

Reimbursement for Special Education Services for Children in Private School/Homeschool during the Pandemic FAQ

Who will be eligible for reimbursement?	
Who is eligible for the reimbursement?	Parents or guardians of a child with an identified disability and the disability has an impact on the child's educational progress that have incurred expenses providing a quality education for their children during COVID19 school closures.
What is meant by being a parent or guardian of a child with a disability?	Your child must have a disability and been identified prior to the application period and the disability must have an impact on the child's educational progress.
If I have multiple children who are eligible, am I required to submit multiple applications?	No, parents or guardians may submit one application for a maximum of three eligible children.
Will children be eligible if they used the Special Needs Scholarship for private school either prior to the pandemic or during the pandemic?	Families of children with special needs may seek reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses incurred while enrolled in private schools or being homeschooled between March 13, 2020, through June 30, 2021 .
Can Pre-K students or Head Start students qualify for reimbursement?	Young children with a Service Plan, diagnosis of a disability, or identified by Babies Can't Wait and did not attend a public-school program or receive services from a public school may be eligible for reimbursement.
Will the reimbursement accommodate families only with out-of-pocket expenses?	Yes, families must have incurred the expenses prior to submitting the reimbursement application.
Is there a hard copy of the application that we can provide for families?	A hard copy of the application will be available for families; however, final submissions must be completed using the online process.
What if my child is enrolled in a virtual charter school system?	You may seek reimbursement for children with a service plan or identified with a disability that has an impact on the child's educational progress, who are enrolled in a virtual school that is not a public school.
What does it mean to have a child with special needs? Are there specific ages?	A child from ages 3-21 with an identified disability that has an impact on the child's educational progress. The child may have one or more specific disabilities such as Speech, Other Health Impaired, Autism, Specific Learning Disabilities, Emotional Behavior Disorder, Hearing Impaired, Visually Impaired, Deaf, Blind, Traumatic Brain Injury, Intellectual Disabilities, Significant Developmental Delay, etc. In Georgia, we provide special education services until graduation or the age of 22, if the child does not obtain a regular diploma.

Richard Woods, Georgia's School Superintendent

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Who will be eligible for reimbursement?	
Does the reimbursement include foster children?	Yes, all children with an identified disability that has impacted the child's ability to make progress enrolled in private schools or homeschooled may be eligible.
Are there income restrictions for eligibility?	No, there is not a consideration of income for reimbursement.
If the parent serves as the learning coach, how is that reimbursable?	The reimbursement is not available for natural supports, such as parents supporting the learning process.
Is reimbursement available for tutoring?	Reimbursement may be available for the timeframe of school closures in which the child with a disability was homeschooled or attend a private school.

What is the reimbursement amount?	
Is there a maximum amount of reimbursement per child?	Families may be eligible for a maximum of \$500.00 per verified reimbursement request per child, with a disability that impacts the child's educational progress. The maximum total amount may vary based on funding.
Will submitting expenses more than \$500 impact my eligibility to qualify for the \$500?	No, you may submit additional expenses; however, approval of each application is based on meeting the criteria and availability of funding.

What is the reimbursement period?	
What is the reimbursement period?	Families may submit unduplicated expenses from March 13, 2020, through June 30, 2021 . Applications must be reviewed and approved for reimbursement. Pending the volume of application submissions, it may be necessary to prioritize approvals based on students with high needs.

How can I access the application and get started?	
Where do we find the application?	You may access the application on the following webpage: ClickHere .
What information should be available before starting the application?	Documentation that a disability exist which could include one of the following items: diagnosis from doctor and the impact on educational progress, if the child was in public school at one time, a statement of the disability, Service Plan, old IEP, old eligibility report, Babies Can't Wait documentation, or statement from private school stating the disability.

