



ESA+ Overview:

An Introduction to the Program and the Parent Agreement





Statutes and Rules

North Carolina lawmakers have established the ESA+ Program.

ESA+ is funded by the State of North Carolina.

The State Education Assistance Authority (SEAA) is charged with administering ESA+. There are Rules which govern the operations of the Program.

STATUTES and RULES: <https://www.ncseaa.edu/psr/k12-programs/>



Overview of ESA+

ESA+ provides scholarships for expenses related to educating a child with a disability in a nonpublic (private or home) school. Funds can be used for:

- Tuition and fees at participating schools
- Therapeutic services (such as ABA, speech), tutoring, curriculum, and educational technology



Overview of ESA+

- SEAA will disburse funds for required tuition / fees to participating private schools, by semester.
- Funds for qualifying expenses, other than for tuition and fees at schools, will transfer to the ClassWallet platform for the parents to access via an electronic account.





ESA+ Award Amounts

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

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

These areas of disability may qualify the student for the higher award amount. Terms listed as they appear on the Eligibility Determination.

- Autism
- Hearing Impairment, Deafness, Deaf-Blindness
- Intellectual Disability, Moderate or Severe
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Visual Impairment

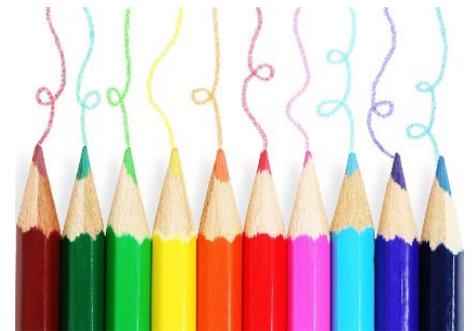


Enrollment Options

1. Student enrolls in a private school.
 - a. School accepts a direct disbursement (most schools do this)
 - b. School does not accept a direct disbursement (parents are reimbursed)

2. Student enrolls in a home school.

There are part-time enrollment options.



Funding for students who enroll in two schools

Students who co-enroll in ... will receive ...

- two private schools: regular award
 - private school and home school: regular award
 - private school and public school: 50% of the award
-
- **Students enrolled full time in a public school (including charter schools) may not benefit from any ESA+ funds.**

School Payments

Schools which **accept** direct payment from SEAA

- Schools certify in August (1x per year)
- Schools and parents endorse (each semester)
- Payment to schools (each semester)

Schools which **do not accept** a direct payment

- Schools must be registered with the NC Division of Non-Public Education (DNPE)
- Parents of ESA+ students will seek **reimbursement** for the cost of tuition and fees.
- *Parents of students at schools which accept Opportunity Scholarship direct payments **may not** be reimbursed for tuition and fees if that school chooses not to accept direct payments for ESA+.*



Waiver of Public School Services

In September, SEAA will require parents to sign a Waiver of Public School Services. Only parents of ESA+ students attending a nonpublic (private or home) school full time will sign the waiver.

RELEASE OF LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY AND WAIVER OF CERTAIN RIGHTS

1. I am a Parent or guardian of a student who has been awarded a scholarship ("Scholarship"), consisting of State funds, from the Education Student Accounts for Children with Disabilities Program (the "Program"). I understand that the Scholarship



Using ESA+ funds: QUALIFYING EDUCATIONAL EXPENSES

Expenses other than tuition and fees

Textbooks

- Required by the participating nonpublic school

Educational Technology

Curricula

- Supports an academic subject

Fees for Nationally Standardized Tests

- Available for homeschool families only; contact ESA in advance
- Not available for students enrolled in participating nonpublic schools

Tutoring and Teaching Services

- In academic subjects

Educational Therapies

- Ex. ABA, Speech, OT, and PT

Student Transportation

- To and from educational services or activities

NOTE about providers of these services:

- 1. Must be registered with AND approved by NCSEAA*
- 2. Cannot be member of student's family*



ClassWallet

ClassWallet is:

- a separate company that partners with SEAA.
- an online platform that hosts the **electronic account** on behalf of the ESA+ Program.
- where ESA+ families use remaining funds (after tuition has been disbursed to school) to:
 - make a payment to a service provider.
 - purchase products that are ESA+ Qualifying Expenses.



Parent Obligations

1. Spend funds only on behalf of the student who was awarded ESA+.
2. Notify SEAA immediately if you enroll your student in a public school.
3. Be prepared to submit documentation about expenses.
4. Return ESA+ funds spent on an item or service that is not a qualifying expense.
5. Do not request or accept a refund or rebate of funds from a school, provider, or any other entity.
6. Do not give schools or providers your parent ClassWallet login credentials.





Testing

Standardized testing for third grade and higher is a school responsibility. You are required to allow your student to be tested annually.

Home Schools are not required to submit test scores.





Misuse of Funds

SEAA has zero tolerance for misuse of ESA+ funds. Examples of misspent funds include:

- Using funds for anything other than Qualifying Education Expenses
- Using funds on behalf of someone other than the student awarded an ESA+ scholarship
- Using funds when the ESA+ recipient is enrolled full time in a public school (*The MyPortal record must always accurately reflect the student's enrollment.*)

A parent who has made an error in spending should self report and notify SEAA immediately. ESA@ncseaa.edu or (855) 330-3955

Parent of Record (in MyPortal)

- Note the definition of “parent” in the ESA+ Parental Agreement.
- The parent of record must be a parent with whom the child lives.
- Only one parent can be listed in the MyPortal record.

Is the parent who primarily manages the ClassWallet account and other ESA+ business not the parent who is listed in MyPortal? *Email program staff and request to change the parent of record.*



Tip: Email is the best way to request information about your student’s record. Note that staff can only share information in response to the email address on file in MyPortal.

(You can update your email address. In MyPortal, go to My Contact Information.)



Funding year-over-year

- Students who receive a **\$9,000 award** may not accumulate any funds in the ESA+ account year over year. Remaining funds do not roll over to the next year.
- Students who receive a **\$17,000 award** may roll over a maximum of \$4,500 per year from any remaining funds.
- The overall maximum account limit is \$30,000.



Continuing Eligibility: *update every 3 years*

The date by which renewing students must have an updated documentation of a disability is January 1.

If your student's evaluation date in MyPortal is **older than 2020** ... you'll need to seek an update this fall (by January 1, 2023). *Students with evaluations dated 2020 and more recent don't need to update this fall.*

Two ways to update the evaluation date:

1. Review from a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist, **OR**
2. Updated Eligibility Determination from an NC public school.

More info: <https://www.ncseaa.edu/k12/esa/documentation-of-a-disability/>

<https://www.ncseaa.edu/events>

- Wednesdays at noon
- Attend live or watch recordings

June 15 How do Schools get Paid? When are ESA+ Funds Sent to ClassWallet?

June 22 ESA+ Students at Schools Not Paid Directly by SEAA

June 29 Choosing or Changing Your School

July 6 ESA+ Continuing Eligibility

July 13 Qualified Expenses and Shopping on ClassWallet

July 20 Dual Enrolled Students (ESA+ and Opportunity Scholarship)

July 27 Planning for Summer 2023 Expenses

ESA@ncseaa.edu

855-330-3955

Monday- Thursday 8am-6pm

Friday- 8am-5pm