



St. Barnabas Catholic School EdChoice Scholarship Frequently Asked Questions

What is an EdChoice Scholarship?

The EdChoice Program is a state-funded scholarship granted to every K-12 student in the state of Ohio. There are two different scholarship types:

1. EdChoice “Traditional” – This scholarship is awarded to families who live in a qualifying school district. This is not new to the state of Ohio and has been available since 2005.
2. EdChoice “Expansion” – Any Family that does not live in a qualifying school district is now eligible for an EdChoice Expansion Scholarship. This was signed on July 4, 2023 by Governor Mike DeWine and makes the “EdChoice Expansion” Scholarship universally available to every Ohio student. The EdChoice Expansion Scholarship is now available to St. Barnabas School families as we are not in a school district that qualifies for the Traditional EdChoice.

What is the maximum scholarship award amount?

The EdChoice Scholarship amount is based on a family’s Adjusted Gross Income and the maximum scholarship for students in grades K-8 is currently **\$6,165** and \$8,407 for grades 9-12. The amount each student receives varies based on household income. Note – ALL families who apply are guaranteed to receive some level of award.

Who is eligible for the EdChoice Expanded Scholarship Program?

Everyone. The EdChoice Expansion Scholarship program eligibility has expanded. If a family’s household income is at or below 450% of the [Federal Poverty Level](#) (see chart on our website), they will be awarded the maximum scholarship amount and full tuition will be covered. If a family’s household income is at or above 451% of the Federal Poverty Level, the scholarship award will be prorated accordingly. Income levels have been expanded to include all households, removing the previous sibling eligibility criteria.

When can a family apply?

The EdChoice Scholarship application window is open now for the 2023-2024 school year through October 14, 2023. Anyone can apply for the EdChoice Expansion Scholarship by taking the following steps:

1. Submit an Income Verification Form to the State of Ohio (not St. Barnabas). Instructions can be found [here](#).
2. Bring the following documents to St. Barnabas during your assigned time:
 - a. Completed [EdChoice Request Form](#)
 - b. A hard copy of each child’s birth certificate. The child’s name on the EdChoice application must match his/her name exactly as it appears on the birth certificate
 - c. [Proof of current residential address](#)



St. Barnabas will be accepting the above referenced documents at the main school office on the following days and times:

- August 7 and 8 from 6:00-7:30 PM (please make every effort to come at your assigned time.) Student Last Name:
 - A-J 6:00-6:30 PM
 - K-R 6:30-7:00 PM
 - S-Z 7:00-7:30 PM
- August 14 and 15 from 8:30-11:00 AM (for those who could not make the above dates.). We will have a notary onsite during these times. If these days/times do not work for you, please contact finance@barnbasohio.org to schedule an appointment.

What if a family applies after October 14, 2023?

Applications submitted after October 14 will be awarded at a prorated amount based on how much of the school year remains after the date of the student's enrollment in private school.

Is an EdChoice Scholarship available for two years at St. Barnabas because the budget was only approved for two years?

It is correct that the Ohio budget is passed on a two year term limit. However, the traditional EdChoice Scholarship and EdChoice Expansion Scholarship have been around for more than since 2005. It is always possible that next budget proposal is different, which is why it is important for Catholic, private and homeschooled students to apply for these scholarships, sending a message that the funding is necessary and that Ohioans support the continued funding of school choice scholarships.

How much does it cost for a family to apply?

There is no fee to apply for an EdChoice Scholarship.

Who determines what each family is awarded through the EdChoice Program?

The State of Ohio will make the award determinations based on Adjusted Gross Income. Once St. Barnabas School has confirmation from the state of Ohio, the school will update your FACTS account accordingly and the system will send you an email notification of any changes.

Does the State of Ohio now have control over our school policies?

No, we continue to operate independently of state run education requirements as a Catholic School within the Cleveland Diocese. The monies we receive from the state are tax dollars following your child.

Have our admissions requirements and standards changed now that we accept the EdChoice Scholarship?

No. Currently, we have a comprehensive admissions and screening policy in place which allows us to be selective in admitting new students to ensure they meet our rigorous academic and behavioral standards. As part of our current admissions process, families are required to have a



tour and interview with Mrs. Faetanini as well as complete, grade-specific testing. Prospective students also take part in a shadow day where they interact with our staff and students.

Will class sizes become larger because we accept more students?

