



# The Alliance of Private Special Education Schools of North Jersey

## 2025 Connections to the Future Scholarship

Up to \$1,000 for a graduating public school senior with disabilities from Bergen, Passaic, Hudson, Essex, Morris, Somerset, Union, Warren or Sussex County.

Please read the following information before completing your application.

**Background:** The Alliance of Private Special Education Schools of North Jersey is a nonprofit group of over 40 state-approved private special education schools in Northern and Central New Jersey whose members are committed to great outcomes for students with special needs.

The Alliance supports and empowers educators and advocates who serve students with special needs through education, information support and advocacy. To further the mission of the Alliance, we have established the **Connections for the Future Scholarship**.

The goal of the **Connections for the Future Scholarship** is to provide financial support and recognition of students with disabilities graduating from a **PUBLIC SCHOOL PROGRAM** as they pursue post-secondary training, education or other opportunities.

The scholarship encourages continuing education and training, increased independence and goal setting, and promotes community integration and the use of local resources and supports.

The scholarship will:

- Provide financial support to PUBLIC SCHOOL graduates with disabilities (IEP or 504) so that they may pursue post-secondary education, training, and other life-enhancing opportunities. **STUDENTS DO NOT NEED TO GO TO COLLEGE.**
- Encourage students with disabilities and their families to identify community-based supports to help foster the success of the student beyond graduation.
- Encourage goal setting and planning for the future.

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: April 1, 2025**

### **Eligibility Criteria**

1. The student must be currently enrolled in a public high school or charter school in Bergen, Passaic, Essex, Hudson, Morris, Union, Sussex, Somerset, or Warren counties, and are scheduled to receive their diploma in 2025.
2. The student must be receiving special education and/or related services through an IEP or 504 plan in ANY placement.
3. The student (or designee) must demonstrate that the funds will be used to pursue post-secondary education, internships, or apprenticeship opportunities, including but not limited to

special training programs for the pursuit of vocational opportunities, or continuing education. Examples of such programs are art, recreation, film or music programs, 2- or 4-year college courses, trade and vocational schools, physical education programs, or adult day programs. Funds may be used to pay for related transportation costs.

4. If applicable, the student (or designee) must demonstrate acceptance into a post-secondary program or a commitment for participation in an internship, externship or mentor arrangement.
5. The student must submit ONE letter of recommendation from school personnel i.e., guidance counselor, teacher or principal.

### **Distribution and Use of Funds**

Each individual scholarship will be awarded in an amount of up to \$1,000 per student. Funds can be used to support the student's post-secondary goals as they relate to education, training or vocational opportunities.

Appropriate use of scholarship funds includes, but is not limited to:

- Tuition or coursework payments
- Transportation costs (where none is otherwise available)
- Tutoring services (when appropriate)
- Stipends for unpaid internships
- Assistive technology

### **Selection Criteria**

*Applications will be reviewed by a committee that may be comprised of:*

- Ideally, one representative from each Alliance region.
- An Alliance board member serving as a non-voting facilitator.

*Applications will be reviewed for:*

- Completeness
- Eligibility criteria
- Appropriate use of funds
- Compatibility with the goals of the scholarship

*It is important that we can read all applications; preference shall be given to typed submissions.*

*Consideration will be given to:*

- Nature of student challenges and steps to overcome those challenges.
- Student achievements and accomplishments.
- Student goals and the appropriateness of post-secondary program in meeting those goals.

(Application begins on the following page)

**2025 Alliance Connections to the Future Scholarship**

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: April 1, 2025**

Sponsored by the Alliance of Private Special Education Schools of North Jersey

**For Internal Use Only**

Reviewer Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Internal Review \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer Score \_\_\_\_\_

Total Score \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Current School & County: \_\_\_\_\_

Expected year of graduation: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person Completing this Application: (If different from applicant) \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

School Counselor or Guidance Officer: \_\_\_\_\_

School Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

(Application Continues)

**I plan to go on to:**

- Higher education (2-year or 4-year)
- Trade or vocational school
- Internship or apprenticeship opportunity
- A volunteer opportunity
- Start my own business
- Art, recreation, film, music, physical education program
- Adult day program/ DDD Supports/ DVRS Supports
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**I will use scholarship funds to pay for:**

- Tuition or coursework payments
- Transportation costs (where none is otherwise available)
- Tutoring services (when appropriate)
- Stipends for unpaid internships
- Assistive technology
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

The following section may be completed by the individual or his/her designee. **PLEASE PROVIDE FULL PARAGRAPHS OF A FEW SENTENCES OR MORE** explaining in detail your earlier successes, plans, and services you intend to use in order to reach your goals in the following questions. Please use extra sheets if necessary.

**Given specific obstacles linked to my disabilities, I have had accomplishments and successes, both in and out of school. Some of them are:**

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**When I leave school, I plan to:**

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**Why did you apply for this scholarship and what would it mean for you to win?**

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**Please complete the Application Checklist and Signature on the following page.**

**APPLICATION CHECKLIST & SIGNATURE**

- [ ] I am currently enrolled in a **public** high school or **charter school** in Bergen, Passaic, Essex, Hudson, Morris, Union, Sussex, Somerset, or Warren counties.
- [ ] I am scheduled to graduate and accept a diploma in 2025.
- [ ] I have been receiving special education services through an IEP or 504 plan.
- [ ] I have described my accomplishments, my goals, and my needs for support.
- [ ] I have provided proof of acceptance in a post-secondary program **or** a letter of commitment for participation in an internship/mentor arrangement (if applicable).
- [ ] I have enclosed a letter of recommendation from a guidance counselor, teacher or principal, with specific reference to my disability
- [ ] My application reflects appropriate use of scholarship funds.
- [ ] If selected, I (or parent/guardian) **consent** to use of my picture and/or a recording of the presentation of my award, including my full name and basic information about my post-secondary goal, in press releases, on social media, on the Alliance website and in Alliance newsletters.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Applicant or Parent/Guardian)

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: April 1, 2025**

**Submit Your Application by mail:**  
Alliance of Private Special Education Schools of North Jersey  
170 Changebridge Road C5-3 • Montville, NJ 07045

**Submit Your Application by Email:**  
outreach@specialeducationalliancenj.org

PLEASE SUBMIT ALL DOCUMENTS and SUPPORTING LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION TOGETHER IN ONE EMAIL, subject line: STUDENT LAST NAME Connections Scholarship. If submitting by mail, please use A SINGLE ENVELOPE.