



The Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities  
**Accessibility and Disability Policy Webinar Series**  
February 3, 2026

# **How the Texas Education Freedom Accounts Program Supports Students with Disabilities**

presented by

**Lindsay Baerwald**, Marketing and Outreach Manager  
Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts

For more information: [www.gov.texas.gov/disabilities](http://www.gov.texas.gov/disabilities) - [gcpd@gov.texas.gov](mailto:gcpd@gov.texas.gov) - 512-463-5749

# General Information

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- After the webinar, you will have the option to complete a survey for feedback. Zoom will also send an automated email if you wish to complete the survey later. This email will also include a link to our GCPD page to access the webinar recording and other materials.



# TEXAS EDUCATION FREEDOM ACCOUNTS

*Freedom to learn your way.*




**TEXAS EDUCATION**  
**FREEDOM ACCOUNTS**

# Program Overview




# About Education Freedom Accounts

- An education savings account (ESA) program
  - Funds can be used for private school tuition, homeschool expenses, tutoring, and other approved educational costs
  - Year 1 funding available for the 2026-27 school year
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# Eligibility


Parents must prove each child:

- Resides in the state of Texas
  - Is a citizen or national of the United States or lawfully admitted into the United States
  - Is eligible to attend a public school or eligible to enroll in a public school's pre-K or kindergarten program
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# **Pre-K Eligibility**

**Only students eligible for free pre-K will be eligible to receive TEFA funding for pre-K services.**

- Students who cannot speak English**
  - Students eligible for free or reduced lunch**
  - Homeless students**
  - Children of members of the armed forces**
  - Children in foster care**
  - Children of parents eligible for the Star of Texas Award**
  - Teachers in districts that offer free pre-K**
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# Prioritization

- Tier 1: Students with qualifying disabilities + household income at or below 500% FPL  
\$165,000 for a family of 4
- Tier 2: Income at or below 200% FPL  
\$66,000 for a family of 4
- Tier 3: Income between 200–500% FPL
- Tier 4: All others (public school students prioritized)  
Only 20% of total funds in this category

If *one* child is selected in the lottery, all their eligible siblings will be accepted with them – even if their applications are prioritized differently.





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# Funding



# TEFA Funding

1. Students enrolled in a participating accredited private school:

\$10,474

2. Special education students attending a participating accredited private school:

Up to \$30,000, depending on their IEP


3. All other students, including homeschoolers:

\$2,000





# Eligible Expenses

- Tuition and fees at a participating private school
  - Textbooks and other instructional materials
  - Required uniforms, breakfast or lunch provided by the school or transportation to or from the approved school
  - Educational therapies or services
  - Private tutor or teaching services
  - Technology – capped at 10% of the total annual award
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# **Certified Education Assistance Organization (CEAO)**

**The Comptroller's Office has contracted with Odyssey to:**

- Help promote awareness of the program to Texas families**
- Receive applications and verify eligibility**
- Conduct a lottery if demand exceeds available funding**
- Administer an online marketplace for eligible expenses**

**No reimbursements are permitted. All transactions are administered through Odyssey's platform.**





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# How Families Will Apply



# **TEFA Applications**

- **Open 9 a.m. February 4<sup>th</sup> – 11:59 p.m. March 17<sup>th</sup>**

**Program is NOT first-come, first-served**

- **Mobile-friendly online application will be available at [EducationFreedom.Texas.Gov](https://EducationFreedom.Texas.Gov)**
  - **Families will verify lawful residence, income, and, if applicable, their child's disability**
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# Lawful Residence Documents

- A SSN or ITIN for the parent and a SSN for the student
- Texas Driver License or state ID

## Additional Documents

- Birth certificate or report of birth abroad
  - Certificate of naturalization
  - Certificate of citizenship
  - Other official documentation
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# **Additional Documents to Prove Texas Residency**

**Families may provide one of the following:**

- Utility bill**
  - Lease agreement**
  - Mortgage statement**
  - Voter registration certificate**
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# Disability Documentation

## For Prioritization Purposes:


- Texas Individualized Education Program (IEP) or authorization to verify the IEP with the Texas Education Agency (TEA);
- Full Individual and Initial Evaluation (FIIE);
- Out-of-state IEP verified by the issuing state or school district; or
- TEFA Disability Certification Form issued by the Comptroller and signed by one or more qualified professionals.

## For Additional Funding:

- Your child must have a Texas IEP from school year 2023-24, 2024-25 or 2025-26 on file with TEA and must not have been exited from special education services.
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# **Income Verification**

- All families will need to upload a federal tax return (Form 1040) for either 2024 or 2025
  - Income verification is necessary to prioritize applications
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# TEFA Timeline



## **Parents Apply**

- 9 a.m. on Feb. 4th to 11:59 p.m. on March 17th
- Not first come, first served

## **Lottery (if necessary)**

- Late March

## **Parents Notified**

- Early April 2026

## **Parents and Schools Confirm Enrollments**

- Summer 2026
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## **Initial funding distribution (at least 25%)**

- July 1

## **Final deadline for initial funding**

- August 2026

## **Additional funding (50%)**


- October 1

## **Remaining Funding**

- April 1, 2027
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# Parent Support Contacts

- Odyssey FAQs and self-service chatbot: <https://support.withodyssey.com>
  - Call toll free: 737-379-2362
  - Email: [help.tx@withodyssey.com](mailto:help.tx@withodyssey.com).
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