

Special Education Savings Account



What is the ESA Program?

The Education Savings Account is a reimbursement program for parents of a child with a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20.U.S.C 1400, et seq. The purpose of this program is to provide flexibility for parents in their child's education in order for all to reach their full educational potential.

How do families apply?

Applications for the ESA program will be available to families twice a year and will be located on the ESA website. Paper applications are available upon request by contacting OPIESA@mt.gov. The application windows will open May 1 - June 1 and November 1 - December 1 each year. Copies of a child's disability qualification documents (evaluation report, IEP, or private-place service plan), and proof of address will need to be provided with the complete application. Please note that students with 504 plans may not qualify for this program.

Who is eligible?

Students must be identified as having special needs under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) definition of a "child with disabilities." A "Qualified student" means a resident of the state who meets the following criteria:

- Is identified as a "child with a disability" under IDEA, 20 U.S.C. 1400, et seq.
- Is between the ages of 5 and 19 on September 10.
- Is not currently enrolled in a school operating for the purpose of providing educational services to youth in department of corrections commitment programs or in the Montana School for the deaf and blind;

AND

- Was enrolled in a public school during the previous school year.
- Was counted during the previous school year for purposes of school district ANB funding.

OR

- Is eligible to enter kindergarten pursuant to 20-7-117, MCA.
- Did not reside in Montana in the previous school year.

How can the ESA funds be utilized?

ESA funds can be used towards qualified school tuition, tutoring expenses, educational therapies, textbooks, curriculum materials, electronic educational programs, distance learning programs, or other instructional materials or services. For a full list of allowable expenses, please visit the [ESA website](#) and review the parent handbook.

How do reimbursements work?

Upon receipt of a signed contract with OPI, families will submit reimbursement receipts to OPI for allowable expenses utilizing an electronic management system. Funds will be deposited in the trust account in equal payments through the months of August and June. Reimbursement requests must be submitted to OPI by the 25th of each month for processing after the 10th of the following month for available funds in the trust account.

Things to know:

If a student is enrolled in the ESA program, they cannot be enrolled full-time in a Montana public school during the school year in which the child is enrolled in the ESA program.

Additional resources for parents and schools are available on OPI's website.

<https://opi.mt.gov/Families-Students/Parent-Resources/Education-Savings-Account>



Application Windows

May 1 - June 1
Nov 1 - Dec 1



Questions About ESA?

Contact ESA:
OPIESA@mt.gov

