



# Continuing Eligibility

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North Carolina's ESA+ Scholarship Program



# Helpful Hints for Zoom

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

Note that Zoom has **closed captioning** available

## Asking Questions

- Use the Q & A to ask your questions (chat is disabled)
- Email [ESA@ncseaa.edu](mailto: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

# Agenda

1. Requirement in NC law
2. Resource to Help
3. Calculating the 3 Years
4. 2 Options
5. Exceptions to the Options
6. Process & Timeline





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# Continuing Eligibility Requirement

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# Why do we need Continuing Eligibility?

State law requires the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority (NCSEAA) to confirm a student's **continuing eligibility** for the ESA+ Program at least every three years.



# How do we complete the Continuing Eligibility requirement?

- Return to the public school for a re-evaluation via the IEP team process

**OR**

- Have a psychologist or psychiatrist sign the Continuing Eligibility Form\*

*\* There are students who can't use this option.*

# What is this exactly? Who needs it?

*Continuing Eligibility* is the process of updating the documentation of a disability to confirm a student continues to be eligible for the ESA+ Scholarship.



**Current students (new or renewal)** in ESA+ need to meet this requirement every three years.

The deadline is January 1.

# When do we need Continuing Eligibility?

## Does your student need to update the documentation of a disability?

1. Find your student's current Eligibility Determination Form.

*For a description of the form, see our website. On the last page of the form there should be a list of people who attended the meeting, their signatures, and **the date**.*

2. Find the date of the meeting in the "Date" column and add three to the year.
3. If the meeting date was 2020: **2020 + 3 = 2023**

**TIP:** If your student's Eligibility Determination meeting date is 2020...

**Updated documentation is due January 1, 2024. Start now.**





## Continuing Eligibility: *delays in payment?*

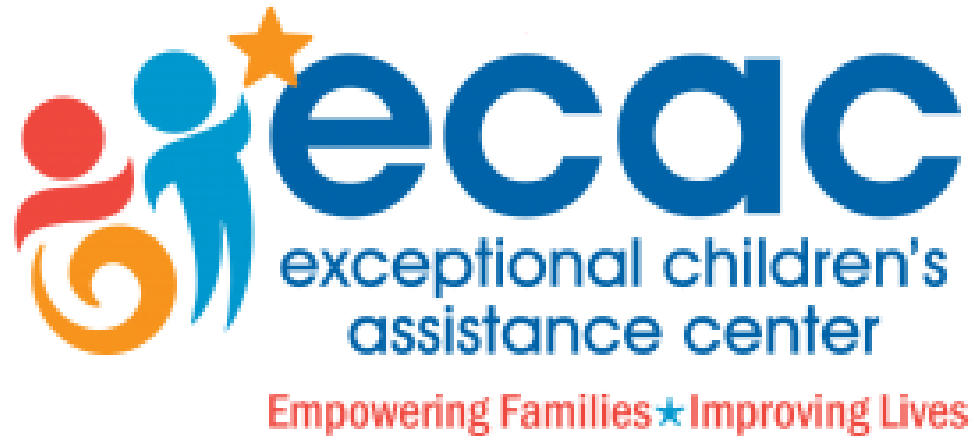
If your student's documentation of a disability is due to be updated by January 1, 2024, and you have not submitted it in MyPortal by then ...

- Your school will not be paid for spring 2024.
- No spring deposit will be made to ClassWallet.
- You can't use any existing funds in ClassWallet.
- Student's renewal status for 24-25 will be *ineligible*.

Reach out to ESA+ Program staff ASAP regarding your timeline if you are worried about a delay past January 1.

# Exceptional Children's Assistance Center

## Need Help?



ECAC is a resource for North Carolina families!

1. Who is ECAC?
2. Can you describe a high-level overview of reaching out to the public school for an updated evaluation?

<https://www.ecac-parentcenter.org/>

Phone:

**1-800-962-6817**



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# Two Options

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# Is the public-school process required?

