

K12 Programs: Eligibility Requirements updated for 2026-2027

Students must meet the following requirements to be eligible for each program.
Families can apply for both programs.

Opportunity Scholarship

Required

- At least 5 years old by August 31 or at least 4 years old by April 16 and approved for kindergarten according to [State guidelines](#) (additional testing required)
- Lives in [North Carolina](#)
- Has not graduated from high school
- Has not enrolled in a post-secondary institution full-time*

Scholarship amount is determined by previous tax year [household income](#)

ESA+

Eligibility Requirements for Base Award

- Is a child with a disability who is eligible for special education, as documented by a [North Carolina public school IEP](#)
[Eligibility Determination](#)
- At least 5 years old by August 31 or at least 4 years old by April 16 and approved for kindergarten according to [State guidelines](#)
- Lives in [North Carolina](#)
- Has not graduated from high school
- Has not enrolled in a post-secondary institution full-time*

*Full-time: 12 or more credit hours in a given semester.

For both programs, students funded in the prior year receive priority consideration as [renewals](#).

For More Information:

www.k12.ncseaa.edu

1-855-330-3955

Opportunity Scholarship:

OpportunityScholarships@ncseaa.edu

ESA+:

ESA@ncseaa.edu

Nothing in this document should be construed to supersede the Program Statute, Program Rules or other Program policies. In addition, these policies do not represent an exhaustive list of all Program rules; rather these policies are set forth to provide a broad overview of the Program. See the Program Rules and Statutes on each Program's website for more details.

Additional Eligibility Requirements for Higher Award

Students who meet the criteria outlined above and have **one** of the following designated as the primary or secondary disability on the IEP Eligibility Determination may be eligible for a higher scholarship award .

- Autism
- Hearing Impairment
- Moderate or Severe Intellectual Disability
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Visual Impairment