



The Empowerment Scholarship Account (ESA) Program

The Empowerment Scholarship Account (ESA) Program is funded by the Arizona Department of Education and provides students with 90% of funding the state would be spending on them in the public school system. ESA scholarships are NOT “vouchers.” Instead, the ESA funds flow through the parents, who choose how to spend it. ESA funds can be used for private school tuition,

home education, educational therapies, tutoring and more. (azed.gov/esa)

- **ESA is available to all K-12 students, and there are no income requirements.**
- **A typical student in grades 1-12 using an ESA will receive approximately \$6,500/year.**
- Kindergarten students receive around \$4,000/year. The state is currently funding a half-day program so this may change in the future.
- **Children with special needs receive a higher ESA amount** based on the PRIMARY eligibility category on their IEP. (Example: A student with Autism receives approximately \$28,000/year).
- Funding is awarded quarterly.
- **Easy application process at azed.gov/esa**, available year-round. Complete a 1-page form online. Have a copy of the student’s birth certificate, proof of address, and if your student has one, you will need to also have their current IEP / MET / 504.*
*(*Even if your student has a disability (IEP / MET / 504), apply under the “Universal” category.)*
- Once you have applied, ESA will send you a letter telling you the amount your student will receive per quarter. You then can decide whether to accept or decline the scholarship.
- Once you have accepted an ESA, you only need to **renew it yearly**. If the student has a special education evaluation currently on file with the ESA program, ADE will NOT require a new evaluation to remain in the program.**
***Note: Students age 3-9 with a disability in the ESA program under the specific disability category Developmental Delay (DD) need to have a re-evaluation done by an Arizona public school or district prior to turning age 10, or their account will be set to ‘base-level funding’.*
- **You may not combine the ESA with tax credit scholarships like the School Tuition Organization (STO).**
- You may NOT keep your child in a public or charter school once you sign the ESA acceptance contract.
- **Questions about the ESA Eligibilities or Application? Visit azed.gov/esa**
Call the ESA Support Line at 602-364-1969.



Arizona State Tax Credit School Tuition Organizations (STOs)

Certified School Tuition Organizations (STOs) are private non-profit organizations established to receive income dollar-for-dollar state tax credit contributions that fund scholarships for students to attend qualified Arizona private schools (like Kino School.)

- Individuals and corporations can get dollar-for-dollar state tax credits for their donations to STOs. The School Tuition Organizations then award students these funds.
- Donations to the Arizona State Tax Credit Program are a **dollar-for-dollar tax credit for AZ state taxes**. For tax year 2022, the maximum credit allowed is \$1,243 for individuals filing single taxes, and \$2,483 for married joint filers.
- Families, friends, and co-workers who contribute to one of the above STOs can recommend their funds go to your child or to Kino School. (So if you have lots of family and friends willing to donate each year, this might make an STO a better choice than an ESA.)
- You cannot recommend your contributions for your own child. But you can request your donations go to Kino School for other students.
- **Multiple applications:** Students can be eligible for four different funding programs. Applications can be submitted to each STO. You will typically need access to your most recent tax returns and IEP/504 plans (if applicable).
- Most applications are open year round.
- **Must reapply each year, possibly to multiple STOs.**
- **Unknown scholarship amount:** Scholarships are dependent on donations to your child or Kino, and are awarded as they become available.
- **Once you have applied for an STO, you are committed to accepting that scholarship amount, even before you know the amount.** Therefore, you will not be able to apply for an ESA that year, even if your STO totals less than an ESA.

Participating School Tuition Organizations (STOs):

- Arizona Leadership Foundation, arizonaleader.org
- Arizona Private Education Scholarship Fund, apesf.org
- Institute for Better Education, ibescholarships.org
- Arizona Tuition Connection, arizonatuitionconnection.com
- Education Liberty Fund, elfscholar.org
- School Choice Arizona, schoolchoicearizona.org
- Academic Opportunity of Arizona, academicopportunity.org