

# SAFE Grants

Safe Access to Flexible Education

## Introduction to SAFE Grants



### What are SAFE Grants?

SAFE Grants is a program, developed by Governor Henry McMaster, to address the educational needs of eligible K5-12 students who attend a participating independent school in South Carolina.

Modeled on successful grant and scholarship programs serving thousands of students in states like Florida, Arizona, and North Carolina, SAFE Grants will provide critical support for working and low-income families to stabilize their child's education journey during the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure these students can access an education environment of their choice.

### Who qualifies for a SAFE Grant and how will they be awarded?

South Carolina families with a household adjusted gross income of **300%** or less of the federal poverty level (FPL) may apply through a secure online portal which will be located at MySCEducation.org to receive a SAFE grant of up to **\$6,500** per student.

The first 2,500 scholarships will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, after which a lottery program will be instituted (if necessary) to allocate the balance of available grant funds.

Parents may sign up to receive important program notifications, such as the opening of the online portal at MySCEducation.org.

### What schools may participate in the SAFE Grants program?

Schools wishing to participate in the program must complete an online application process that verifies basic legal, educational, and accountability requirements. This application can be found at [surveymonkey.com/r/SAFEGrantSchool](https://surveymonkey.com/r/SAFEGrantSchool). Learn more about how schools qualify at MySCEducation.org.

Household Size	300% FPL
1	\$38,280
2	\$51,720
3	\$65,160
4	\$78,600
5	\$92,040
6	\$105,480
7	\$118,920
8	\$132,360
9	\$145,800
10	\$159,240

Source: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2020 FPL Calculations



## Who do SAFE Grants benefit?

### Students

COVID-19 has wreaked havoc on the education of students across our state. By allowing eligible students to remain in the schools they love and providing new opportunities for students whose health, economic, or education challenges make private education the best choice. SAFE Grants put the needs of struggling students first.

### Parents

Many families make big sacrifices to find the right education fit for their child. SAFE Grants provide relief for stretched family budgets and peace of mind for worried parents, especially those most impacted by COVID-19.

### Independent Schools

These schools are essential to the education of the over 50,000 South Carolina children they currently serve, making them essential to our state's education system. To keep tuition costs low, many operate on shoestring budgets even in flush economic years. SAFE Grants will help support the jobs and education that independent schools provide.

### Public Schools

COVID-19 has created many challenges for traditional public schools, especially in ensuring the health and safety of students, teachers, and staff as schools reopen. SAFE Grants can help alleviate the impact of COVID-19 on public schools' resources by giving parent support in making alternative choices, saving both money and space.

## What may SAFE Grants be spent on?

SAFE Grants may be used to cover the cost of tuition, defined as the total amount of money charged for the cost of a qualifying student to attend a participating independent school including, but not limited to, fees for attending the school and school-related transportation.

## How are SAFE Grants funded?

SAFE Grants are funded through a federal CARES Act grant made to the Office of Governor Henry McMaster. Governor McMaster has dedicated up to \$32 million of this grant, known as the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund, to provide subgrants through the SAFE Grants program. This program does not draw from existing state or local education funds.