

The list below constitutes frequently asked questions about the [BOOST Scholarship Program](#). This page will be updated with frequently asked questions and answers on a continual basis.

1. Question: I did not work in 2023. Or, I receive SSI benefits. Or, my only income is child support. Do I still need to upload a 2023 Federal 1040 Tax form?

Answer: The BOOST Program only accepts the Federal 1040 Tax form. So, all applicants are required to complete a 2023 Federal 1040 Tax form with their taxable income and upload it to their online application. Some SSI benefits are taxable, and some are not. [Here is some guidance from the IRS on SSI benefits](#). When in doubt, please consult a tax professional.

2. Question: Can you provide some resources for completing the Federal 1040 Tax Form?

Answer: Sure! Below are some helpful resources:

- [Free File Fillable Forms and Guided Tax Software](#)
- [IRS Tax Tips](#)
- [IRS Customer Service](#)
- Visit [211 Maryland](#) for services in Maryland
- Reach out to your tax professional for advice

3. Question: I'm still not sure how to fill out the 2023 Federal 1040 Tax form. What should I do?

Answer: Please consult with a tax professional or review the guidance from the IRS. We cannot provide tax advice.

4. Question: I have not filed my Federal 1040 tax forms yet for 2023. Can I upload taxes from 2022 or my W-2?

Answer: No, your application will be incomplete and will be declined. Do not submit your application until you have the correct documentation.

5. Question: Can I just update my 2023-2024 application for the 2024-2025 school year?

Answer: No, these are two different applications. You must complete the newest application for the correct school year. [Here is a link to the application](#).

6. Question: My child's school changed. How can I edit my application?

Answer: You have to send us a request to open your application up for you to edit it. [Click here](#) for a video on how to do this.

7. Question: Are applications awarded on a first-come-first-serve basis?

Answer: No. Applications are reviewed for eligibility & priority. The deadline to apply is May 10, 2024.

8. Question: When will parents be notified if they are receiving an award?

Answer: Applicants will be notified by August 2024 of their award status.

9. Question: Will new applicants get an award?

Answer: We won't know until the budget bill is passed in April 2024 and the BOOST Advisory Board meets in Summer 2024. So far, the draft bill provides for \$9 million in scholarships (the same as last year) and prioritizes renewals (the same as last year).

10. Question: Can I listen to the BOOST Advisory Board meeting?

Answer: Yes! Once the date has been scheduled, we'll send a link to all parents who have submitted an application. Or, you can visit the BOOST Advisory Board [webpage](#).

11. Question: How many families applied last year who were new versus renewals? How many students were awarded during the 2023-2024 school year?

Answer: Please review the [Joint Chairman's Report BOOST January 2024](#) (see page 4) for the 2023-2024 school year. To view reports from previous school years, look under reports on the left-hand side of the BOOST [webpage](#).

12. Question: Are there any other programs that offer tuition assistance?

Answer: Currently, BOOST is the only state-sponsored scholarship program. Some private schools offer discounts or financial aid based on family income or student merit. The school may have information on private scholarships. We've gathered a short list of other opportunities:

- [Children's Scholarship Fund Baltimore](#)
- [The Theresa F. Truschel Charitable Foundation, Inc](#)
- [Knotts Scholarship](#)
- [Hillel International](#)
- [G.B. Charities](#)
- [The Maryland Knights of Columbus Scholarship Program](#)

Beyond 12th grade, the Maryland Higher Education Commission ([MHEC](#)) offers scholarships and financial aid.

13. Question: My family is really struggling, and we need some assistance. What resources are available?

Answer: If you are struggling financially, the Department of Human Services ([DHS](#)) offers all types of assistance (nutrition assistance, medical assistance, emergency assistance, etc.). Families may also turn to the [American Red Cross](#) for support during a financial crisis. If your child has a disability and you are looking for information on your rights, please check out the Parent Information Series offered by MSDE's [Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services](#).

14. Question: What happens with the award funds for awards that are declined?

Answer: The funds go back into the BOOST fund.

15. Question: I qualify for free meals at the public school and receive SNAP benefits. Does this mean I'm automatically eligible for BOOST?

Answer: No, not necessarily. We review your 2023 Federal 1040 Tax forms to determine your household size and the household income. Please know that the BOOST Program does not allow business losses to reduce income. Additionally, we consider income received from interest, dividends, IRA distributions, and social security benefits as part of your household income. We then compare your household size and household income against the most recent [FARMs](#) income eligibility guidelines. Therefore, while your child may receive free meals at the public school, it doesn't guarantee eligibility for a BOOST award.

16. Question: I see that renewals are first priority. What does a "renewal" mean?

Answer: A renewal student is a student that received and accepted a scholarship award for the 2023-2024 school year, and the school confirmed that your child was enrolled there.