

# Frequently Asked Questions – ESA+

## Newly Awarded Families - \$9,000

If you have questions about your award offer or the awarding process, please consult the following Frequently Asked Questions and our [website](#) for more information. Please check your email and the MyPortal account where you applied for important updates and program notifications.

### **I received an award offer for \$9,000. What does that mean?**

If you applied for an ESA+ Scholarship between February 1 and March 1, 2024, an ESA+ award may have been offered to you on April 26, 2024. Check your email and your MyPortal account as soon as possible for an award notification.

Funds may be used to pay tuition and fees for eligible schools and for certain [allowable expenses](#) such as speech therapy, tutoring services, and educational technology.

For families who homeschool, funds may be used for [allowable expenses](#) only.

### **How long do I have to respond to the award offer?**

You must accept the award through your MyPortal account **no later than May 17, 2024**. Failure to respond by May 17th will result in the loss of the award for the 2024-25 school year. Accepting or declining the award must be done through your MyPortal account. Please do not call or email SEAA to accept or decline your award.

### **How do I accept the award offer?**

- Log into your MyPortal account.
- Go to your “To-Do List.”
- Click on “Respond to Offer”.
- Select “Accept” or “Decline”.
- Click “Submit”.

You can confirm your response to the award offer by going to Eligibility and Award Information section of MyPortal. Hover over the icon next to your student’s name, and you’ll see confirmation of your status.

### **Do I have to accept the award for each student in my household?**

Yes. You must accept the award for **each student in your household who received an award**. Failure to accept for each student who received an award will result in the award being cancelled for any students for whom you did not accept the award.

**What happens once I accept the award offer?**

Continue to check your “To-Do List” in MyPortal for important action items. This is also where you will upload documents required by the program. By late May, you will receive a task on your to-do list to sign the ESA+ Parent Agreement.

**What happens if I miss the May 17th deadline?**

If you do not accept the award by May 17th, the award will be cancelled.

**If I decline the award or the award is cancelled, can I apply again next year?**

Yes. Even if you decline the award this year, you can apply again next year. Just like this year, award availability for new eligible families will depend upon the amount of funds available after renewal families are awarded.

**What if I haven’t chosen a school yet or the school I’ve chosen hasn’t accepted my student?**

Even if you haven’t chosen a school or the school you’ve chosen hasn’t accepted your child, you **must still accept the award offer by May 17th to remain eligible for the ESA+ scholarship**. Your student must be enrolled and attending an eligible school no later than October 1, 2024, to use scholarship funds. For help in finding a school in your area, see the [Choosing a School](#) section of the K12 Program website, which includes access to the app NC Schools Around Me.

Families who enroll their students in an ESA+ Reimbursement School (schools that choose not to receive funds directly from the K12 Programs) should email [ESA@ncseaa.edu](mailto:ESA@ncseaa.edu) with the name of the school. ESA+ staff will add the school choice in MyPortal for you.

**What if my school does not accept direct disbursement from SEAA?** [ESA+ Reimbursement Schools](#) are not required to accept direct disbursements from SEAA for tuition and fees. ESA+ Reimbursement Schools are schools that are registered with the North Carolina Division of Non-Public Education (DNPE) but who do not receive tuition and fee disbursements directly from SEAA. If the school is a [Direct Payment School](#), the school must accept tuition and fee disbursements from SEAA. Please contact [ESA@ncseaa.edu](mailto:ESA@ncseaa.edu) or call 855-330-3955 if you have any questions about your school.

**Do I have to pay tuition and fees to the school before I receive the award?**

Whether or not you have to pay any portion of tuition and fees before you receive the award depends on whether your school is a [Direct Payment School](#) or an [ESA+ Reimbursement School](#). If your school is a Direct Payment School, you are not required to pay any portion of the tuition and fees **covered by the award**. If your student is enrolled in a Direct Payment School, once that school has certified that your student is enrolled in and attending the school, SEAA disburses the tuition and fees directly to the school. If your school is an ESA+ Reimbursement School, you may be required to pay tuition and fees directly to the school prior to receiving your award funds. In this case, you should consult with your school of choice on their payment policies.

**Will the award funds be sent directly to me?**

If your school is a Direct Payment School, SEAA disburses ESA+ Scholarships directly to the school after both you and the school have certified that your student is enrolled and attending, usually in August. Any remaining funds will be deposited in your ClassWallet account. If your school is an ESA+ Reimbursement School, or if you are a homeschool family, the fall semester amount of the award will be sent to your ClassWallet account in late August or early September.

**Should I sign up with ClassWallet now?**

No. You can look for onboarding information soon, including a timeline for all ESA+ training and required steps.

**I am moving to North Carolina. How do I update my mailing address?**

Update your mailing address in MyPortal as soon as you move to North Carolina. Log in to MyPortal, click on My Contact Information, and follow the instructions on the screen. Update both the permanent and mailing address. You must be a North Carolina resident prior to the disbursement of your award.

**Is there anything else I should know?**

The ESA+ Program expects that parents will use a portion of the ESA+ funds each year. If you do not spend at least \$1,000 by the end of the school year (June, 2025), either for tuition or via your ClassWallet account, you may not be eligible to renew the award for the next school year.

The ESA+ Program does not allow your student's account to roll over any remaining funds from one school year to the next school year.