Education Savings Account

Information for Parents and School Administrators

NCSEAA
North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority
What is the Education Savings Account?
Education Savings Account (ESA) Program

Expands school choice for eligible students with disabilities in kindergarten through 12th grade.

- For students attending a registered nonpublic school or home school
- For tuition and required fees and certain other expenses related to educating a child with a disability
- Allows parents quarterly access to funds in an electronic account (subject to program requirements)
NCSEAA administers the program

— Manages the application, lottery, and award process.

— Ensures the participating school meets program requirements.

— Verifies each student’s eligibility.

— Manages the disbursement of funds for use by parents via an electronic account.
Which nonpublic schools participate in the program?
Participating schools list

- From www.ncseaa.edu, click on the K12 Grants tab then click on any of the three K12 programs. Each page includes a link to information about school choice.
- Click “Choosing a School” to see the page below.

Choosing a School

Current List of Nonpublic Schools

Resources exist that may assist you in choosing a school -

1. North Carolina’s Division of Nonpublic Education registers and monitors nonpublic schools in the State in accordance with State statutes.

2. Parents for Educational Freedom (PEFNC) is an organization that serves as a resource to help families locate participating schools. PEFNC offers a location-based web service that generates lists of schools by address and zip code based on the individual information you provide. You can access their service, NC Schools Around Me, to get a customized list of the schools closest to you.

(These resources are not affiliated with SEAA or the K12 Programs.)
Can a student attend a public school and a nonpublic school with the help of ESA funds?
Attending a public school part-time

Students who attend a public school part-time may benefit from the ESA for the cost of the part-time nonpublic school **IF:**

— The nonpublic school is a school that *exclusively* provides services for children with disabilities.
What types of expenses does the ESA cover?
Categories of expenses

Tuition

Parents pay for tuition with an electronic transfer from the account linked to the student’s ESA funds.

*Schools must be registered with North Carolina’s Division of Nonpublic Education (DNPE) and with SEAA.*

*Note that parents may not pay for tuition at schools which are not registered with DNPE, or which are registered with DNPE but choose not to register with SEAA for the ESA Program.*
Categories of expenses, cont.

Families may also use ESA funds for the following expenses:

**Tutoring and teaching** services from a provider qualified according to requirements set by the ESA Program, including accreditation by a State, regional or national organization.

**Educational therapies** provided by a practitioner who holds a license that meets the requirements set by the ESA Program, including accreditation by a State, regional or national organization.

**Educational Technology** used primarily for educational purposes for a child with a disability.

**Other expenses** such as textbooks, fees for testing, or curriculum.
How do I know if my student is eligible to apply for an ESA?
Eligibility

An eligible student meets all these requirements.

- is eligible to attend public school in NC.
- is 5 years old on or before August 31.
- has not graduated from high school.
- has not enrolled in a post secondary institution (college or university) as a full-time student taking at least 12 hours of credit.
- is a resident of North Carolina.
- is a child with a disability who requires special education, as documented by the NC public school Individualized Education Program (IEP).
Can I apply for the Opportunity Scholarship and the ESA?

What about the Disabilities Grant and the ESA?
A student may receive both the Opportunity Scholarship and the ESA if eligible for both.

In order to receive both the Disabilities Grant and the ESA, additional eligibility requirements must be met. See the ESA manual at http://www.ncseaa.edu/ESA.htm for more information.

A student may receive the Opportunity Scholarship, the ESA, and the Disabilities Grant if all eligibility criteria are met.
I want to apply. Where do I find the application?
New Student Application:

1. Create a MyPortal account (use parent information)

2. Add a student (can only add student when applications are available)

Renewals: Log on to MyPortal. Click on Respond to Renewal Offer.
You’ve got email!

Information about next steps and the Education Savings Account Program Portal.
When do I submit my completed application?
Application period begins...

**February**

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Go to ncseaa.edu for application!
What specific document do I need from the IEP process?
IEP (Individualized Education Program)

- Issued by the NC public school system.
- Specific document is the DEC3 or ECATS Eligibility Determination.
- Dated within the last three years.
- *Initial eligibility* requires a current DEC3.
- *Continuing eligibility* requires a re-evaluation every three years by the NC public school system or by a NC licensed psychologist with a school psychology focus or by a NC licensed psychiatrist.

Education Savings Account Program
When will I find out if I’m going to get an Education Savings Account award?
Award notification starts in April.

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How do I pay for tuition at the school?

How do I pay for other eligible expenses?
Electronic account

- ESA deposits funds for awarded students to an electronic account accessible to the parent account holder.

- Parents transfer funds to participating schools and providers. Parents make purchases for approved products online from this account.

- The Education Savings Account provides for $9,000 per full-time nonpublic school student per school year or for $4,500 per part-time nonpublic school student per school year. The amount will be divided and deposited to the account in 4 installments, subject to family compliance with program requirements.

  ➢ For example, for a full-time nonpublic school student, the parent receives $2,250 in August for the first quarter (July, August, September) and a second installment of $2,250 in October for the second quarter (October, November, December) and so forth.
Additional Information

www.ncseaa.edu

ESA@ncseaa.edu

1-855-330-3955 (toll-free)