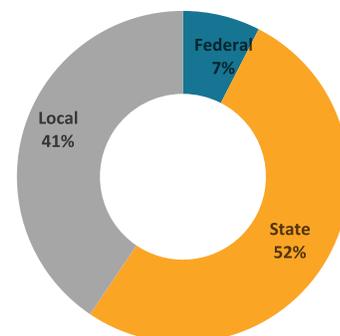


## WISCONSIN

<b>AUTHORIZER TYPE(S)</b>	Local Education Agency Institute of Higher Education Non-Educational Government Entity
<b>LEGAL STATUS OF CHARTER SCHOOLS</b>	Local Education Agency Part of a Local Education Agency
<b>LINKAGE TO A TRADITIONAL DISTRICT</b>	Total Link (LEA auth) No Link (IHE or Non-educ. govt. ent. auth)
<b>STATE SPECIAL ED FUNDING FORMULA</b>	Percentage reimbursement - Funding based on a percentage of allowable actual expenditures
<b>% OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES</b>	13.79% (all public schools) 12.74% (charter schools)

### WISCONSIN Revenue Sources, FY 2014



FY 2014	Spending Per Pupil
WISCONSIN	\$11,186
US	\$11,009

\*Sources on last page; click [here](#) for definitions

### Charter School Funding

Independent Local Education Agency	Part of a Local Education Agency
<p>Independent charter schools are their own LEAs and funded with state and federal dollars only, not with local property taxes. Independent charter schools receive a per-pupil amount determined by the state (\$8,075 per pupil in 2014-15) and are eligible to seek reimbursement through a few of the state's categorical aid programs.</p> <p><b>Special Education and School-Age Parent's Aid:</b> Special Education and School-Age Parents Aid is the major categorical aid program supporting special education. Independent charters receive partial reimbursement for certain instructional, transportation, and other costs of special education and related services in the prior year. In 2013-14, the state paid an average of \$3,057 (27%) for each student with a disability while the average per student cost was \$11,265. For the 2014-15 school year, the reimbursement rate was approximately 26.5%. Transportation accommodations specified on a student's IEP are eligible for reimbursement under this categorical grant.</p> <p><b>High Cost Special Education Aid:</b> Reimbursement is a prorated portion of eligible costs. An LEA is eligible for aid when a student with disabilities has actual, additional, non-administrative costs of special education and related services in excess of \$30,000, after certain reimbursements are excluded.</p> <p><b>Transportation</b></p> <p>Independent charter schools, like traditional school districts, are eligible for transportation funds based on mileage.</p>	<p>The law does not specify how district-authorized charters must be funded; each contract is different.</p> <p>The traditional LEA receives funds from the state for:</p> <p><b>Equalization Aid:</b> State Equalization Aid is general financial assistance to public school districts for use in funding a broad range of school district operational expenditures. General aid uses are not restricted as they would be in a categorical aid program. Wisconsin distributes state aid to public school districts through a formula that works toward equalizing the resources available to districts with varying tax bases. Districts are limited in the total revenue they can raise through equalization aid and property taxes and fund district-authorized charter schools within this limit like any other operations.</p> <p><b>Special Education and School-Age Parent's Aid:</b> Special Education and School-Age Parents Aid is the major categorical aid program supporting special education. District-authorized charters receive partial reimbursement for certain instructional, transportation, and other costs of special education and related services in the prior year. Claims are submitted via authorizing districts, which are responsible for forwarding a proportional share to their authorized charter schools under their contracts. In 2013-14, the state paid an average of \$3,057 (27%) for each student with a disability while the average per student cost was \$11,265. For the 2014-15 school year, the reimbursement rate was approximately 26.5%. Transportation accommodations specified on a student's IEP are eligible for reimbursement under this categorical grant.</p> <p>(Cont. on following page)</p>

Charter School Funding (cont.)	
Independent Local Education Agency	Part of a Local Education Agency
	<p><b>Supplemental Special Education Aid:</b> The Supplemental Special Education Aid program provides additional funding to small school districts with higher special education costs and less ability to raise revenues. Eligibility is based on three criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Per-pupil revenue authority below the state average.</li> <li>2. Special education makes up more than 16% of its total costs.</li> <li>3. Membership is less than 2,000.</li> </ol> <p>These criteria are evaluated using prior year data. By law, a district cannot receive both Supplemental Special Education Aid and High Cost Special Education Aid. In 2014-15, only three districts with district-authorized charter schools received aid under this program.</p> <p><b>Transportation</b></p> <p>LEAs are eligible for transportation funds based on mileage.</p>

