

New Illinois Tax Credit Program Provides Scholarship Opportunities for Students

How You Can Donate

The Illinois General Assembly recently passed the Invest in Kids Act, which provides for the creation of a state tax credit scholarship program. We know that finances are often a barrier to children receiving a quality Christian education. **This exciting opportunity will provide Illinois children from low-income families with additional scholarship resources to help their families afford private school tuition at schools such as CLEF Lutheran Schools.**



WHAT IS A SCHOLARSHIP GRANTING ORGANIZATION (SGO)?

An SGO is an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that handles the administrative tasks of the scholarship program including:

- Receiving donations
- Receiving and processing scholarship applications from students
- Distributing scholarships to eligible students as allowed by law

CLEF has chosen Empower Illinois as the SGO which will serve our schools. You can learn more about them at empowerillinois.org.



HOW MUCH IS THE SCHOLARSHIP?

The Tax Credit Scholarship will cover up to 100% of private school tuition, up to a maximum of the average Illinois cost to educate, which is roughly \$13,000. Students with unique learning needs, including those who are gifted, English language learners, or those with special education qualifications, will receive larger scholarships – up to double – roughly \$26,000.

HOW MUCH IS THE TAX CREDIT?

Individuals and corporations who donate to an SGO may receive a credit against their Illinois income tax liability equal to 75% of their donation. For example, a \$1,000 donation will generate a \$750 Illinois tax credit for the donor.

Note that donations to an Illinois SGO are not deductible as itemized charitable deductions on your federal income tax return. With recent changes to the federal tax law, an Illinois credit may offer greater financial benefits to donors than a federal charitable deduction. Donors should consult with their tax advisor on their specific situation.

Tax credits are capped at \$1 million per taxpayer per year, which means a donor can contribute about \$1.33 million to receive the maximum tax credit allowed. Total tax credits are capped at \$75 million per year statewide, which equates to \$100 million in donations and scholarships. Taxpayers can roll over their tax credits up to five years.

HOW CAN I DONATE TO AN SGO?

1 REGISTER

Donors need an account on **mytax.illinois.gov** before applying for a tax credit. This can take up to 10 days and involves a mailed Personal Identification Number (PIN). **We encourage you to register as soon as possible so that you can reserve a credit immediately after the start of the new year.**



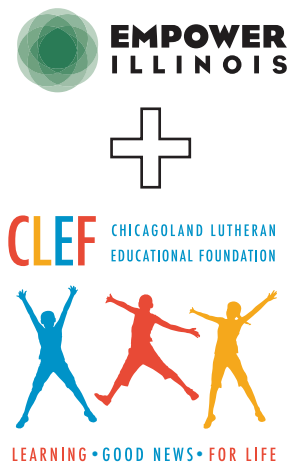
2 RESERVE

After you have registered, you must reserve your 2018 tax credit with the Illinois Department of Revenue prior to making a donation. **Credits are available on a first come, first served basis and could be reserved very quickly. Due to the cap on total credits available, we encourage you to reserve your credit starting at 8:00 a.m. on January 2nd or as soon as you receive your PIN. Select Empower Illinois as your SGO and designate your gift for Chicagoland Lutheran Educational Foundation Schools (or a particular CLEF Lutheran school).**



3 DONATE

Once you receive confirmation of your tax credit from the Illinois Department of Revenue, make your donation to Empower Illinois within 60 days. **Individual donors, be sure to designate Chicagoland Lutheran Educational Foundation Schools (or a particular CLEF Lutheran school) as the recipient to continue supporting enrollment of students at CLEF schools. Corporate donors are unable to designate donations to particular schools.**



If you have any questions, please contact the CLEF office at 630-595-9310 or clef@clefchicago.org.

HOW TO REGISTER WITH THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE (IDR)

All tax credit scholarship donors need to have an account on mytax.illinois.gov **BEFORE** applying for a tax credit. Since the IDR must mail you a Letter ID, this process can take up to 10 days. **Begin the process today!**

Part I: Request a Letter ID at mytax.illinois.gov

You will need:

- ✓ The primary taxpayer's Social Security Number (SSN)
- ✓ **One** of the following:
 - Illinois Driver's License number
 - Illinois State ID number
 - Adjusted Gross Income from 2016

You will find "Request a Letter ID" under the "Miscellaneous" section accessed through the "Individuals" tab at the top of the screen. Follow the prompts. You should receive your Letter ID in the mail within 7-10 business days.

Part II: Activate your [MyTax.illinois.gov](https://mytax.illinois.gov) account using your Letter ID

You will need:

- ✓ Your Letter ID
- ✓ Primary Taxpayer's SSN and one of the approved documents from above

Click the "Sign up Now!" button in the Login to MyTax Illinois box and follow the prompts. Using your information, you will be able to look up your "IL-PIN". Use your pin and Letter ID to set your Username and Password and Active Your Account.

Once your account is active, you will be able to reserve your tax credit starting January 2, 2018.

HOW TO RESERVE YOUR TAX CREDIT

1. Visit the Illinois Department of Revenue at <https://mytax.illinois.gov/> **to reserve your tax credit**. Tax credit applications open January 2, 2018 at 8:00 a.m. (CST). Select Empower Illinois as your Scholarship Granting Organization and designate Chicagoland Lutheran Educational Foundation Schools (or a particular Lutheran school) for your contribution.
2. The Illinois Department of Revenue will email your Contribution Authorization Certificate (CAC) within 3 days of approval of your application.

HOW TO DONATE

3. Once you have your certificate, return to Empower Illinois Donation page at <https://empowerillinois.org/donors/donate/> to make your donation. Be sure to designate Chicagoland Lutheran Educational Foundation Schools (or a particular CLEF Lutheran school).