



EdChoice Scholarship Program
25 S. Front Street, Mail Stop 705
Columbus, Ohio 43215

(877) OHIO EDU [toll free]
EdChoice@ode.state.oh.us

Sue Cosmo
Chief Program Officer

Lisa Huckins
EdChoice Program Consultant

Stacy Cherry
EdChoice Program Consultant

Erin Andrews
Management Analyst

Bev Russell
Management Analyst

Visit the EdChoice Web site at
<http://EdChoice.ohio.gov>
to find:

- designated public school buildings
- participating private schools
- EdChoice law and program rules
- answers to frequently asked questions

EdChoice Dates to Remember

February 1, 2008
Student application process for the 2008-2009 school year begins.

April 18, 2008
Student application and renewal process ends.

June 30, 2008
ODE and schools complete student application verifications.

July 2008
Scholarships awarded by lottery if necessary. Students and schools notified of scholarship awards.

August/September 2008
School year begins. EdChoice Scholarship students begin attending participating private schools.

OHIO EDCHOICE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FACT SHEET

The State of Ohio can provide up to 14,000 eligible students with scholarships to attend the participating private school of their choice. Students from schools that have been in Academic Watch or Academic Emergency – the lowest categories on the state's school rating system – for two of the last three school years are eligible to apply.

What is Ohio's Educational Choice Scholarship Pilot Program?

The Ohio EdChoice Program provides a limited number of state-funded scholarships to students who attend low-performing public school buildings. The scholarships may be used to attend private schools that meet requirements for program participation.

When will EdChoice applications be accepted?

If a student is eligible for the EdChoice Scholarship program, the first step is to apply for admission at a participating private school. Parents of eligible students can and should start that process now. Students must first be accepted at a participating private school for next school year and then apply for an EdChoice Scholarship.

On February 1, 2008, ODE will once again open the EdChoice Scholarship Application through its secure, Web-based system. Staff members of the participating private schools have access to the system and will help students apply for the scholarships by entering information into the online system. All scholarship applications must be submitted by April 18, 2008.

Who is eligible to apply for EdChoice?

You can find a list of EdChoice-designated public school buildings on the EdChoice Web site, <http://EdChoice.ohio.gov>.

The following students are eligible to apply for an EdChoice scholarship:

- Students currently enrolled in and attending the listed public school buildings;
- Students currently enrolled in a public community school (charter school) who would otherwise be assigned by their public school district to one of these listed buildings;
- Students currently enrolled in a regular public school or community school who would be assigned to attend one of the listed buildings for the upcoming school year. This refers to students moving from elementary school to middle/junior high school or from middle/ junior high school to high school; and
- Incoming students who are eligible to attend kindergarten in the fall of 2008 and who would be assigned by their public school district to one of these listed buildings.

Students currently attending private school and home-schooled students are not eligible.

What is the value of the scholarship?

The EdChoice Scholarship amount is currently \$4,375 for elementary school students (kindergarten through Grade 8) and \$5,150 for high school students (Grades 9 through 12) or the private school's actual tuition amount, whichever is lower. The scholarship amount will increase slightly each school year.

Will parents/guardians have to pay any amount of money?

Parents and guardians still may have to pay registration fees, material fees and other similar types of fees. The scholarship amount covers only school tuition.

If the private school's tuition is higher than the EdChoice Scholarship amount and if the student's family income is above 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines, the family may have to pay the difference or participate in volunteer service activities in lieu of cash payment.

If a student receives an EdChoice Scholarship, how long can he or she continue to attend a private school?

There will be a scholarship renewal process each year. Once a student receives an EdChoice Scholarship, he or she can renew it in future years through 12th grade, as long as the student:

- Does not move to another public school district, unless the student would be assigned to an EdChoice-designated public school in the student's new district;
- Takes all required state achievement tests; and
- Has good school attendance. Students cannot have more than 20 unexcused absences in a school year.

Are current private school or home-schooled students eligible to apply?

Students who are currently enrolled in private, nonpublic schools or who are homeschooled are not eligible for Ohio EdChoice Scholarships.

The EdChoice law limits scholarships to students currently attending a public school in Academic Watch or Academic Emergency for two of the last three school years, to students enrolled in publicly funded community ("charter") schools who would otherwise be assigned to those schools, to public school students who will be assigned to those schools for the next school year, and to incoming kindergarteners who would be assigned to those schools.

Should parents and students apply for an EdChoice Scholarship first, or apply for admission to a private school first?

Parents & students should first apply for admission at a participating private school. All students who apply for an EdChoice Scholarship must have been accepted for enrollment at a participating private school. To ensure that students have been accepted for admission by a participating school, the private school staff will enter student information into the secure Web-based EdChoice application system.

Will every child who applies to participate be accepted?

Under current law, there is a cap of 14,000 EdChoice Scholarships to be awarded statewide.

There are no income requirements for EdChoice Scholarship program eligibility. However, if ODE receives more than 14,000 applications, students who are renewing their scholarships receive first priority in a lottery, followed by students who are at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

The Cleveland Scholarship and Tutoring Program still is available for residents of the Cleveland Municipal School District. For more information about the Cleveland program, please visit <http://www.ode.state.oh.us> and search for keyword "CSTP."