



Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

Choice Scholarship Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) developed the following resource to provide general information regarding the Choice Scholarship Program for the 2024-2025 school year. This program aligns to legislative requirements under Indiana Code (IC) 20-51 and 511 Indiana Administrative Code (IAC) 3 and 4. More information can be found on IDOE's [Indiana Choice Scholarship Program webpage](#).

General Information

Number	Question	Answer
1	What is the Indiana Choice Scholarship Program?	The Choice Scholarship Program provides state funding to qualifying students that is used to offset tuition costs at participating Choice schools. Students qualify based on household income.
2	Can children be included in the household size if they are not listed on the tax forms for their household?	Yes. The household which serves as the child's primary residence should be used for purposes of applying for a Choice Scholarship. If a child is claimed by the other parent on taxes, documentation of this agreement should be kept in the student's file. More guidance for determining household size is available in the Income Verification Rules .
3	Who is responsible for determining a student's Choice Scholarship eligibility?	IDOE determines eligibility. The parent/guardian of the student must provide documentation establishing eligibility to the participating Choice school before the application is submitted. This documentation must be kept on file at the school.
4	How is the amount of the Choice Scholarship award determined?	<p>The first period Choice Scholarship award amount is the lesser of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Tuition and fees reported on the Choice student's application at the Choice school; or2. 90% of the state-per-student tuition support funding allocation, based on the student's school corporation of residence. <p>The second period Choice Scholarship award amounts are one-half of the period one Choice Scholarship award amounts.</p>
5	Where can I review the Choice Scholarship award amounts?	The award amounts for each school corporation are available on IDOE's Choice Scholarship Program webpage .



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		Because per student tuition support funding is calculated using data that is reported later in the school year, the initial award amount is an estimated amount that can increase, decrease, or remain the same when the final award amounts are calculated. Final award amounts will be posted on IDOE's Choice Scholarship Program webpage upon availability.
6	How will families be notified of the Choice Scholarship awarded to their child?	The school will print the award or denial letter following application submission. The initial award letter is an estimated award amount; actual award amounts are calculated using information that is not available until later in the school year. A letter with the final award amounts will be available to the Choice school when the public tuition support payment amounts are final. Families should retain copies of all forms and letters.
7	Can a parent/guardian of a student apply for a Choice Scholarship at multiple schools?	A student can only have one application for a given period. If a student Choice Scholarship application has been submitted and a parent/guardian wishes to apply at a different school, the parent/guardian must withdraw the application at the original Choice school, then they may submit an application at the preferred school.

Tuition and Fees

Number	Question	Answer
8	Can participating schools charge tuition and fees in addition to what is covered by the Choice Scholarship award?	Yes, the parent/guardian is responsible for any tuition and fees that the participating school charges beyond the Choice Scholarship award amount. A parent/guardian should carefully read any agreement signed at a participating school. A Choice school is not allowed to charge Choice Scholarship students additional fees and costs that are not routinely charged to non-Choice eligible students.
9	Will the Choice school receive additional funding if a student receives special education services?	The parent or guardian of an eligible special education student will designate either the Choice school or the public-school corporation as the special education service provider. If the Choice school is selected as the service provider during the first period, they will be eligible to receive the state special education funding allocated for that student. This funding is to be used to provide special education services for the eligible student. If the Choice school is selected as the service provider during the second application period, the Choice school will



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		<p>not be eligible to receive the state special education funding allocated for that student.</p> <p>For more information, review the Choice Scholarship and Special Education Services FAQ available on the Choice Scholarship Program webpage.</p>
10	What should be included in the tuition and fees policy for the Choice school application?	The tuition and fees policy should include descriptions and amounts for all tuition, fees, and discounts used by the applying Choice school. The policy must be finalized for the 2024 -2025 school year prior to the submission of the school application. The policy and amounts must be applied uniformly among Choice and non-Choice students.
11	Can a Choice school receive a Curricular Material Assistance (TB) payment for a Choice student?	Yes, they can receive TB payments provided that the Choice student qualifies for the Free/Reduced Lunch Program, was selected to receive curricular materials assistance, and the cost of curricular materials is not included in the tuition and fees amount covered by the Choice Scholarship.

