

Ohio Opportunity Scholarship

Senate Bill 85 & House Bill 200



All parents should have access to the best educational fit for their children.

Senate Bill 85, sponsored by Senator Huffman, creates the *Ohio Opportunity Scholarship*, which combines the Cleveland, EdChoice and Income-Based scholarship programs into one statewide scholarship program with eligibility based on income that is easier for parents to access. House Bill 200, sponsored by Representative Koehler, is the companion bill in the House.

Families with an income at or below 400% of federal poverty level would be eligible to apply for a scholarship to be used toward tuition and fees at the participating private school of their choice. See the chart for the income guidelines. Scholarships are worth up to \$5,000 for K-8 and up to \$7,500 for high school, depending on the family's income. Those students at or below 200% would receive the full scholarship amount, and students from families with an income between 200-400% would receive a partial scholarship.

Federal Poverty Level (FPL)		
Household Size	200%	400%
1	\$24,120	\$48,240
2	\$32,480	\$64,960
3	\$40,840	\$81,680
4	\$49,200	\$98,400
5	\$57,560	\$115,120
6	\$65,920	\$131,840
7	\$74,280	\$148,560
8	\$82,640	\$165,280

What you can do to help pass Senate Bill 85 & House Bill 200:

- **Call & Email** your legislators to tell them why you support the Opportunity Scholarship.
- **Request a Meeting** with your state senator and representative to share your support of SB 85 & HB 200. Invite them to visit your school.
- **Write** a letter to the editor of your local newspaper indicating your support of SB 85 & HB 200. Include your own story of how scholarships help you or families in your community.
- **Testify** at the Ohio Statehouse in Education Committee and at your local school board meeting when they are considering a resolution on SB 85 & HB 200. Speak up about what SB 85 & HB 200 means to you and your school.

Look up your legislators here: <http://www.scoho.org/advocates/legislation/contact-your-legislator/>

Easy Talking Points - Why I support Senate Bill 85 & House Bill 200:

- Parents should be able to choose the school that is the best fit for their child. A family's address or income should not stop them from making the best educational choice for their child.
- Working families (farmers, nurses, teachers, police, etc.) earning up to 400% of federal poverty are already stretched. They don't need the added stress of not being able to afford private options for their child if their current school isn't a good fit.
- Consolidation of the three current state scholarship programs makes it easier for parents to navigate and for the state to administer.
- State education dollars should follow the child to where parents feel is the right fit. For example, families could choose to live anywhere and not be limited to a certain school district.
- Existing scholarship students will not lose their scholarships; instead their siblings will be eligible. This scholarship would remove the anxiety and uncertainty that comes from the current program.
- I don't qualify for this program, but I believe we should all be advocates for all students in Ohio.

Contact School Choice Ohio to learn more.
scoho.org | 614-223-1555 | info@scoho.org

Senate Bill 85 / House Bill 200

Ohio Opportunity Scholarship

A new consolidated statewide scholarship with eligibility based upon income



Frequently Asked Questions

Why Income?

- Income remains the biggest barrier for students to access schools—public or private—that meet their educational needs
- The most successful choice programs in the nation base eligibility on family income rather than public school performance
- “Failing schools” language has a negative impact on communities

Who is eligible?

- Students not currently enrolled in a private school, with family income below 400% of poverty
- Current recipients of the EdChoice, Income-Based and Cleveland scholarships, along with their family members (income requirements do not apply to grandfathered students or their siblings)

How much are the scholarships?

- \$5,000 for K-8 and \$7,500 for high school
- Students with family income below 200% of poverty and grandfathered students (and their siblings) receive the full scholarship amount
- As income increases, the scholarship amount decreases; students with family income at 400% of poverty (the limit) receive half the scholarship amount

How will the new scholarship impact parents?

- More families will be eligible
- Eligibility will be easier to determine without basing it upon changing school grades
- Parents will be empowered as they apply directly to the Ohio Department of Education to establish eligibility and then find a school that works for their child
- Likely to have additional private school choices as the program allows schools to charge students more if tuition exceeds the voucher amount
- An education savings account feature is included allowing parents to save unused scholarship funds for future Ohio educational expenses

How will the scholarships be funded?

- Funding will not be a specific line item but distributed directly from the foundation amount in accordance with permanent language in the revised code
- School districts will not report scholarship recipients in their student counts and no deduct will occur
- No cap on the number of scholarships that can be awarded

Is there accountability?

- All participating private schools must be chartered by the state of Ohio
- Scholarship recipients take the state assessment
- Assessment results distributed based upon both proficiency and value-added

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schoio.org | 614-223-1555 | info@schoio.org