

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on BOOST Scholarship Application

February 2022

The Broadening Options and Opportunities for Students Today (BOOST) Program provides scholarships for some students who are eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch program to attend eligible nonpublic schools. Awards are granted based on household income, with the lowest income served first.

To be considered for a BOOST scholarship, parents/guardians must submit a complete online application **with all required documents** by the application deadline. BOOST online application Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) - though not all inclusive - are listed below. Other specific questions can be addressed by emailing BOOST (boost.msde@maryland.gov).

1. What documents do I need to have *before* submitting a School Year 2022-2023 BOOST application?

The BOOST online application requires a parent/guardian to upload - in ADOBE(*pdf*) format:

- Documentation that a parent/guardian has submitted an application/written enrollment information request or proof of student acceptance/enrollment at a BOOST participating nonpublic school. The most current list of potential participating schools is available in a link on the main BOOST webpage <https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/Pages/boost/index.aspx>.
- 2021 **non-password protected** Federal Income Tax return to include all pages and schedules submitted to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). See additional information at <https://www.irs.gov/help/ita/do-i-need-to-file-a-tax-return> to determine if are legally required to file taxes for alternative income verification.

2. I have more than one student applying for the BOOST award, do I need to submit an application for each student?

No. A parent/guardian can only submit one BOOST application each year. Multiple students must be entered on a single application.

3. I have not submitted a 2021 *Federal* tax return yet. Can I submit alternate documentation to validate my family's 2021 income?

No. Applicants who are required to file a Federal tax return must upload their 2021 Federal tax return. An application without a 2021 Federal tax return will be determined incomplete and is ineligible for further scholarship consideration.

4. The deadline date for the 2022-2023 BOOST application is April 25, 2022. Can I get an extension?

No.

5. I only receive social security and/or state financial assistance. Can I use an alternate method to confirm my 2021 household income?

See question #1. If you determine that you are not required by the IRS to file a 2021 federal, you may use the alternate household income form on the BOOST website, but you must ALSO upload sufficient written government documentation that substantiates your gross household income estimate AND household size.

6. How does the BOOST online application identify my application?

BOOST tracks 2022-2023 applications by an applicant's email address. Please only use one email address when corresponding with BOOST. To make sure you receive BOOST correspondence; adjust your email settings to include BOOST as a recognized address. This will prevent BOOST correspondence delivered to your SPAM folder instead of our Inbox folder.

7. My student has received a BOOST scholarship the past two years; will my student automatically receive a 2022-2023 award?

No – you must re-apply for BOOST every year.

8. My 2021 Federal household income exceeds the BOOST income limit but does not reflect my current financial situation. Can I submit documentation of my current income to qualify?

No. Income eligibility is determined by household size and income reported on your 2021 Federal tax return.