## YES

An Eligibility Determination issued by a North Carolina Public School is the only acceptable documentation of a disability for **new students**

Required in order to **update the area of disability** (which could result in a different award level)

Required to update if student's **only area of disability is Developmental Delay**

## NO

### *The Continuing Eligibility Form is ..*

An option for students who are already in the ESA+ Scholarship Program (except for the two exceptions described on this slide)

Not an option for students whose only area of disability is Developmental Delay or for students whose parents want to update the student's area of disability for ESA+

# Public School Eligibility Determination

ESA+ website 

Four sections labeled with roman numerals I-IV

All sections with YES selected

List of IEP team members present with meeting date in the year 2020 or later.



**ECATS** Eligibility Determination

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Student LID# \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_  
 School: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

### ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION

**I. Disability Determination**

Based on the information from a variety of sources that have been documented and carefully considered, the IEP Team has determined:

Student **MEETS** the criteria for one or more of the fourteen (14) disabling conditions described in the NC Public Operating Services for Children with Disabilities.  
 Student **DOES NOT MEET** the criteria for one or more of the fourteen (14) disabling conditions described in the NC Public Operating Services for Children with Disabilities.

Primary Disability		Secondary Disability	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Autism	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Multiple Disabilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Autism	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Multiple Disabilities
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deaf Blindness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Orthopedic Impairment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deaf Blindness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Orthopedic Impairment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deafness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Health Impairment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deafness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Health Impairment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Developmental Delay	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Specific Learning Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Developmental Delay	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Specific Learning Disability
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Emotional Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Speech or Language Impairment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Emotional Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Speech or Language Impairment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hearing Impairment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traumatic Brain Injury	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hearing Impairment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traumatic Brain Injury
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Intellectual Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Visual Impairment (including Blindness)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Intellectual Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Visual Impairment (including Blindness)

**II. Adverse Effect on Educational Performance**

The IEP Team has determined the student's educational performance is not primarily caused by:

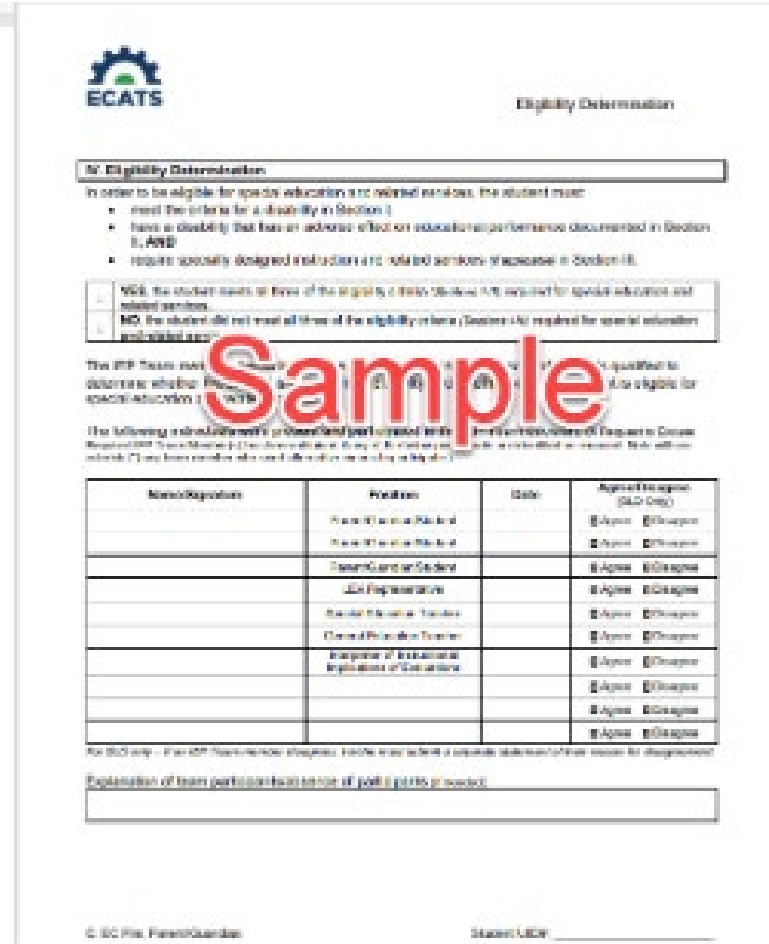
Yes	No	Comments
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a lack of appropriate instruction in reading, including the essential components of reading instruction; the term "essential components of reading instruction" means explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency (including oral reading skills), and reading comprehension strategies.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	a lack of appropriate instruction in math and a related English proficiency.

