

**For Immediate Release**

**May 20, 2014**

Contact: Jim Bender

## **Demand for School Choice Surges Ahead**

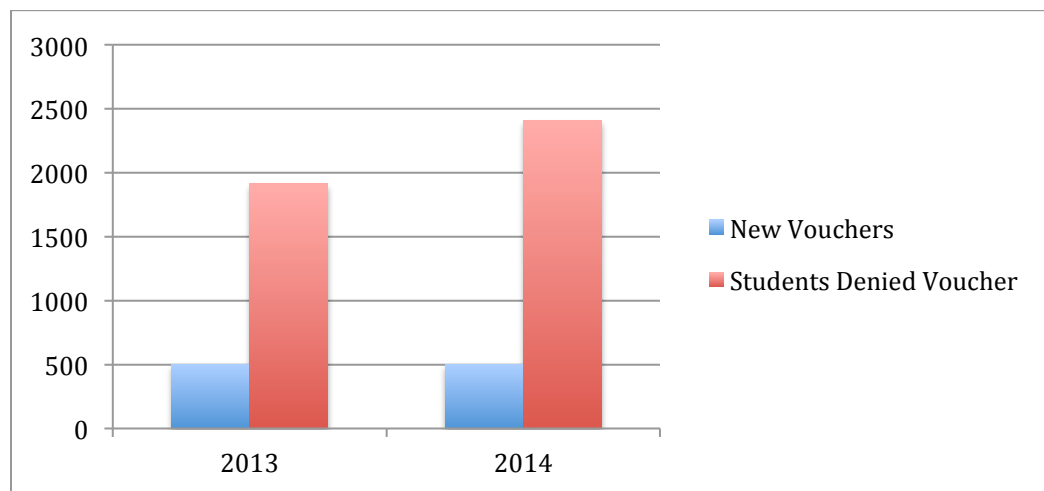
*Caps Are Barrier to Program*

Data released today shows that more parents across Wisconsin are applying to get into the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program. Applicants from all sectors increased over last year.

“Once again, applications far exceeded the cap,” Jim Bender said. “For the second year in a row, we have thousands of parents—over 70 percent—who are left on the outside looking in. The caps on the program are denying students in all types of schools – private and public from getting access.”

Also for the second year, students applying to the program from public schools exceeded the caps. Only 500 new slots were open for the 2014-15 school year and 537 public school students applied, an increase over last year.

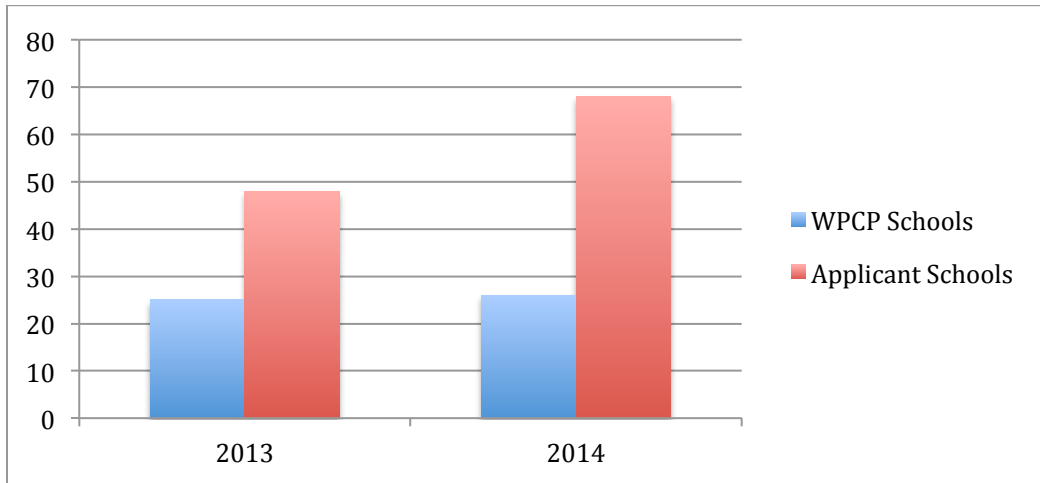
The 3,407 total applications were more than six times the number of new vouchers available for the 2014-15 school year. The forced waitlist of students denied a voucher this year exceeds 2400 and represents a 26% increase in the number of students denied access to the school of their choice over the current year.



**Sixty-eight schools applied to participate the WPCP for the 2014-15 school year that represents a 41% increase in applicant schools from the current year.**

An unfortunate reality for Wisconsin families in Shawano, Merrill, Freedom, Two Rivers, Madison, Portage, Plymouth, Rhinelander, West Allis, Butler, Cato, Waukesha, Milwaukee, Brookfield, Elm Grove, Somers, Greendale, Menomonee Falls, Pleasant Prairie, Mount Pleasant,

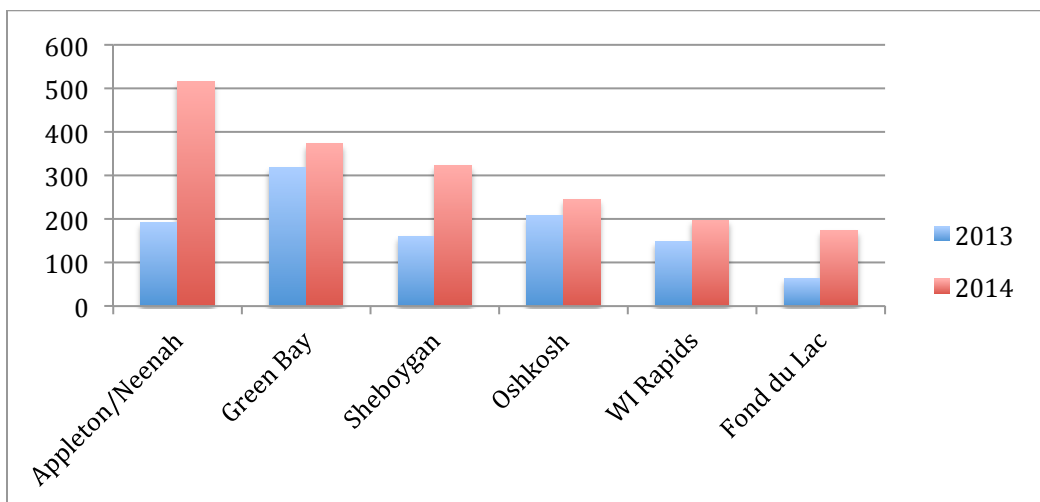
and Franklin is that 68% of applicant schools were denied entrance into the WPCP eliminating access to great schools in the heart of their community. Communities denied additional WPCP school options included Green Bay, Kenosha, Sheboygan, Wausau, Stevens Point, and Appleton.



The number of WPCP applications significantly grew in every community in 2014 versus 2013. Communities adding denominational options saw the greatest percentage increase in applications for the WPCP.

- Appleton/Neenah/Freedom: 267%
- Sheboygan: 203%
- Fond du Lac: 272%

Communities with existing WPCP schools saw the greatest increase in applications.



When parents perceive school choice as viable with multiple school choice options in their community, demand for the program surges. Parents throughout Wisconsin demand school choice. It's time for Wisconsin to empower parents to choose the school that is best for their child. It's time to eliminate the cap on the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program.

***School Choice Wisconsin** is a nonprofit organization that seeks to ensure an honest debate about school choice by providing accurate information on the impact of school choice on families, communities, and schools. [www.chooseyourschoolwi.org](http://www.chooseyourschoolwi.org)*