



PARTIAL SCHOLARSHIPS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS HOUSE BILL (HB) 4126?

HB4126 passed the Illinois legislature in April 2022 and was signed into law in June 2022. This bill made improvements to the Invest in Kids Act Tax Credit Scholarship Program to provide greater education stability to currently participating students with [year-over-year scholarship priority](#) and positively impact the thousands of students still waiting in line for a scholarship by allowing for partial scholarships that can benefit even more students.

WHAT ARE PARTIAL SCHOLARSHIPS?

This provision aims to expand the need-based, tiered scholarship distribution model, while protecting scholarships for students in the lowest-income tier. Participating schools may set lower maximum scholarship amounts for eligible students from families in income tiers above 185% of the federal poverty level (FPL).

By offering the option for additional partial scholarships, more students could receive a scholarship making their best-fit school accessible while meeting more of the program's astronomical demand.

DOES MY SCHOOL HAVE TO OPT INTO PARTIAL SCHOLARSHIPS?

No. If a school partner does not proactively opt into partial scholarships when completing their [School Participation Agreement](#) (SPA), students eligible for 75% and 50% tax credit scholarships will receive awards corresponding to those maximum tuition amounts.

HOW CAN MY SCHOOL PARTICIPATE IN PARTIAL SCHOLARSHIPS?

Schools can opt into the partial scholarship process when [filling out their SPA](#) in their [EmpowerXChange portal](#) at the beginning of the year. Interested schools will be prompted to provide the reduced max tuition percentages for students that qualify for 75% or 50% scholarships.

EXAMPLES

- A school's full tuition and fees is \$6,000.
- [Without partial scholarships](#): The school has decided not to opt into partial scholarships for their students. An eligible student who qualifies for a 75% scholarship will receive an award in the amount of \$4,500, and student who qualifies for a 50% scholarship will receive an award in the amount of \$3,000.
- [With partial scholarships](#): The school has decided to set the maximum scholarship amount at 60% instead of 75% and 35% instead of 50% for qualifying students. An eligible student who qualifies for a 75% (60%) scholarship will receive an award in the amount of \$3,600, and student who qualifies for a 50% (35%) scholarship will receive an award in the amount of \$2,100.

CAN MY SCHOOL REDUCE THE SCHOLARSHIP MAXIMUM FOR 100% QUALIFYING STUDENTS?

No. Qualifying students from families whose household income is 185% or less of the FPL will receive tax credit scholarships covering all tuition and fees. This ensures families with the greatest need still qualify for a full, 100% scholarship if eligible.

DO THE NEW MAXIMUM TUITION AMOUNTS HAVE TO BE A CERTAIN PERCENTAGE APART?

No. The new tuition amounts for eligible students from families in income tiers above 185% can be set at your school's discretion but cannot be zero.

CAN MY SCHOOL OPT INTO PARTIAL SCHOLARSHIPS LATER IN THE YEAR?

No. Schools must decide whether to opt into partial scholarships when completing their SPA before awarding begins for the next school year.

CAN MY SCHOOL OPT INTO PARTIAL SCHOLARSHIPS FOR INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS?

No. The new maximum tuition amounts for eligible students from families in income tiers above 185% will apply to all TCS applicants at your school.

HOW DO PARTIAL SCHOLARSHIPS IMPACT OTHER TUITION ADJUSTMENTS, SUCH AS MULTI-STUDENT OR PARISHONER DISCOUNTS?

There is no impact. Discounts may be distributed on an individual basis at your school's discretion and will be reflected in the student's School Commitment Form (SCF).

WHO DO I CONTACT WITH MORE QUESTIONS?

Please reach out to our School Helpline (schools@empowerillinois.org, 800-616-7606) with any additional questions.