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Opportunity Scholarship Fact Sheet

Do Opportunity Scholarships direct public money to private schools?

No. Opportunity Scholarships are funded through tax credits and do not take money away from public schools. Any taxpayer required to pay the Modified Business Tax may receive a credit against the tax otherwise due for any donation of money made by the taxpayer to an approved Scholarship Grant Organization (“SGO”) by the Nevada Department of Education. The SGOs then provide private school scholarships to families who meet the income requirements.

Did Opportunity Scholarship funding decrease last legislative session?

Yes. During the 2023 Legislative Session, the Democratic majority in the Legislature declined to provide additional funding for the program. The funding cap decreased from \$11.4 million to the statutory credit limit of \$6.7 million.

Are hundreds of students at risk of losing their scholarships?

Yes, barring intervention. On August 9, the Interim Finance Committee (IFC) voted against Governor Joe Lombardo’s proposal to utilize unallocated federal COVID relief funds to maintain Opportunity Scholarship funding for the 2023-2024 school year. With the denial of the proposal, several hundred Nevada school children faced losing their Opportunity Scholarships and removal from their schools.

Did Governor Lombardo and Republican legislators propose increasing Opportunity Scholarship funding in the 2023 Legislative Session?

Yes. Governor Lombardo proposed increasing Opportunity Scholarship funding to \$50 million through his Education Achievement, Opportunity, and Accountability Act (AB400), which Democrats gutted to remove the scholarship funding increase. Additionally, Senator Heidi Seevers Gansert proposed SB220, which would have expanded Opportunity Scholarships to thousands of students. Democrats denied SB220 a hearing.

Did Governor Lombardo sign the largest education budget in state history?

Yes. Governor Lombardo’s commitment to Nevada’s education system is unparalleled, and he signed the largest education budget in state history. Governor Lombardo’s budget allocates over \$12 billion in funding for K-12 education over the next biennium. This budget makes a historic investment in K-12 education, increasing per pupil funding by \$2,500 next year, a 25% increase. Furthermore, Governor Lombardo’s budget fully funds the weights of the Pupil-Centered Funding Plan, bolstering per pupil funding by \$4,035 for English language learners, \$3,137 for at-risk students, and \$1,075 for gifted and talented students.

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