

Office of School Choice

School Choice Program (SCP) for Certain Students with Exceptionalities Application Guide

To apply for the School Choice Program, please complete an online application [here](#).

Key Dates:

1. February 5, 2024: Online Application Opens
Families can apply for the School Choice Program
2. March 8, 2024: Online Application Closes
Deadline for families to apply for SCP
3. March 15, 2024: Deadline for families to submit documentation
4. April 29, 2024: Department sends award notification letters

Table of Contents:

Overview of the School Choice Program	2
How to Apply	4
How to Confirm Eligibility	5
Understanding the Matching and Lottery Process	6
Frequently Asked Questions	7
Additional Resources	11

Overview of the School Choice Program

The [School Choice Program for Certain Students with Exceptionalities \(SCP\)](#) empowers families of qualifying students with the financial resources to choose the school that will best address their student's unique needs. The program provides tuition assistance of up to 50% of the state per pupil funding for the student's school district. The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) will conduct a lottery to award student participation, with a priority given to continuing students.

Current SCP Students

- How do I keep my student at their current SCP school?
 - Families wishing for their student to continue participating in this program must complete the online student application annually. Continuing students are not required to provide eligibility documentation.
- How do you add siblings to the School Choice Program?
 - If you currently have a child/children receiving the Scholarship and would like to apply for their sibling(s), you will need to complete an application for the new sibling. To apply for a sibling, follow the instructions below. Eligibility documentation must be submitted for each additional sibling.
- How do I switch my student to another school next year?
 - To apply to another school other than your current school, you must submit an online application. Continuing Students are not required to provide eligibility documentation.

NEW Students (students who are not currently participating in the School Choice Program)

Students participating in the SCP must meet all of the following eligibility requirements:

- Student has been evaluated by a Louisiana public school district and determined to have any one of the following exceptionalities:
 - Autism
 - Developmental Delay
 - Mental Disability
 - Other Health Impairment
 - Specific Learning Disability
 - Traumatic Brain Injury
- The student has a current Individual Education Plan or district provided services plan
- The student is eligible to attend a Louisiana public school in grades K-12
 - a resident of Louisiana
 - 5 years of age by September 30 of the upcoming year

**Continuing students are awarded scholarships first, and the Office of School Choice will conduct a lottery to determine which new students are awarded a scholarship. A new student being determined eligible does NOT guarantee a seat at a SCP school.*

How to Apply

Both new and returning students must complete an application yearly to be considered for a scholarship award.

Families applying for a Scholarship for a student *not currently enrolled as a SCP student in grades K-12, MUST* confirm their eligibility (see step 2 below).

Step 1: Complete Online Application

1) Click [here](#) to complete the online application.

2) Complete the application:

- Provide information required to verify the student has a current Individual Education Plan or district provided services plan
- Enter basic information about the student and the parent/guardian.
- Provide information required to verify residency.
- Enter basic information about this student's siblings (if applicable).
- Select up to five (3) participating schools, in order of preference.
- Agree to required disclosures, then submit the application.

Step 2: Confirm Eligibility

Families applying for NEW students must submit the required eligibility documentation to their first choice school by the application deadline.

Families must provide all required documentation in person to the first choice school listed on the application by **March 15, 2024**.

How to Confirm Eligibility

Families applying for **new students** must provide the following eligibility documents to their first choice school when submitting an application:

- Copy of student's current Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or district provided service plan
- One proof of residency documentation. Acceptable documents to verify residency include one of the following:
 - Rental agreement or mortgage statement
 - Landline telephone bill
 - Cable or internet service bill
 - Sewerage or water bill
 - Electricity or gas bill

- A current property tax notice
- Official Letter from a Government Agency such as the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) or Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH)

Please note: Documentation must be in the parent and/or guardian's name and must match the student's address listed on the application.

****Continuing Students are not required to provide eligibility documentation.***

Step 3: Award Notification

Once the application closes, all applications are reviewed for eligibility. **Continuing students are awarded scholarships first, and the Office of School Choice will conduct a lottery to determine which new students are awarded a scholarship.**

Scholarships are awarded contingent upon funding availability and based on the availability of services at participating schools.

- Application Timeline:
 - February – Application opens
 - March – Application closes and verification due to first choice school
 - Late April/Beginning of May – LDOE notifies families of award status

Each participating school has discretion in maintaining their own admissions criteria and may decide whether or not to admit and enroll a student. However, all admissions criteria must align with what is in the student handbook.

Frequently Asked Questions

General Questions

What is the School Choice Program for Certain Students with Exceptionalities?

