



JOY HOFMEISTER

STATE SUPERINTENDENT *of* PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT *of* EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

TO: Private School Administrators

FROM: Stacy Eden, Lindsey Nicole Henry Scholarship Program Specialist

DATE: March 2019

SUBJECT: Financial Guidance for the Lindsey Nicole Henry Scholarship

The Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) frequently receives questions about the distribution and application of funding for the Lindsey Nicole Henry Scholarship for Students with Disabilities. The OSDE is providing the following information as a reference for private schools approved for participation in the Lindsey Nicole Henry Scholarship for Students with Disabilities Program (LNHS Program).

Scholarship Amount

As provided in the authorizing statute for the LNHS Program, the maximum scholarship granted for an eligible student with disabilities shall be equivalent to the total State Aid Factors for the applicable school year, multiplied by the grade and disability weights generated by the student for the applicable school year (*see* 70 O.S. § 13-101.2(J)(2)). For a participating student who is eligible for the LNHS due to having been adopted or in out-of-home placement through the Department of Human Services (DHS), or out-of-home placement through the Office of Juvenile Affairs, the maximum amount of the scholarship shall be equivalent to the total State Aid factors for the applicable school year multiplied by the student's grade weight and any other factors applicable to the student (e.g., identified as Gifted, Economically Disadvantaged, or Bilingual).

The LNHS statute also provides that the amount of the scholarship awarded to an eligible student each year shall be the amount calculated as provided above, *or* the amount of tuition and fees for the private school—whichever is less—minus up to two and one-half percent (2½%) of the scholarship amount, which is retained by the OSDE as a fee for administrative services. The amount of any assessment fee required by the private school, and the amount associated with providing services and therapies to address the educational needs resulting from the disabilities of the student, may be paid from the total amount of the scholarship (70 O.S. § 13-101.2(J)(3)).

Many private schools and parents have asked what fees will be covered by the Lindsey Nicole Henry Scholarship. We have generated a list of potential private school fees that will be covered by the scholarship. If you would like to know about a specific fee that is not listed below, please contact the LNH Specialist at the OSDE.

Covered Fees

- Enrollment, registration, or application fees
- Textbook fees
- Technology fees
- Activity fees
- Testing and assessment fees
- Fees for school uniforms, if paid directly to the school

In addition to the private school tuition and fees, the scholarship may also pay for special education programs offered by the private school to students with disabilities, and any therapies needed to address the educational needs resulting from the disabilities of the student such as tutoring or a one-on-one student aide.

While charges of this nature are within the scope of the LNHS Program, it is not permissible for a participating private school to use the scholarship as a mechanism to recoup the *general costs* of providing special education services. Under the statute, "the State Department of Education shall not be responsible for any additional costs associated with special education and related services incurred by the private school for the student including the cost of teachers, equipment, material, and special costs associated with the special education class" (70 O.S. § 13-101.2(J)(5)).

Annual Statement

A participating private school will submit an itemized Annual Statement for each LNHS student once the LNHS application has been approved by the OSDE. The Annual Statement must include the annual tuition, any mandatory fees required by the school for enrollment, and fees for any additional special service programs, tutoring, or therapies provided to address educational needs related to the student's disabilities. In addition, the statement should also include any discounts applied to the student and any prorated tuition due to scholarship approval occurring after the beginning of the school year. Furthermore, beginning with the 2019-2020 academic year, the Annual Statement for any student receiving services or therapies for their educational needs will require additional documentation. Please submit a copy of the contract for services, tutoring, therapies, or student aide along with the Annual Statement. If the student is participating in any special education program provided by the private school, please submit a description of the program along with the Annual Statement.

Payment of scholarship funds shall be made by the OSDE with an individual warrant made payable to the participating student's parent or legal guardian and mailed by the

OSDE to the private school where the student is enrolled. Upon issuance of an LNHS warrant, the parent or legal guardian to whom the warrant is made shall restrictively endorse the warrant to the private school for deposit into the account of the school. The parent or legal guardian may not designate any entity or individual associated with the private school as the attorney in fact for the parent or legal guardian to endorse a warrant. Failure to comply with these requirements will result in forfeiture of the scholarship (70 O.S. § 13-101.2(I)(1)(e)). The initial payment shall be made after the OSDE verifies acceptance and enrollment at the approved private school. A detailed individualized daily attendance report is required for enrollment verification. The report must reflect each school day for the requested quarter and show whether the student was present or absent. Basic attendance reports only showing the number of days present and absent will no longer be accepted as verification.

Beginning with the 2019-2020 academic year, the OSDE has created a fillable pdf for the private school to use to submit the LNHS Annual Statements and quarterly invoices. The templates are available on the OSDE website at <http://sde.ok.gov/lindsey-nicole-henry-lnh-scholarship-program-children-disabilities>.

If you have additional questions or concerns about the LNHS Program, please contact Stacy Eden at (405) 521-4876.