Technical Guide and State Plan:
FY23 IDEA High Cost

Tennessee Department of Education | June 2023

Contents

Introduction

Additional funds for high cost students with disabilities are subject to the availability of federal funds as specified in Public Law 108-446 § 602(8) and 611(e)(3). **These additional federal funds are distributed to school systems based on special education expenditures from the General Purpose School Funds only**. These additional funds received by the local education agency (LEA) must be budgeted and expended as General Purpose Funds in the **71200** and **72220** series for audit purposes and included in the review for maintenance of effort. Please remember that <u>Functionally Delayed</u> and <u>Intellectually Gifted</u> are state disability categories and not federal; therefore, requests for reimbursement for these disabilities are **not** accepted.

The FY23 IDEA High Cost tool can be accessed through the Tennessee Department of Education's online grants management platform, ePlan.tn.gov.

ePlan User Access

All users must have the correct ePlan user access role to access and complete the FY23 IDEA High Cost tool. Users with existing ePlan access can verify current user access roles in the Address Book. To view existing access, visit ePlan and navigate to the **Address Book** and **LEA Role**.

New ePlan users and existing ePlan users who need to request a User Access role must request the additional role using the appropriate **ePlan User Access Form**. Access the form by navigating to ePlan > TDOE Resources > 1. User Access Forms and select the correct form according to organization type, or click on the link below:

- **ePlan User Access Form for LEAs**

Users do not need to log in to ePlan to access *TDOE Resources* in ePlan. Follow the instructions on the *User Access Form*, then email the completed form to ePlan.Help@tn.gov to request additional access roles. User access requests may take up to two business days to process. Users will receive an email reply when access has been granted.

IDEA Directors who had existing roles in ePlan prior to July 2023 were grandfathered in with the new IDEA High Cost role.

Workflows

Below are the roles and the order of the workflow steps for the data and information process. These roles and the workflow may vary slightly for specific programs.

ePlan Role	ePlan Function
LEA IDEA High Cost Director	Click **Draft Started** (or **Revision Started** for revisions) Respond to questions, upload files, etc.
LEA IDEA High Cost Director	Click **Draft Completed** (or **Revision Completed** for revisions)
LEA Authorized Representative (Director of Schools)	Click **LEA Authorized Representative Approved** (or **LEA Authorized Representative Not Approved**)
TDOE IDEA High Cost Consultant (Department project consultants)	Click **TDOE IDEA High Cost Consultant Approved** (or **TDOE IDEA High Cost Director Returned Not Approved**)
TDOE IDEA High Cost Director (Department project directors)	Click **TDOE IDEA High Cost Director Approved** (or **TDOE IDEA High Cost Director Returned Not Approved**)

After each status change, ePlan automatically sends a notification email to all users in the LEA who have the ePlan role in the next step in the process. High Cost reimbursements cannot be allocated to the LEA until approval is received from the TDOE Program Director.
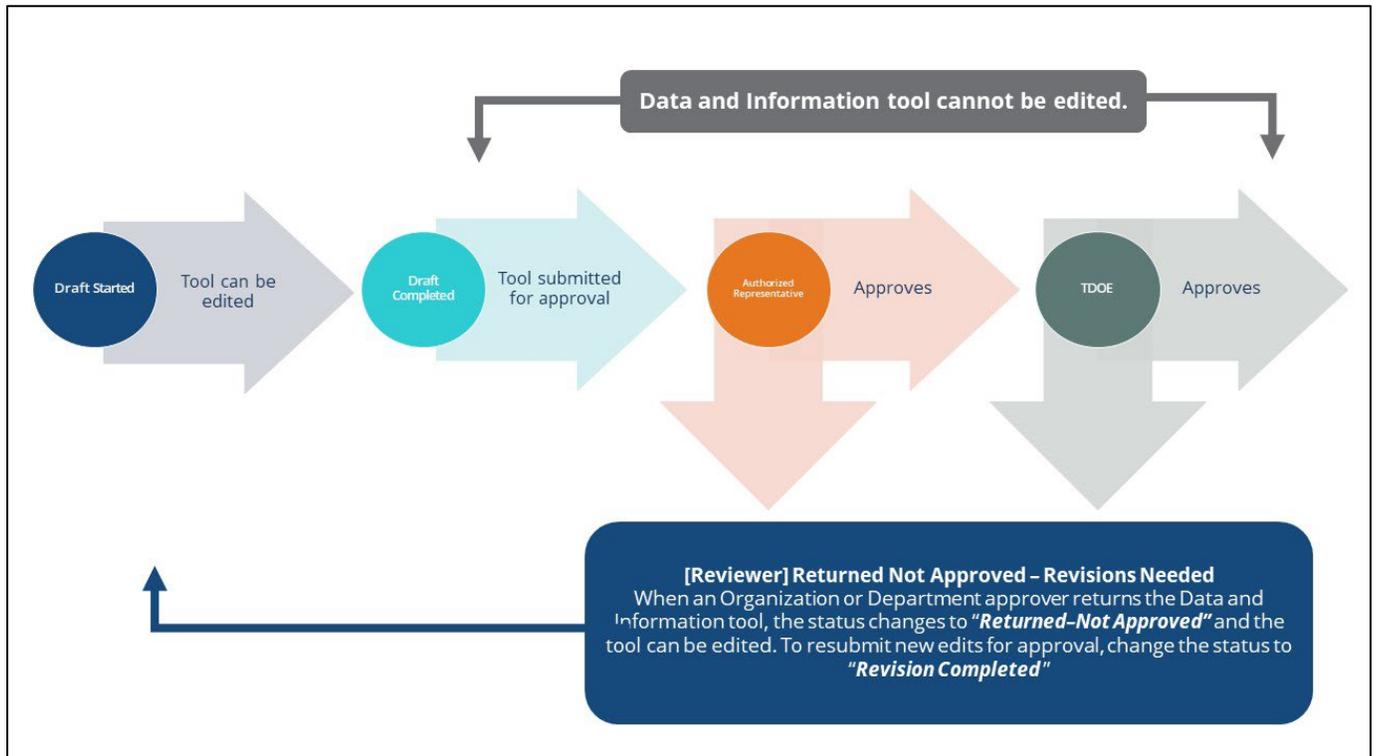
ePlan Data and Information Tool

