



North Carolina State Education
Assistance Authority

ESA+

*a new program for K12 students in North Carolina
for the 2022-23 school year*





Education Student Accounts (ESA+)

Agenda

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- ## **New Student Application**
2. Documentation of a disability
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- ## **Program Operations**
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The ESA+ program provides scholarships to cover expenses related to educating a child with a disability in a nonpublic (private or home) school.

- Pays tuition and fees at participating schools
- No out-of-pocket expenses
- Funds can be used for expenses such as:
 - Speech or occupational therapy
 - Tutoring services
 - Curriculum
 - Educational technology

Documentation of a disability

The documentation of a disability is an **Eligibility Determination** from the student's IEP, issued by a North Carolina public school.

The form must be dated within the last three years. For the new student application opening March 1, 2022 (for the 2022-2023 school year), this means that the date of the **Eligibility Determination** must be 1/1/2019 or later.



Eligibility Determination

Student:
School:

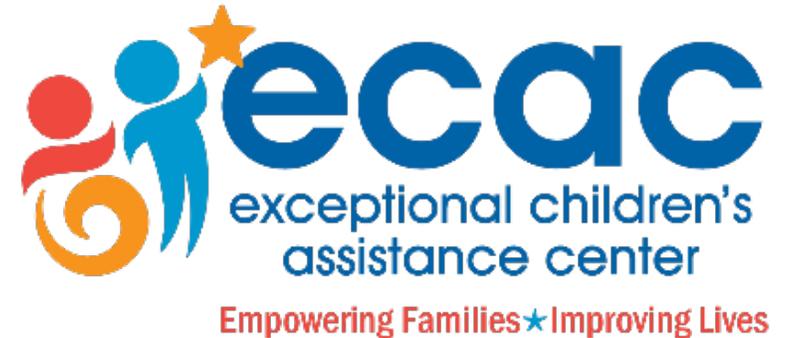
Student UID #:
Grade:

DOB:
Age:

If you have questions about initiating the special education process, timelines, evaluations, reevaluations, and/or eligibility, please contact the Exceptional Children's Assistance Center (ECAC) at **1-800-962-6817** or ecac@ecacmail.org.

ECAC's services to families are provided at no cost.

Please note that ECAC is a wholly separate entity from the State Education Assistance Authority (the "Authority"). ECAC is not affiliated with the Authority and the Authority is not responsible for any representations or information provided to the public by ECAC.



Eligibility other than documentation of a disability

- At least 5 years old by August 31 (*or at least 4 by April 16 with nonpublic school administrator approval for kindergarten*)
- Lives in NC
- Has not graduated from high school
- Has not enrolled in a post-secondary institution full-time
- Eligible to attend public school in NC

Note:

Students who will remain enrolled in public school full-time are not eligible to benefit from ESA+ funds.

- The ESA+ new student application will open **March 1, 2022**.
- The ESA+ Priority Deadline is **April 1, 2022**.
- The ESA+ application is expected to remain open after April 1, assuming funds remain available.

HOW TO APPLY:

1. Create a parent account on MyPortal (*you can do this before March 1 if you like*).
2. Add your student(s) to your MyPortal account.
3. Click on the link to apply for ESA+ (*the ESA+ application link will be available on March 1*).
4. Complete the application for each student, and submit.
5. Within the week following, upload the student's Eligibility Determination via the MyPortal link.

Links to MyPortal and application how-to information here: <https://www.ncseaa.edu/k12/k12-forms-resources/>



- Eligible students on applications received by the Priority Deadline will be entered into a lottery in April, with awards announced by early May.
- As funds remain available, other eligible students will be considered for awards later in 2022, first in order of lottery number, and then in order of application date.



The main award level is \$9,000 per year.

Students who meet the main eligibility criteria previously outlined, and have one of the following designated as the primary or secondary disability on the IEP Eligibility Determination may be eligible for \$17,000.

Terms listed in parentheses as they appear on the Eligibility Determination.

- Autism (Autism)
- Hearing Impairment (Hearing Impairment, Deafness, Deaf-Blindness)
- Moderate or Severe Intellectual or Developmental Disability (Intellectual Disability, Moderate or Severe)
- Multiple, Permanent Orthopedic Impairments (Orthopedic Impairment)
- Visual Impairment (Visual Impairment, Deaf-Blindness)

Schools which participate in ESA+ will receive a **direct payment from SEAA on behalf of the ESA+ student**. Most schools are paid via this method.

The payments to schools are made from SEAA to the school each semester; in August/September for fall and in January/February for spring.

For schools which choose not to participate directly in ESA+, there is another option. Parents of ESA+ students can seek **reimbursement** for the cost of tuition and fees.



Qualified Expenses other than tuition and fees

There are two types of expenses other than tuition and fees.

- Providers (tutoring, teaching services, educational therapies)*
- Purchases (curriculum, textbooks, educational technology)*

The parent manages these expenses through an electronic account on a platform provided by ClassWallet.



ClassWallet:

- a separate company that partners with SEAA.
- an online platform that hosts the **electronic debit account** on behalf of the ESA+ Program.



ESA+ families use remaining funds (after tuition has been disbursed to school) to:

- make a payment to an approved service provider
- purchase products that are ESA+ Qualified Expenses

Providers are tutors and therapists. Provider registration is not for schools or companies selling products.

- Providers register with ESA+ so that families can spend their award funding for their services. Providers need only register once.
- Parents of awarded students can check this summer to see if their preferred providers are already registered, and if not, can forward those providers the information they need to register.

ClassWallet offers an online shopping marketplace where ESA+ parent account holders can choose from hundreds of companies, small and large, including many which specialize in materials designed to assist with special education.

These companies include Amazon, Staples, Scholastic, and many more. Families of new students can expect onboarding this summer to prepare them for paying schools, providers, and for making purchases.

- Students who enroll in two private schools, each ½ time, can receive a full award.
- Students who enroll in home school and a private school, each ½ time, can receive a full award.
- **Students who enroll part-time in a public school and part-time in a private or home school can receive a ½ award (½ the lower award amount regardless of the student's disability).**



- Students who receive a **\$9,000 award** may not roll over funds to the next year.
- Students who receive a **\$17,000 award** may roll over, from one year to the next, a maximum of \$4,500 per year. \$30,000 is the maximum amount families may have in their ESA+ account.

Two Programs for K12 School Choice

North Carolina offers **two scholarship programs** that help families afford nonpublic (private and home) schools. Families may apply to one, or to both programs. Eligibility is determined separately.

Opportunity Scholarship is for students who live in a household that qualifies based on income.

ESA+ is for students with disabilities.

A *Frequently Asked Questions* document assembled from the questions you submit will be posted online in the next few weeks. Look for it on this page, which also includes transitional information for the new ESA+ program: <https://www.ncseaa.edu/k12/updates-to-k12-programs-2/>



The main K12 page leads to the Opportunity Scholarship and the permanent ESA+ web information: <https://www.ncseaa.edu/k12/>

Forms and resources about program operations: <https://www.ncseaa.edu/k12/k12-forms-resources/>

855-330-3955

Monday- Thursday 8am-6pm
Friday- 8am-5pm

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