

# Private K-12 Tuition Tax Deduction Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

## **What is the tax deduction for tuition expenses?**

In 2013, the state budget bill (2013 Wisconsin Act 20) established a tuition tax deduction (see Wis. Stat. s. 71.05(6)(b)49) which began in the 2014 tax year when filing in 2015. Annually, taxpayers may deduct the private and religious school tuition expenses they have paid between January 1 and December 31. Up to \$4,000 for each dependent child in Kindergarten - grade 8 and up to \$10,000 for each dependent child in grades 9 - 12.

## **How much does the deduction benefit families?**

The **average** Wisconsin family will see their taxes cut around \$240 per elementary school child and around \$600 per high school student. However, since this is a tax deduction and not a credit, the amount that a family or individual saves may depend on income, filing status, and tax liability.

## **Who is eligible to claim the deduction?**

Every parent or guardian who pays tuition expenses for a dependent child at a private school is eligible. The deduction applies to tuition expenses paid at an institution that meets the definition of a private school under Wisconsin Statutes s. 118.165. A list of recognized private schools can be found at, <https://apps4.dpi.wi.gov/SchoolDirectory/Search/PrivateSchoolsSearch>

## **Can I deduct all tuition if my child receives a scholarship or financial aid? What about all school-related expenses?**

No, you may only deduct tuition you have paid. Tuition does not include balances paid with a voucher or any of the following:

- Room and board
- Supplies
- Cap and gown fees
- Rentals of equipment
- Meals
- Transportation
- Building
- Personal use items (i.e. uniforms, gym clothes, towels)
- Before-school and after-school child care
- Social and extracurricular activities, including musical or athletic activity fees
- Registration fees
- High school classes not required for graduation and for which no credits towards graduation are given

## **What if my student is going from elementary or middle school to high school?**

If a student goes from eighth to ninth grade, fill in the amount you paid for tuition during the taxable year for the period your student was in 8th grade (up to \$4,000) PLUS the amount you paid for the period when your student was in 9th grade (the total cannot exceed \$10,000).

## **How does a taxpayer claim the deduction?\***

Make certain the school their child attends meets the basic definition of a private school (list can be found here: <https://apps4.dpi.wi.gov/SchoolDirectory/Search/PrivateSchoolsSearch>); find the federal employer ID number (FEIN) of the school; and save payment records (receipts, etc.) as supporting documentation for their tax record.

\*The Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR) draft publication, Schedule PS is available each year near the start of “tax season” with more information on how to claim the deduction.

**For more information, you may contact:** Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Customer Service Bureau, PO Box 8949, Madison, WI 53708 | **Phone:** (608) 266-2486 | **Email:** [income@revenue.wi.gov](mailto:income@revenue.wi.gov)