

General Program Overview

The Carson Smith Special Needs Scholarship Program (CSS) is a parent choice model for Utah residents. It is designed to help pay tuition and fees for students who would qualify for special education and related services in public schools K-12 school age (5-21 years of age) whose parents choose an eligible private school.

Utah public schools, CSS eligible private schools, and parents together determine special education and related services through an eligibility determination process guided by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); the same requirements of public schools. Through this process one of the following disability categories must be identified.

- Autism
 - Developmental Delay*
 - Emotional Disturbance
 - Hearing Impairment
 - Intellectual disability
 - Multiple Disabilities
 - Orthopedic Impairment
 - Other Health Impairment
 - Specific Learning disability
 - Speech/Language Impairment
 - Traumatic Brain Injury
 - Visual Impairment (including Blindness)
- *Applicable to children between 5-8 years of age

The Utah State Office of Education (USOE) has oversight responsibilities to verify compliance with the law – primarily financial, safety, and disclosure issues between the private school and parents. The USOE does not evaluate the curriculum or services provided by the school. It is a responsibility of parents to determine if services provided by the private school are adequate.

Value of the scholarship is based on the amount of special education and related services a child would qualify for through an Individual Education Program (IEP) process under the IDEA guidelines and Utah Special Education rules (insert link). If a child qualifies for less than three hours of specialized instruction per day, the scholarship will be worth a maximum of \$\$\$\$ (1.5 x WPU). If a child qualifies for three or more hours of specialized services per day, the scholarship will be worth a maximum of \$\$\$\$ (2.5 x WPU).

Scholarships are not guaranteed. Funding for the Carson Smith Special Needs Scholarship is appropriated annually by the Utah State Legislature.