



# Program Information

## D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program

### 2017-2018

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The DC Opportunity Scholarship Program (OSP) is authorized by the US Congress under the *Scholarships for Opportunities and Results Act* (SOAR). It is currently administered by Serving Our Children (SoC). The OSP provides scholarships to enable low-income students in Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade to attend private schools.

The information you provide on this application may be shared with SoC, key partners of SoC and with the organization selected by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) to conduct the evaluation of this program. For audit purposes, information may be shared with government agencies such as the Government Accountability Office (GAO).

If you have any questions about the application or your eligibility for the Program, please call SoC at 1-888-DC-YOUTH (1-888-329-6884).

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- There is no fee to apply for the OSP.
- Scholarships will not affect your family's ability to receive other federal and/or local government benefits.
- The maximum scholarship amount is up to \$12,679 per school year for attendance in grades 9-12 and up to \$8,452 for attendance in grades K-8 for tuition and school-related fees (e.g. books, uniforms, public transportation, etc.).
- Scholarships may only be used at a school participating in the OSP. A current list of participating schools is available at [servingourchildrenc.org](http://servingourchildrenc.org). Once a child receives a scholarship, is placed, and uses the scholarship at a participating school, he/she may receive one every year the program is funded, as long as he/she remains eligible and is placed in a participating school. If there are more applicants than slots in participating schools or available funds, the law requires that scholarships be given out through a lottery. In awarding scholarships, the law gives priority to (A) eligible students who are attending a school identified as in need of improvement; (B) students who have been previously awarded a scholarship through the OSP; and (C) siblings of students currently participating in the OSP.
- Scholarships cannot be used until the student is actually placed in and attends a participating school.
- Scholarships are awarded to individual students, not to families, and cannot be transferred from one student to another.
- Parents/Guardians are responsible for applying separately to the schools they are interested in. Each school has its own application process, and parents/guardians must contact participating schools directly to apply.
- We encourage applicants and scholarship recipients to apply early, and to as many schools as possible, in order to complete schools' application processes prior to their deadlines. In the event your child does not get his/her first-choice school, it is important to have other options. Schools will inform applicants of requirements for admission.
- While application to the Program is voluntary, applicants may be required to participate in an evaluation. The evaluation is important because it allows Congress to measure the success of the program. As part of the evaluation, parents/guardians of applicants must agree to:
  - Annual testing of your child in reading and math, and surveys of children
  - Annual parent/guardian surveys
  - Collection of files and records from your child's school.