

# Enrollment at St. Marcus School

## Submit steps to enroll

#1) enroll online <https://apps4.dpi.wi.gov/ChoiceParent/>

#2) submit the required residency and/or income documents (last page of application says "print this page" - the information is on that page)

***Unless you complete both of these steps, your choice application is not complete.***

#3) complete the St. Marcus forms (registration, school pick up, permission) These are available at the St. Marcus business office or [download and print them on our website.](#)

If not currently attending St. Marcus (including any K4 student), supply the following:

#4) up to date immunization records

#5) original birth certificate

**Unless you complete the last three steps, you are not registered at St Marcus.**

## Enroll in February

Enrolling in February accomplishes two things:

- 1) If you have a seat at St Marcus this year, it guarantees your seat for next year.
- 2) If you hope to start at St Marcus next year, you will be nearer to the top of the waiting list with a February application.

It is in your best interest to enroll early in February and get your documentation to St Marcus. This gives personnel at St Marcus time to review your document for any errors while you are still able to get back into your documentation to make any corrections, if they are necessary. Once the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month comes, your application becomes locked and you no longer have access to it. Then if mistakes are found, additional paperwork, and possibly additional documentation may be necessary.

## Enroll during first several days and submit documents to allow STM to review and correct

Getting the choice application completely done in the first several days of the enrollment period allows St Marcus a chance to review the paper documents and your online application to make sure there are no mistakes. During the enrollment period (1st-20th), you are able to get back into your application to correct errors that might have been made, especially spellings, birthdates, and grades. However, once the enrollment period closes, these mistakes cannot be corrected. Sometimes the mistake is of the kind that the application can still be accepted. Sometime the mistake is of the kind where it becomes necessary for you to redo the application the next month, thus losing your seniority for the previous month. It is to your advantage to do it early in the month and you are encouraged to do so. It is not wise to wait until the 20<sup>th</sup> to fill out your application and bring in your documents.

## When you apply during the month makes no difference

The month in which you apply makes all the difference in the world

Whether you apply on the 1st or the 3rd or the 5th or the 10th of each month makes no difference in your lottery chances. All applications from a particular month are grouped together and thrown into the lottery bin.

Whether you apply in February or March or April, etc. makes all the the difference in the world. All February applications have priority over March applications, etc. So the best time to apply is February of each year.

### You must apply EVERY year

It is very important to remember that you must apply every year. The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) insists that every student apply every year. You will not retain your seat if you do not apply each year. If you do not apply in February, your seat cannot be guaranteed.

If your student currently attends St Marcus, you need to apply sometime in February (1st - 20th) of that year in order to keep your seat for the following school year. If you don't apply in February, chances are that your seat will be taken by another student who did apply in February since that application always takes priority. Please remember to apply in February of every year for a seat at St Marcus.

### Continuing vs new

As you fill in your online choice application, be sure to check whether or not your student comes up as "continuing" or "new." If your child currently attends a choice school (such as St. Marcus), then your student should be a "continuing" student which means that they are currently a choice student "continuing" on the following year as a choice student.

If this is the first time your student is a choice student (all K4 students and anyone who did not attend a choice school the current/previous year), then your student should show up as "new".

If your student shows up as "new" and should be a "continuing" student, then check for the spelling of the name, the same name as used in current choice school lists, and a correct birthdate. Any mistake in any of these items could cause the student to be listed as "new." If you have any questions, be sure to contact St. Marcus and ask what name and birthdate is listed for your current student. St. Marcus personnel will be happy to assist you to make sure your student is correctly categorized as a "continuing" student

### Prepare ahead of time with required items

Your proof of residency document and, if you need it, your proof of income document(s) must have your legal name on it. If you have been receiving residency documents or income documents that do not have your legal name on it, maybe now is the time to get it changed to your legal name. Many times this takes 6-8 weeks to accomplish. Starting now means that you will have your legal name on the document when you bring it in. If you do not have your legal name on these documents, then you will be required to fill out additional paperwork, and possibly bring additional documentation to "prove" who you are. Here are some typical examples of errors in legal names:

