



DEMOTTE
CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS



INDIANA CHOICE SCHOLARSHIP ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Two components determine eligibility for an Indiana Choice Scholarship:

1. Student eligibility criteria
2. Household income limits

The student eligibility criteria are as follows:

1. Have legal settlement in Indiana;
2. Be between the ages of 5 and 22 no later than August 1 of the school year; and
3. Be accepted for enrollment into a participating Choice Scholarship school.

After satisfying the requirements listed above, there are **seven** different pathways that enable a student to be eligible to participate in the Choice Scholarship Program. The seven pathways, labeled 1 through 7, are outlined below. A student must satisfy **ONLY ONE** of the seven pathways to be eligible.

1. Continuing Choice Scholarship Student Pathway

- The student received a Choice Scholarship in the school year that immediately precedes the school year for which the student is applying for a Choice Scholarship, and
- The student is required to have remained enrolled at the Choice School for the entirety of the immediately preceding school year, and
- The student is a member of a household with an annual income equal to or below 200% of the amount to qualify for the federal free or reduced lunch program.

2. Previous Choice Scholarship Student Pathway

EITHER

- The student received a Choice Scholarship in a previous school year that does not immediately precede the school year for which the student is applying for a Choice Scholarship;

OR

- The student received a Choice Scholarship in the immediately preceding school year but the student exited the Choice School prior the end of the school year; AND
- The student is a member of a household with an annual income equal to or below 150% of the amount to qualify for the federal free or reduced lunch program.

3. Previous Scholarship Granting Organization (SGO) Award Pathway
 - The student received an SGO Scholarship in a previous school year, including a school year that does not immediately precede school year for which the student is applying for a Choice Scholarship.
 - The seven approved Scholarship Granting Organizations (SGOs) are: Community Foundation of Elkhart County; Institute for Education, Inc. (Formerly Educational Choice Charitable Trust); School Scholarship Granting Organization of Northeast Indiana; Sagamore Institute Scholarships for Education Choice; The Lutheran Scholarship Granting Organization of Indiana; Tuition Assistance Fund of Southwestern Indiana (Closed February 2013).
 - The student is a member of a household with an income equal to or below 150% of the amount to qualify for the federal free or reduced lunch program.
4. Special Education Pathway
 - The student has a disability that requires special education and related services;
 - An Individualized Education Program (IEP) pursuant to IC 20-35 or a Service Plan pursuant to 511 IAC 7-34 has been developed for the student; and,
 - The student is a member of a household with an annual income equal to or below 200% of the amount to qualify for the federal free or reduced lunch program.
5. The "F" Public School Pathway
 - The student would be required to attend a specific public school based on his/her residence that has been assigned an "F" grade. The list of F schools for Choice Scholarship eligibility is posted prior to the beginning of the school year. Note: This pathway does not require prior attendance at the school.
 - The student is a member of a household with an annual income equal to or below 150% of the amount to qualify for the federal free or reduced lunch program.
6. Two Semesters in Public School Pathway
 - The student was enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12 in a public school, including a charter school, in Indiana for at least two semesters immediately preceding the first semester for which the individual receives a Choice Scholarship, and
 - The student is a member of a household with an annual income equal to or below 150% of the amount to qualify for the federal free or reduced lunch program.
7. Sibling Pathway
 - The sibling of the newly applying student received either a Choice Scholarship or an SGO scholarship in a preceding school year, including a school year that does

not immediately precede the school year for which the student is applying for a Choice Scholarship, and

- The student is a member of a household with an annual income equal to or below 150% of the amount to qualify for the federal free or reduced lunch program.

We know navigating this program might seem daunting, but we're here to help! Our Finance Manager can help answer any questions you might have. Here are a few other general FAQ's that can help too.

Can a kindergarten student be eligible for a Choice Scholarship?

Yes, a parent/guardian of a kindergarten student may apply for a Choice Scholarship provided that the child satisfies the eligibility and household income criteria.

If a child attends a public school for kindergarten, can this count toward the two semesters in public school requirement?

Yes, kindergarten attendance may satisfy the Two Semesters in Public School Pathway requirement.

If a child attends the public school in the spring and fall semesters, can they use the Two Semesters Public School Pathway?

Yes. The requirements for the Two Semesters Public School Pathway require that the student was attending a public school for the 2 semesters immediately preceding the semester in which the child is applying for the Choice Scholarship. The student qualifies to apply in the fall if they attended the public school in the fall and spring of the previous year. The student qualifies to apply in the spring if he/she attended the public school in the spring and fall semesters immediately preceding the spring application.

Which A through F grades will be used to determine the F schools for eligibility purposes for the 2017-2018 Choice Scholarship Program?

The A through F grades issued in December of 2016 for school performance in the 2015-2016 school year will be used to determine the F schools for eligibility purposes for the 2017-2018 Choice Scholarship Program.

What does the term "sibling" mean for purposes of the Choice Scholarship Program?

For purposes of the Choice Scholarship Program, the term "sibling" means one of two or more individuals having one or both parents, legal guardians, or legal custodians in common. The term does not require a consanguineous (blood) relationship between the individuals.

When did the sibling of a student attempting to qualify under the sibling pathway have to receive a Choice Scholarship or SGO award for the sibling to be eligible?

To be eligible under the sibling pathway, the student's siblings had to receive a Choice Scholarship or SGO Award in any previous year.

If a student is awarded a Choice Scholarship in the fall, can hi/her sibling apply for the spring semester using the Sibling Pathway?

No. The Sibling Pathway requires that the sibling received a Choice Scholarship in a previous school year. An award in the current school year does not satisfy the requirement.

If a student receives an SGO in the first semester, does the student qualify for the spring semester Choice Scholarship using the Previous SGO Pathway?

No. The Previous SGO Pathway requires that the student received an SGO in a previous school year. An SGO award in the current school year does not satisfy the requirement.

What are the household income limits?

The income guidelines for the 2017-2018 school year are posted on the Choice Scholarship Program website at www.doe.in.gov/choice.

Is the household income of the foster parent included when determining whether the foster child is eligible to receive a Choice Scholarship?

No. Because foster children are directly certified for the free and reduced school lunch program, they satisfy the income eligibility requirements to qualify for a Choice Scholarship. Official documentation of the student's current foster status must be kept in his/her file. Foster children must satisfy the criteria for student eligibility and meet the requirements of one of the pathways to qualify for a Choice Scholarship.

If your household includes biological or adopted children in addition to foster children, payments received for serving as a foster parent will not be included in the household income calculation for purposes of determining eligibility for the biological or adopted children.

What counts as income and who should be included in the household size?

For questions about determining income and household size, please view the income verification document posted on the Choice Scholarship Program website at www.doe.in.gov/choice.