

How to Apply for a BISON Fund Scholarship

The Application process has closed for the 2015-2016 school year. **The new Applicant Eligibility Form will be available beginning on January 1, 2016 for the 2016-2017 school year.**

Participating **families are required to contribute to their children's education** and are therefore responsible for costs not covered by the scholarship. Each family agrees to pay a minimum of \$500 per school year towards their children's tuition.

Grants are **renewable annually provided that the family keeps up their portion of the tuition payments**, the family remains financially eligible, and the child remains enrolled in an accredited private school in Kindergarten through eighth grade.

The maximum award we provide per student per school year is \$1,800.

BISON Fund Annual Income Eligibility Scale for 2015 – 2016 School Year Maximum Income Based on 2014 Household Income	
Household size	Maximum Income
2	\$40,347
3	\$50,761
4	\$61,175
5	\$71,589
6	\$82,003
7	\$92,417
For each additional child add \$10,414	

DISCLAIMER: Applicants are not guaranteed a grant by completing this application.

The BISON Children's Scholarship Fund, Inc. | P.O. Box 1134, Buffalo, New York 14205 | Phone 716.854.0869
| Fax 716.854.0877

The BISON Children's Scholarship Fund FAQs

Who qualifies for the scholarship? All applicants must be residents of the eight counties of WNY with children attending K-8th grade. The total family income must fall within the income eligibility scale (below). You may only apply for your biological children or children that you have legal guardianship or custody.

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When can I apply? Applications are available starting in early January and are open until April 30th. Preference is NOT given to early applications; however you must apply by April 30th to be considered.

How do I apply for the scholarship? You can apply online through our website or download and print a paper application. The local schools also have paper applications available.

How are BISON scholarship recipients chosen? All scholarships are awarded using a random computerized lottery which is conducted in early May. Lottery winners will receive a winner's kit with important papers that must be completed in order to remain eligible for the scholarship.

How do I know if I won the lottery? All applicants will be notified by mail the results of the lottery drawing in May.

Why do families have to pay part of the tuition? One key component of educational success is parental involvement. Making a financial sacrifice is a strong incentive to becoming, and remaining, involved. Therefore, the scholarship is a hand-up, not a hand-out. The families are required to pay a minimum of \$500 per family.

What if I am not satisfied with my child's school? You are free to transfer your child to another private school. Contact the BISON Fund office to let us know you are switching schools and we will send you the necessary paperwork.

Can the scholarships be used for pre-school or pre-kindergarten? No. Children must be at least 5 years old and entering kindergarten or a higher grade to be eligible for the scholarship.

Listed below are the four steps lottery winners need to complete to be considered for a BISON scholarship.

All lottery winners will receive an application and financial form along with a school commitment form. The application and financial forms are to be completed by the parent/guardian who applied for the lottery and the school commitment form is to be completed by the school you have chosen for your child. Along with these three forms, we must receive all required documents by the indicated deadline.

Scholarship recipients may use the scholarship at a private or parochial (must be tuition-based) school of their choice.

Please see our School Directory for a list of schools in the Western New York area ([click here for list of schools »](#)). When searching for a school, please keep in mind that the maximum amount awarded to 2013-2014 recipients was \$1,400 per child.

Please be sure to include a copy of all income sources including your FEDERAL 1040 tax return, child support, business income, public assistance, food stamps, social security income, unemployment insurance, worker's compensation and financial assistance from friends and family. Incomplete financial paperwork will lead to lose of award.

After we receive all the required forms and documents, your scholarship amount will be calculated based on your household size and income. You must re-qualify to continue with the BISON program as long as your child is enrolled in a private school through eighth grade.

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