Accessing the Data and Information Tool

To navigate to applications from the ePlan homepage, click the **Data and Information** tab on the left menu bar.

NOTE: For users with ePlan roles for multiple organizations, return to ePlan home to select the correct organization before proceeding to Data and Information.

ePlan Home
Search ▶
Reports
Inbox ▶
Planning ▶
Monitoring ▶
Funding ▶
Data and Information
Reimbursement Requests ▶

Select the desired fiscal year from the dropdown in the upper left corner of the screen. Data and information tools are stored in ePlan according to the state fiscal year (i.e., 2023 indicates the 2022–23 school year). Click on the *Data and Information* tool name link: **IDEA High Cost** to access the tool. The **IDEA High Cost tool will be in the Fiscal Year 2023.**

Data and Information

Example (###) Public District - FY 2023

2022 ▾   Active ▾

Data and Information	Revision	Status	Status Date
Civil Rights and Bullying Compliance Report	0	Not Started	5/19/2022 8:39:01 PM
Comparability	0	TDOE FPO Divisional Coordinator Reviewed	12/10/2021 8:33:33 PM
Coordinated School Health Action Plan	2	TDOE Coordinated School Health Action Plan Director Approved	5/27/2022 1:12:52 PM
CTE FAUPL Target Negotiations	0	Not Started	1/5/2021 9:05:12 PM
Education Stabilization Fund - ESSERF Data Collection	1	Revision Started	6/29/2022 3:10:34 AM
End of Year Data Reports for Students with Disabilities	0	Not Started	7/6/2022 2:28:38 PM
Federal Program Waiver Request	0	TDOE Federal Program Waiver Request Director Reviewed	10/4/2021 7:23:36 PM
Homeless Immunization Report	0	TDOE Homeless Immunization Report Director Approved	6/8/2022 2:25:07 PM
IDEA High Cost	0	Draft Started	7/5/2022 8:57:34 PM
McKinney-Vento Subgrant Closeout Report	0	Not Started	6/8/2022 7:16:43 PM

The IDEA High Cost tool loads to the *Sections* page. To begin completing the tool, next to ***Change Status To:*** click on **Draft Started**.

Application Status:	Not Started
Change Status To:	Draft Started

IDEA High Cost Sections and Pages

The _Sections_ page lists all the available sections and pages within the FY23 IDEA High Cost tool. The _Sections_ page helps navigate to the specific sections and pages which must be completed.

IDEA High Cost Sections

Example (###) Public District - FY 2023 - IDEA High Cost - Rev 0

Status: Draft Started

Change Status To: LEA IDEA High Cost Director Draft Completed

View Change Log

Description (View Sections Only View All Pages)	Validation	Print ☐ Select Items
All	Messages	Print
History Log		Print
History Log		Print
Create Comment		
IDEA High Cost	Messages	Print
Overview and Instructions		Print
Cover Page	Messages	Print
PRIORITY 1: Students Placed in a SDOE Special School	Messages	Print
PRIORITY 1: Pre-K		Print
PRIORITY 1: K-12		Print
PRIORITY 1: Related Documents	Messages	Print
PRIORITY 2: Students Placed by a State Agency (Out-of-System Resident)	Messages	Print
PRIORITY 2: Pre-K		Print
PRIORITY 2: K-12		Print
PRIORITY 2: Related Documents	Messages	Print
PRIORITY 3: Extremely High Cost Students Placed and Served By LEA	Messages	Print
PRIORITY 3: Pre-K		Print
PRIORITY 3: K-12		Print
PRIORITY 3: Related Documents	Messages	Print
Summary and Assurances		Print
High Cost Reimbursement Request Summary		Print
Assurances		Print
Checklist		Print
IDEA High Cost Checklist		Print
All	Messages	Print

