



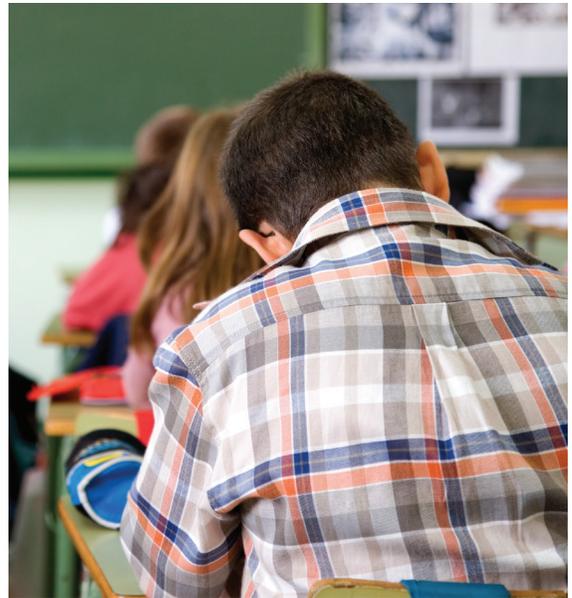
## FIVE FAST FACTS

# Jon Peterson Special Needs Scholarship Program

The Jon Peterson Special Needs (JPSN) Scholarship (Voucher) Program began in fall 2012 and was the fourth voucher program created in Ohio. It uses taxpayer dollars to allow students with disabilities to receive special education services through a private or alternative public school provider.

**1. The Jon Peterson Special Needs Scholarship Program provides vouchers for students with disabilities in grades K-12 who are on an individualized education plan (IEP) to attend participating private or alternative public schools to receive special education services.**

The program provides vouchers for up to 5% (roughly 14,000) of the total number of special education students in the state.



**2. Funding for the voucher is deducted from the resident school district.**

In fiscal year 2013, almost \$14 million was deducted from public schools for the special needs voucher program. The voucher amount is the lesser of the fee or tuition charged for the child by the special education program, up to the maximum amount awarded based on the child's special education category. Voucher students are counted in the average daily membership (ADM) of the resident school district and the actual voucher amount is deducted from the school district of residence. Voucher amounts range from \$7,196 to \$20,000 per school year.

# FAST FIVE FACTS ON JON PETERSON SPECIAL NEEDS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

## RESOURCES

Ohio Department of  
Education John Peterson  
Special Needs Scholarship  
Web page

[http://education.ohio.gov/  
Topics/Other-Resources/  
Scholarships/Special-Needs-  
Scholarship](http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Other-Resources/Scholarships/Special-Needs-Scholarship)

**3. Under this program, private providers are *not* required to provide a free appropriate public education under federal law in the least restrictive environment.**

Under this program, parents and students relinquish their due process rights and their right to a free appropriate public education under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Ohio Operating Standards for Students with Disabilities. In addition, private providers are not required to provide all of the services included in the IEP.

**4. Under this program, public school districts are still responsible for the IEP of students who receive special education services through a private or alternative public school provider.**

Though public school districts don't implement the student's IEP, don't interact with the voucher student or have firsthand knowledge of the student's progress or his or her ability under the special needs voucher program, they are still responsible for the initial IEP, the annual review of the IEP and for re-evaluating the student every three years.

**5. Private schools accepting special needs vouchers are not held accountable for spending public taxpayer dollars.**

Private schools accepting vouchers are not held accountable through publicly elected boards of education. They are not held accountable for the expenditure of public dollars they receive and are *not* subject to public audit. In addition, private schools are able to choose which students will be admitted if they accept vouchers. Voucher students must apply for admission to participating private schools and private schools can choose which students to accept. It is the private schools that have a choice, not the students and parents.



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*OSBA leads the way to educational excellence by serving Ohio's public school board members and the diverse districts they represent through superior service, unwavering advocacy and creative solutions.*

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