

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the terms and conditions?

- To participate in the program, applicants must abide by an annually signed contract. Students **cannot** be enrolled in public school.
- Students cannot be enrolled in a public school (including charters and public online schools).
- Students cannot be enrolled in a summer public school program (including charters and public online schools).
- Students cannot receive any School Tuition Organization (STO) scholarships or any tax credit scholarships concurrently in the same year.
- Applicants must submit quarterly expense reports, with uploaded receipts, by the given deadlines.
- Applicants must adhere to approved expenditures.
- Applicants must spend a portion of the annual award each year.

How much funding will my child receive?

- Funding is based on district of residence or district of attendance, and is determined by a variety of factors that are subject to change. Amounts vary between districts and fiscal years.
- Base Funding: This amount is 90% of what is given to the District. Funding could range from approximately \$3,000 to approximately \$30,000 per year, depending on grade, school, district of residence/district of attendance, funding category, disability, etc.



Empowerment Scholarship Account Program

Arizona Department of Education
Empowerment Scholarship Account Program
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Website: www.azed.gov/esa

Empowerment Scholarship Account Program



Quick Information Guide

ADE Mission:

To serve Arizona's education community, and actively engage parents, ensuring every child has access to an excellent education.

Background

The Empowerment Scholarship Account (ESA) program was originally created by the Arizona State Legislature to expand educational opportunities for



special needs students. The program has subsequently been expanded each year. Because the program was created by the Legislature, state law

governs and houses its rules and regulations. The state statutes concerning the program are A.R.S. § 15-2401 through A.R.S. § 15-2404.

ESA is an account administered by the Arizona Department of Education that is funded by state tax dollars to provide educational options for qualified Arizona students. By opting out of the public school system, parents can seek a range of alternative educational services, such as private school or home-based education, to tailor an individualized educational plan that is best for their child.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the Empowerment Scholarship Account (ESA) Program, the student and parent/guardian must reside in Arizona and meet program criteria.

Students can qualify for the Empowerment Scholarship Account Program under the following categories*:

- K-12 Student with Disability
- Preschool Student with Disability
- Active Military
- Legal Guardian is Legally Blind, Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- Resides within Boundaries, and Attends, D or F Rated School
- Resides on an Indian Reservation
- Sibling of Qualifying Applicant
- Ward of Court

Additional criteria must also be met, depending on which category the student may qualify for. These qualifications are based on the most recent legislative updates and are subject to change annually. For specific eligibility requirements, please visit the ESA website at www.azed.gov/esa, call 602-364-1969, or email the Empowerment Scholarship Account Program team at esa@azed.gov.

*Please note that additional eligibility requirements must be met to qualify within a category.

Applying for an ESA

Applications for ESA are available year-round.

Applicants will receive a letter of approval or denial within 45 days of submitting a completed application.

If the application is incomplete, a request for information will be sent, listing any additional required documentation.

If approved, a contract will be issued to the applicant. The signed contract and required documents must be received by the ESA Program before funding begins.

Funding will begin in the quarter following that in which the contract is received and fully executed by the applicant and ADE. For example, if a contract is fully executed in Quarter 1, the applicant will begin receiving funding at the beginning of Quarter 2. ESA applications are located at

<https://esa.azed.gov/esa>.

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