State Special Education Funding	
Independent Local Education Agency	Part of a Local Education Agency
<p>Independent charters receive partial state reimbursement for special education costs through Wisconsin’s categorical aid programs: Special Education and School-Age Parent’s Aid and High Cost Special Education Aid.</p> <p><b>Special Education and School-Age Parent’s Aid:</b> Special Education and School-Age Parents Aid is the major categorical aid program supporting special education. Independent charters receive partial reimbursement for certain instructional, transportation, and other costs of special education and related services in the prior year. In 2013-14, the state paid an average of \$3,057 (27%) for each student with a disability while the average per student cost was \$11,265. For the 2014-15 school year, the reimbursement rate was approximately 26.5%. Transportation accommodations specified on a student’s IEP are eligible for reimbursement under this categorical grant.</p> <p><b>High Cost Special Education Aid:</b> Reimbursement is a prorated portion of eligible costs. An LEA is eligible for aid when a student with disabilities has actual, additional, non-administrative costs of special education and related services in excess of \$30,000, after certain reimbursements are excluded.</p>	<p>Districts receive special education reimbursement through the Special Education and Parent’s Aid, Supplemental Education Aid, High Cost Aid and State Equalization Aid programs. District-authorized charter schools, regardless of their instrumentality status, will receive aid under these programs via the district for any special education costs they incur. Any special education costs not supported by these aid programs are covered by the district’s contract.</p> <p><b>Special Education and School-Age Parent’s Aid:</b> Special Education and School-Age Parents Aid is the major categorical aid program supporting special education. District-authorized charters receive partial reimbursement for certain instructional, transportation, and other costs of special education and related services in the prior year. Claims are submitted via authorizing districts, which are responsible for forwarding a proportional share to their authorized charter schools under their contracts. In 2013-14, the state paid an average of \$3,057 for each student with a disability while the average per student cost was \$11,265. For the 2014-15 school year, the reimbursement rate was approximately 26.5%. Transportation accommodations specified on a student’s IEP are eligible for reimbursement under this categorical grant.</p> <p><b>Supplemental Special Education Aid:</b> The Supplemental Special Education Aid program provides additional funding to small school districts with higher special education costs and less ability to raise revenues. Eligibility is based on three criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Per-pupil revenue authority below the state average.</li> <li>2. Special education makes up more than 16% of its total costs.</li> <li>3. Membership is less than 2,000.</li> </ol> <p>These criteria are evaluated using prior year data. By law, a district cannot receive both Supplemental Special Education Aid and High Cost Special Education Aid. In 2014-15, only three districts with district-authorized charter schools received aid under this program.</p>

**Local Special Education Funding/Services**

Independent Local Education Agency	Part of a Local Education Agency
<p>An independent charter school is the Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) agency for its students. Independent charters do not receive any local funds. While independent charters could contract with the district for services, this is not common practice in Wisconsin. Cooperative Educational Service Agencies (CESAs) serve as a link between school districts and between school districts and the state. There are 12 CESAs in Wisconsin. Many independent charters have a relationship with CESA 1, for providing central office services, IEP evaluations, and/or special education services.</p>	<p>Districts retain Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) responsibility for students with disabilities attending district-authorized charter schools. The contract stipulates how the LEA will provide funding and/or services for charter students with disabilities. The contract may delegate provision of certain services to the charter, but if the contract is silent then the district provides all services necessary for FAPE. Instrumentality status may factor into district-charter negotiations regarding provision of special education.</p>

**Federal IDEA Part B Funding**

Independent Local Education Agency	Part of a Local Education Agency
<p>The Department sets aside 10% of Part B Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) discretionary grant funds for high-cost aid.</p> <p>Remaining funds are distributed to school districts and independent charters based on the October 1 count of students with IEPs, student enrollment, and number of students in poverty. On average, independent charter school receive between \$30,000 and \$60,000 per year in federal IDEA funds.</p>	<p>Full district discretion.</p>

**High-Cost Funds**

**High cost funds:** DPI combines state and federal funds to provide additional support for school districts and other eligible LEAs serving students with disabilities whose needs are particularly significant and costly. Agencies apply for partial reimbursement of costs for individual students in the prior year.