The disability has an adverse effect on educational performance.  Yes  No

**III. Instructional Requirement**

The IEP Team has determined that the student:

**REQUIRES** specially designed instruction and related services (if applicable).  
 **DOES NOT REQUIRE** specially designed instruction and related services.



**ECATS** Eligibility Determination

**IV. Eligibility Determination**

In order to be eligible for special education and related services, the student must:

- meet the criteria for a disability in Section I;
- have a disability that has an adverse effect on educational performance (documented in Section II); **AND**
- require specially designed instruction and related services (if applicable in Section III).

**YES**, the student meets all three of the criteria (Sections I-III) required for special education and related services.  
 **NO**, the student did not meet all three of the eligibility criteria (Sections I-III) required for special education and related services.

The IEP Team was unable to determine whether the student is eligible for special education and related services.

The following information will be provided to the parent/guardian of the student and the student (if appropriate) upon request. No additional information will be provided unless otherwise requested by the parent/guardian.

Name/Signature	Position	Date	Agreed to sign (S.D. Only)
	Parent/Guardian/Student		<input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
	IEP Representative		<input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
	Special Education Teacher		<input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
	Interpreter of Instructional Implications of Observations		<input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
			<input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
			<input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree

Explanation of team participation in order of priority (if needed):

© EC Pk, Parent/Guardian Student LID# \_\_\_\_\_

# Public School Eligibility Determination

## Accepted Documentation

Eligibility Determination issued from the **North Carolina Public School IEP** process

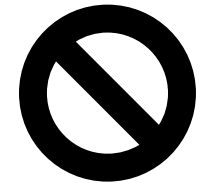
Eligibility Determination issued by a **Department of Defense School** located in North Carolina

Issued within the **last 3 years**

## Not Accepted

Other IEP documentation: **prior written notice, annual goals, progress reports**

- **504 Plans**
- **Student Aptitude Tests**
- **Student Achievement Tests**
- **Letter from a doctor or other medical professional**
- **Private psychological assessment**



# Continuing Eligibility Form

ESA+ website 



## K-12 Programs Documentation of Continuing Eligibility

State law requires the State Education Assistance Authority (SEAA) to confirm a student's continuing eligibility for the Education Student Accounts (ESA+) program at least every three years. The date of initial eligibility is the date of the public-school system's Eligibility Determination issued by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. Tracking of the three-year cycle begins with this date.

One of the following processes must document continuing eligibility for the student every three years for the student to remain eligible for one the program. The program does not require medical records or educational test results; however, families must submit one of the two documents outlined below:

1. The local public school system assesses the student to determine if the student continues to be a child with a disability. The public school then verifies the outcome via the Eligibility Determination issued by the IEP team at the time of the reevaluation.  
OR
2. A North Carolina licensed psychologist with a school psychology focus or a North Carolina Licensed Psychiatrist assesses the student and completes this form.

To be completed by the psychologist or psychiatrist:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Birthdate

I certify that I have reviewed appropriate medical and educational records for the student named above. I further certify that the education and related services received by the student in the nonpublic school setting have improved the child's educational performance, and that the child will continue to benefit from placement in the nonpublic school setting.

I certify that I am a psychologist with a school psychology focus or a psychiatrist, licensed to practice in North Carolina. I further certify that I have the knowledge and expertise to make the assessment and render the foregoing certification. I am licensed and in good standing with the North Carolina agency governing my profession.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Psychologist/Psychiatrist name (printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Psychologist/Psychiatrist name (signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
License Number

Most students who are updating their evaluation in order to remain eligible for ESA+ (every 3 years) have the option to use this form.

*This form can't be used:*

- if a student's only area of disability is Developmental Delay
- if the parent needs to document that an area of disability has changed



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# Developmental Delay

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# Developmental Delay

- Students with Developmental Delay as the only area of disability **must be re-evaluated by a North Carolina public school**
- Parents can request an evaluation without re-enrolling back in public school
- Start process in **fall of re-evaluation year**





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What if my child's area of eligibility has  
changed?

