



Individualized Education Account (IEA) Program

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Presentation Agenda

1. What is the IEA Program?
2. Who is eligible for the IEA Program?
3. How much funding will students receive?
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**What is the IEA
Program?**

Introduction to the IEA Program

- The Individualized Education Account (IEA) Program **was adopted by the state legislature in 2015.**
- The IEA Program creates **accounts** (IEAs) for **eligible students** with disabilities to use **public funds** for educational purposes.
- The program provides **options** for parents to **choose** the education opportunities that best meet their child's own unique needs.

IEA Program Overview

- The program is **statewide**; a student can reside in any school district in Tennessee.
- There is **no cap** on the number of students who can participate and/or the number of IEA accounts that can be established.

IEA Program School Options

- Students in the IEA Program **cannot be enrolled full-time** in a public school as their school of record.
- Students can either be:
 - enrolled as an **independent homeschooled student** registered with the school district, or
 - enrolled in a **private school** (including private virtual schools).
- Students **can transfer from one participating school to another** during the year at any time.

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**Who is eligible for the
IEA Program?**

Student Eligibility

Students must meet the following **four** eligibility criteria to enroll in the IEA Program:

1. Student must be a Tennessee resident.
2. Student must have an **active IEP** through a public school district at the time of their application to the IEA Program.
3. Student must have one of the following disabilities listed in their IEP as either their primary or secondary disability:
 - a. autism
 - b. deaf-blindness
 - c. hearing impairments
 - d. intellectual disability
 - e. orthopedic impairments
 - f. traumatic brain injury
 - g. visual impairments

Student Eligibility

4. Student must meet at least **one** of the following requirements:
 - a. was previously enrolled in a Tennessee public school during the two semesters (one full school year) immediately preceding the semester in which the student receives an IEA;
 - b. is entering kindergarten;
 - c. moved to Tennessee within six months prior to the date the student receives an IEA; *or*
 - d. received an IEA in the previous year.

Student Eligibility

- Parents **must notify the school district** in which they reside that their child is enrolled in the IEA Program, including parents of students entering kindergarten and students who recently moved to Tennessee.
 - Students entering kindergarten and students who recently moved to **would not have to attend a public school** in order to be eligible to enroll in the IEA Program.
- Students who recently moved to Tennessee must have an **active IEP** in the state they moved from.

Term of the IEA

- A student who enrolls in the IEA Program will remain eligible until the student:
 1. withdraws from the IEA Program (including return to a public school),
 2. graduates from high school (including passing the GED or HiSET), **or**
 3. reaches 22 years of age by Aug. 15 for the next school year

Withdrawal from IEA Program

- Students **can withdraw from the IEA Program** at any time and return to the school district. Parents must:
 - **notify the TDOE and the school district** in which the student resides, and
 - report to the TDOE **which school** the student will attend, including return to the public school district.
- If the student **returns to the school district** parents must request, in writing, an **evaluation for eligibility**, in order for the student to be eligible for services.
 - The school district shall treat the request as a request for an **initial evaluation**.

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**How much funding will
students receive?**

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How much funding will students receive?

- The maximum amount of the IEA annual payment is equal to the **per-pupil state and local funds** required through the state's education funding formula (BEP) account for the school district in which the student resides and is zoned to attend.
- This amount **does not include** federal funds *or* additional education funds that local governments contribute to the school district beyond the BEP required local match.
- The department will **subtract four percent** from this amount for administrative fees.
- The average amount of the IEA annual payment is approximately **\$6,300**, but will **vary per district**.

**Average Per
Student State and
Local BEP Funding
Amount for the
District the
Student Lives in**

=

**Annual
Amount of
Student's IEA
Award**

Minus

**4% state
admin fee**

Funding Disbursement & Reporting

- Parents will receive funding in **four, equal, quarterly payments** deposited into an IEA account.
 - The TDOE is planning to use a prepaid debit card system to distribute IEA funds to parents/ students.
- Parents will have to submit **receipts and expense reports each quarter**.
 - The TDOE will determine the process for reviewing the receipts.
 - Receipts must be received before next quarterly payment is disbursed.

