

Open Enrollment

School Finance Formula Review Committee
Monday, December 16, 2024



Department of Education

What is Open Enrollment?

- Open enrollment has supported families making public school choices across Iowa since SY 1989-1990.
- Open enrollment is a cost-free public school choice option for parents/guardians to apply for their child/children to attend a school outside of their residential public school district.
 - The deadline to open enroll was reestablished in SY 2024-2025 as March 1 for grades 1–12 and September 1 for preschoolers receiving special education services and kindergarteners.
 - If applying after the deadline, a family must demonstrate “good cause” or have approval of both the receiving and resident school district’s boards.
 - There is no deadline to open enroll into a district operating a state-approved online school, given the unique student needs that online school meet, including drop-out prevention.
- Choosing a public school (attendance center) within your resident school district is an intra-district transfer, which is subject to local school district policies unless the student is requesting a transfer due to bullying and harassment.
- Please see Iowa Code 282.18 and Iowa Administrative Code rule 281—17 for more information. Please also see the [Open Enrollment](#) web page for additional information and resources.

Open Enrollment Growth Over Time

School Year	Certified Enrollment	# Open Enrolled	% Open Enrolled
1990-1991	483,399	2,757	0.6
1995-1996	504,505	12,502	2.5
2000-2001	494,291	18,544	3.8
2005-2006	483,105	23,155	4.8
2010-2011	473,493	25,831	5.5
2015-2016	483,451	30,463	6.3
2020-2021	484,159	35,227	7.3
2021-2022	485,630	36,412	7.5
2022-2023	486,476	38,965	7.3

Source: Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Information and Analysis Services, Certified Enrollment and Student Reporting in Iowa.

Open Enrollment Finance

- Open enrolled students are always counted in the resident district.
- A receiving district bills the resident district for the following:
 - State cost per pupil for the budget year,
 - Teacher Leadership & Compensation (TLC) supplement,
 - Professional Development supplement,
 - Early Intervention supplement, and
 - Any additional funds for non-English speaking weighting (if applicable).
- For students receiving special education services, the receiving district bills for the actual costs to implement the IEP.
- If a student is open enrolled for a partial year, costs are prorated. Billing takes place on or before February 15 for the fall semester and on or before July 15 for the spring semester.
- If a receiving district's open enrollment student population exceeds 45% total enrollment, it may request a Modified Supplemental Amount (MSA)/additional spending authority from the School Budget Review Committee (SBRC) for one year not to exceed their current tax rate.

Open Enrollment Finance

- A receiving district may not bill the resident district for Teacher Salary Supplement (TSS), which is was modified in SY 2024-2025 to ensure districts reached new teacher pay statutory minimums for new and experienced teachers.
- A receiving district may not bill the resident district for Secure an Advanced Vision for Education (SAVE) dollars, which includes money for school infrastructure purposes. “School infrastructure,” means those activities for which a school district is authorized to contract indebtedness and issue general obligations bonds under Iowa Code 296.1.
- The ability to request a MSA from the SBRC does not include students who are open enrolled into an online school.