OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIP UPDATE FOR NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS
July 30, 2015

News:
Because the ongoing legal challenge to the Opportunity Scholarship Program has been resolved, the SEAA will be able to send funds to the nonpublic schools enrolling Opportunity Scholarship recipients for the 2015-16 school year.

The timing for the fall 2015 disbursement will be contingent upon the budget process the North Carolina General Assembly is now finalizing. Specific dates for Opportunity Scholarship payments are not available now. When the General Assembly completes the budget process, an exact calendar for disbursements will be announced.

SEAA is offering a webinar to explain the fall semester disbursement and answer questions about Opportunity Scholarship processes. Plan to attend any one of the four webinars, offered Monday, August 3, at 10:00 a.m. or 2:00 p.m. or Wednesday, August 5, at 10:00 a.m. or 2:00 p.m. Click here for details.

Quick Explanations: Opportunity Scholarship processes and nonpublic school action
All processes occur via the Nonpublic School Portal.

- **Recipient Certification** – Nonpublic schools access lists of students who have accepted the Opportunity Scholarship and have chosen to attend the school. Nonpublic school officials provide the SEAA certain information to certify the recipients. Click here for instructions.
- **Endorsement Forms** – SEAA makes an endorsement form available on the Nonpublic School Portal for each student who has been certified by the school. The school must ensure that applicants (parent or guardian) sign the endorsement form at the nonpublic school. The school will upload an electronic copy of the signed endorsement form and keep the original on file.
- **Disbursement Rosters** – When payment is made to the nonpublic school, a disbursement roster is available on the Nonpublic School Portal. Schools must apply the funds to the school account of the appropriate Opportunity Scholarship recipients within 10 days of receipt of funds. Opportunity Scholarships are not transferable.

Note that data may be reported to the media about all applicants to the Opportunity Scholarship Program. Reporters may want to know how many applicants have chosen different nonpublic schools. These numbers may represent applicants and not Opportunity Scholarship recipients. Only students who have been awarded an Opportunity Scholarship and who have accepted it will appear on a Recipient Certification list.
Another quick explanation: Enrollment documentation required of certain students

New students in 2015-16 who have been awarded the Opportunity Scholarship are matched with North Carolina Department of Instruction (DPI) records to verify previous public school enrollment (2nd grade and up, renewals excluded). If DPI is unable to match the record, SEAA will ask the family to send documentation to confirm public school enrollment for the spring 2015 semester. Nonpublic schools will not receive payment from the Opportunity Scholarship Program until the public school documentation is received and approved.

If a family whose student cannot be matched by DPI has chosen a school for 2015-16, SEAA will notify that school that the family is being asked for this documentation. Only students who were awarded an Opportunity Scholarship were matched to DPI records. Note also that only families with students not matched to DPI records must provide documents.

Acceptable documentation will include a North Carolina public school transcript or report card which clearly shows enrollment / attendance for the full spring 2015 semester.

Review of Opportunity Scholarship Program resources:
Click on any of the following topics to access previous Updates, which are archived here.

- Testing Instructions
- Testing Fees
- Income Verification and Income Verification clarification
- Recipient Certification and reporting student costs
- Instructions for Recipient Certification
- Sending documents to SEAA
- Student withdrawal / Return of funds

Opportunity Scholarship general information: Program Overview and Frequently Asked Questions

Nonpublic School information: Nonpublic School Program Overview and Frequently Asked Questions and the Nonpublic School Training Document

Opportunity Scholarship Program
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