

Federation for Children: Assembly Passes Bill to Expand Eligibility for Wisconsin Parental Choice Program

Posted on Wednesday, May 12, 2021

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

Milwaukee, Wisc. May 11, 2021 — This afternoon, Assembly Bill 59 passed the Wisconsin Assembly with a 60-36 vote. The bill increases the income threshold for parents who want to enroll in Wisconsin's Parental Choice program to 300% of the federal poverty level, or about \$78,000 a-year for a family of four.

"We are pleased to see that the bill has passed and will progress to the Senate," says Wisconsin Federation for Children State Director Justin Morales. "Thank you to the bill's authors and sponsors as well as the assembly members who voted to support educational choice for families across our state."

No Democrats voted to support the bill, despite several Democrats having divided districts with unequal educational access among their constituents. The bill now moves on to the Senate as Senate Bill 41.

Wisconsin's statewide Parental Choice Program was enacted and launched in 2013. The program offers school vouchers to students whose families meet certain income qualifications and are not assigned to the Milwaukee Public Schools or Racine Unified school districts.

At the current income threshold level, 220% of the federal poverty level (only \$56,650 for a family of 4), essential workers such as a single nurse or educator with a stay at home spouse could be disqualified from eligibility for the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program based on their income.

The bill brings equality to the income requirements in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program, the Racine Parental Choice Program, and the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program and expands eligibility and access for more families.

A [recent poll from Real Clear Opinion Research](#) shows increasing bipartisan support for school choice, especially as parents search for more K-12 education options in the time of COVID-19.

To write a letter to your Senator in support of S.B. 41 and educational choice, visit: <https://p2a.co/hC1tzDj>.