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## Eligible Student

Students must be income and grade eligible. The law only permits students in **Kindergarten, 1st Grade or 9th Grade** or entering any grade if transferring from a public school or entering a K-12 school in South Dakota for the first time to apply for the scholarship. Once qualified, a K-8 student would remain eligible for three years, and a high school student, until graduation. Qualified students may reapply after three years.

The new law defines an eligible student as a child in a household with an annual income not to exceed 150 percent (150%) of the income that qualifies a student for the [Federal Free or Reduced-Price Lunch Program](#) in the previous year. After the initial period of eligibility, a child would continue to qualify as long as family income did not exceed 200 percent of the lunch eligibility level.

## How to Apply for a Scholarship

Please read the eligibility information carefully. If you do not qualify, do not submit an application.

The SDPE application is an on-line application. You will be asked to set up a TADS Account. Go to [www.TADS.com](http://www.TADS.com) click on the Family LOG IN button. On the next page click on Financial Aid Assessment. If you do not have an account with TADS, please create a new account. Help is available by contacting the school you would like your child to attend or use the TADS help line.

If you already have a TADS account, login to your existing account and locate the green button labeled – Add School. Click on the -Add School- button. In the School Search box type SDPE and click on the Search button. You will know you are on the right page when you see the SD Partners in Education logo appear at the top of the page. A drop-down box labeled – Schools will appear. Click on the down arrow and select SDPE South Dakota Partners in Education (South Dakota, SD). Check the box next to your eligible child’s name.

## SD Accredited Private Schools

For a private school to participate in the program, they must be accredited by the South Dakota Department of Education. Currently there are 41 participating schools located across the State.

## Scholarship Amounts

Scholarships can be used to pay tuition and fees at an accredited private school. SDPE will determine the amount of the scholarship based on the available funds. Priority is given to low income students.

## Scholarship Impact on the State of South Dakota

The program is designed to be budget neutral to the State of South Dakota. The average scholarship must be less than the State’s cost of educating the student in a public school. For the record... The current K-12 private school enrollment is just over 10,000 students who already **save** the State and local taxpayers more than \$50 million in state aid alone.

## How scholarships are funded

The scholarships are funded with both corporate contributions receiving tax credit and private donations. Under the “Partners in Education Tax Credit Program” insurance companies that pay premium and annuity taxes in the state may claim as a tax credit up to 80 percent of the contribution they make to a scholarship granting organization (SGO). The SGO in turn provides scholarships to help eligible students attend participating private schools.