- Hyphenated name (Susan Smith-Cole vs Susan Smith Cole)
- Misspelled name (Jennifr vs Jennifer, Mathew vs Matthew, Theresa vs Teresa)
- Abbreviated name (Dan vs Daniel, Suzie vs Susan, Mike vs Michael)
- Multiple last names (Maria Gonzalez-Dominquez vs Maria Gonzalez)
- Apostrophes in names (D'Ahzah vs Dahzah)

Each of these needs to be corrected or additional paperwork filled out. Additional documentation such as birth certificate, marriage certificate, divorce decree, etc. may be required. It seems to be easier to get things corrected before they are needed. Your legal name is required on the online application even if it doesn't match your residency or income documentation. DPI (Department of Public Instruction) is looking for a "computer" match to the documents. A computer match means spellings, spacing, apostrophes, and hyphens are all exactly the same.

### Matching the residency document

When you fill out your choice application, it is sometimes a good idea to first find your proof of residency which everyone needs to submit in order to complete the choice application. Make sure the proof of residency is dated within the previous 90 days. Then make sure that the name and address from the proof of residency are exactly the same as the name and address that are used on the online choice application. Since St Marcus is in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (MPCP), the address at which the child resides must be in the city of Milwaukee. Typing mistakes matter, so please be careful.

Examples of non-matching addresses:

2210 S First St vs 2210 S First (Doesn't match because the 2<sup>nd</sup> one is missing St)

2 210 S First St vs 2210 S First St (Doesn't match because of the space in the number in the first one)

2210 Martin Luther King Dr vs 2210 MLK Dr (Doesn't match because name isn't spelled out in second one)

The addresses must match exactly, so copy exactly what the address is on your residency document into the online application system (OAS).

### Residency documents

One of the documents below must be provided that includes the name of one of the parents/legal guardians on the application and the address on the application. The list below includes ALL acceptable forms of residency documentation. Only the items on this list may be used as residency documentation. Residency documentation must include a date to show that it is current (the acceptable date range will be given you on the last page of the application).

1. Wage statement or W2 year-end earnings statement. (Note: W-2 end-of-year earnings statements are not acceptable for applications received after April.)
2. Water, gas, electric, cable, satellite, or landline phone bill. Cell phone bills are NOT acceptable.
3. Dated Governmental correspondence. Examples include a property tax bill, Supplemental Security Income "SSI", Wisconsin Works "W2", FoodShare, or Housing Assistance letter. Printed statements from Access.gov can be used as residency support if the statement is during the required period.
4. Lease agreement with a term that includes the date the parent applies to the school (must be complete and legible) that is in the name of one of the parents/legal guardians at the address on the student application. Expired leases are NOT acceptable. Generally, the parent should try to provide one of the allowed residency documents other than a month-to-month lease. However, if a month-to-month lease is used, it must be dated within three months of when the application is received. Rent receipts are NOT an allowed residency document.
5. Homeless individuals may identify a location for their residence if it is an identifiable location which could conceivably serve as a temporary residence. A homeless family should provide a letter on the organization's letterhead from a shelter for the homeless or from a private or public organization providing services for homeless individuals signed and dated within the required time period by a representative of the organization.
6. Properly completed Alternative Residency Verification form (Form PI-PCP-51) only for situations where:
  - (a) the student is not living with one of his or her parents or legal guardians; or
  - (b) one of the parents/ legal guardians does not have one of the residency documents above and someone else living at the address on the application is able to provide one of the residency documents above for the family.

### Proof of Income documents

If your student is a new student to choice, including everyone enrolling in K4, then you will be required to provide proof of income. What you must bring is determined by what you check when you fill out the application. You must bring what you check off. You cannot substitute a different document even though it provides the same proof (Example a tax return vs a W-2). Please be sure you have what you check. What you must bring for proof of income is listed on the last page of the application that says "print this page". The first question will be "Did you file a 2016 Federal 1040 income form with the IRS?" If you did not file it yet, simply check NO. Then another page will come which has other options for providing proof of income such as a W-2, final Dec 2016 earning statement, etc. You must then choose which of these identify all the income coming into your household.

