



giving parents a choice- giving children a chance

The BISON Children's Scholarship Fund FAQ's

1. Who qualifies for the scholarship?

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

2017-2018 Income Eligibility Scale	
Maximum Income Based on Total Annual 2016 Household Income	
Household Size	Maximum Allowable Income
2	\$41,091
3	\$51,710
4	\$62,329
5	\$72,949
6	\$83,568
7	\$94,212

2. How do new families apply?

New families must first go online and fill out the Pre-Application Form **electronically**. The new family Pre-Application Form deadline is **February 28, 2017**. You can apply online through our website at www.bisonfund.com. Preference is NOT given to early applications; however you must apply by February 28th to be considered.

3. How are BISON scholarship recipients chosen?

Scholarships are awarded using a lottery from all submitted Pre- Application Forms which is conducted on March 10, 2017. Lottery winners will receive an e-mail with a link directing them to complete a full application and upload supporting documentation that must be completed to receive the scholarship.

4. How do I know if I won the lottery?

All applicants will be notified the results of the lottery by e-mail after the March 10, 2017 drawing.

5. I've received an e-mail that I was awarded a scholarship – now what?

There will be a link for you to click to complete your full application. Click on the link and follow the application steps. The deadline to complete the application is April 30, 2017.

Application steps that lottery winners need to complete to be considered for a BISON scholarship.

1. Families selected in the lottery drawing will be notified by e-mail with a link to fill out the full online application. We must receive all required supporting documents by April 30, 2017. 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. Once you select a school, contact them to fill out the School Commitment form in our online scholarship database.

2. Scholarship recipients may use the scholarship at any private school of their choice. Please see the school list tab on our web-site for a list of schools in the Western New York area. When searching for a school, please keep in mind that the maximum award amount for the 2017-2018 school year is \$1,800 per child.

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

6. I've received an e-mail that I am on the waitlist – now what?

Unfortunately, there are always more applicants than funding available. We will keep your name on the waitlist should more funds become available. If you are not chosen for the academic year, you will need to resubmit a Pre-Application Form to be considered for funding for the next school year.

7. 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.

8. What if I am not satisfied with my child's school?

You are free to transfer your child to another private school. Your scholarship will transfer unless you are delinquent with tuition payments or a child is asked to leave. Contact the BISON Fund office to let us know you are switching schools and we will send you the necessary paperwork.

9. Can the scholarships be used for pre-school or pre-kindergarten?

No. Children must be at least 5 years old by 12/31/2017 and entering kindergarten or a higher grade to be eligible for the scholarship.