The Disabilities Grant Program may reimburse families for qualified expenses related to educating a child with disabilities. This document explains qualified expenses and key reimbursement processes. See the Frequently Asked Questions for general Disabilities Grant information.

1. The Disabilities Grant disburses funds for tuition directly to participating schools on behalf of students. Families do not submit reimbursement documents for a direct disbursement to schools.
2. For tuition to a private school which is registered with the Division of Nonpublic Education (DNPE) but not participating in the Disabilities Grant or Opportunity Scholarship Programs, families can be reimbursed. Home school families cannot be reimbursed for tuition.
3. For special education expenses (services or products), related services (services only), or technology products (products only), families can be reimbursed. This is true for families of students in private school or in home school. Families cannot be reimbursed for expenses which do not align with these categories, and there are other limitations explained below.
4. The total maximum amount of the Disabilities Grant is $4,000 per semester. If the full amount is used in a direct disbursement to a school, the family may not seek reimbursement for additional expenses.

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What expenses are reimbursable?

**Tuition** Home school families cannot be reimbursed for tuition. Families may be reimbursed if their students attend a school registered with the Division of Nonpublic Education (DNPE) but which is not a participating school with the Disabilities Grant or Opportunity Scholarship Programs. Note that families may not be reimbursed if the student attends a school which participates in the Opportunity Scholarship Program but chooses not to participate in the Disabilities Grant Program.

**Special Education** Special Education refers to services (e.g. tutoring) or products (e.g. curriculum). See below for information about the type of provider or other policies; and see below for items specifically included or specifically excluded.
Related Services
Related Services refers to services only. It does not include products. See below for items specifically included or specifically excluded.

Educational Technology
Educational Technology refers to products only. It does not include services. This category has its own document to explain reimbursable categories. Click here.

Related Services

- Curriculum: YES if grade appropriate and supports an academic program
- Academic curriculum with a religious basis: YES if grade appropriate
- Membership to online curriculum: YES
- Science kits from an academic source: YES
- Tutoring: YES if provider is qualified (see below)
- Summer camp: YES if it is special education instruction such as through a qualified ABA provider or a tutoring camp through a school
- School supplies like paper: NO
- Household items: NO
- Field trips: NO
- Tickets to events: NO
- Membership in organizations such as the YMCA, etc.: NO
- Furnishings (e.g. a desk): NO
- Enrollment or Registration Fees for a subsequent semester: NO
- Out of state services: NO
- Speech therapy, Physical therapy, Occupational therapy: YES
- Psychological / Educational testing: YES
- Physical Education classes: YES
- Sports leagues / horseback riding / swim lessons: YES if provider is a qualified special education provider; NO if provider is not a qualified special education provider
- Sports equipment: NO
- Specialized sports training: NO
- Art/Drama/Music camps: YES if provider is a qualified special education provider; NO if provider is not a qualified special education provider
- Music/Piano lessons: NO
- Recreational summer camp not led by a qualified special education provider: NO
- Bicycles: NO
- Capital Assessment Fees for school building programs: NO
- Uniforms: only if billed by the school, 1 per year: YES

What about special education services or tutoring if I am billed by a participating school?
This is a reimbursable expense. No provider qualifications are needed. No preapproval form is needed.

What about special education services or tutoring if I hire a provider?
Special education providers must have a current North Carolina teaching license or its equivalent (for example: the provider is a licensed teacher from another state or the provider has a degree in special education or an appropriate content area field). Family may be required to provide proof of credentials.
Can a special education provider be a member of the student’s immediate family?  
No. Grant funds cannot be used to pay a student’s immediate family or a member of the student’s household for services. Nor can grant funds be used to pay a member of the home school family or household if two families form a home school. Grandparents are not immediate family; so if a grandparent does not live in the student’s household, the grandparent can be a provider (if qualified).

Can the grant be used for online educational services?  
If the online services are for a school, see the requirements in the main Disabilities Grant FAQ about schools and tuition.

If the online services are for tutoring, and the provider is qualified, the Disabilities Grant can reimburse a family for these expenses. Note that more than 20 hours per week will be viewed as school tuition rather than tutoring. Use the preapproval process if you have questions.

This question references online instruction where a virtual instructor is a provider. This question has no bearing if a home school parent is purchasing online curriculum and providing the instruction.

Can I be reimbursed for transportation expenses?  
Typically, no. The transportation service must be necessary for your student to benefit from special education, as documented in the public school IEP (Submit the DEC4). Grant funds cannot be used to pay transportation expenses incurred for your convenience or personal preferences.

What technology purchases are reimbursable?  
1) Assistive technology which is used for educational purposes for a child with a disability.  
2) Educational technology (hardware and software) which is used for educational purposes for a child with a disability. This technology does not have to be specially adapted for use by a child with a disability. See the list of assistive and educational technology.  
Note: The educational technology items must be purchased to allow for 75 days of use. Fall semester purchase dates: July 1st - Oct 18th; Spring semester purchase dates: Jan. 1st – April 17th.

Can I choose what technology my student needs?  
Yes. However, families are encouraged to research carefully before purchasing technology. Consult these recommendations about assessing your student’s needs and choosing technology.

Are there limits to the number of technology purchases that can be made?  
The grant cannot be used to purchase the same category of item again within three years. In addition, the total grant amount, for tuition and all reimbursable expenses, is $4,000 per semester.

The three year clock is measured against the school year. So purchases (fall or spring) in the 2016-17 school year can be made again in the 2019-2020 school year.
Is a computer the same as a tablet for the purposes of the three year limit?
For the purposes of the Disabilities Grant, a computer (laptop or desktop; Mac or PC) is one item. A tablet (Ipad or other mobile device like a Samsung) is another item. A family could be reimbursed from Grant funds for both items in the same semester, in the same year, or within the three year period.