Attendance and Payment Process

Number	Question	Answer
12	Can a student receive a Choice Scholarship after the school year has already begun?	To be awarded a Choice Scholarship in period one, a complete application must be submitted for the student on or before September 1, 2024. For a second period Choice Scholarship, a complete application must be submitted for the student on or before Wednesday, January 15.
13	Can a student who has been withdrawn from their Choice school return to the same school later in the school year and continue to receive their scholarship award?	When a student is withdrawn from a Choice school, the parent/guardian forfeits the remaining portion of the student's Choice Scholarship award. If the student enrolls at another school and chooses to return to the original school, they may apply for a second period application at their original school prior to Wednesday, January 15, if they have a qualifying track.
14	Is there anything parents/guardians	Parents/guardians play a very important role in the payment process. The Choice Scholarship award is designated by the parent/guardian to be paid to the participating Choice school on the student's behalf.



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	need to do once school starts?	Once the application is received, the school will download and print a <i>Choice Scholarship Endorsement Form</i> . This form must be signed/dated by the parents/guardians. Without completing this form, the state will not proceed with payments for the student.
15	What happens to the payment if the student is withdrawn before the school year ends? Are there any costs to the family beyond what is covered by the scholarship?	When a student is withdrawn from the Choice school, the parent/guardian forfeits the remaining portion of the student's Choice Scholarship award. Review the participating school's policies concerning student withdrawal and tuition payment, as individual school policies vary and may require that tuition and fee costs be paid for the full month for which the student withdraws, or even for the full semester. In accordance with the school's policy, the family may be responsible for any unpaid tuition resulting from the state's process of prorating payments.
16	How does the payment process work?	<p>To receive a payment, a student must have:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An approved Choice Scholarship, 2. Current enrollment record, 3. Be included in the Choice school's Membership for Vouchers (MV) submission, and 4. Have a <i>Choice Scholarship Endorsement Form</i> signed by the parent/guardian and the school has uploaded this in the STN Application Center by the posted deadline. <p>The <i>Choice Scholarship Endorsement Form</i> instructs the state to provide payment to the school on the student's behalf. Without the completed form, a payment will not be made.</p>
17	How often are state payments made?	At a minimum, Choice Scholarship payments are made at least once per semester.

School Policy

Number	Question	Answer
18	Does my participating school need to remove its religion classes and/or religious affiliation to qualify?	No. Participation in the Choice Scholarship Program does not require schools to remove religion classes or alter their religious affiliation.



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19	How would the Choice Scholarship Program affect my school's admissions policy?	A participating Choice school may not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national origin. The school must have a written admissions policy. This policy is required to be submitted as part of the school's application to participate in the Choice Scholarship Program. Admission standards for Choice Scholarship students may not be different from the standards used for non-Choice eligible students.
20	Will my school be required to do teacher evaluations?	Yes. Pursuant to IC 20-28-11.5-4, eligible Choice schools are required to develop a plan for annual performance evaluations for each certified employee.

Accreditation and Accountability

Number	Question	Answer
21	If my school is not accredited by the State Board of Education (SBOE), what national/regional accrediting entities are recognized by SBOE?	<p>SBOE currently recognizes 14 accrediting entities for purposes of participating in the Choice Scholarship Program. The recognized accrediting agencies are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accrediting Association of Seventh-Day Adventist Schools, Colleges, and Universities (AASDAS) • Accrediting Commission for Schools Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ACSWASC) • American Association of Christian Schools (AACS) • American Montessori Society (AMS) • Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) • Association of Classical and Christian Schools (ACCS) • Christian Schools International (CSI) • Independent Schools Association of the Central States (ISACS) • International Christian Accrediting Association (ICAA) • National Lutheran Schools Accreditation (NLSA) • North Central Association (NCA)/AdvancED/Cognia • Lumen Accreditation from the Catholic University of America



