



State of Arizona Department of Education Exceptional Student Services



Date: January 21, 2020
To: Public Education Agencies' Special Education Directors
From: Exceptional Student Services
Subject: Fiscal Year 2020 IDEA High-Cost Funding

Exceptional Student Services (ESS) is opening up the IDEA High-Cost Funding application for claims for the 2019-2020 school year on January 27, 2020. ESS aims to review claim submissions as a batch monthly to process them in order of urgency. ESS determines urgency by the supporting evidence submitted by the public education agency (PEA) and whether the student meets needs, such as those listed below, that are currently classified as receiving priority of review:

- Hearing or Visual Impairment
- Severe Intellectual Disability
- Moderate Intellectual Disability
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Multiple Disabilities (including Severe Sensory Impairment)
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Preschool Severe Delay
- Other extenuating circumstances (case-by-case)

All applications will be reviewed and processed to determine if they meet the minimum requirements for any high-cost claim. The primary requirements are as follows:

1. Clear invoicing or accounting journals that reflect actual dollars spent to the individual student on a claim
 - a. If a single cost is shared between multiple students, it must be proportioned out in a manner consistent of services or items received for the child
2. The IEP that supports and explains the necessity for the extra services required for this child
3. Must meet the requirement of costing the PEA at least *three times* the normal amount expended on a child in Arizona of \$7,652 (National Center for Educational Statistics - May 2019)



- a. This amount would be \$22,956 annually or \$127.53 per-day (per-day amount can fluctuate, dependent upon the PEA's operational calendar)

The supporting documentation to meet these requirements must be submitted to the ESS Vouchers application. For permission to submit high-cost claims using the ESS Vouchers application, please work with the Entity Administrator for your PEA to assign the role of ESS High Cost.

ESS has available funds from the prior fiscal year and is budgeting approximately three million dollars to be dedicated to the High-Cost Child fund. From this amount, \$500,000 will be dedicated to secure care entities in Arizona, as they target a critical niche of students in the state. Any amount not claimed by the secure care entities by May 31, 2020, will be made available for use in the general fund. ESS will review the availability of funds monthly to track the number of claims being paid out. Approval or disapproval to use high-cost funds does not change or remove the obligation of the PEA to provide free appropriate public education (FAPE) to students with disabilities. As such, PEAs are encouraged to have contingency plans in place, in case the funds are depleted, reduced, or removed in future years. ESS can place limitations on how much can be claimed for a particular student(s) or an entity to ensure it is addressing high-cost students equitably. The primary focus of these funds is to reimburse direct services for the eligible students and remove some or all the burden from a PEA.

The quick reference guide for the High-Cost Child applications can be found on [the ESS Program Management website](#).

For any questions or concerns, please [email ESS Program Management](#).