



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Who is eligible for a Say Yes Buffalo Tuition Scholarship?

A: To be eligible for the Buffalo Say Yes Tuition Scholarship, a student must meet the following qualifications:

1. Reside in the City of Buffalo
2. Continuously enroll in a public or charter high school in Buffalo from at least 9th–12th grades. (Or be legally designated as having refugee status on an Arrival-Departure Record (I-94) from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) or be an otherwise eligible noncitizen.)
3. Graduate from a public or charter school in Buffalo in June 2013 or after
4. Enroll full-time at a Say Yes college within one year of high school graduation
5. Apply and remain eligible for financial aid each year

Q: Is my child eligible to receive full tuition coverage?

A: The amount of the Buffalo Say Yes Tuition Scholarship for SUNY/CUNY schools is determined by the number of consecutive years a student has attended a public or charter school in Buffalo. Refer to the chart below to determine tuition eligibility:

| Entry grade in Buffalo public or charter school | Percent of tuition that scholarship will cover |
|---|--|
| K | 100% |
| 1, 2, 3 | 95% |
| 4, 5, 6 | 80% |
| 7, 8, 9 | 65% |

Q: What expenses does the Buffalo Say Yes Tuition Scholarship cover?

A: This scholarship goes toward tuition only. It does not cover room and board, book and supplies, or fees.

Q: What does “last dollar scholarship” mean?

A: It means that the Say Yes scholarship will cover the remaining balance of a student’s tuition costs after state, federal, and/or institutional grants and scholarships have been applied.

Q: What are the income requirements for the Buffalo Say Yes Tuition Scholarship?

A: Students may enroll in most of the campuses of the State University of New York (SUNY) or the City University of New York (CUNY) system and be guaranteed that their tuition will be paid for by scholarships and/or grants regardless of family income. The majority of the Say Yes Higher Education Compact private colleges limit the full tuition guarantee to admitted students with family incomes less than \$75,000 per year (there are several exceptions—please see www.sayyesbuffalo.org for details). Students whose family incomes are greater than \$75,000 per year may be eligible for the Say Yes Choice Grant.

Q: What is the Say Yes Buffalo Choice Grant?

A: Students from families whose income is more than \$75,000 who are attending a Say Yes Private Compact College may receive the Choice Grant. This grant offers up to \$5,000 per year. Awards are determined by the difference between financial aid and the cost of full-time tuition. Choice Grants, when combined with state, federal, and institutional grants and scholarships, are not to exceed the cost of full-time undergraduate tuition.

Q: Does Say Yes offer any scholarships that help cover expenses beyond the cost of tuition (i.e., room and board, books and supplies, fees, etc.)?

A: Yes. The Opportunity Grant may be awarded to eligible students enrolled at a SUNY or CUNY college who have received the maximum Federal Pell Grant, **reside on campus**, and have high remaining need for financial aid. This grant offers up to \$2,000 per year and can be used toward books, fees, or room and board.

Q: Are students who reside in Buffalo and attend Buffalo private or Catholic schools eligible for the scholarship?

A: No, only students who attend public or charter schools in Buffalo are eligible.

Q: How is *continuous enrollment* determined if the student starts in a public or charter school in Buffalo, leaves for a period of time, and then returns to a public or charter school in Buffalo?

A: The student will be eligible for a Say Yes scholarship based on the date s/he reenrolled in Buffalo public or charter schools.

Q: If a student enrolls in a public or charter school in Buffalo partway through 9th grade, is that student eligible for a SY scholarship?

A: No. Students need to be continuously enrolled from the very beginning of 9th grade.

Q: Will students who attended a Buffalo public or charter school and then transferred out of the district prior to high school graduation be eligible for a Say Yes scholarship?

A: No

Q: If a student is a refugee who enrolled in public or charter schools in Buffalo after the beginning of 9th grade (i.e., does not meet the continuous enrollment requirements), is s/he eligible for a Say Yes scholarship?

A: Yes. Students who are legally designated as having refugee status are eligible providing they complete a Request for Eligibility Form and furnish proof of I-94.

Q: If a student graduates from high school early, is s/he eligible for a Say Yes scholarship?

A: Yes, providing the student meets all eligibility requirements, has been continuously enrolled in a public or charter school in Buffalo since at least 9th grade, and graduates in June of 2013 or later.

Q: How do I apply for a Say Yes scholarship?

A: Complete the following steps to apply for a Say Yes scholarship:

1. Complete and submit a Say Yes Student Certification Form **by March 1 of your senior year**
2. Apply and be admitted to a Say Yes partner college (see www.sayyesbuffalo.org for a full list of Say Yes partner colleges)
3. Apply for financial aid (complete and submit FAFSA and TAP applications)
4. Let Say Yes Buffalo know which college you plan to attend

Q: Do students need to reapply for Say Yes scholarships every year that they are in college?

A: No, if a student maintains enrollment in the same college s/he does not need to fill out a new Student Certification Form year after year. However, students **are** responsible for resubmitting their financial aid information every year.

Q: Can I transfer from one Say Yes college to another?

A: Yes. If a student transfers to a different Say Yes college, s/he will have to complete and submit a new Student Certification Form. Please note that all Say Yes Scholars wishing to transfer from one Say Yes partner college to another must follow the same transfer process as all other college students.

Q: What does a student need to do to remain eligible for a Say Yes scholarship once they are admitted to college?

A: Students will need to apply for financial aid each year prior to attending college and complete the financial aid process at their college. Students must also maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress in accordance with the college's "Good Standing" status. For Say Yes, this is defined as successfully completing a **minimum of 12 credit hours for each semester (fall and spring) and maintaining a GPA of 2.0 or better.**

Q: What happens if a student does not earn the required 12 credit hours and/or does not have a GPA of 2.0 or better?

A: A student's academic record will be reviewed at the end of each semester. If a student completes less than 12 credit hours each semester and/or does not have a 2.0 GPA, then s/he can make up for it by taking additional credits the following fall/spring semester and/or bringing their GPA up.

If at the end of the spring semester the student has not completed the required 24 credit hours and does not have a GPA of 2.0 or better, then the student will not be eligible to renew her/his Say Yes scholarship for the following school year.

Students who do not meet the standards of academic progress at the end of an academic year can enroll over the summer to make up their deficiencies at their own expense. Remember that Say Yes funding is NOT available to students over the summer.

Q: How many semesters is Say Yes funding available to each qualified student?

A: Say yes funding is available for 4 semesters at a community college or 8 semesters at a four-year college for qualified students. It is highly recommended that students complete at least 15 credit hours a semester in order to earn their degrees in the time frame supported by Say Yes.

Q: When will the scholarship funds be available?

A: Funds are dispersed directly to the college after drop/add day at the beginning of each semester (fall and spring). Say Yes will verify the student's enrollment at the college before any monies are dispersed.

Q: Is study abroad covered?

A: Study abroad is covered if the program is administered by the Say Yes school the student is attending. The only costs that are covered are the normal tuition costs for the credits taken abroad. No extraordinary tuition or expenses are covered.