

WILL, SCW: Ensure MPS follows the law, provide transportation benefits to private school students

Posted on Thursday, May 13, 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.](#)

The News: Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) committed to provide transportation benefits to private schools and parents for the entire 2020-2021 school year after the Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty (WILL) and School Choice Wisconsin (SCW) pressed state lawmakers to consider legislation to require the District to meet its obligations under state law.

The Quote: WILL Director of Education Policy, Libby Sobic, said, “Milwaukee Public Schools have shrugged their legal obligation to provide transportation to thousands of Milwaukee’s students that attend private schools. We are pleased to see a resolution.”

Background: Wisconsin ensures that every student, regardless of the school they attend, must receive transportation to safely go to school. MPS has long provided transportation benefits to both its students and around 6,500 private school students because state law requires the District to treat public school and private school students with “[reasonable uniformity](#).”

But with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the MPS decision to remain virtual for much of the 2020-2021 school year, the District refused to meet its obligations under state law to provide transportation benefits to private school students whose schools had returned for in-person learning.

School Choice Wisconsin and WILL worked together to draw the attention of state lawmakers to this urgent matter. WILL Director of Education Policy, Libby Sobic, testified to Senate and Assembly committees in favor of [AB 160/SB 221](#), a bill that would have required the district to provide transportation benefits to private school students for this school year. Sobic [testified](#) to the legal requirements school districts are required to meet with regard to student transportation, and how MPS was leaving thousands of private school students without access to transportation

to school.

This week, MPS committed to state lawmakers that it will provide transportation benefits to private schools and parents for the entire 2020-2021 school year.