



Choice Scholarship Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) 2024-2025

The information in this FAQ is accurate according to current legislation. The FAQ will be updated according to any changes in the law instituted in the 2024 legislative session.

Choice Scholarship Program requirements are pursuant to IC 20-51 and 511 IAC 3 and 4.

	Question	Answer
General Questions		
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?	The first period Choice Scholarship award amount is the lesser of: <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 1 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 the Choice Scholarship Program website . 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. This amount can increase, decrease, or remain the same when the final award amounts are calculated. Final Choice Scholarship award amounts will be posted on the Choice Scholarship Program website upon availability.



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6	How will families be notified of the Choice Scholarship awarded to their child?	The school will print the award letter or denial letter at the time the application is submitted. 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 application 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 student's application at the original Choice school and then they may submit an application at the preferred Choice school.
Tuition and Fees		
1	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.
2	Will the Choice school receive additional funding if a student receives special education services?	<p>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, the Choice school 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 not be eligible to receive the state special education funding allocated for that student.</p> <p>For more information on the Choice Scholarship Program and special education, please review the Choice Scholarship and Special Education Services FAQ available on the Choice Scholarship Program website.</p>
3	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.



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4	Can an optional fee be included in the tuition and fees on the Choice school application?	No, the optional fees cannot be included in the reported tuition and fees on the Choice school application. However, the Choice school can charge optional fees that are not included on the Choice student application.
5	Can a Choice school receive a Curricular Material Assistance (TB) payment for a Choice student?	Yes, provided that the Choice student qualifies for the Free/Reduced Lunch Program and has been 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		
1	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 Sunday, September 1. For a second period Choice Scholarship, a complete application must be submitted for the student on or before Wednesday, January 15.
2	Can a student who has been withdrawn from their Choice school return to the same Choice school later in the school year and continue to receive his/her Choice Scholarship award?	At the time a student is withdrawn from the 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, the student may apply for a second period application at their original school prior to Wednesday, January 15, if the student has a qualifying track.
3	Is there anything I (the parent/guardian) need to do once school starts?	The parent/guardian plays a very important role in the payment process. The Choice Scholarship award is designated by the parent/guardian to be paid directly to the participating Choice school on the student's behalf. At the time of the application, the Choice school will download and print a Choice Scholarship Endorsement Form. The Endorsement Form must be signed and dated by the parent/guardian. Without the completed Endorsement Form, the state will not make payment for the student.
4	What happens to the payment if the student is withdrawn before the school year is over? Are there any costs to the family beyond what is covered by the Choice Scholarship?	At the time a student is withdrawn from the Choice school, the parent/guardian forfeits the remaining portion of the student's Choice Scholarship award. Please 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.



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5	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 an Endorsement Form (EF) signed by the parent/guardian and the school has uploaded this in the STN Application Center by the posted deadline. <p>The Endorsement Form instructs the state to provide payment to the school on the student's behalf. Without the completed Endorsement Form, a payment will not be made.</p>
6	What happens to the payment if the student is withdrawn before the school year is over?	<p>When a student is withdrawn from the participating school, the Choice Scholarship amount is prorated down to the number of days that the student was enrolled at the Choice School providing that the student was claimed in the school's Membership for Vouchers (MV) count and a signed Endorsement Form (EF) was uploaded for the student. This process is repeated for the second count day, with the exception that the EF is only required to be submitted for period two students.</p> <p>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.</p>
7	How often will state payments be made?	At a minimum, Choice Scholarship payments will be made at least once per semester.
School Policies		
1	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.
2	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.



Indiana Department of Education

	Question	Answer
3	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/Accountability		
1	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 nine 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
Assessment		
1	Will my school be responsible for the cost of state mandated tests?	No. Indiana provides state-mandated assessments to Choice schools with no fees.
2	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 Office of Student Assessment website for information on specific assessments and 2024-2025 testing windows.
3	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; this document is posted and can be found on the website .



	Question	Answer
4	How will parents/guardians be notified of test results?	The school will provide student results to parents in a secure manner to protect student data. As per 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.
5	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.
6	Our school does not have access to technology for all our 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 the 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>
7	Can students take a state assessment remotely if they are remote learners?	State assessments may not be administered remotely to students under any circumstances. Additional guidance and support may be viewed through the 2024-2025 Corporation Test Coordinator (CTC) and All Staff Test Security & Integrity Training, which is required annually by CTCs and school staff prior to administering assessments.
8	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.



	Question	Answer
Scholarship Granting Organization Program		
1	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.
2	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. Please contact the Choice school for more information about this program.
3	What is the minimum SGO award amount?	There is no minimum amount that an SGO can award to an eligible student.
4	Where can I find additional information about the SGO Program?	Information is available on the School Scholarships webpage. For policies of a specific SGO, the SGO can be contacted directly. Contact information and an FAQ document are posted on the webpage with a list of schools that participate in the SGO Program, in the section for General Information.

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.