
The BOOST Scholarship Program has Certain Requirements for Participating Schools

The Broadening Options and Opportunities for Students Today (BOOST) scholarship program for the 2022-2023 school year is governed by the Annual Budget Bill. For the 2022-2023 program year, Senate Bill 290 (Chapter 484) of the 2022 legislative session will govern the program. The Annual Budget Bill includes certain requirements for nonpublic schools to participate.

The Bill requires that BOOST schools must: participate in the Nonpublic Textbook and Technology Program during the 2021-2022 school year; offer programs beyond kindergarten; administer certain assessments and will provide assessment results; and comply with certain non-discrimination laws, among other requirements. The BOOST Advisory and Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) have developed requirements related to administration of the program.

Please read this Assurances form and fill in the information at the bottom of the form. Your school must Agree that it complies with the terms and conditions in the Assurances in order to participate in the BOOST 2022-2023 program. If you have questions, please email them to MSDE at boost.msde@maryland.gov. Thank you.

Assurances for Schools Participating in BOOST for School Year 2022-2023:

I hereby agree, as the Principal or Head of School, that our school complies with the following terms and conditions:

1) Non-discrimination:

a. The school operates in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended. The school complies with Title 20, Subtitle 6 of the State Government Article, which prohibits discrimination in employment. The school does not discriminate in student admissions, retention, or expulsion, or otherwise discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression. Nothing herein shall require any school or institution to adopt any rule, regulation, or policy that conflicts with its religious or moral teachings. However, all participating schools must agree that they will not discriminate in student admissions, retention, or expulsion, or otherwise discriminate based on race, color, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression. If a nonpublic school does not comply with these requirements, it shall reimburse MSDE [the Maryland State Department of Education] all scholarship funds received under the BOOST program and may not charge the student tuition and fees instead. The only other legal remedy for violation of this provision is ineligibility for participation in the BOOST program.

b. The school had incorporated the following statement into its student handbook as required by Annotated Code of Maryland Code, Education Article, § 26-704(c) (Please see exceptions under § 26-702):

"It is the policy of the State of Maryland that all public and publicly funded schools and school programs operate in compliance with:

(1) Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964; and

(2) Title 26, Subtitle 7 of the Education Article of the Maryland Code, which states that public and publicly funded schools and programs may not:

(i) Discriminate against a current student, a prospective student, or the parent or guardian of a current or prospective student on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability;

(ii) Refuse enrollment of a prospective student, expel a current student, or withhold privileges from a current student, a prospective student, or the parent or guardian of a current or prospective student because of an individual's race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability; or

(iii) Discipline, invoke a penalty against, or take any other retaliatory action against a student or parent or guardian of a student who files a complaint alleging that the program or school discriminated against the student, regardless of the outcome of the complaint."

2) Assessments:

a. Eligible BOOST schools are those that will administer national, norm referenced standardized assessments chosen from the list of assessments published by the United States Department of Education to qualify nonpublic schools for the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program. The nonpublic schools must administer the assessments to all students as follows:

- English/language arts and mathematics assessments each year for students in grades 3 through 8, and at least once for students in grades 9 through 12; and

- a science assessment at least once for students in grades 3 through 5, at least once for students in grades 6 through 9, and at least once for students in grades 10 through 12.

b. The assessments referenced in #2a must be administered in the 2022-2023 school year.

c. The assessment results must be maintained by the school and reported to MSDE as required.

d. The school must report the assessments that were administered and the results of the assessments for the 2021-2022 school year. MSDE is required to report these assessment results to the Maryland General Assembly in an aggregate manner that does not violate student data privacy.

3) If an eligible student becomes ineligible during the course of the school year, the school will notify MSDE within 7 business days.

4) If a student becomes ineligible (withdraws from the school) during the course of the school year, the school will return the scholarship funds to MSDE on a pro-rata basis. The pro-rata calculation is to divide the number of school days the student was enrolled (numerator) by the total number of school days in the school's academic year (denominator). The school's written tuition refund policy will be considered by MSDE in calculating the pro-rata amount owed.

5) The school will provide to MSDE financial aid information for each BOOST student so that MSDE can determine whether BOOST aid plus non-BOOST aid exceeds tuition; if so, MSDE will reduce the BOOST award accordingly or require the school to reimburse MSDE.

6) BOOST Scholarships are to supplement, not supplant, other financial aid that the student may be receiving in 2022-2023. Schools may not use BOOST funds as a substitute for other financial aid funds.

7) Parents or guardians are required to make a meaningful contribution to the school consistent with the school's policies. The contribution may be monetary or based on volunteer work, as determined by the school.

8) The school will maintain BOOST records for three years and will make all records related to the program available for review and audit by authorized representatives of MSDE.

9) The school understands that it may be randomly selected to participate in an annual MSDE on-site technical review of schools participating in the BOOST program.

10) The school agrees that it will provide MSDE with the following information, at such time and in such manner as prescribed by MSDE:

a. The number of State certified and non-certified teachers in core subject areas. The deadline for submitting the information is September 15, 2022;

b. Confirmation that the BOOST student is enrolled in the school for the 2022-2023 school year. MSDE will request this information in August 2022 and the deadline will be in early September 2022; other information collected in this process is:

c. Indication of whether a BOOST student has a disability and is eligible for an Individualized Education Program (IEP), a 504 Plan, an Individual Services Plan, or a similar educational plan used by the nonpublic school for students with special needs.

d. The amount and type of non-BOOST financial aid the BOOST student received in the 2021-2022 school year, if the student attended the same school and received financial aid, and the amount and type of non-BOOST financial aid the BOOST student will receive in the 2022-2023 school year.

e. Tuition rate for the 2022-2023 school year, including fees.

f. The name of the assessments administered and the assessment results for the 2021-2022 school year required in accordance with Assurance #2. The deadline for submitting the information will be September 2022.

g. The number of students who received BOOST scholarships at your school in 2021-2022 who withdrew or were expelled, the reason(s) for which they withdrew or were expelled, and the length of time the students were enrolled before withdrawing or being expelled. The deadline for submitting the information will be in September 2022.

By receiving funds under this program, I hereby agree, as the official representative of the school, that our school complies with the above terms and conditions:

Name of School for Assurances: _____

Name of School Official: _____
(Must be Principal or Head of School)

Title of School Official: _____
(Must be Principal or Head of School)

Principal School Official Email Address: _____

Note: If your school does not agree with the above terms and conditions and does not intend to participate in the BOOST Program, please check the box below and sign the form.

By checking this box, the above referenced School Official, on behalf of the above referenced schools elects NOT TO participate in the BOOST Program for the 2022-2023 school year.