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# Updating the Area of Disability

- Contact your local public school and request a re-evaluation.
- A full IEP is not required. Seek an updated Eligibility Determination.



## Eligibility Determination

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Student:  
School:

Student UID #:  
Grade:

DOB:  
Age:

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# Process and Timeline

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# Process & Timeline

1. Parent pursues public school re-evaluation process or psychologist/psychiatrist process

## **AND THEN**

2. After October 1 each year parents whose students need to update will see a link on MyPortal to submit the updated documentation of a disability which is due by January 1

## **OR**

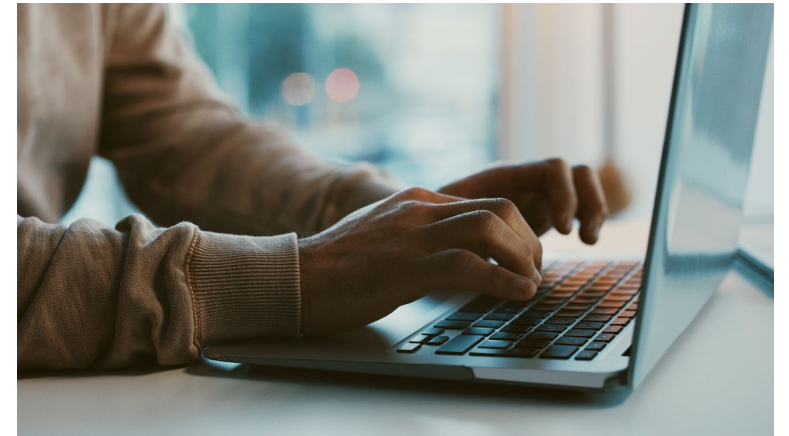
3. Parent emails ESA+ to ask for a link to upload document  
*(wait until you have the document in hand)*

Note that ESA+ can only update the award level to the higher amount at certain points in the scholarship cycle.

# How to Upload a Document to MyPortal

1. Sign on to MyPortal.
2. Look for the To Do list.
3. Look for the task with the link: “Continuing Eligibility Information”.
4. Submit the document as **ONE Word or PDF file.**

**Tip:** Don't email your document. Staff will only have to ask you to upload to MyPortal.



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

## Renewing Families

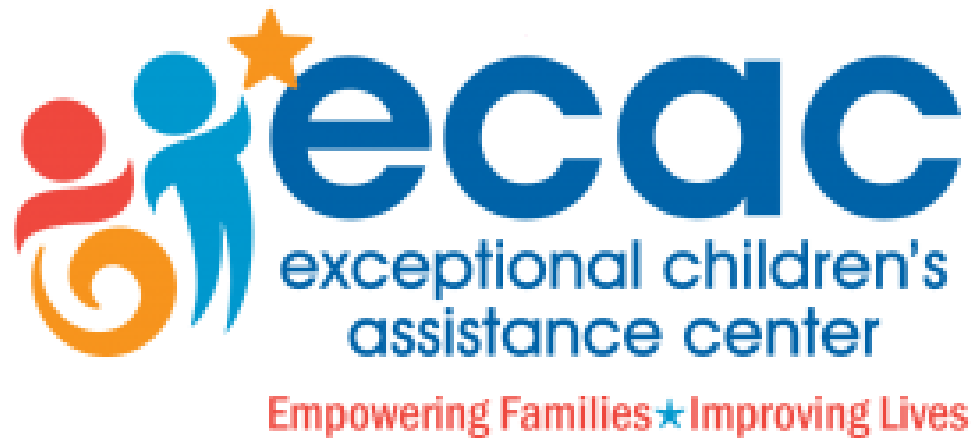
To remain eligible to participate in the ESA+ program, families must provide a re-evaluation of their student's disability every three years.



**Remember:** all this information is on the ESA+ website!

# Exceptional Children's Assistance Center

## Need Help?



<https://www.ecac-parentcenter.org/>

Phone:

**1-800-962-6817**



# CONTACT US



ncseaa.edu



[ESA@ncseaa.edu](mailto:ESA@ncseaa.edu)



**1-855-330-3955**

Monday-Thursday: 8am-6pm

Friday: 8am-5pm

## 2023 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 ...

**View recordings at your convenience.**