How can I learn more information about allowable expenses and documentation?	
Am I required to upload documentation for the expenses?	Yes, you are required to upload documentation of expenses for the reimbursement request per child.
Does this include copays associated with private therapies?	You may opt to submit out-of-pocket expenses for copays related to private therapies provided for special education services.
My child required specialized childcare services per his/her unique needs. Does this qualify?	Childcare services were not included on the list of expenses. If you opt to submit this expense, you will need to clarify how the services supported the provision of services.
If I am seeking reimbursement for transportation, will I need to submit gas receipts? I traveled to make services available for my child.	It is appropriate to submit a request for mileage reimbursement for the miles traveled from your destination to the provider. It is helpful to upload a document to show the number of miles traveled, such as a printout from MapQuest. Mileage will be reimbursed based on the state rate.
During the pandemic, I hired someone to assist with virtual instruction and to help my child redirect his behavior. I have some documentation including Cash App and handwritten receipts. Is this appropriate?	Yes, you may submit this type of documentation for reimbursement.
Are mental health services an allowable reimbursement expense?	Yes, the provision of services from a mental health therapist can be submitted for reimbursement.

How can I obtain more information about allowable expenses and documentation?	
Can I seek reimbursement for laptops, tablets, or printers?	No, the only technology that is allowable is technology specific to the disability of the child.
Is private tutoring classified as qualifying services under "tutoring supports?"	Yes, you may opt to submit private tutoring that was necessary for special education supports during the pandemic.
Can families request reimbursement for private school tuition?	No, the reimbursement program is not for private school tuition.
What if we do not have itemized receipts? Can we upload bank statements showing charges from the store? Can we upload pictures of the items purchased?	As an alternative to an actual receipt, you may upload a statement or other supporting documents for the incurred expense. Pictures of the purchased item will not be sufficient for reimbursement. The documentation should include what was purchased so eligibility can be determined.
Will missing work for therapy appointments be considered eligible for reimbursement?	No, the reimbursement process does not address loss of wages.
Can I seek reimbursement for vitamins?	You will need to share why the incurred expense was necessary during this unique time. You would not seek reimbursement for natural supports or expenses that were not relative to the pandemic. It is possible that additional supports were necessary during this time.
Can I seek reimbursement for a behavior therapist?	Yes, the use of a behavior therapist may be reimbursable.
Do we have to upload an IEP?	No, we are not requesting that you upload a copy of the IEP, however, you will need to provide documentation to verify a disability that impacts the child's educational progress.
Can I be reimbursed for ink printer cartridges used to print required assignments? Should I submit copies of the emailed assignments?	Yes, you may seek reimbursement for the purchase (printer cartridge); however, you do not need to submit copies of the assignment.

How can I upload additional documents?	
Can I submit additional documentation after submitting the request?	Yes, you can upload additional documents after your initial submission.
Who can submit the application?	The parent or guardian's name and email address used to submit the application must be consistent with the name and email address used to receive payment.
How can I learn more information about the application status?	
How will families know the status of the application?	Families will be able to access the "check status" button for updates. Final notification letters will be sent to each parent or guardian when the application has been approved or denied.
Will every parent reimbursement request be approved?	It is possible that an application may be approved for a partial/allowable amount of the requested reimbursement.
Is there an appeal process if parents are denied the reimbursement?	No, there is not an appeal process. Applications will be reviewed and approved based on the criteria and availability of funding.
How can I learn more information about the reimbursement process?	
If approved, how will I receive my reimbursement?	The approval email will describe specific information to include the approval amount per child and next steps.
Will the reimbursement payment come directly from GaDOE?	No, GaDOE is contracting with a third-party vendor to process reimbursement payments on behalf of this project. The reimbursement process will require ACH Banking information. The banking account must be in the same name as the applicant submitting the reimbursement request. If there are concerns, you may use the "Report an Issue" feature located on the public webpage or email SPEDReimbursement@doe.k12.ga.us .
When can I expect my reimbursement?	After receiving an approval email, the parent or guardian will need to complete the registration for payment and include ACH Banking information. Upon receiving complete registration information, the third-party vendor will be able to process payments between 10 – 14 days. The State will make the application process available through June 30 and may not be able to approve applications real time.
Will reimbursement be first come first serve or based on student's disability needs?	The State intends to maximize the full application submission window to allow appropriate consideration for all families.