The [School Choice Program for Certain Students with Exceptionalities \(SCP\)](#) Students with disabilities in some school districts may be eligible for the School Choice Program, which provides families with tuition assistance to attend eligible participating schools that offer special needs programs.

Who is eligible for the School Choice Program?

Students participating in the SCP must meet all of the following eligibility requirements:

- Student has been evaluated by a Louisiana public school district and determined to have any one of the following exceptionalities:
 - Autism
 - Developmental Delay
 - Mental Disability
 - Other Health Impairment
 - Specific Learning Disability
 - Traumatic Brain Injury
- The student has a current Individual Education Plan or district provided services plan
- The student is eligible to attend a Louisiana public school in grades K-12
 - a resident of Louisiana
 - 5 years of age by September 30 of the upcoming year

How do I know which schools are participating in the program?

To find participating schools in your area, please view our participating schools list [here](#). To view a list of services offered at each participating school, click [here](#).

Do I need to verify eligibility at each school I rank on my application?

No. You only need to verify eligibility at your first choice school. You may rank up to three schools on your application. You only need to submit one application, no matter how many schools you rank.

What will the program cost me?

Families participating in this program receive an educational certificate, which is paid directly to the school on behalf of the family. The certificate is worth either approximately 50% of the per-pupil allocation of state funds to the student's local school district, or the school's tuition and fees, whichever is less. If the school's tuition and fees exceed the certificate amount, the parents are responsible for paying the difference.

If you have additional questions or are interested in participating in the School Program Program, please visit our [website](#) or reach out to the Office of School Choice at studentscholarships@la.gov.

Will participating schools provide transportation?

Providing transportation for all Scholarship students is not a requirement of this program. Please check with the participating school of your choice to determine if transportation services are available.

Application Questions

Does it matter how quickly I apply?

No. There is no preference for early applications. All qualified applicants who meet the deadline will have an equal chance of selection, regardless of whether they are the first or the last to submit an application.

Do all students who apply to the program receive an award?

Continuing students are awarded scholarships first, and the Department will conduct a lottery to determine which new students are awarded a scholarship.

Scholarships are awarded contingent upon funding availability and based on the availability of services at participating schools.

- Application Timeline:
 - February – Application opens
 - March – Application closes and verification due to first choice school
 - Late April/Beginning of May – LDOE notifies families of award status

Each participating school has discretion in maintaining their own admissions criteria and may decide whether or not to admit and enroll a student. However, all admissions criteria must align with what is in the student handbook.

What if my child is entering a grade their current school does not serve?

You must submit a new application and list choices that serve the appropriate grade. **If you do not submit an application, your child will not receive an award for next year.** Continuing students are not required to provide eligibility documentation.

How do I add my child's siblings to the School Choice Program?

If you currently have a child/children receiving an SCP award and would like to apply for their sibling(s), you will need to complete an application for the new sibling. It is important that you indicate on the application that your child currently has a sibling participating in the program. **Eligibility documentation must be submitted for each additional sibling.**

Awards and Enrollment Questions

How will I be notified of my student's award status?

Scholarship awards are made by LDOE and will be communicated directly to families via email and mail in late April. Schools cannot inform families that they have been accepted to their school as a Scholarship student prior to awards being made. Families that have questions about this policy should reach out to studentscholarships@la.gov.

How do I accept my student's SCP award?

Families must complete registration at the awarded school before the deadline stated in the award notification letter. An award is not confirmed until registration is complete. If families fail to register by the deadline, the student will lose their award.

What should I do if I am not happy with my student's award?

Once the transfer window opens in the summer, the student may then apply for a transfer to another SCP school. The transfer form would be completed at the new school and submitted to LDOE for approval.

Current SCP Student Questions

What if my child is entering a grade their current school does not serve?

A current SCP student who is completing the final grade offered at their current SCP school must submit a new application and list choices that serve the upcoming grade in order to be matched.

Can students transfer to other participating SCP schools?

Current SCP students who wish to transfer from one participating school to another during the school year are required to submit a formal Transfer Request to LDOE signed by both the parent/guardian and a representative of the receiving school.

A student is not permitted to enroll at a different participating school until LDOE has notified the participating school that the transfer has been approved. If a student transfers without a completed transfer form and approval from LDOE, he/she may lose their award. It is the school's responsibility to inform the family when the transfer has been approved.

How do families withdraw from the School Choice Program?

If a family wishes to withdraw their student(s) from the program, they should notify the Scholarship school.

Students who withdraw from a participating school without transferring to another participating school will lose their award for the remainder of the year.

If the student would like to apply for an award the following year, the family will need to

re-verify eligibility, and the student must again meet all other eligibility requirements.

Students with documented medical leave may request a hold on their award by contacting studentscholarships@la.gov.

