

2024-2025 Opportunity Scholarship Report

Dr. Rob Dietrich – Senior Director, Enterprise Data and Reporting
Amanda Fratrik – Business Systems Manager,
School Business Finance

Statutory Requirements

- G.S. §115C-562.7(f), the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is tasked annually with reporting the **cumulative financial difference** between the Opportunity Scholarship grant amount awarded to students who previously attended public schools and the average State per-pupil allocation for students enrolled in public school units.

Statutory Requirements

- A "prior public-school attendee"
 - is defined as any student receiving an Opportunity Scholarship who was enrolled in a North Carolina public-school unit for a majority of either the first or second month of the school year immediately before enrolling in a nonpublic school.
 - Due to the enactment of Session Law 2024-55, SECTION 6.5A.(e), the General Assembly delayed the reporting deadlines for the 2024–2025 fiscal year: the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority (NCSEAA) must submit the required data to DPI by April 1, 2025, and DPI must report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by June 1, 2025.

Opportunity Scholarship Methodology

- NCSEAA provided Student-Level Dataset to determine the public K12 students who were awarded Opportunity Scholarships
- NCSEAA does not use UID. The data was provided by matching on five data points since NCSEAA does not use UID
 - UIDs
 - Student first name
 - Student last name
 - Date of birth
 - County of residence

Statutory Requirements

- G.S. §115C-562.2(b2) specifies the amount of Opportunity Scholarship funding a student is eligible to receive based on family income tier.
- The scholarship amount in each income tier is a percentage of the “average State per-pupil allocation for average daily membership in the prior fiscal year.”

Tier	Family income as a percentage of federal free or reduced-price lunch income amount	Percentage of average State per-pupil allocation	FY 2024-25 Tier Amount
1	100%	100%	\$7,468
2	100% to 200%	90%	\$6,722
3	200% to 450%	60%	\$4,480
4	above 450%	45%	\$3,360

Opportunity Scholarship Timing

Base Year	Year One	Year Two
FY 2023-24 Student enrolled in public school	FY 2024-25 Student receives OPS (in private school)	FY 2025-26 Student receives OPS (in private school)

Base Year:

Student was enrolled in Month 1 or Month 2

Year One:

Student received Opportunity Scholarship was enrolled in base year

Year Two:

Student received Opportunity Scholarship would not be enrolled in PSU 2425 (Unless Spring Tuition only)

Opportunity Scholarship Results

Semester Received	Number of Students	Total Scholarship \$ Awarded	Average State Per-pupil Allocation	Difference between Scholarship and State PPE
Fall or Full Year	5,955	\$34,374,870	\$44,467,533	\$10,092,663
Spring Only	755	\$1,967,473	\$5,637,781	

Opportunity Scholarship Recommendations

1. SEC. 7.82(C) OF S.L. 2023-134 STATES: “It is the intent of the General Assembly to reinvest in the public schools any savings realized by the State each year, beginning in the 2025-2026 school year, because of the transfer of a student from a public school unit to a nonpublic school where the student accepts an opportunity scholarship grant award that is less than one hundred percent (100%) of the average State per-pupil allocation for average daily membership for a student in a public school unit.”
 - The amount needed for reinvestment in FY 2025-26 is \$10,092,663.

Opportunity Scholarship Recommendations

2. NC UNIQUE STATEWIDE IDENTIFIER (UID) SYSTEM

DPI recommends that NCSEAA start using the UID system for Opportunity Scholarship recipients. The UID would allow for efficient matching of student data received.