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## **Required Notice for Parents Regarding Act 85 of 2012(72 P.S. §§ 8701-G.1, et seq)**

### **(i) Required Description of the Program and Parental Notice**

The Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit (OSTC) program was created pursuant to Act 85 of 2012 (72 P.S. §§ 8701-G.1, et seq) and amended by Act 86 of 2016 (24 P.S. §§ 2001-B, et seq). This law enables eligible students, residing within the attendance boundaries of Pennsylvania schools designated as "low-achieving" as determined by student performance on annual assessments, to apply for a scholarship to be used to attend a participating public, private or faith-based school. Nearly 400 public schools across Pennsylvania were identified based on students' combined Mathematics/Algebra I and Reading/Literature scores from the annual assessments (PASA, PSSA, and/or Keystone) administered last year.

As allowed by law, these scholarships are funded by businesses that make contributions to approved scholarship organizations in exchange for tax credits. The pool of scholarship money available to students across Pennsylvania is contingent upon the amount contributed by Pennsylvania businesses.

While Erie's Public Schools continue to perform well relative to other peer urban districts in Pennsylvania cities, we are required to notify you that Erie High School, East Middle School, Edison Elementary School, Diehl Elementary School, McKinley Elementary School, Pfeiffer-Burleigh Elementary School, Wilson Middle School, Perry Elementary School, Jefferson Elementary School, Strong Vincent Middle School, Harding Elementary School and Lincoln Elementary School are some of the 380+ Pennsylvania schools designated as "low-achieving" based on combined student performance on the annual assessments.

Though the district has made great strides, we recognize there is still work to be done. We have taken transformational action, recently investing millions of dollars into revamping curriculum, expanding afterschool and summer programming and bolstering student supports, among other major improvements.

### **(ii) Instructions for Obtaining Information about the OSTC Program**

Opportunity scholarships are offered by approved opportunity scholarship organizations and not by the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) or the Erie School District. The list of opportunity scholarship granting organizations across Pennsylvania is available on the Pennsylvania Department of Education website at <https://tinyurl.com/mrnhj3hv>. This link also provides specific instructions on how to contact an approved Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit (OSTC) organization to apply for a scholarship. OSTC organizations will provide details regarding their application process, tuition and fees.

As required by law, a description of the program, instructions on applying for a scholarship and a list of the public schools in the Erie's Public Schools district that have been designated as "low-achieving" based on the above criteria is also accessible on

the district's website at [www.eriesd.org](http://www.eriesd.org). Please note that many of the schools listed as offering these scholarships are not required to test students with these assessments or publicly report the same academic achievement results that were used to designate public schools as "low-achieving." Under the law, the Erie School District is unable to provide further assistance, guidance or advice on this program.

**(iii) Notification to Apply Directly to Participating School(s)**

If you seek to enroll a student in the OSTC program, you are responsible for making an inquiry and/or applying directly to a participating school (not DCED or the Erie School District). Again, the list of OSTC schools/organizations is available on PA Department of Education's website at <https://tinyurl.com/mrnjh3hv>.

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