

2011–2013 State Budget Implications: An AFE Series

PART 5 Whitefish Bay School District Enrollment

A major portion of public school district revenue is determined by its student enrollment. Every year, on the third Friday in September, each student is counted, and this number becomes the district's enrollment number. The official Third Friday Student Enrollment Count in Whitefish Bay for the 2010-11 school year was 3,027 total students, of which 2,717 were resident students.

The Whitefish Bay School District received \$11,561 in revenue for each resident student. Early childhood and half day kindergarten students generate only about half of this amount since they are less than full day programs.

Major fluctuations in enrollment can wreak havoc on school district budgets, so increases and decreases are calculated by using a three-year incremental scale. For example, a school district will receive one third of the revenue the first year of an increase, two-thirds the second year, and the full amount the third year. The same process is used with declining enrollments. This helps to cushion the financial impact of increasing or decreasing enrollment.

WI Chapter 220 Inter-district Transfer Program

The Chapter 220 program was established in 1976 to promote racial integration in Milwaukee and its surrounding suburban districts. It is funded with state aid and was intended to voluntarily draw minority students into low-minority districts. The state aid for each pupil transferred is equal to the district's actual cost of educating that student.

The Whitefish Bay School District has participated in the program since its inception. About 220 students currently attend the district's schools through this program. These students bring a diverse population to our schools and enrich the lives and understanding of our resident students.

WI Open Enrollment Program

The Open Enrollment program allows students to attend schools in school districts other than the school district of residence. This program is most commonly used when families move from one district to another and wish their child to remain in their previous school.

During the 2010-11 school year, 16 Whitefish Bay children chose to attend schools outside of the district and 84 children from other school districts chose Whitefish Bay schools. A district participating in the program receives \$6,796 in aid per pupil; this amount represents an adjusted state average of per pupil costs. The district of residence is allowed to keep any remaining funds for students who enroll elsewhere.

With the aid per pupil being less than the average cost to educate a child in the Whitefish Bay School District, the administration manages this number carefully. Currently, participation remains relatively low, and no additional teachers have been hired or significant new expenses incurred due to the program.

Sources:

2010–11 School District Enrollment Report and Projections for 2011–12,
Dr. Mary J. Gavigan, District Administrator, October 14, 2010

School District of Whitefish Bay Issue Summaries:

Enrollment Trends, January, 2011

WI Chapter 220 Inter-district Transfer Program, January, 2011

WI Open Enrollment Program, February, 2011