If a family purchases a computer and a tablet in the same semester, they cannot make those purchases again until three years from that school year.

If a family purchases a computer in the fall of 2016 and a tablet in the spring of 2017, they cannot purchase a computer again until the fall of 2019 or a tablet until the spring of 2020.

Are there limits to the cost of an item?
Grant funds will reimburse families for reasonable expenses. If you fear that an expense may not be considered reasonable, use the preapproval process to ensure that the purchase is reimbursable.

Can I use a gift card to purchase items that will be reimbursed?
A parent applicant can only be reimbursed for items he or she has purchased. You should not use a gift card to make purchases as this may delay your reimbursement.

What are the limitations?
Technology: The statute which governs the Disabilities Grant requires that the technology be used at least 75 days of the semester for which the parent seeks reimbursement of the technology product. This means that the date on the receipt must allow at least 75 days of use. **Technology purchases must be made between July 1 and October 18 for a fall semester reimbursement and between January 1 and April 17 for a spring semester reimbursement.** Technology purchases outside these dates will not be reimbursed. More information about educational technology is [here](#).

Once per semester: The Disabilities Grant Program reimburses families one time per semester.

Parent applicant: The parent applicant is the parent who should complete reimbursement documents. The parent applicant cannot be reimbursed for expenses incurred by someone else.

Current evaluation: A student must have a confirmed evaluation dated September 1, 2014 or later prior to reimbursement for fall 2017 expenses. The confirmed evaluation date must be January 1, 2015 or later for reimbursement of spring 2018 expenses. The student’s evaluation date is posted on the [Student Portal](#). If the evaluation date is not current when the family submits reimbursement documentation, there will be no reimbursement for that semester. It is the family’s responsibility to ensure that the Disabilities Grant Program has a current evaluation date for the student.

No public school: Families cannot be reimbursed for qualified expenses if a student remains in or returns to public school (part time or full time).
What is the timeline?
The direct disbursement to participating schools occurs at the *beginning* of each semester.

The reimbursement to families occurs at the *end* of each semester. Families submit receipts between **December 1 and January 31** for the first semester and between **June 1 and July 31** for the second semester. **Receipts are not accepted outside these two time periods.**

The first semester ("fall") in which reimbursable expenses occur is defined as July 1 through December 31. The second semester ("spring") is January 1 through June 30. Families can only seek reimbursement for expenses incurred in the semester per the date of the receipt. Families cannot split the cost of an expense between semesters. For example, a purchase or service provided in one semester must be reimbursed for that semester and cannot be paid partially in one semester and partially in another.

Payments for fall semester expenses will be made in late January and continue on a weekly basis as documents are processed. Payments for spring semester expenses will begin in late June and continue on a weekly basis. Note the deadlines above for the submission of reimbursement documents. Processing a reimbursement request can take 10-12 weeks.

How does Preapproval work?
Families are encouraged to review the allowable expenses and submit a request for preapproval only for items not addressed in this document. The preapproval process will be available from mid-August through November for the fall semester and from January through April for the spring semester. Qualified expenses will be reimbursed without preapproval (preapproval is not required). The Disabilities Grant provides preapproval for the family’s assurance prior to incurring an unusual expense.

Preapproval is available through the **Student Portal**. Submit requests all at one time. Avoid multiple preapproval requests.

What are the documents I have to send?
New families will need to submit an **Electronic Payment Authorization Form**, a voided check, and **IRS Form W-9**. These documents are required just one time, unless your banking information changes.

Each semester, a family seeking reimbursement will submit a Disabilities Grant reimbursement form (specific to that semester) and receipts to support the reimbursement request. The reimbursement form is available via the Student Portal during the reimbursement periods.

How do I send my documents?
Upload reimbursement documents via the **Disabilities Grant Student Portal**.
Submit documents as a single pdf file with your student’s name as the file name. Emailing your documents, faxing, or mailing hard copies will cause a delay for your reimbursement payment.

Submit your document as one complete file. DO NOT UPLOAD MULTIPLE RECEIPTS INDIVIDUALLY. Uploading each receipt separately will also delay your reimbursement.

What information should the receipts contain?
Receipts should show what you have paid for expenses for tuition, special education, related services or educational technology. Submit these receipts at the end of the semester in which you incurred the expense, and after you have paid the bills. Note that parents do not need to submit these documents for tuition disbursed directly to the school.

For tuition, related services, or special education instruction, the document must show:
- Student’s name and the name of the parent or guardian paying the expense
- Name of school or service provider’s name
- Dates of enrollment or service
- Amount of expense

For special education products or educational technology, the document must show:
- The name of the item
- The name of the retail outlet
- The amount paid
- The date purchased

Note that the parent or guardian named on the grant application must also be the responsible party for payment named on a receipt submitted for reimbursement. The Disabilities Grant cannot reimburse one person for expenses incurred by another person. However, allowance is made for parents of the same household; when one parent pays the bill and another is the parent on the Disabilities Grant record.

What are the tax implications?
In January of each year, the parent applicant will receive a 1099 tax form for reimbursements paid in the previous tax year for expenses other than tuition. Contact your accountant or a tax professional to understand any tax liability you may have as a result of receiving the Disabilities Grant.

Contact information for the Disabilities Grant:
Email: DGrants@ncseaa.edu
Phone: 1-855-330-3955 (toll-free)
Disabilities Grant Student Portal