

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

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Abstract

Wisconsin has 221 operating charter schools and anticipates an increase of 130 new charter schools by the year 2014. Our state charter school law places no limits on the number of charter schools developed and works in concert with federal charter school statutes. Wisconsin has increased educational options for parents and students through the Open Enrollment Program (allows a student to attend a school district other than their resident school district), the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (the private school voucher program in the city of Milwaukee), and the Integration Aid program that allows inter-district transfers between suburban school districts and Milwaukee Public Schools, and the Wisconsin Charter School Program (WCSP). The WCSP is aligned to our state content standards, the state accountability system and our state plan, The New Wisconsin Promise (NWP).

The four objectives of the Wisconsin project are to: (1) increase the number of high quality charter schools; (2) utilize CSP funds to improve outcomes for secondary charter school students who are at risk of not meeting state standards or graduating; (3) promote the dissemination of Wisconsin charter schools' best practices to other public schools and LEAs; and (4) support charter schools' efforts to be fiscally responsible for long-term sustainability.

Anticipated outcomes are: a) 130 new quality charter schools will open; b) the majority of charter schools will continue to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) on statewide assessments; c) high percentages of charter school students will meet or exceed state proficiency levels in math and reading; d) graduation rates for charter school students will improve; e) at least fifteen dissemination grants will be awarded to support successful schools in their efforts to share best practices with charter and traditional schools, benefiting students and their educational achievement; and f) a majority of charter schools will demonstrate strong leadership and fiscal stability after three years of operation

Wisconsin requests a waiver of the 36-month requirement of the federal grant period and instead, seeks a 60-month grant period to successfully meet the objectives outlined above. The SEA requests \$82.35 million in grant funds over five years to support these efforts to open 130 new high quality charter schools.