### Completing your choice application early in the enrollment period

In the last news article, a list of acceptable proof of residency documents was given. If you missed it, please click on this link:

<http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sms/Choice/Residency-Documents.pdf>

Until this residency document is submitted to St Marcus, your choice application is not complete. This documentation must be submitted between the 1st and the 20th of the month in which you filled out the choice application. Bringing this to St Marcus between the 1st and 10th gives St Marcus time to check that all information exactly matches the choice application. Once the 20th passes by, no changes can be made to the online parent application. It is to your benefit to bring this document to St Marcus early in the enrollment period.

### Using your email address

When you enroll online, you are asked to register your email. That same email address will be used to communicate with you so please be sure to check it regularly during the enrollment period and also after the enrollment period for any follow up information. This year, plans are to email the acceptance letters and the place on the waiting list rather than use snail mail. This same online enrollment email address will be used.

Filling out the OAS (online application system) form

The following are stumbling blocks along the way and how to overcome them:

- 1) School district  
If you live in the city of Milwaukee, you are in the Milwaukee school district. Select Milwaukee from the drop down list of school districts.
- 2) You will be participating in the MPCP. Under “add a school” make sure you choose Saint Marcus Lutheran School (You may also choose other schools if you wish)
- 3) Under parent/legal guardian, list only parents/legal guardians that live at the address you listed previously
- 4) Please list your phone number under the correct heading (home phone is a landline phone, not a cell)
- 5) List the child’s legal name under student information including suffixes, if applicable (Jr, III, etc)
- 6) Prior year attendance: If they attended Saint Marcus Lutheran School “this year” then you must check “private school in Wisconsin” and a drop down box will show up under which you will find Saint Marcus Lutheran School
- 7) Under the income page, you will be asked to list any other family members who live at the address you listed. Add any other children you have that live with you that are not currently listed.
- 8) Choose DOR or DPI method of verifying income. Separate newsletter article about these next week.

**DOR vs DPI method of verifying income (for new choice students, including all K4 students)**

There are two ways to verify your income: Either the government can do it or St Marcus can do it. DOR stands for Department of Revenue which means the government declares you income-eligible for a choice seat. We will cover DOR in this issue. The DOR does this by checking your income tax record from the previous year. In order to do this, you must give your Social Security number to St Marcus to enter into the OAS system in order for them to search the government database for your income tax records. If they find your tax record, they will be checking your tax form to see if your adjusted gross income (AGI) falls below the following limits:

Family Size	Maximum Yearly Income*
1.	\$35,628
2.	\$48,219
3.	\$60,810
4.	\$73,401
5.	\$85,992
6.	\$98,583

For each additional member add \$12,591

If it does, you will be declared income-eligible for a choice seat. In order to be able to do this, they must have your legal name on your income tax form in order to match it to your social security number. If they cannot find your records, then you must go back into your form and change it to DPI (Department of Public Instruction) which means St Marcus will verify your income. More about DPI next issue. If the DOR finds that you have made more than the amounts above, they will declare you ineligible for a choice seat anywhere in Wisconsin for the entire school year. There is no appeal to this process. For 99% or you, this will not be a problem. If you think you are near the limit, choose DPI.

DOR vs **DPI method** of verifying income (for new choice students, including all K4 students)

There are two ways to verify your income: Either the government can do it or St Marcus can do it. DPI stands for Department of Public Instruction which means St Marcus will verify your income based on the documentation that you check that you have and are required to bring to St Marcus. If you filed your current taxes, then you will bring the first two pages of the tax form. If you have not, you will be asked what other documentation you have to verify your income. Whatever you check, you must bring to St Marcus. Again, the income levels you are allowed to have were given last issue. If you would like to see them again, please go to this link: <http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sms/pdf/Income%20Limits%20MPCP%20RPCP%202016-17.pdf> St Marcus will verify that what you entered in OAS (Online Application System) is exactly what you have on the documentation you bring. Thus your income is verified by St Marcus (DPI). This is the harder of the two methods to use, but if you are close to the income levels, it would be best for St Marcus to verify rather than the government.