We are only accepting students if we have available seats in their grade level. Our current plan is to keep each classroom under 25 students but closer to 22 students. The state has opened the door to Catholic education for families who previously couldn't afford private school, but we are committed to keeping our class sizes small to give our children the best learning environment possible.

How does this affect my tuition rate for the 2023-2024 school year?

Fr. James and Mrs. Faetanini, in consultation with Parish and Finance Councils, and the Diocese of Cleveland have agreed on the following tuition changes for the 2023-2024 school year.

- The new base tuition rate for students in grades 1-8 will be \$6,500. This is an increase of \$450.
- The new base tuition rate for Kindergarten students will be \$6,165. This is an increase of \$665.
- We are no longer permitted to offer sibling discounts as part of being an EdChoice Scholarship provider.

How will these changes affect my family?

We are committed to no family paying more for 2023-2024 tuition than was originally communicated in the tuition policy in February, but it is also dependent on every family applying for the EdChoice Scholarship and the Angel Scholarship.

- Angel Scholarship funds will be used to cover the sibling discount difference for those who applied.
- Angel Scholarship funds will be used to cover the difference in Kindergarten tuition up to \$215/child.
- Families choosing not to apply for an EdChoice Scholarship would see a tuition increase of \$450 for grades 1-8 and \$665 for Kindergarten.

Click for [scenarios](#) detailing how the EdChoice Scholarship will affect different families based on size and income.

What will happen to my Diocesan Tuition Assistance or Angel Scholarship money if I have already received this?

If your family qualifies for a full EdChoice state scholarship, then the Diocese will take back the Diocese of Cleveland Grant that was previously loaded onto your tuition agreement. The same is true for any St. Barnabas Scholarship (Angel or Parishioner) money that was awarded. Each tuition agreement will be looked at individually and we will make adjustments as needed.

Is there still time to apply for the Angel Scholarship if I have not done so for the 2023-2024 school year?



Absolutely and we strongly encourage all families to apply. As you are aware, through the generosity of our parishioners and school families, we raised over \$92,000 to award in Angel Scholarship funds this year. A significant percentage of our families who received those grants will no longer need the Angel Scholarship because tuition will be covered by the EdChoice Scholarship. Therefore, we forecast there will be a large amount of money back in the Angel Scholarship distribution pool. The state requires that we prioritize families at or below 300% of the federal poverty line for Angel Scholarship, but those families will now be fully assisted by EdChoice, allowing us to award the money to families in higher income brackets who don't qualify for the full EdChoice Scholarship to reduce tuition costs. [Angel Scholarship application instructions can be found here.](#) There is a \$35 fee required to complete the FACTS application. The application deadline for Angel Scholarship closes **September 1, 2023**.

What is the status of the Parishioner Tuition Scholarship?

If your family was already awarded the Parishioner Tuition Scholarship (PTS), it will still apply. Depending on the amount awarded by the state for the EdChoice Scholarship, your family may no longer need any PTS funds or may need partial funding. This will be dealt with on a family case by case basis. PTS funds can only be applied to tuition and not fees, cafeteria prepays or incidental expenses.

Can we defer future tuition payments if we think we will get a full EdChoice Scholarship?

No. All parents need to keep making tuition payments as scheduled and as required by the tuition policy. We will make appropriate adjustments in FACTS once awards are approved.

What if I am divorced? Who is required to file the application?

The scholarship award belongs to the child so in the case of divorce, the primary/residential parent who claims the child/children on their federal tax return is the one who needs to apply. It doesn't matter if it is actually the other parent who is financially responsible for paying the tuition.

Since fees can not be included in the tuition amount due to EdChoice provider agreement, will I see additional fees on my new tuition statement?

Yes, it is correct that fees cannot be included in the tuition total per the EdChoice provider agreement. For this reason, one fee added to your tuition statement that was previously rolled into your tuition cost, which is the PTU Membership Fee of \$35/family.

Why should my family apply?

No matter your family's adjusted gross income, this is a financial win-win for the parents, the children, our teachers and for the school. Upon successful completion of the required paperwork, your family will owe less for tuition than you did when the original bills came out in June. The additional funding from the state will be utilized to enhance our educational priorities and improve staff compensation and development. We strongly encourage every one of our K-8 families, who are not already on another state scholarship, to apply for the EdChoice Scholarship.