



**Saint Mary's**  
*...the Spirit is in the School*

Dear Parents,

December 1, 2017

Attached to this letter you will find a pamphlet explaining the new Scholarship Tax Law (Grades K-8) that was recently passed in the state of Illinois. The school board will be conducting an informational meeting for all parents of current St. Mary's students as well as prospective parents for the 2018-2019 school year on December 18 beginning at 6:00 pm in the Parish Center. Please pass this information along to any parent that may be interested in sending their child to St. Mary's next school year.

At this informational meeting, we will be explaining to you how you can apply for a scholarship beginning on January 1, 2018. These are state issued scholarships, and have nothing to do with the current scholarship program being used at St. Mary's; however no scholarships will be granted from the St. Mary's scholarship fund if you have not first applied for a state scholarship.

We look forward to meeting with you on December 18. Feel free to let us know if you have any questions that can be answered prior to this scheduled meeting.

Sincerely,

*Mrs. Brogan*  
Mrs. Brogan  
St. Mary's Principal

*Kristi Stevens*  
Kristi Stevens  
School Board  
Finance

*Nikki Fullop*  
Nikki Fullop  
School Board  
President

**What steps do I need to take to participate in this program?**

To participate in the program the parent/custodian and student:

- must select qualified school and apply for admission
- comply with the qualified school's published policies; and
- apply for a scholarship through the Scholarship Granting Organization
- authorize the Scholarship Granting Organization to access information needed for income eligibility determinations.

**Where do we go to apply for a scholarship?**

The Scholarship Granting Organization is in the process of being created. As soon as we have information on how the application process will work, we will let interested families know.

To be sure that you are notified when the application process is determined, you are encouraged to contact your local Catholic School and let them know to add you to their list of potential applicants.



# Private School Tax Credit Scholarship Information for Parents



**Tax Credit Scholarship Program:**

The State of Illinois recently passed the Invest in Kids Act to help provide families funding to attend the school of their choice. The Tax Credit Scholarship Program begins in January 2018 and will automatically expire January 2023 unless it is changed by the legislature.

**Who qualifies for the Tax Credit Scholarship?**

Initially, students whose families earn 300% of the federal poverty level or less are eligible for the scholarship. Once a student receives a scholarship, his or her family can earn up to 400% of the federal poverty level.

From January 1 to April 1, priority will be given to students from each of the following categories:

- Students who received a scholarship from a SGO during the previous school year;
- Students who are members of a household whose previous year's total annual income does not exceed 185% of the federal poverty level
- Students who reside within a focus district; and
- Students who are siblings of students currently receiving a scholarship.

After April 1, all other qualifying students will be able to receive scholarships.

**Current Level of Qualifying Income (2018)**

Household size	Max Annual Income 185%	185% - 250%	251% - 300%
1	\$22,311	\$30,150	\$36,180
2	\$30,044	\$40,600	\$48,720
3	\$37,777	\$51,050	\$61,260
4	\$45,510	\$61,500	\$73,800
5	\$53,243	\$71,950	\$86,340
6	\$60,976	\$82,400	\$98,880
7	\$68,709	\$92,850	\$111,420
8	\$76,442	\$103,300	\$123,960
9	\$84,175	\$113,750	\$136,500
10	\$91,908	\$124,200	\$149,040
11	\$99,641	\$134,650	\$161,580
12	\$107,374	\$145,100	\$174,120

**How does a SGO determine the size of a scholarship a student receives?**

In order to qualify for a scholarship, a student's family will have to give official documentation to the SGO of their ability to pay.

Based on how a student's household income compares to the federal poverty level, a student will receive the following:

- For students whose household income is less than 185%, the scholarship will be 100% of tuition and necessary fees;
- For students whose household income is between 185% and 250%, scholarships will average 75% of tuition and necessary fees; and
- For students whose household income is above 250%, scholarships will average 50% of tuition and necessary fees.

**What is the maximum amount of scholarship a student can receive?**

Tuition and necessary fees or the statewide average operating expense per student, whichever is lower.

- For the current year, the statewide average operating expense per student is \$12,280.
- Students identified as gifted and talented can receive a maximum scholarship amount of \$13,508.
- Students identified as English Language Learners can receive a maximum scholarship amount of \$14,736.
- Students identified as eligible to receive services under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act can receive a maximum scholarship amount of \$24,560.

**How will it be determined whether students are benefiting from this program?**

All students who receive scholarships will be required to take the state assessment.

ISBE will select an independent research organization to conduct an annual study examining the year-to-year learning gains of students receiving scholarships and a comparison of these learning gains to public school students with similar demographic backgrounds.