



Overview of the Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit Program

Establishment:

The Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit Program provides scholarships to eligible students who wish to attend a participating public or nonpublic school of their choice.

Eligibility:

The Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit Program allows businesses to contribute to an opportunity scholarship organization that provides funding to eligible students who reside within the attendance boundaries of certain public schools in Pennsylvania. Students (including those entering kindergarten) who reside within these attendance boundaries as of the first day of classes may apply for an opportunity scholarship.

Due to Ferndale Area Elementary School's PSSA scores on the combined Mathematics and English Language Arts results from the 2024–2025 PSSA exam, Ferndale families qualify for the Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit Program for the 2026–2027 school year.

It is important to note that this eligibility applies only to school districts. Charter schools, cyber charter schools, and area career and technical centers (CTCs) are not included under state law (24 P.S. § 20-2002-B). In addition, inclusion on this list does not reflect a federal accountability designation and does not indicate identification for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI), Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI), or Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI).

Eligible students are defined as school-age children living within the attendance boundary of a qualifying public school as of the first day of classes. Income eligibility and information on additional allowances for individuals with disabilities can be found on the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) website at:

[Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit Program \(OSTC\) - PA Department of Community & Economic Development](#)

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) annually publishes a list of schools used to determine eligibility for this program.

Continuation of Scholarship:

A scholarship organization may award a scholarship to an applicant who resides within the attendance boundary of a qualifying school to attend a participating public school or a participating nonpublic school selected by the parent. If an applicant who received an opportunity scholarship in the prior year continues to meet eligibility requirements, the student may continue receiving the scholarship. The scholarship may be awarded for each year of enrollment in a participating public

or nonpublic school for up to the lesser of five years or until completion of grade 12, provided the applicant remains eligible.

Funding:

Opportunity scholarships are funded through contributions made by businesses to scholarship organizations in exchange for a tax credit. The amount of scholarships awarded cannot exceed the amount of business contributions received. Even if a student is eligible, scholarship awards depend on available funding.

Requirements:

Scholarships may be used only for tuition costs and school-related fees at a participating nonpublic school or nonresident public-school district. Scholarships may not be used for enrollment in a home education program. The combined amount of scholarship and additional financial aid may not exceed the tuition and school-related fees charged by the participating school. Scholarship funds received by a parent are not considered taxable income. Participating schools may not charge higher tuition rates than their standard rates for non-participating students.

Transportation:

A resident school district that provides transportation to its own students must provide transportation for a resident student attending a participating nonpublic school located within 10 miles of the district's boundaries. A resident school district may also provide transportation for a student attending a nonresident public school located within 10 miles of the district's boundaries.

How to Apply for an Opportunity Scholarship:

Opportunity scholarships are awarded by approved scholarship organizations, not DCED or PDE. A list of approved opportunity scholarship organizations is available on the DCED website. This resource provides instructions on how to contact participating organizations. Parents should work directly with these organizations to complete the application process.

[Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit Program \(OSTC\) - PA Department of Community & Economic Development](#)

Awarding of Scholarships:

In awarding scholarships, organizations must give preference to eligible applicants who:

- Received a scholarship for the prior school year;
- Meet established income limits; or
- Meet income limits and reside in certain school districts identified under program guidelines.

Parental Responsibilities:

Parents are responsible for contacting and enrolling their students in a participating public or nonpublic school.