

Frequently Asked Questions
BOOST (Broadening Options and Opportunities for Students Today)
Scholarship Program

This page will be updated with frequently asked questions and answers on a continual basis.
Last update: November 3, 2022

1. **Question:** When is reporting due?

Answer: See the schedule below:

Due Date	Item
October 14, 2022 (originally Oct 11)	Enrollment Confirmation is due, reporting on the current 2022-2023 school year
October 14, 2022	Teacher Certification Reporting is due, reporting on the current 2022-2023 school year
October 14, 2022	Assessments and Performance Reporting is due, reporting on data for the 2021-2022 school year
October 14, 2022	Withdrawal & Expulsion Reporting is due, reporting on data for the 2021-2022 school year

2. **Question:** If you had no BOOST applicants last year, do you still need to submit reports?

Answer: Yes. Schools must initiate and complete all reporting requirements stated above in the BOOST Online School Portal. If your school did not participate in BOOST or did not have BOOST students during the 2021-2022, your school would not have data to report, but you must initiate the report and respond to questions to satisfy this reporting requirement.

3. **Question:** What fees should be captured as part of the tuition?

Answer: Enter the published tuition rate (s) from your current website Plus other mandatory fees. Tuition Rates may differ for different grade groupings. Grades 9-12, for example may have higher tuition/fees than kindergarten through grade eight (8). If there is a specific charge for special education services, schools may add that cost for a particular student. If a fee is required of all students, then they are in essence a tuition cost. A bus fee for example is not required for all students. Contact the BOOST Program to confirm fees to report as tuition.

4. **Question:** What is the actual website to access the reporting portal? I cannot find it on the boost website.

Answer: On September 30, the BOOST Program sent emails to eligible schools with the link to the BOOST Online School Portal and the Enrollment Confirmation Portal. If your school

did not receive this email, please contact the program immediately by sending an email to boost.msde@maryland.gov or call Robert Wancowicz at (410) 767-0443.

5. **Question:** What is the frequency of the science assessment? The other assessments?
Answer: See the table below for accurate and up-to-date assessment requirements:

English / Language Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must be administered each year to all students in grades 3-8• Must be administered once to students in grades 9-12
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must be administered each year to all students in grades 3-8• Must be administered once to students in grades 9-12
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must be administered each year to all students in grades 3-5• Must be administered once to students in grades 6-9• Must be administered once to students in grades 10-12

6. **Question:** Do we only report grades for which we have BOOST students?
Answer: No. Schools must administer assessments and provide data for **ALL** the required subjects and grades (see table above). Even if your school only had one student who was awarded a BOOST scholarship, it is a requirement that you administer and report on all of the required grades.
7. **Question:** What is the difference between Reading/Language Arts and English?
Answer: There isn't a distinction; the subject areas are the synonymous.
8. **Question:** Should 6th-8th teachers who are certified in their field of teaching be counted under both the elementary teachers or just under the content area numbers?
Answer: A certified teacher should only be counted once under the content area.
9. **Question:** Is the teacher certification report due required of nonpublic schools?
Answer: The State of Maryland does not have teacher certification requirements for nonpublic schools. However, the BOOST Program is required to collect data from nonpublic schools participating in the program about the number of teachers that are certified and non-certified.

10. **Question:** Are we using assessment data from this current school year? Our school normally does not do science until the end of the year.

Answer: Schools must provide the Assessment Performance results of the assessments you administered during the 2021-2022 school year. Schools are required to administer assessments during the 2022-2023 school year from the list of assessments published by the U.S. Department of Education (see list of approved assessment test below):

Test Name	Test Publisher
Iowa Assessments (Form E,F,G)	Riverside Publishing
Stanford Achievement Test – 10th Ed (Forms A & D)	Pearson Education
AIMSwebPlus	Pearson Education
Terra Nova 3 / Next	DRC/CTB/ McGraw-Hill
SAT 2017	College Board
ACT	ACT
Pre ACT	ACT
ACT Aspire	ACT
Comprehensive Testing Program (CTP) 4	Educational Records Bureau
Measures of Academic Program (MAP)	NWEA
Performance Series	Scantron
Standardized Test for the Assessment of Reading (Star)	Renaissance Learning
CLT, CLT10, CLT81	Classic Learning Initiatives
i-Ready Diagnostic1	Curriculum Associates
Edmentum Assessments1	Edmentum

11. **Question:** What is the actual website to access the reporting portal?