- The High Cost Special Education Aid program is funded with a combination of federal and state money. The reimbursement is a prorated portion of eligible costs, regardless of the specific federal/state breakdown of that payment.
- An LEA is eligible for aid when a student with disabilities has actual, additional, non-administrative costs of special education and related services in excess of \$30,000, after certain reimbursements are excluded. By law, an LEA cannot receive both High Cost Special Education Aid and Supplemental Special Education Aid.
- Funding: Aid under this program combines a sum-certain appropriation in the state's biennial budget with additional federal funds set aside by DPI from its IDEA allocation. In 2014-15, \$3.5 million of state and \$2.2 million of federal monies were available. The average reimbursement rate for LEAs was:
  - \* 46.2% of eligible reimbursements (out of 90% of each student's cost above \$30,000)
  - \* 41.6% of eligible costs (out of each student's cost above \$30,000)
  - \* 9.9% of total costs (out of each student's total cost)
- For most students, DPI adds a 'base cost' credited toward the statutory student cost threshold. This amount is meant to stand in for the typical excess costs of a special education program, including services shared by many or all of the LEA's students with disabilities. Because these costs vary substantially from district to district and school to school, depending as much upon staffing and enrollment patterns as the needs of particular students, DPI determined it would be more appropriate to establish a flat amount supporting student eligibility for most LEAs. This amount is a credit toward the threshold, not a cost that is itself eligible for or reimbursed by High Cost Special Education Aid.

## Medicaid

The **Medicaid School Based Services** (SBS) program covers IEP services if:

- Medically necessary and in a Medicaid covered category
- All federal and state Medicaid regulations are followed
- Medical services are included in the state's plan or available under EPSDT
- Provided to a Medicaid-eligible student
- Parental consent was obtained to bill Medicaid

LEAs, including independent charters, can bill Medicaid directly, through a Cooperative Educational Services Agency, or through a third party vendor. The Wisconsin Department of Human Services oversees the SBS program. LEAs receive interim payments according to the Max Fee Schedule. When an LEA's costs exceed the Max Fee Schedule, LEAs receive reimbursement for all allowable costs above the interim payment amount through the cost settlement process. Additionally, LEAs are eligible to receive reimbursement for Medicaid administrative costs through the Medicaid Administrative Claiming (MAC) program. The Department of Human Services also oversees the MAC program; however, it is separate from the SBS program. School based services are reimbursed through the Department of Health Services, which retains a portion of the full fee-for-service payment for administration.

## References / Resources

### Reference sites

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction  
<http://dpi.wi.gov/>

### Funding links

Equalization Aid

<http://dpi.wi.gov/sfs/aid/general/equalization/overview>

Challenges for Wisconsin: School Finance and Vouchers

<https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/eis/pdf/school-finance-challenges-rev2014-09-23.pdf>

Special Education and School-Age Parents Aid

<http://dpi.wi.gov/sfs/aid/special-ed/sped-sap/overview>

Special Education Aids

<http://dpi.wi.gov/sfs/aid/special-ed/overview>

IDEA Part B Flow-through allocation spreadsheets

<http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/educators/fiscal/flow>

### Medicaid links

Medicaid Reimbursement

<http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sfs/pdf/Medicaid%206-23-15.pdf>

### High-cost links

Wisconsin Statute 115.881

<http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/115/V/881>

Wisconsin Administrative Code PI 30

[http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin\\_code/pi/30](http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/pi/30)

High Cost Special Education Aid Program Guidance

<https://www.cesa10.k12.wi.us/upload/document/571/highcostspedaaidprogramguidance.pdf>

<http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sfs/pdf/HCSPEd%20Program%20Guidance.pdf>

[An Overview of Special Education for 2r Charter Schools](#)

<http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sped/pdf/2r-special-ed-funding-overview.pdf>

### Departments/Organizations

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction:

Charter School Programs

Policy and Budget, Finance and Management

School Financial Services

School Management Services, Finance

Office of Urban Education

Special Ed, Learning Support

### Sources for data on first page of report

Percentage of students with disabilities: U.S. Department of Education, Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) for the 2013-14 school year. Available at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/crdc-2013-14.html>

Federal, state, and local revenue sources & spending per pupil: United States Census Bureau, Annual Survey of School System Finances. Available at <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/school-finances.html>