



Frequently Asked Questions - Parents:

1. How do I apply for this scholarship?

The application process will go through Empower Illinois. Please check their website for the most up-to-date information. www.empowerillinois.org

2. Will I be able to pick any school that I want?

You may choose any private or non-public school that is accredited by the State of Illinois. All of the Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Rockford are accredited schools.

3. What do I do first if I decide to apply for a scholarship?

You should apply to and be accepted by the school of your choice. So the first step would be to contact the school and get information on the application and registration process.

4. Who will be responsible for determining who gets the scholarship money?

The scholarship applications and the selection of recipients will all go through a scholarship granting organization (SGO). Our partner SGO is Empower Illinois. Since the scholarship is income based, the determination of eligibility will be on this information only.

5. When is the earliest date I can apply for a scholarship?

Scholarship applications will start on January 24th through Empower Illinois. www.empowerillinois.org.

6. Do I have to know in January that I want to apply for a scholarship? I'm not sure I will be ready by then to make a decision.

No. Scholarship applications will continue to be accepted until the scholarship money available is given out. However, the sooner a decision is made, the more likely you will be able to receive any funds that may be available.

7. How much money in scholarships will be available?

Since the scholarships are based on the amount of donations made to the scholarship granting organization, it is hard to know how much money will be available to families. However, the law provides for a 75% tax credit on donations until the State reaches the maximum of \$75 million in tax credits. If all of the available tax credits are issued, it would mean \$100 million in scholarships for lower income families.

8. Will the money be restricted based on anything, such as geography?

Yes. The law states that the money must be distributed throughout the entire state in proportion with non-public school enrollment. Meaning that areas that have more private (non-public) schools should get a bigger percentage of the funding than areas with a few private (non-public) schools.

Our Diocese is mostly in Region 2. Region 2 will retain 23.09% of the tax credits, which results in \$23,090,000 in scholarships if donors fully fund the program. The Sterling Area is in Region 3, which has been allocated 9.97% or a total of \$9,970,000 if fully funded.

9. What will I have to provide in order to be considered for a scholarship?

This information is listed on the Empower Illinois website. If you have questions on what information to provide based on your specific situation, please contact Empower Illinois directly.