

Parental School Choice FAQ

Special ESA Website: (from TPSA Update Email on 8-28-25)

<https://comptroller.texas.gov/programs/education/esa/>

This will be updated regularly by the Comptroller's Office. Check out Comptroller's office list of frequently asked questions, which will be updated regularly as the program develops. Please call Bill Hinz or Lee Gaines if you have any questions about the Comptrollers FAQ.

How can we stay informed about the latest Parental School Choice news in Texas?

All Schools that are members of Texas Private School Association, TPSA, receive an email update on School Choice, Educational Savings Accounts, ESAs each Thursday from Laura Colangelo, Executive Director of TPSA. These provide very helpful information.

Most of our Schools are members of TPSA. Either check with the TPSA website for information about membership or contact Bill Hinz or Lee Gaines.

How can our school participate in Parental School Choice?

Schools will need to Register (for Parental School Choice) to participate.

When will we be able to Register?

It will be done electronically and most likely sometime this Fall.

LSAC Accredited schools can Register.

PK-3 and PK-4 children that qualify for free public schools will qualify.

[Texas Rising Star (with a 3 or 4 star rating) or NAEYC accredited are also eligible]

Do we need to do anything now to be approved?

Three requirements: 1) Must be a TEPSAC recognized Accredited School, all LSAC schools qualify, 2) **You must have a Financial Review or Audit completed**, and 3) You must give a Norm-referenced test, such as: Iowa, Stanford, MAPS, CLT, PSAT, SAT in grades 3 – 12.

What should we do first?

For any special needs students in your school currently; **they must have an approved IEP** in order to qualify for Category 1. (However, we are NOT required to follow the IEP.)

What are some special needs our current students might have?

Autism deaf-blindness emotional disturbance hearing impairment
intellectual disability multiple disabilities orthopedic impairment
other health impairment specific learning disability speech or language impairment
traumatic brain injury visual impairment.

How do parents request an IEP?

Currently this must be done in the public school where they reside. Parents of the child must request this from their local school district. For those who do not have an IEP but wish to use Category, Special Needs testing will need to be completed.

How do families qualify for the ESA (Parental School Choice) program?

Families will need to qualify for the ESA (Parental School Choice) program through the Comptroller's Office. The Texas District/TPSA will have all those links for you to share with your current/future families. **We believe this will not be in place until around January 1, 2026.**

When can families start the application process?

Many schools will begin the Application Process already in November and December. Families will possibly not be notified by the Comptroller's office until late January or later if they have been approved for an ESA. Once they qualify they are good through 12th grade. AND all siblings also automatically qualify (they will have to register.)

Will our school be able to continue with our current acceptance policies?

Each school will be able to use their enrollment processes. Each school will be able to have their normal discipline procedures, up to and including expulsion of students.

Can a school require a family to apply for the ESA program before requesting financial aid?

Each school will be able to use their enrollment processes. So, a school can make it a policy that families must first apply for ESA program before requesting financial aid from the school.

What is in Senate Bill 2?

- Approximately \$10,800 per student.
- Private schools that participate must be TEPSAC recognized Accredited Schools. All LSAC schools qualify.
- Strong religious liberty and private school autonomy language.
- Currently enrolled private school students are eligible.
- **Four categories of prioritization for applicants:**
 1. Special needs students and economically disadvantaged students up to \$162,000 for a family of four include both currently enrolled public and private school students. (Must have a current IEP) Special needs students are eligible for more funding – up to \$30,000 per year, per child. If one student in a family qualifies as a special needs student, all siblings automatically qualify in category 1. **[Once a student qualifies for the ESA program, he/she qualifies through the 12th grade. All the siblings also qualify through the 12th grade]**
 2. Children from families making up to \$64,300 for a family of four.
Currently enrolled private school students are eligible.
 3. Children from families making between \$64,300 to \$162,000.
Currently enrolled private school students are eligible.
 4. Everyone else depending on available funds. Students who are switching to private schools will go ahead of currently enrolled private school students (in this category only).
- Schools will receive the first 25% by July 1 directly from the Comptroller's office for each ESA student enrolled. 50% by October 1, and the final 25% by April 1.

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