



SCHOOL EMPOWERXCHANGE PORTAL FAQ

DASHBOARD

WHAT FUNDS ARE INCLUDED IN THE AVAILABLE DESIGNATED BALANCE?

Your school's current available designated fund balance includes any rollover donations from previous years and your donations for the current school year that are available to be awarded. Throughout the scholarship awarding process, this balance will fluctuate as students are awarded scholarships and more donations are obtained.


I HAVE AN AWARD CONFIRMED STUDENT IN MY EMPOWERXCHANGE PORTAL. WHAT DO I NEED TO DO, AND WHERE DO I DO IT?

When you have a student in Award Confirmed status, you must complete a School Commitment Form (SCF). The SCF can be found under "School Forms" in your EmpowerXChange portal. Please list any discounts offered by your school, and include any additional costs to cover ELL, IEP, or gifted services. The SCF value cannot exceed the tuition and fee amount on your School Participation Agreement (SPA). The scholarship amount on this form is final. [Click here for instructions on how to complete the SCF.](#)

HOW DO I SEE THE CONTACT INFORMATION FOR A STUDENT?

If you click on a student on your student list, you can see additional information about the student including parent contact information and if they attended your school last year.

I WOULD LIKE TO SAVE A LIST OF MY STUDENTS AND THEIR CONTACT INFO. HOW DO I SEE THAT?

On your dashboard, there is a download button  located next to the search bar. If you click this button, an export of the students who have applied to your school for the current school year will be emailed to you. Students are listed in first-come, first-served order on the export you receive via email.

WHAT DOES "ELL," "GIFTED," AND "IEP" IN THE NOTES COLUMN MEAN TO ME?

At the student level, there may be notes next to a specific student. These notes indicate if a student has a special status such as English language learner (ELL), gifted, or has an IEP. These statuses are generated from the family application. A family must indicate that their child falls into one or more of these special statuses on the application. Students with these statuses may be eligible to receive increased scholarship awards based on the rules of the *Invest in Kids Act*.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF THE FIRST STUDENT IN MY PORTAL WHO RECEIVED AN AWARD DOES NOT ATTEND MY SCHOOL?

If a student receives an award but does not currently attend your school, you can reach out to the family to get the student enrolled. The family has a set amount of time to accept the award to your school. The expiration date

for each award is shown in the "Expiration Date" column. If the family has accepted the award, the student will move to Award Confirmed status. If the student will not be attending your school, you should indicate that the student is Not Enrolled on the SCF. Submitting the SCF will release the funds for the student's award to be used for the next student in line.

A STUDENT SHOWS A CONDITIONAL AWARD, BUT THEY ACCEPTED AN AWARD FROM ANOTHER SGO. WHAT SHOULD I DO SO THE FUNDS CAN BE AWARDED TO THE NEXT STUDENT?

The action the school should take depends on the award status of the student. If a student is in a status of:

- Conditional Award - encourage the family to decline the award in their student EmpowerXChange portal. If they do not take action on the award, it will expire and funds will be recycled to the next student in line.
- Award Confirmed - you should indicate that the student is "Enrolled with Other SGO" on the SCF. Submitting the SCF will release the funds for the student's award to be used for the next student in line.
- Funding Confirmed - please contact Empower Illinois at 800-616-7606 or email us at schools@empowerillinois.org.

WHEN DO THE AWARDS EXPIRE?

This depends on when the conditional award was made. The expiration date for each award is shown on your dashboard in the "Expiration Date" column. Please see the chart below for the expiration dates based on when the award was made.

Conditional awards made between:	Expire on
January 28 - March 1	April 1
March 2 - May 31	30 Days after conditional award is sent
June 1 - August 14	15 days after conditional award is sent
August 15 - end of awarding	10 days after conditional award is sent

HOW CAN I SORT STUDENTS INTO NAME ORDER?

You can sort any column on your dashboard by clicking the column header of that column. For example, if you want to sort by name, you can click "Name" and the students will be sorted by last name. If you click the column header a second time, the column will sort in reverse alphabetical order.

WHAT DO THE WAITLIST STATUSES MEAN?

Students on the waitlist may or may not have had their application processed. For more information on each of the student statuses, please review our [award status guide](#).

Funds are reserved for students while they are in the processing queue, and once their application has been fully processed and the student is deemed eligible, a conditional award letter will be sent to the family via email and the student's status will change in your portal.

CAN I VIEW STUDENT AWARDS AND APPLICATIONS FROM PREVIOUS YEARS?

Yes! In the upper right-hand corner of the dashboard, there is a dropdown where you can select the school year for which you would like to see applicants and awardees. There may be a small delay while the system pulls up your previous year data.

CAN I WITHDRAW A STUDENT FROM MY SCHOOL'S WAITLIST?

Yes. Please email us at schools@empowerillinois.org or call us at 800-616-7606 and provide the names of the students who should be withdrawn.

Prior to October 1, Empower Illinois will contact the family to inform them that a representative from the selected school has requested their application be withdrawn. The family will be given five (5) business days to respond. If the family does not respond within the allotted time, the student's application will be withdrawn from the school's waitlist. If the family responds that they wish to remain on the waitlist, Empower Illinois will instruct them to contact the school representative to confirm enrollment and next steps.

On or after October 1, Empower Illinois will withdraw the application without contacting the family.

Reasons why students can be withdrawn from a school's waitlist are as follows:

- the school partner confirms the student has received a TCS award from another SGO,
- there is no room at the selected school,
- the family is moving out of the region, or
- the family confirms they will not be enrolling their student at the selected school

WHAT DOES "TUITION AND FEES" COVER?