Answer: The BOOST Program sent an email to participating schools with the link to the Enrollment Confirmation Portal and the BOOST Online School Portal. If your school did not receive this email, please contact the program immediately by sending an email to boost.msde@maryland.gov or call Robert Wancowicz at (410) 767-0443.

12. **Question:** Is there a place on the Confirmation Enrollment to show that the awarded BOOST scholarship exceeds total tuition cost?

Answer: No. Schools must report a student’s total tuition and non-BOOST financial aid. The BOOST Program is responsible for ensuring the BOOST Scholarship does not exceed total tuition costs. You are only required to provide an accurate response to the questions.

13. **Question:** Can a scholarship award ever be decreased?

Answer: BOOST Program Staff may make downward adjustments to initial BOOST scholarship awards in instances when the total of BOOST and non-BOOST financial aid exceeds the total school tuition.

14. **Question:** What happens if a student leaves the school before the end of the school year?
Answer: If a student leaves the school before April 30, 2024, the award must be prorated, and the school should refund any overage to MSDE as soon as possible. The amount to be refunded to MSDE should be calculated as follows:
- Divide the number of school days the student was enrolled (numerator) by the total number of school days in your school year (denominator); and
 - Multiply the result obtained above by the total BOOST award amount, rounded to the nearest dollar.
15. **Question:** A family has several children, but only one was awarded a BOOST scholarship. Can it be split up among their children?
Answer: No. Individual BOOST awards cannot be split among siblings.
16. **Question:** A parent has two (2) children receiving BOOST scholarships who are attending the same school. One child transfers out and is no longer eligible for BOOST, but the other child remains at the school. Can BOOST funds be transferred to the remaining child's account?
Answer: No. Individual BOOST awards cannot be split among siblings.
17. **Question:** Are BOOST payments made as soon as a student is enrolled in a participating school?
Answer: No. BOOST scholarship checks are issued through the State Comptroller's Office and are subject to detailed review of documentation before funds are released. MSDE must verify each scholarship recipient's name, award amount, school enrollment, the parent's name, and residency.
18. **Question:** The BOOST award amount does not match the dollar amount of the State Comptroller's check to the school. Why?
Answer: A student's scholarship award is the total amount of three components:
- The base award is issued for all students whose scholarship award was accepted and enrollment confirmed.
 - A student's award may be adjusted for a special education enhancement that is the same amount as the base award.
 - A student's award may be adjusted for a high school enhancement in the amount of \$3,000.
19. **Question:** Can a BOOST scholarship awarded in one year be used in the next school year?
Answer: No, the funds are only good for the school year in which they were awarded.

20. **Question:** If a student transfers out of a participating BOOST school and enrolls in another school, what happens to the BOOST funds?

Answer: The answer will vary depending on the timing and the type of school to which the student transfers. If the student transfers to:

another participating BOOST school,	Original school returns prorated refund to BOOST. BOOST issues balance of award to the new school.
a public school,	then funds should be prorated, and a partial return of funds should be returned issued to MSDE.
an out-of-state school,	then funds should be prorated, and a partial return of funds should be returned issued to MSDE.

21. **Question:** If a parent has been making monthly tuition payments while awaiting the BOOST award, and the parent is now due a refund, can the school cash the BOOST check(s) and make a refund to the parent?

Answer: Yes. The participating school should maintain written documentation of the funding transactions connected to the student’s account. This is especially important for parents with multiple children receiving BOOST scholarship awards.

22. **Question:** A parent presented BOOST scholarship award documentation, but the batch of checks sent by MSDE does not include funds for their child. What should the school do?

Answer: School officials should contact BOOST staff concerning the issue. MSDE will investigate the specific situation and advise both the school and parents of a final determination and corrective action, if necessary.