

SGO SCHOLARSHIPS

Support OLS Students with Financial Scholarships and Get an Indiana State Tax Credit

Most people have heard about the Indiana School Choice Program (also known as the Voucher Program) which helps make Catholic education more affordable for families. Here is what you might not know...

There are four pathways for a student to qualify for a voucher:

- A student must have spent two semesters in a public school.
- A student must have received a voucher or an **SGO Scholarship** in a previous school year.
- A student must have a sibling who has received a voucher or an **SGO Scholarship** in a previous school year.
- A student must have an IEP/SP and receive special education services.

Did you notice that an SGO Scholarship was mentioned in two of the four pathways? So, what is an SGO Scholarship and how does a student get one?

Since 2009, SGO Scholarships have provided a public incentive for private giving. Individuals and corporations can receive a 50% state tax credit when making donations to an approved Scholarship Granting Organization (SGO). In the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, the Scholarship Granting Organization of Northeast Indiana, Inc. (SGONEI) has been established and offers scholarships to students who meet certain income requirements. Our Lady School participates in this SGO Scholarship Program.

This means that a monetary gift to the SGONEI in the name of OLS is a real win-win situation for both donors and families. When you help students and their families afford Catholic education, you receive a significant tax saving opportunity of a 50% state tax credit. While your tax credit can be carried forward for up to nine years, your donation will be applied directly to the tuition bills of students at OLS who need assistance now!

This assistance, however, provides an on-going benefit. A student who receives a \$500 SGO Scholarship in kindergarten and who meets the income guidelines in subsequent years can receive a voucher in Grades 1-12. The benefit does not stop there! If you look at the Pathways mentioned above, you will see that any sibling of a student who has ever received an SGO Scholarship and who meets the income guidelines will receive a voucher in grades K-12.

People sometimes ask about families who earn too much to receive a voucher, but find it a struggle to afford tuition at a Catholic school. While the parish often assists these families with financial aid, the SGO program is also available to students who do not qualify for a voucher so long as they are at 200% of the Reduced Lunch Eligibility Rate. That means that in SY 2017-2018, a family of four who makes \$91,020 or less can receive an SGO Scholarship. This is great for families who are always in the "middle" so-to-speak.

When you support SGONEI, you are providing an incredible gift to the families for whom Catholic education may not otherwise be affordable. Plus, your donation can be deducted as a federal charitable tax deduction. If you would like to know more about the SGO program or make a donation, please contact Natalie Kohrman at 485.5289 x 114 or admissions@ourladyfortwayne.org. You may also make a donation on our website at ourladyfortwayne.org/SGO.