Tuition and Fees can include costs charged to all school families as part of your school's stated cost. Costs covered by the tax credit scholarship must be associated with the cost to educate a student, such as, Tuition, Books, Required Supplies, Uniforms, Other Fees (for extra-curricular activities) and Testing. Any fees related to registration/enrollment/graduation one-time fees, refundable deposits, or fees otherwise related to the operation of the educational institution cannot be included and are the responsibility of the parent/custodian/guardian.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT ONE OF THE STUDENT APPLICATIONS. WHO DO I CALL?

If you have questions about the student applications or information on your portal, you can contact us at 800-616-7606 or email us at schools@empowerillinois.org.

SCHOOL FORMS

HOW CAN I VIEW MY SCHOOL'S SUBMITTED SCHOOL PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT (SPA), SCHOOL COMMITMENT FORMS (SCF), OR ATTENDANCE REPORTS?

Once you submit any of these forms, you view them under "School Forms." By clicking the header of the form you are interested in, you can view all previously submitted forms.

HOW CAN I EDIT MY SCHOOL'S SUBMITTED SCHOOL PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT (SPA), SCHOOL COMMITMENT FORMS (SCF), OR ATTENDANCE REPORTS?

Once you submit any of these forms, they cannot be edited in your school portal. If you need to edit your school forms:

- School Participation Agreement — download the [“SPA \(School Participation Agreement\) Update Form”](#) and add your school specific edits. Once completed, send this form to us at schools@empowerillinois.org.
- School Commitment Form — download the “SCF (School Commitment Form) Update Request” and add your student specific changes. Once completed, send this form to us at schools@empowerillinois.org.
- Attendance Reports — please contact us at 800-616-7606 or schools@empowerillinois.org.

If you cannot download the form that is needed or would like assistance in completing the documentation, please contact us at 800-616-7606 or schools@empowerillinois.org.

IS THE SCHOOL COMMITMENT FORM (SCF) STUDENT-SPECIFIC?

Yes, an SCF needs to be completed for each student. It is extremely important to input the student's tuition and fees correctly, since this form is what determines the final scholarship amount for each student. Please do not submit an SCF until the student is enrolled in your school and you have finalized their tuition. Once an SCF is submitted, it will confirm the scholarship amount for that individual student, so be sure the information is correct before submitting the SCF.

If your school will not accept a student for admission and enrollment for the upcoming school year, and you have an SCF for this student, mark the student as “Not Enrolled” and submit the SCF. Once you do this, that specific student will be notified that they are not enrolled at your school, and these funds will be freed up for the next student in line.

DONATIONS

HOW CAN I VIEW MY DONATIONS BY SCHOOL YEAR OR CALENDAR YEAR?

Navigate to the Donations page by clicking the “Donations” tab on the left side of your portal. Once you are viewing your donations, there are two filter boxes in the upper right hand side of your portal. The first dropdown menu can be used to filter on a specific school year. As a reminder, beginning on December 1, donations will count toward scholarships for the upcoming school year, not the current school year.

The second dropdown menu can be used to filter on a specific calendar year. This option will show all donations made between January 1 and December 31 of the specific calendar year you have selected. To view all donations designated to your school since the program started, you can click on all on either dropdown menu.

WHAT DOES “CAN BE USED AT SYSTEM LEVEL” MEAN?

If a donor has a green check under “Donor Permission—School System,” this means that the donor has given Empower Illinois permission to roll funds up to the school system when all students in line at your school have been funded.

WHAT DOES “CAN BE UNDESIGNATED” MEAN?

If a donor has a green check under “Donor Permission—Undesignated,” this means that the donor has given Empower Illinois permission to move any unused funds to undesignated money when all students in line at your school have been funded.

CAN I OBTAIN THE CONTACT INFORMATION FOR MY DONORS?

If you would like to look for a specific donor, you can use the search bar on the right side of the screen and type in the donor's name. Once you find a specific donor you want to look at, you can click on the donor, and you will be brought to donor details. Here is where you can find the address and email address for a donor, as long as they did not choose to be anonymous.

ONE OF MY DONORS DOES NOT SHOW UP ON THE LIST. WHO DO I CALL?

If you have any questions about donor information or feel that a donor is missing from your list, please contact our donor helpline at 800-616-7606 or email us at donors@empowerillinois.org.

ACCOUNT

HOW CAN I ADD A NEW USER?

Under manage users, you can add or remove users. To add a user, add in the new user's first name, last name and email on the right-hand side of the screen.

The new user will be sent an email to set up their password and will then be able to log in and access your school's portal. You can resend the link to the user if they do not get it. You can also delete any user by clicking the trashcan icon next to their name.

HOW CAN I CHANGE MY EMAIL ADDRESS?

In "Account" and under "School Details," you can update the school contact information and address. Under "User Details," you can view your own user details including name and email. If you would like to change your email address, you can do so here. Once you change your email address, this new email address will be your username to use at login.

HOW CAN I UPDATE OUR SCHOOL'S CONTACTS?

In "Account" and under "School Details," you can update your school's contacts including the principal, finance contact, scholarship contact, financial aid contact, and admissions contact. We use this information to send our communications to the right person at your school, so please update these contacts when there is a change.

SCHOLARSHIP PAYMENTS

WHEN DOES EMPOWER ILLINOIS MAKE SCHOLARSHIP PAYMENTS?

Empower Illinois makes scholarship payments in February, September, and twice in December. The amount includes 100% of the scholarship amounts for students who have reached Funding Confirmed status since the last payment.