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## **EdChoice Eligibility 2021-2022**

Now that the application window is open for both the traditional EdChoice and income-based program, it's important to review eligibility criteria.

### **Income-Based EdChoice Scholarship**

- The Ohio General Assembly increased the income-based EdChoice program's income eligibility level from 200% to 250% of the federal poverty level (FPL). This change was effective March 2, 2021.
  - If you had a family denied for income-based EdChoice for the 2020-21 school year because their income was above 200% FPL but below 250% FPL, you may want to contact the Department of Education to see if the application(s) can be reconsidered for the 2020-21 school year.
- The 2021 FPL income guidelines are available here <https://tinyurl.com/f8e3paad>

[Although the income level for eligibility purposes was raised to 250% FPL, the income level below which additional tuition charges must be waived remains at 200%. We recommend that you talk with families and clarify exactly what their total financial responsibilities may be.](#)

### **Traditional EdChoice Scholarship (performance-based)**

- **Building eligibility criteria for scholarships awarded for the 2021-22 school year (established in SB 89) include:**
  - Buildings must be ranked in the lowest 20% of all school district buildings for two consecutive years based on the performance index score; and
  - Be part of a district that averaged 20% or more of Title I eligible students for three consecutive years.
  - The list of eligible schools is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/53zp3xdt>

## **EdChoice Eligibility 2021-2022 (page 2)**

- To ease the transition to new eligibility criteria, students eligible for the traditional EdChoice program for the current school year (2020-21) are eligible for the upcoming school year (2021-22) if:
  - **The student was eligible for a scholarship for the 2020-2021 school year.**
  - **The student is enrolled in a public or nonpublic school in any of grades kindergarten through twelve, or was homeschooled for the equivalent of those grades, in the 2020-2021 school year.**
  - **For the 2021-2022 school year, the student would be enrolled or assigned to a building that, in the 2019-2020 school year, met one of the previous eligibility criteria.**
- Use the 2019-20 list of eligible school buildings (517 schools) to help determine whether a student may be eligible for EdChoice under this transition provision. It also may be helpful in these cases to contact the Ohio Department of Education to confirm eligibility. Per the Department of Education eligible buildings must appear on both the 2019-20 and 2020-21 lists of EdChoice eligible buildings.
- This transition provision is not available for incoming kindergarten students.

Students eligible for both the income-based and traditional EdChoice programs will be awarded a scholarship through the traditional, performance-based program.

Siblings of students already using a traditional Educational Choice (performance-based) Scholarship are not automatically eligible. Siblings of current traditional EdChoice Scholarships must themselves meet eligibility criteria.

The Ohio Department of Education's is interpreting the transitional eligibility language to mean that nonpublic 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who are applying as 9<sup>th</sup> graders for the 2021-22 school year are no longer eligible. Such applications are not accepted by the application portal. We respectfully disagree with this interpretation, but in our conversations with the Department they indicated that they do not intend to revise their interpretation.

**We understand that this is complicated. Please contact School Choice Ohio ([info@scoho.org](mailto:info@scoho.org) or 614-223-1555) or the Ohio Department of Education for more information or assistance.**