



Invest in Kids Tax Credit Scholarship Program Key Messages

- The “Invest in Kids Act” is a new initiative that provides a new way to fund scholarships for eligible low income students to attend private K-12 schools in Illinois.
- Scholarships offered through this program have the potential to cover up to 100 percent of tuition and eligible fees for next school year.
- This program provides an exciting opportunity for more children to receive a quality Catholic education.

- We are still learning more about the rules of the program, the application process and timing, and will share details as they are finalized.

- Contact us at InvestInKids@archchicago.org or 312.534.5321 for more information. You can also visit our website, <https://schools.archchicago.org//tax-credit-scholarships>

Application Process and Scholarship Details

When can students apply for a tax credit scholarship?

Students can apply for scholarships beginning January 2, 2018. There has been no deadline established for application, but families should apply as early as possible since scholarships will be awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis.

How do students/families apply for tax credit scholarships?

Students/families must submit an application for scholarship directly to an SGO. There will be an application process established by each SGO after it receives Department of Revenue approval and is operational. There will likely be several SGOs operating in the state. We will share more information and details as soon as they are available.

How will schools assist students/families with the application process?

Once the Department of Revenue publishes a list of approved SGOs, school staff will help connect students/families with the SGOs and assist them with the application process. The Archdiocese will also provide schools, students and families with support and assistance.

Will the SGOs' application materials be available in Spanish?

We anticipate that applications will be available in Spanish, however the entire process is still being finalized. We will share more information and details as soon as they are available.

Will paper applications be available?

We believe that the application process is likely to be conducted online only, but the application process is still being finalized. If the online requirement poses a problem for some families, support will likely be provided through local schools. Again, we will share more information and details as soon as they are available.

What type of expenses are covered through tax credit scholarships?

Tuition and eligible fees for any non-public school in Illinois are covered through tax credit scholarships.

How much money can students receive through a tax credit scholarship?

Scholarship amounts will vary based on the student's household income and be limited to the lower of actual tuition and fees for the student's school, or the statewide average expense per student among public schools (currently \$12,280). Students from households that are lower than 185 percent of the federal poverty level receive 100 percent of tuition and eligible fees.

Students from households that are 185 percent to 250 percent of the federal poverty level will receive 75 percent of tuition and eligible fees through the scholarships.

Students from households that are 250 percent to 300 percent of the federal poverty level will receive 50 percent of tuition and eligible fees through the scholarships.

When will students/families be notified if they have been granted a scholarship?

SGOs will be responsible for notifying families. The law presently requires SGOs to process applications received before April 1 within ten business days of receipt. The law does not impose an application processing deadline for applications received after April 1. However, we would anticipate that the processing timelines will be similar for all applications.

How is a scholarship payment made?

The SGOs will manage scholarship payments. The law presently requires SGOs to distribute scholarship payments directly to the qualified school where the student is enrolled. We will share more information on this process as soon as it is available.

Do students need to be accepted to a school before they can apply for a scholarship?

This is still being determined, but we expect that the process will require earlier application to schools than has been the practice in the past. We will share more information as soon as it is available.

What if a student is already receiving a scholarship from a school or another scholarship program, should the student be encouraged to apply for a tax credit scholarship?

Yes. We encourage any student/family who thinks they may be eligible for tax credit scholarship to apply.

Are these scholarships only for Catholic schools?

No. The scholarships can be used to cover the tuition and eligible fees for any non-public school in Illinois.

If a student does not receive a tax credit scholarship, what should the family do?

The family should work with their local school to determine what other scholarships that may be available to them.

Donations

How much of a tax credit do individuals and/or corporations receive?

Individuals and corporations that donate to SGOs may receive a credit off their Illinois state taxes equal to 75 percent of the donation.

How much money can be donated to an SGO for tax credit scholarships?

Tax credits are capped at \$1 million per taxpayer per year. Total tax credits are capped at \$75 million per year statewide, which equates to \$100 million in donations and scholarships.

Can donations be directed to a certain school or individual?

Individuals may direct donations to a particular school or subset of schools, but NOT to an individual student or group of students. Corporate donors cannot restrict their donations at all.

How do individuals direct their donations to a certain school or subset of schools?

The process for reserving tax credits and designating a particular school or subset of schools is still being finalized by the Illinois Department of Revenue and the SGOs. Further information will be made available when these processes have been published.

What is the process for making a donation?

Beginning January 2, 2018, donors can indicate the amount they want to donate and reserve the corresponding tax credits through the Illinois Department of Revenue's website. The Department of Revenue will grant tax credits on a first come first served basis. Donating individuals and corporations then have 60 days from the date they receive the credit authorization certificate to donate that indicated amount to the SGO of their choice.

After donating, the individual or corporation receives a receipt from the SGO, indicating the donation was made, which then generates the corresponding tax credit. If a donor fails to make all or a portion of a donation payment to the SGO by the deadline, they shall not be entitled to a certificate of receipt for that portion of the donation not made.

Do I need to do anything to receive my tax credit?

All tax credit scholarship donors need to have an account on mytax.illinois.gov before applying for a tax credit. This process can take up to 10 days and involves a mailed pin number. We encourage anyone considering making a donation to sign up at mytax.illinois.gov as soon as possible.

Who can I contact if I am interested in making a donation or learning more about donations?

For more information on making a donation or if you have any questions regarding the donation process, please contact Jeremy Monty at jmonty@archchicago.org.

Scholarship Granting Organizations

Is the Archdiocese of Chicago an SGO?

No. The Archdiocese of Chicago is not an SGO. The Archdiocese is not able to be an SGO as we operate schools that participate in the tax credit scholarship program.

What are the SGOs in Illinois? Are there any in place?

The SGOs in Illinois are still being established. There will likely be several SGOs, all of which may operate independently. We will share more information on the SGOs in Illinois in the coming weeks.

How many SGOs are there in Illinois?

The SGOs in Illinois are still being established. There will likely be several SGOs, all of which may operate independently. We will share more information on the SGOs in Illinois in the coming weeks.