

INNOVATIVE SCHOOL CHOICE LEGISLATION PROPOSED IN HOUSE BILL 136



Frequently Asked Questions

House Bill 136: *A state proposal to create a Special Education Scholarship and to combine the EdChoice Scholarship and Cleveland Scholarship into a much more expansive Parental Choice and Taxpayer Savings Scholarship (PACT).*

WHAT ARE THESE SCHOLARSHIPS THAT ARE BEING PROPOSED AND WHO WOULD BE ELIGIBLE?

Parental Choice and Taxpayer Savings (PACT) Scholarship:

Any K-12 student who comes from a middle- or lower-income family, regardless of the area of the state they live in – rural, urban, or suburban would be eligible.

Families of 4 making up to \$100,000/year would be eligible for a scholarship worth \$2,313. Families of 4 making up to \$61,000/year would be eligible for a scholarship worth \$4,626, the maximum amount. Families in-between would be awarded scholarships on a sliding scale:

PACT Family income guidelines and sample:	Max scholarship/ % state share
At or below 150% of RPL (\$61,189 for a family of 4)	\$4,626 (80%)
151% - 175% of RPL (\$71,387 for a family of 4)	\$4,048 (70%)
176% - 200% of RPL (\$81,585 for a family of 4)	\$3,470 (60%)
201% - 225% of RPL (\$91,783 for a family of 4)	\$2,892 (50%)
226% - 250% of RPL (\$101,981 for a family of 4)	\$2,313 (40%)

RPL stands for Reduced Price Lunch income guidelines

Special Education Scholarship:

Any K-12 student with special needs who has an Individual Education Program, regardless of income, would be eligible. This would allow any student with an IEP to access their preferred public and private school options through a scholarship, just like the one that is already available to students in Ohio with autism.

Special education category	Maximum scholarship
1 (Speech)	\$5,953
2 (Learning Disability)	\$6,319
3 (Hearing or vision impaired)	\$12,741
4 (Major health impairments)	\$15,470
5 (Multi-handicapped)	\$18,901
6 (Autism, traumatic brain injury, hearing and vision impaired)	\$26,336

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If my school community supports this legislation, what can we do to help it pass?

Parents, students, board members, teacher, principals, alumni, and supporters are all needed to speak out for this legislation. Please contact info@scohio.org to find out how to become an ambassador.

What about students at my school who are already paying tuition? Would they be able to receive any help?

Yes. The bill includes a phase-in of eligibility for families who already attend private schools and pay their own tuition. During the second year of the program, private school students in grades K-4 who do not yet receive a voucher would be eligible. In the 3rd and 4th years of the program, students in K-8 and K-12, respectively, would become eligible.

What would the sign-up process be for students who are interested in our school?

The scholarship application process is not outlined in the bill so we can only share what the process is for current voucher programs. Currently, families apply to private schools through their regular admission process and then the private school applies for their voucher if they are accepted.

Are we required to accept all the voucher students who apply?

No, there is nothing proposed in this bill that would force a private school to alter its regular admission policies.

What if our tuition is higher than a family's voucher amount?

You have a range of options: you can charge the family for the tuition overage, you can provide volunteer options to work off the overage, or you can waive the tuition overage. The proposal leaves all options on the table.

Do we have to award our internal scholarships to voucher recipients?

No, you just have to charge the same tuition rate you charge to everyone else.

Can our school choose to participate in one of the new scholarships but not the other?

Yes, it's critical that each school participate only in those programs where they feel they can meet student needs.

What are some of the requirements to participate in the new programs?

For PACT: Schools must agree to administer the state achievement test to state voucher recipients.

For Special Education Scholarship: Schools must have a licensed special educator on staff (not contracted through the public schools). Schools do NOT have to accept students with all disabilities; they may admit those that they are able to serve effectively.

Will students who have an EdChoice or Cleveland voucher lose theirs?

No, depending on their income, their voucher amount may increase or decrease, but no current recipients will lose their vouchers.