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Assessment

Number	Question	Answer
22	Are schools responsible for the cost of mandated state tests?	No. Indiana provides required statewide assessments to Choice schools with no fees. More information on statewide testing can be found here .
23	What assessments are Choice schools required to administer?	Depending on the grades served, Indiana statewide assessments must be administered as part of a school's participation in the Choice Scholarship Program. All enrolled students who are in tested grades must complete the required assessments. Refer to IDOE's Assessment webpage for information on specific assessments and testing windows.
24	Is the test administrator (TA) required to be a licensed teacher?	Statewide assessment TAs must have an IDOE-issued license (instructional, administrative, or school services). See the Indiana Assessments Policy Manual (Section 4) for details.
25	How are parents/guardians notified of test results?	Schools provide student results to parents in a secure manner to protect student data. Pursuant to IC 20-32-5.1-13, school corporations, charter schools, and accredited non-public schools must promptly provide parents with information to access their child's test results.
26	Are schools responsible for managing the ILEARN rescore request process?	Yes. The school must communicate details of the rescore request process to all parents/guardians of students who participated in ILEARN testing ahead of the defined rescore window. As per IC 20-32-5.1-139(d), parents/guardians must have the opportunity to request resources for eligible, open-ended ILEARN test items. Schools must manage this process locally for any interested parents/guardians.
27	Our school does not have access to technology for all students. Are we required to participate in tests online?	<p>Schools are required to participate in online testing to the extent possible. A school does not need to be 1:1 to participate in online testing. Testing can be administered using a stationary computer lab, mobile computer lab, or Bring Your Own Device (BYOD). A formal request to IDOE's Office of Student Assessment must be made for paper testing approval. In some cases, only partial approval may be granted. Approvals will be determined on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>Schools requesting paper must participate in a Systems Readiness Test to confirm technology capacity issues that would prevent the successful implementation of online tests.</p>



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28	Can students take a state assessment remotely if they are remote learners?	Virtual learners are required to participate in all statewide assessments, which may not be administered remotely. Assessments must be administered in a secure location with a TA present in-person. Schools may administer tests to virtual learners at different times and locations to meet their testing needs. More information can be found in Section 8, Part K of the Indiana Assessments Policy Manual .
29	What is the process for ensuring alternate testers are noted, along with accommodations, in the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE) when Indiana IEP (IIEP) is not utilized?	Student information regarding alternate testing that is not submitted through a certified SIS/DEX vendor for students with a CSEP must be communicated to Alyson Traficante, Accessibility and Accommodations Specialist, at atraficante@doe.in.gov or 317-234-0658.

Scholarship Granting Organization (SGO) Program

Number	Question	Answer
30	What is an SGO Scholarship?	The program provides a 50% state tax credit for contributions made to qualified SGOs that offer scholarships to children to attend non-public schools of their choice. For more information on whether your child qualifies for an SGO award, please contact the Choice school.
31	Can a student who receives a Choice Scholarship also receive a SGO Scholarship?	Yes. A student who meets the requirements for a Choice Scholarship could qualify for an SGO Scholarship as well, provided that the combination of the two amounts does not exceed tuition and fees at the school. Contact the Choice school for more information about this program.
32	What is the minimum SGO award amount?	There is no minimum amount that an SGO can award to an eligible student.
33	Where can I find additional	Information is available on IDOE's School Scholarships webpage . For policies of a specific SGO, the organization can be contacted directly.



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	information about the SGO program?	Contact information and an FAQ are posted on the webpage with a list of schools that participate in the SGO program.
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If further enrollment and application information is needed, questions should be directed to the Choice school in which you are interested in having your student attend. For additional information about the Choice Scholarship Program, contact ChoiceSchool@doe.in.gov or call (317) 233-2200.

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