Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year!

North Carolina’s ESA+ Scholarship Program
Helpful Hints for Zoom

**Slides** are already posted at [https://www.ncseaa.edu/esa-family-trainings/](https://www.ncseaa.edu/esa-family-trainings/) and a recording of this session will be posted there within a week.

- Zoom has **closed captioning** available

**Asking Questions**
- Use the Q & A to ask your questions (chat is disabled)
- Email **ESA@ncseaa.edu** to ask questions about an individual student

**Answering Questions**
- Presentation team will answer questions from the Q & A at certain points
- Only questions related to this session’s content will be addressed live
ESA+ BIG PICTURE
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.

STATUTE 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 eligible schools
- Therapeutic services (such as ABA, speech), tutoring, curriculum, and educational technology

ESA+ is not a program for students attending their assigned public school full time.
Resources

www.ncseaa.edu

Explore K12 Funding
Education Student Accounts (ESA+)

Education Student Accounts (ESA+) Program
ESA+ Newsletter

The ESA+ newsletter is designed for families of current, awarded ESA+ students. Twice a month you’ll receive all the latest news and announcements about the North Carolina ESA+ program.

Sign up for the newsletter
Awards and Enrollment
ESA+ Award Amounts

The main award level is up to $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 up to $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
https://www.ncseaa.edu/k12/esa/documentation-of-a-disability/

What should I do if my child’s area of disability has changed?

Contact your local public school and request a re-evaluation. A full IEP is not required for this process; only the Eligibility Determination document.

Need Help?

[Image of ECAC logo]
Enrollment Options

1. Student enrolls in a private school.
   a. School accepts a direct payment for tuition and fees (most schools do this)
   b. School does not accept a direct payment (parents are reimbursed for tuition and fees)

2. Student enrolls in a home school.

There are part-time enrollment options.
Enrollment Resources

https://www.ncseaa.edu/k12/choosing-a-school/

**How to Choose a School: ESA+**

ESA+ students may choose from three different types of schools: a school that accepts direct payment, an ESA+ Reimbursement School, or a home school.

**Direct Payment Schools**

Direct Payment Schools are schools that receive a direct payment on behalf of Opportunity Scholarship or ESA+ recipients. To find out which schools accept direct payment, visit the list of Direct Payment Nonpublic Schools.

**ESA+ Reimbursement Schools**

ESA+ Reimbursement Schools are schools that choose not to receive funds directly from the K12 Programs. Families who enroll their students in these schools pay tuition and fees out of pocket and are reimbursed by ESA+.

- Your nonpublic school of choice must be registered with the North Carolina Division of Nonpublic Schools (DNPE) to use this option. To find out whether your school is registered with DNPE, visit DNPE's website or contact the school.
- ESA+ funds may be used to cover the costs required for a student to enroll in a public school other than the public school where the student is assigned to attend. Enrolling in an out-of-district school is contingent on the policies of the local public school district.
- A student enrolled in an ESA+ Reimbursement School cannot use Opportunity Scholarship funds at that school. Only Direct Payment Schools are eligible to receive funds from an Opportunity Scholarship.

**Home Schools (only available to ESA+ students)**

Parents of students in a home school spend their ESA+ funds for Qualified Expenses other than tuition.
LEA Release
Another Form to Sign (*this fall*)

In early fall, ESA+ parents will need to sign a **Release of Public School Services**.

Only parents of ESA+ students attending a nonpublic (private or home) school full time will sign the LEA Release.

**RELEASE OF LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY FOR THE PERIOD OF TIME THE ESA+ RECIPIENT RECEIVES ESA+ SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS**

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...
Accessing ESA+ Funds: How? Where?
## Paying for Tuition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Direct Payment Schools</strong></th>
<th><strong>ESA+ Reimbursement Schools</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School provides cost and enrollment info to SEAA</td>
<td>Schools that are registered with the NC Division of Non-Public Education (DNPE) who do not accept a Direct Payment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School, and then parent, endorse payment to the school (electronically in MyPortal)</td>
<td>Parents of ESA+ students at these schools pay tuition up front and then submit for reimbursement from SEAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEAA sends ESA+ funding to the school on behalf of the student</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is ClassWallet?

- 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 scholarship funds to:
  - make a payment to a service provider
  - purchase products that are ESA+ Qualifying Expenses
  - submit receipts from an ESA+ Reimbursement School
Do you use ClassWallet?

