

W-A-Y Eau Claire: FAQ [Frequently Asked Questions]

1. Who is eligible for WAY Eau Claire?

In most cases, second semester freshman are the youngest additions to the WAY program. If, after completing the first semester in a traditional high school setting, a student wishes to transfer to WAY Eau Claire they should complete and submit an application which can be found on the Eau Claire Public Schools website

The application will be reviewed by district personnel to ensure the program is a good fit. Students will be notified as soon as a decision is made in regards to their acceptance.

Non-resident students seeking to join the WAY Eau Claire Students program should contact our WAY Team Leader at 269-461-3121 or email way@eauclaireps.com.

2. What is project-based learning?

Students explore authentic, engaging, real-world problems and earn credits by demonstrating understanding of competencies aligned with national and state standards by completing projects. The projects are supplied by WAY or can be developed by students, allowing them to incorporate their interests with guidance of WAY experts. Examples of the supplied projects can be found on the WAY website at <https://www.wayprogram.net/how-it-works/curriculum>

3. Are WAY classes taught in-person or online?

Content experts, virtual Michigan-certified teachers, deliver lessons and are available to students 24/7 online. Students communicate with content experts to gain a better understanding of various lessons or for specific help with their projects. The content experts also review projects once they are submitted and either mark them as completed or provide feedback and suggestions for completion if the project does not demonstrate an understanding of the competencies.

Students have access to face-to-face help when they come into the labs housed at Eau Claire Public Schools, 6295 West Main Street Eau Claire, MI 49111. Eau Claire Public Schools' staff are available in the labs to assist students during set hours of the day.

4. How long will it take a student to complete the WAY Eau Claire program?

A student's progress through the program can be dependent on a variety of factors - the number of competencies demonstrated in each project, the amount of time spent in the lab and working at home to name a few. Typically, the WAY Eau Claire program can be completed within the traditional 4-year high school career. Unlike traditional high school, WAY Eau Claire students have the opportunity to work on their projects and receive teacher help at flexible hours and throughout the summer. Sometimes this allows WAY Eau Claire students to complete the program prior to the average 4-years.

5. Upon completion of the program, do students receive a diploma or GED?

Following completion of the program, students receive a diploma from WAY Eau Claire High School. This diploma is the equivalent of any diploma in the state and will be accepted by any institution.

6. Does WAY Eau Claire have assigned teachers?

Yes, along with content experts available virtually, students have access to in-person assistance from Eau Claire Public Schools' staff at the WAY Eau Claire lab during predetermined hours.

7. Are students expected to supply their own technology?

No, Chromebook laptops are supplied to the student by the district for use while in the program. Certain websites and applications have been blocked, such as Netflix, Hulu, Facebook, and Twitter, as the device should be used for school purposes. Following the completion of the program, the device should be returned. If access to Internet in the home is a barrier, the district will provide a hotspot for student use as they progress through the program.

8. Can a student be in the WAY Eau Claire program and not have Internet at their house?

Yes, if a student does not have access to Internet in the home, the district will provide a hotspot to facilitate Internet access. The hotspot must be returned upon completion of the program.

9. How do credits transfer from traditional high school to WAY Eau Claire?

Half and full credits can be transferred from a traditional high school setting to WAY Eau Claire. To receive as much credit as possible from traditional high school, we recommend students wait to transfer to WAY Eau Claire until the semester change.

10. Can WAY students ride the bus to and from school?

Yes, in-district WAY Eau Claire students will be supplied with transportation from their homes to the WAY lab if during regularly scheduled bus routes.

11. Can WAY students participate in ECPS extracurricular courses, and traditional high school activities such as school dances and prom?

Yes, WAY Eau Claire students are encouraged to take advantage of as many programs, activities, and opportunities as their schedules allow through Eau Claire Public Schools. WAY Eau Claire students have the option to take extracurricular classes such as band and choir at the high school. Please note that attendance requirements with these courses do also apply to WAY Eau Claire students enrolled.

12. Can WAY students participate in sports?

Unfortunately, due to seat time requirements found in the Michigan High School Athletic Associations' eligibility guidelines, WAY Eau Claire students are unable to join athletic teams.

13. Do WAY Eau Claire students have a separate graduation ceremony?

No, typically the graduation for WAY Eau Claire and Eau Claire High School are combined into one ceremony in June. If a WAY Eau Claire student finishes the WAY program early, they can choose to graduate at the semester and still participate in the graduation ceremony in May or June if they so choose.

14. How do parents monitor their students' progress/grades?

Both students and parents have access to an online platform called Hero which tracks student progress and monitors which standards have been mastered and which still need to be explored prior to graduation. This ensures that everyone is aware of each child's individualized path to success.

15. Do WAY students still have to take state assessments (SAT, WorkKeys, Michigan Merit)?

Yes, certain state assessments are required throughout a student's high school career. WAY Eau Claire students must take the PSAT in-person as a freshman and sophomore and must complete the SAT, WorkKeys, and Michigan merit assessments in-person as a junior. If a student fails to take these assessments, they will be dropped from the program.

16. What are the keys to success at WAY Eau Claire?

Successful students at WAY Eau Claire frequently utilize the WAY labs and are actively engaged in their education. They reach out to their content experts and lab specialists with questions and are willing to revise and resubmit projects to receive maximum credit.

17. How does a student initiate their transfer to WAY Eau Claire?

If a current Eau Claire High School student is interested in transferring to WAY Eau Claire, they should complete the WAY Eau Claire application to initiate an interview to discuss whether the WAY program is a good fit.

Students seeking to join the WAY Eau Claire program should contact our WAY Team Leader at 269-461-3121 or email way@eauclaireps.com.

WAY Eau Claire Application: <https://forms.gle/najskDfb9Vzbvo6W6>