General Guidelines for Use of IEA Funds

- **Funds roll over**, so parents are not required to spend the entire sum each quarter.
- **50 percent** of the annual IEA award must be spent by the close of each contract year.
- After graduating from high school, or reaching 22 years of age, **unused funds in an IEA account** from prior years can be used in subsequent years, **up to four years**, for postsecondary education.

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**What can IEA funds be
spent on?**

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Approved IEA Expenses

- Tuition, fees and/ or required textbooks at participating private schools
- Tuition or fees for a nonpublic online learning program or course
- Tutoring services provided by qualified tutors (pre-approval required)
- Educational therapies or services provided by qualified therapists (pre-approval required)

Approved IEA Expenses

- Curriculum
- Computer hardware or other technological devices (pre-approval required)
- Transportation fees
- Fees for nationally standardized, norm-referenced achievement tests, AP exams, or any exams related to college or university admission

Approved IEA Expenses

- Tuition, fees, and/or required textbooks at an eligible postsecondary institution
- Contributions to Coverdell education savings accounts
- Services provided under contract with a public school
- Fees for the management of the IEA by private financial management firms

Approved Expenses

- The **IEA Parent Handbook** posted on the IEA webpage has the complete description of each of the approved expenses and explains the process for parents to receive pre-approval for designated expenses.

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**What do I need to
consider before
applying?**

Parent Rights and Responsibilities

- By placing your child in the IEA Program, parents are agreeing to:
 - Take **full legal responsibility for the education** of your child including obtaining services necessary to educate your child
 - **Waive all** of your child's **rights to services** under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (**IDEA**)

All Student Services are Waived

Students in the IEA Program:

- will not receive any services or accommodations through the public school system;
- will no longer have an active Individualized Education Program (IEP);
- will not be eligible for the services listed in the IEP through the public school system, including test accommodations;
and
- will not be able to get a services plan through a public school district.

Student Assessments

- Students in **grades 3-8** must take either **TCAP or a norm-referenced assessment in English language arts and math.**
 - Results must be reported to the parent.
 - TDOE will require parents to submit verification of assessment administration each year.
- **Will the results of the student assessments be publicly released?**
 - No. The TDOE will not compile, track, or publicly release student assessment results; student assessment results submitted to the TDOE will only be reviewed to verify that the student has taken the required assessments.

Where do Students Take the Assessments?

Assessment

Private School Students

Homeschool Students

State Tests
(TNReady)

Parents should contact the private school to ask them to order the tests from the state. The private school would administer the test.

Parents should contact the school district with which they are registered in order for their student(s) to take the assessment.

Norm-
Referenced
Tests

Parents should contact the private school to ask if the school could order and administer the test. Depending on which test the parent chooses, the test could be ordered directly from the testing company or administered through a local testing center.

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**How do I enroll my child
in the IEA Program?**

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Enrolling in the IEA Program

- Student **application window** will open by **Aug. 2, 2016**.
- Students will **enroll** in the program beginning **Jan. 1, 2017**.
- Students can apply to participate in the IEA program **once per year**.
- Parents must **renew** the IEA every year.

Three Step Enrollment Process

Step 1: Parents submit IEA Application to the TDOE; the TDOE determines student eligibility and notifies the parent.



Step 2: Parents sign IEA Contract with the TDOE.



Step 3: Parents notify the school district they reside in that student is receiving an IEA.

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**Where can I go to find
information about the
IEA Program?**

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IEA Webpage, Update, & Email Address

- IEA Webpage: <http://www.tn.gov/education/section/iea>
- Monthly IEA Email Newsletter, *IEA Update*
 - Subscribe by going to the IEA webpage
 - Archived updates from prior months are posted on the webpage
- Contact the IEA Team:
 - IEA.Questions@tn.gov
 - (615) 253-3781

Parent Information Sessions & Resources

- The TDOE is creating parent resources including **how-to guides, PowerPoint tutorials and online webinars** that will be posted on the IEA webpage.
- The TDOE is planning on mailing the **IEA Program Brochure** this summer to parents of all eligible students who have an active IEP in Tennessee.
- The TDOE is planning to conduct regional **IEA parent information sessions** across the state in June 2016.
 - Registration will be announced through the IEA Update.

Thank you!

If you have questions and/or feedback,
please email the IEA Team at

IEA.Questions@tn.gov