



Continuing Eligibility

North Carolina's ESA+ Scholarship Program



Helpful Hints for Zoom

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

Asking Questions

- Use the Q & A to ask your questions (chat is disabled).
- Email ESA@ncseaa.edu to ask questions about an individual student.

Answering Questions

- ESA+ team will answer questions from the Q & A at certain points.
- Only questions related to this session's content will be addressed live.





01 NC Law
Continuing Eligibility is a statutory requirement

02 Calculate the 3 Years
When to get started

03 2 Options
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04 Exceptions
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05 Process & Timeline
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01

North Carolina Law (*governing the ESA+ Program*)

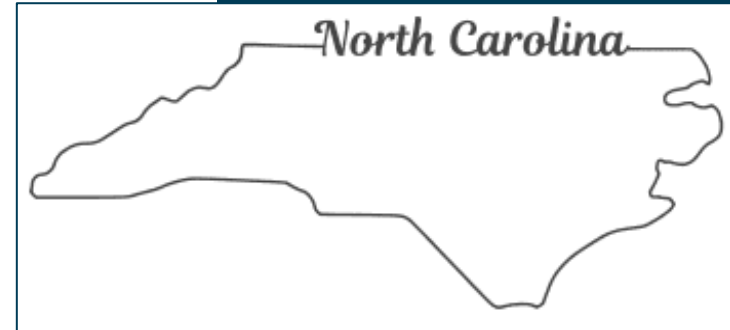




- North Carolina lawmakers established the ESA+ Scholarship Program.
- Our state agency, the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority (NCSEAA), is charged with administering ESA+.
- State law requires that our agency confirm a student's Continuing Eligibility for ESA+ at least every three years.

STATUTE and RULES:

<https://www.ncseaa.edu/psr/k12-programs/>





Initial Eligibility vs Continuing Eligibility

Initial Eligibility: *You may remember that for the ESA+ new student application, you had to provide the public school Eligibility Determination to document your student's disability.*

Continuing Eligibility:

- ☐ Current students
- ☐ **Update** the student's documentation of a disability
- ☐ Most students have 2 options

- ☐ Every 3 years from the date of the documentation currently on file with ESA+



02

Calculate the Three Years



What is your student's current documentation date?

- Pay attention to the *year* (not the month or day).

1. Add 3 to the year.

- If the current date is 2023: $2023 + 3 = 2026$

2. Start the process in the spring of 2026.

3. As of January 1, 2027, the documentation is outdated, and the student is no longer eligible for ESA+.





What happens if the Continuing Eligibility requirement is not met by January 1?

- ESA+ won't disburse spring funds
- Funds in ClassWallet are forfeited
- The student can't renew for the next year





03

Two Options (*for most students*)





Continuing Eligibility: How?

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

OR

(2) Have a psychologist or psychiatrist sign the Continuing Eligibility Form*

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





ECATS

Eligibility Determination

Student: _____ School: _____ Student UID #: _____ Grade: _____ DOB: _____ 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 Policies Governing 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 Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities.

Primary Disability		Secondary Disability	
Autism	Multiple Disabilities	Autism	Multiple Disabilities
Deaf-Blindness	Specific Learning Disability	Deaf-Blindness	Specific Learning Disability
Deafness	Other Health Impairment	Deafness	Other Health Impairment
Developmental Delay	Speech or Language Impairment	Developmental Delay	Speech or Language Impairment
Emotional Disturbance	Traumatic Brain Injury	Emotional Disturbance	Traumatic Brain Injury
Learning Impairment	Visual Impairment (including Blindness)	Learning Impairment	Visual Impairment (including Blindness)
Intellectual Disability		Intellectual Disability	

II. Adverse Effect on Educational Performance

The IEP Team has determined the student's educational performance is not adversely affected by:

☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ a lack of appropriate instruction in reading, including the essential components of reading instruction: the skills, knowledge, and strategies of reading instruction; reading fluency; and reading comprehension.

☐ 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 of assistance.

☐ **DOES NOT REQUIRE** specially designed instruction and related services.

ECATS

Eligibility Determination

Student: _____ School: _____ Student UID #: _____ Grade: _____ DOB: _____ Age: _____

Option 1: *what to submit*

Eligibility Determination from a North Carolina public school IEP team

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



Eligibility Determination

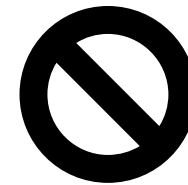
Student: _____ Student UID #: _____ DOB: _____
School: _____ Grade: _____ Age: _____



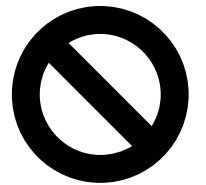
Public School Eligibility Determination

Accepted

- Eligibility Determination issued by a North Carolina public school IEP team
- Eligibility Determination issued by a Department of Defense School located in North Carolina
- Dated within the last 3 years



Not Accepted



- Other IEP documentation: *prior written notice, annual goals, progress reports*
- 504 plans
- Student Aptitude or Achievement Tests
- Letter from doctor or other professional
- Private psychological assessment

Continuing Eligibility form

Nonpublic Education Program (NPE) Form: Review of the three-year cycle begins with the 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

Option 2: *what to submit*

- Form signed by a North Carolina licensed psychiatrist OR by a North Carolina licensed psychologist with a school psychology focus
- The cost of a psychiatrist or psychologist is an acceptable use of ESA+ funds if the provider is enrolled with SEAA and completes the Continuing Eligibility Form while providing a therapeutic service.

<https://k12.ncseaa.edu/media/z0fj0xxc/esa-continuing-eligibility-form.pdf>



04

Exceptions

(Which students have only one option for Continuing Eligibility?)





Exception

Students whose primary or only area of disability is **Developmental Delay**.

These students must be re-evaluated by a North Carolina public school to maintain eligibility for the ESA+ scholarship.



Exception

Students whose parents want to **update the area of disability** (to change the ESA+ award level).

Only the North Carolina public school IEP Eligibility Determination can document a change in the area of disability.





05

Process & Timeline





Submitting Your Documentation



How to
Upload



Timeline



Submitting
off-cycle?



Process

FIRST:

Contact your local public school and request a re-evaluation. Explain that you need an Eligibility Determination. You don't need a full IEP.

OR

Schedule an appointment with a North Carolina licensed psychologist or psychiatrist. Share the Continuing Eligibility Form that you will ask them to sign.

THEN:

Upload the Eligibility Determination *OR* Continuing Eligibility Form to MyPortal.



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.





Submitting a Document Off-Cycle

Sometimes a parent has a document ready to submit *before* the upload link is available in MyPortal.

No problem! Email us and we'll advise on your next steps.





06

Resources





North Carolina non-profit

Exceptional Children's Assistance Center

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

Phone:
800-962-6817

Need Help?



Continuing Eligibility

ESA+ website resources

- <https://k12.ncseaa.edu/families-of-awarded-students/esaplus-program/how-to-renew/continuing-eligibility/>

Here's how it works

The three-year cycle begins with the date of the most recent IEP Eligibility Determination or previous Continuing Eligibility date on file with SEAA. You will receive email reminders in MyPortal when it is time to complete the re-evaluation.

How to determine if your student's re-evaluation date is approaching

Resources



[Continuing Eligibility Form](#)



[Sample Eligibility Determination](#)

Continuing Eligibility

Families must provide a re-evaluation of their student's disability every three years to remain eligible to receive the ESA+ scholarship.



Contact Us



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