What do families do if their student is expelled from their SCP school?

All schools must adhere to the policies outlined in their handbook when implementing expulsions. Families should receive and sign for these policies at the beginning of each school year. In addition, families should request written notification if their child is expelled or asked not to return.

If a student is officially expelled from their current participating school, families may seek a transfer by submitting a Transfer Request to LDOE.

Additional Resources

For more information about the School Choice Program:

- Please visit the program website [here](#), or
- Access the [Family Participation Guide](#), or
- Email studentscholarships@la.gov, or
- Call LDOE's Help Center at 1.877.453.2721. (The Help Center is available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

Current SCP families are encouraged to communicate directly with their child's school. The school is the best source of information about school requirements and the School Choice Program.

If you have any additional questions regarding the application process, please contact our office at studentscholarships@la.gov for assistance.

Appendix A: List of Participating Schools

2024-2025 School Choice Program Participating Schools				
Site Code	Parish	School Name	Grades Served	Phone
506134	St. Tammany	Archbishop Hannan	8-12	985-249-6363
506127	Jefferson	Archbishop Rummel Jr	8-9	504-834-5592
506005	Jefferson	Archbishop Rummel Sr	10-12	504-834-5593
502048	East Baton Rouge	Diocese of BR SPED	K-8	225-336-8735 ext. 1210
560001	Jefferson	Ecole Classique	K-12	504-887-3507
705001	East Baton Rouge	Greater Baton Rouge Hope Academy	K-12	225-293-0141
505002	Calcasieu	Immaculate Conception Cathedral School	K-8	(337) 433-3497
506034	St. Tammany	Our Lady of the Lake	K-7	504-237-1785
505005	Calcasieu	Our Lady Queen of Heaven	K-8	337-477-7349
505006	Calcasieu	Our Lady's School	K-8	337-527-7828
711001	Orleans	Raphael Academy	9-12	504-524-5955
506062	Jefferson	St. Benilde	K-7	504-833-9894
506067	Jefferson	St. Christopher School	K-7	504-837-6871
505009	Calcasieu	St. Louis Catholic High	9-12	337-436-7275 ext. 229
505010	Calcasieu	St. Margaret Catholic School	K-8	337-436-7959
506099	Orleans	St. Michael Special School (New Orleans)	K-12	504-524-7285
502036	East Baton Rouge	St. Michael the Archangel (Baton Rouge)	9-12	225-753-9782
506101	St. Tammany	St. Paul's School (Boys)	8-12	985-892-3200 ext 1943
506103	St. Tammany	St. Peter Catholic School	K-7	985-892-1831
506161	Jefferson	St. Therese	K-12	504-513-4400
694001	East Baton Rouge	The Brighton School	1-12	225-291-2524
692003	East Baton Rouge	The Dunham School	K-12	225-767-7097

Appendix B: Special Education Services Offered

2024-2025 School Choice Program Participating Schools

School			Services Offered						
Site Code	Parish	School Name	Autism	Developmental Delay	Emotional Disturbance	Mental Disability	Other Health Impairment	Specific Learning Disability	Traumatic Brain Injury
506134	St. Tammany	Archbishop Hannan	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
506127	Jefferson	Archbishop Rummel Jr	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
506005	Jefferson	Archbishop Rummel Sr	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
502048	East Baton Rouge	Diocese of BR SPED	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
560001	Jefferson	Ecole Classique	✓	✓			✓	✓	
705001	East Baton Rouge	Greater Baton Rouge Hope Academy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
505002	Calcasieu	Immaculate Conception Cathedral School	✓	✓			✓	✓	
506034	St. Tammany	Our Lady of the Lake	✓	✓			✓	✓	
505005	Calcasieu	Our Lady Queen of Heaven	✓	✓			✓	✓	
505006	Calcasieu	Our Lady's School	✓						
711001	Orleans	Raphael Academy	✓				✓	✓	
506062	Jefferson	St. Benilde	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
506067	Jefferson	St. Christopher School	✓	✓			✓	✓	
505009	Calcasieu	St. Louis Catholic High	✓	✓				✓	
505010	Calcasieu	St. Margaret Catholic	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
506099	Orleans	St. Michael Special School (New Orleans)	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
502036	East Baton Rouge	St. Michael the Archangel (Baton Rouge)	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
506101	St. Tammany	St. Paul's School (Boys)	✓				✓	✓	
506103	St. Tammany	St. Peter Catholic School	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
506161	Jefferson	St. Therese	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
694001	East Baton Rouge	The Brighton School	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
692003	East Baton Rouge	The Dunham School	✓	✓			✓	✓	