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CLEF NOTES

The Newsletter of the Chicagoland Lutheran Educational Foundation

SPECIAL EDITION

OUR MISSION *The mission of the Chicagoland Lutheran Educational Foundation is to empower urban Lutheran schools to deliver innovative, quality education in a Christian environment.*

SCHOLARSHIP MONEY AVAILABLE!

The Illinois General Assembly recently passed the Invest in Kids Act, which provides for the creation of a state tax credit scholarship program. This exciting opportunity will provide Illinois children from low-income families with additional scholarship resources - up to **100% of tuition** - to help afford attendance at eligible private schools. This includes CLEF Lutheran Schools!



DO I QUALIFY?

Eligibility to receive a scholarship is based on your family's household size and household income as it compares to the Federal Poverty Line (FPL).

HOW MUCH IS THE SCHOLARSHIP?

Potential Scholarship	100% of tuition if income is < 185% FPL	75% of tuition if income is < 250% FPL	50% of tuition if income is < 300% FPL
# of Household Members			
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

HOW DO I APPLY FOR AN INVEST IN KIDS SCHOLARSHIP?

Families of K-12 Students can apply to any Scholarship Granting Organization (SGO) to be considered for tuition assistance for the 2018-2019 school year. Applications are opening soon. **Since scholarship dollars are awarded on a first come, first served basis, we encourage you to start gathering your paperwork and apply as soon as the application windows open.**

If you have questions about the scholarship application process, please contact your school principal or the CLEF office at (630) 595-9310 or clef@clefchicago.org.


WHAT DOCUMENTS WILL FAMILIES NEED?

- ✓ A copy of your family's 2016 or 2017 federal tax return. If the family did not file a 2016 or 2017 tax return, you may submit a 1099, W-2 or pay stub showing that your annualized income is either below the minimum required to file a federal tax return, or would be low enough to qualify the student when accounting for the federal standard deduction.
- ✓ Proof of Illinois residence such as:
 - Current utility bill
 - Current driver's license
- ✓ Documentation of the student's age, such as:
 - A copy of student's birth certificate
 - Federal or state ID
 - Passport
- ✓ If available, a letter proving acceptance or enrollment at an eligible, non-public school

Plan on having these documents ready prior to January 22nd to enable quicker completion of the applications when they become available. It is recommended that you scan or photograph these documents in advance so that you can quickly and easily upload them to complete your application.

WHERE DO I APPLY?

Empower Illinois is CLEF's primary SGO partner. However, families are welcome and encouraged to apply to more than one SGO to maximize their chance of receiving a scholarship for use at a CLEF Lutheran school! Each SGO has its own process, and since this is a new law, some organizations are still working out their application details. Below is the latest information available. Completing all available applications will give the greatest chance of qualification for scholarship dollars. See links below for further information.

Scholarship Granting Organization	Link for Further Information	Applications Open
 EMPOWER ILLINOIS (the preferred SGO for CLEF Lutheran Schools)	https://empowerillinois.org/students/how-do-i-apply/	January 31 at noon
Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)	https://www.acsi.org/ctfil	January 22
Big Shoulders Fund	http://www.bigshouldersfund.org/take-action/tax-credit/	January 22- 8AM
Chicago Lights	Not currently available	
Children at the Crossroads Foundation	http://www.catc.org/	Not yet determined
Glen View Club Scholarship Foundation	https://www.glenviewclub.com/jobs/-scholars/-caddies/scholarship-foundation-467.html	Not yet determined
Highsight	http://www.highsight.org/taxcredit/	Currently suspended
Institute for Community Inc.	Not currently available	

HOW DO I LEARN IF I HAVE BEEN AWARDED A SCHOLARSHIP?

Each SGO may follow a slightly different process. Scholarship award notifications through Empower Illinois will be sent to families beginning in February and continue until available funds are used. Funds will be distributed to schools at the start of the 2018-2019 school year. Empower Illinois and other SGOs will work directly with schools and organizations to distribute funds.