



## **Stay In School Fund Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is the purpose of the program?**

To ensure minimal disruption to students' learning due to COVID-19, preserve Oklahoma's existing education system, and prevent an unmanageable surge in students in the public-school system at a time when schools will already face significant challenges to maintain appropriate social distancing and cleaning regimes due to COVID-19.

### **Who is eligible for the funds?**

Any Oklahoma K-12 student who meets the income eligibility, was enrolled in an approved non-profit private school on March 15, 2020, and is enrolled in the same school for the 2020-2021 school year OR ANY student attending a tuition-free school, a state-accredited addiction recovery school, or a school that subsidizes at least 90% of the cost to educate all of its students.

### **What is the value of the award?**

Students can receive \$6,500 or the 2020-2021 published tuition (whichever is less) at an approved non-profit private school. Students attending a tuition-free school, a state-accredited addiction recovery school, or a school that subsidizes at least 90% of the cost to educate all of its students will be entitled to \$6,500.

### **Won't this money mostly benefit wealthy families?**

No, the first round of awarding will be given to those at or below 185% of the [Federal Poverty Guideline](#) that apply during the first week. After that, students whose family income falls at or below 350% of the federal poverty guideline will be awarded.

### **How will this program help public schools?**

If just 5% to 10% percent of private schools close their doors or that share of current private-school students return to public schools, it will translate into an infusion of thousands of new students in the public-school system, dramatically straining existing resources. It will also mean public schools have to find room for thousands of additional students at a time when the Oklahoma State Department of Education has already recommended that schools may have to stagger the days students are in school buildings, space desks at least six feet

apart, and even hold classes outdoors or in gymnasiums, auditoriums, and cafeterias. An influx of thousands of new students into the mix will severely strain the public-school system, and unnecessarily so, when we can maintain those students in their existing private school facilities.

### **How does this address Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)?**

The families who will be aided by this program are already suffering through job losses and the associated loss of income. To force children from those families to uproot to entirely new schools, separated from their friends and educational support system, will compound ACEs for many of these children. The Stay in School Oklahoma program will provide greater stability to those children, and reduce the associated trauma they may face in their lives because of COVID-19.

### **At what schools can the funds be used?**

The schools must be approved nonprofit private schools that serve K-12 students.

### **How does a school become an approved school?**

The school fills out a short registration form to be available soon on the Oklahoma Private School Accrediting Commission (OPSAC) website (<https://www.opsac.org>) and as long as it is a school with more than 10 students, is a private non-profit school that educates children in any grades K-12, it should be approved.

### **Where do students apply?**

Students will apply at [here](#). There will be a link on that website to the application provided by FACTS Management Company.

### **What are the deadlines for the funds?**

Applications can be filed beginning on August 10, 2020. Awarding will be continuous until all funds have been awarded so it is recommended to submit and upload required documents promptly. The first round of awarding will be given to students whose family income falls at or below 185% of the [Federal Poverty Guideline](#) that apply during the first week. After that, awarding will begin for all students up whose family income falls at or below 350% of the Federal Poverty Guideline on a first come first served basis.

### **What is involved in completing the application requirements?**

First step is to submit the FACTS application accessible from the link at [www.opsac.org](http://www.opsac.org). After submission you will need to upload your 2019 tax return and/or any proof of non-taxable income that is requested.

### **When will I find out if I have been awarded?**

Once your documentation is complete, your application will be processed by FACTS within 14 days, and the school your child attends will be verifying enrollment eligibility and tuition

amounts. Awarding will be done weekly, with notices sent out by end of the week for applications where eligibility was verified by Wednesday of that week. You will receive an email letting you know to log back into the application portal to view your notice.

**Who is FACTS?**

Stay in School Fund & Bridge the Gap Digital Wallet has partnered with ClassWallet who utilizes FACTS Management Company for the application process, income verification, and awarding. FACTS is used across the nation by Scholarship Organizations and K-12 private schools to provide a secure application process along with need, income, and eligibility verification.

**What if the school I go to uses FACTS and I already have a FACTS account, or submitted an application for financial aid this year?**

You will log in with the same FACTS account to apply for the Stay in School Fund and Bridging the Gap Digital Wallet. If you have submitted a FACTS application for the 20-21 school year, you will be directed to your application summary where you will click on ‘view form’ and, on the student section, add the program. After you save on that page, your application is submitted to the program, and the application will prompt you to fill out any additional questions for the program. Your application summary will update to show you if there are any additional documents required to complete the application.

**For assistance completing the application, please contact FACTS at (844) 649-2921**

**2020 Federal Poverty Guideline Chart**

<b>Household</b>				
<b>/Family Size</b>		<b>*100%*</b>	<b>185%</b>	<b>350%</b>
<b>1</b>		\$12,760	23,606	44,660
<b>2</b>		\$17,240	31,894	60,340
<b>3</b>		\$21,720	40,182	76,020
<b>4</b>		\$26,200	48,470	91,700
<b>5</b>		\$30,680	56,758	107,380
<b>6</b>		\$35,160	65,046	123,060
<b>7</b>		\$39,640	73,334	138,740
<b>8</b>		\$44,120	81,622	154,420
<b>9</b>		\$48,600	89,910	170,100
<b>10</b>		\$53,080	98,198	185,780