YES

- Home school
- ESA+ Reimbursement School
- Direct Payment School (if ESA+ funds remain after tuition and fees are paid)

NO

Parents of students at a Direct Payment School where the ESA+ funds pay the tuition and fees with nothing left over
Allowable 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**
  - Contact ESA+ in advance
  - Note: Direct Payment schools pay for required testing

- **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
What Expenses Are Allowable

Allowable Expenses

- Tuition and Fees
- Tutoring
- Educational Therapy
- Curricula
- Educational Technology

These topics are links to explanations about WHICH expenses are allowable, and HOW parents pay for them

https://www.ncseaa.edu/k12/esa/8617-2/ (or select “Allowable Expenses” from the left side navigation)

Transportation — ESA+ funds may be used for transportation to/from educational services or activities. Visit the Search for a Provider portal and enter the search term “transportation” to see a list of registered providers.

Textbooks — Must be required by a nonpublic school and related to one of the following academic subjects: math, science, English/language arts, social studies, or foreign languages.

Standardized Tests — Fees for nationally standardized tests (home school students only)
Providers Register

Acceptable credentials

Tutors have a teaching certificate from North Carolina or another state, or a bachelor’s degree.

Therapists must individually hold a license or accreditation that is recognized by a State, regional, or national organization that governs the field of therapy for which they are providing services.

https://www.ncseaa.edu/k12/esa/provider-registration/

---

**Step 1: Submit Provider Registration Request and Create Account**

Visit the Provider Portal to register as a provider (for the purposes of this process, a provider may be referred to as a vendor).

**Step 2: Submit Required Documents**

Once you have created your provider account you will be asked to submit the required documents listed below.

- ESA+ Facility or Individual Provider Agreement (available through the Provider Portal)
- Provider Credentials

Providers must complete registration with SEAA but you can show them where to go and/or encourage them to complete.
Finding Providers Already Registered

https://www2.ncseaa.edu/approvedprovidersk12/default.aspx
or click “Provider Search” from the left side navigation

Welcome to the NCSEAA Provider Search Site

Type the name of the provider or desired city in the box below.

Please note: If your desired provider is not on the list, please direct them to NCSEAA Provider Portal to register.
Parent Obligations
Parents, You Must …

• not give schools or providers your MyPortal or ClassWallet login credentials.
• spend funds only on behalf of the student who was awarded ESA+.
• notify SEAA immediately if you enroll your student in a public school full time.
• be prepared to submit documentation about expenses.
• return funds used for items or services that aren’t allowable expenses.
• not request or accept a refund or rebate of funds from a school, provider, or any other entity.
• Allow your student to be tested (3rd grade and up; requirement excludes home school)
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+ student is enrolled full time in their regular 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
Additional Forms and Resources

ESA+

List of ESA+ Reimbursement Schools
Choosing a School
Documentation of a Disability
School Choice Deadlines

Allowable Expenses
ESA+ Invoice Documentation
Misuse of State Funds Policy
Tax Implications
Continuing Eligibility Form
Educational Technology Guidelines

https://www.ncseaa.edu/k12/k12-forms-resources/
The Parent of Record (in MyPortal)
The MyPortal Parent

- “Parent” is defined 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.

Email is the best way to request information about your student’s record. **BUT:**

*Staff can only respond to the email address listed in MyPortal.*

**Tip:** Need to update your email?

*In MyPortal, go to My Contact Information.*

**Tip:** Is the parent who primarily manages ESA+ business **not** the parent who is listed in MyPortal?

*Email ESA+ and request to change the parent of record.*
IMPORTANT ESA+ REMINDERS

Parents should check MyPortal once a week:
• Are there items on the To Do list?
• Look at Notifications. Maybe you’ve missed an email!

ESA+ students need updated documentation of a disability **every 3 years** (**3 years from the evaluation date on file**).

HOWEVER: Parents, you will renew **annually** so that the ESA+ staff know you want your student to continue next year.

ESA+ is **not a reimbursement** program.
• Very few exceptions (mainly the ESA+ Reimbursement Schools)
• Do not purchase items or pay for services with the intent to submit a receipt.

Public School? If a student will be in the public school, full-time, as normally assigned, then they are **not eligible for ESA+**.

➢ ESA+ is not able to help students who are enrolled in their regular public school (including charter schools).
Summer Training for ESA+ Families

https://www.ncseaa.edu/esa-family-trainings/

Enrollment Options, Updating the Area of Disability, ESA+ Reimbursement Schools, Purchasing Curriculum, Planning for Summer Expenses, Continuing Eligibility, and more …

Register to attend live sessions or view recordings at your convenience.

CONTACT US

ncseaa.edu

ESA@ncseaa.edu

1-855-330-3955

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