Change Log

The _Change Log_ may be accessed on the main sections page of the IDEA High Cost tool. It lists every change or update since the previous status. This helps users identify changes that have been made to the IDEA High Cost tool since they last viewed it. More information about the _Change Log_ is available in the ePlan User Manual.
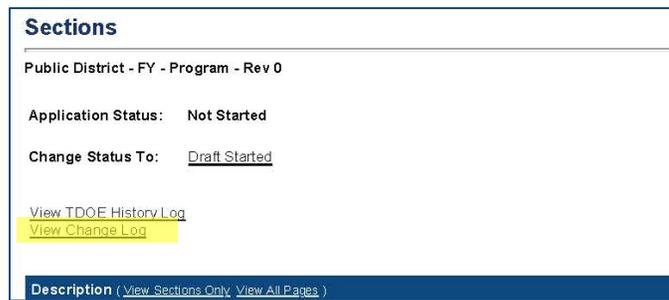
History Log and Create Comment

The *History Log* contains a record of status changes and comments made on the IDEA High Cost tool. ePlan users may want or need to create a comment in an ePlan IDEA High Cost tool for one of the following reasons:

- To explain a part of the IDEA High Cost tool history.
- To provide information that a user cannot add to the IDEA High Cost tool due to the IDEA High Cost current status (users can only edit data and information tools that are in a *Draft Started* or *Revision Started* status.)

ePlan creates a running record of all comments. Any comment created and saved in the IDEA High Cost tool will always be available as a part of its history log.

To add a Comment in the IDEA High Cost tool:

1. Navigate to the IDEA High Cost tool's main *Sections* page.
   - To navigate to the main IDEA High Cost tool page from other pages in the IDEA High Cost tool, click **Go To** and **Sections** as shown and highlighted below.
2. Select **Create Comment** from under the *History Log* on the main section page as highlighted in the screenshot below to navigate to the *Create Comment* page.
3. On the *Create Comment* page, type your comment in the box.
4. If desired, a hyperlink can be inserted in a comment by clicking the hyperlink icon.
5. To send an email notification of this comment to recipients, check the box next to **Send Email to ePlan Contacts** below the main comment box.
   - Sending an email notification is not required to create the comment.
   - If no email notification is needed, click **Save and Go To** to exit the page. The comment is now a part of the IDEA High Cost tool *History Log* for everyone to view.
6. **To send an email notification:** Select the recipients to receive notification of the comment from the lists provided and then click **Add**.

Available Contact Groups

LEA Contacts by Funding Application	Available if a contact is selected on the application's contact page. Not all funding applications have contacts on the contact page.
LEA Contacts by Role	Current users with the applicable role
Other LEA Contacts	Additional contacts for an LEA
TDOE Contacts	State users that can complete various ePlan functions.
TDOE Miscellaneous Contacts	Lists every State ePlan User by name
Additional Recipients	Allows you to type in any additional email addresses manually

- It is a good practice to send a copy of your comment to yourself to let you know when the message has been delivered.

7. The *Recipient Summary* shows who will receive the email.
8. Clicking **Save And Go To** will send the comment notification.
9. Comments with email notifications can be accessed from the *Inbox* on your ePlan tab in addition to the *History Log* of the IDEA High Cost tool. Additional information about Inbox functionality in ePlan is available in Troubleshooting, ***Inbox***.

Overview and Instructions

The overview and instructions page explains the IDEA High Cost program and provides instructions for completing the High Cost tool in ePlan.

Cover Page

The *Cover Page* requires LEAs to enter general organization information and contact information for the IDEA High Cost program points of contact. Once all fields are complete, hover over the **Save And Go To** button and click on **Sections** to return to the *Sections* page.

Priority Sections

The IDEA High Cost tool requests information about High Cost students under four priority categories. A separate section of the tool is provided for each priority. LEAs must provide specific information about students in each priority category where reimbursement is requested. Each priority section contains a page for entering the student's high cost information. A *Related Documents* page for each priority is where the LEA will upload supporting documentation for each student for which the LEA seeks reimbursement.

PRIORITY 1: Students Placed in an SDOE Special School

Tennessee Department of Education State Special Schools include Tennessee School for the Blind (TSB), Tennessee School for the Deaf (TSD), and West Tennessee School for the Deaf (WTSD). When students are placed through appropriate procedures in a Tennessee Department of Education Special School, the LEA of residence may be required to provide additional services to ensure that each student has an appropriate special education program. Since LEAs do not generate state or federal funds for these students, the amount expended by the LEA may be paid by high-cost funds as available.

LEAs can request reimbursement for students in this priority by completing the appropriate grade span page (Pre-K or K-12) for students placed in state special schools. For each student, provide the following:

- Student ID
- Student DOB
- State Special School
- Prior LEA of Residence
- The Disability/ies documented on the student's IEP
- The IEP date for the services provided
- Documentation of total General Purpose expenditures incurred by the LEA (for up to five services)
    - The Service types
    - The Service frequency
    - The Service time period
    - The Service expenditure

ePlan auto-calculates the total student expenditure for each student and the sum of all student expenditures for the grade span.

PRIORITY 2: Students Placed by a State Agency (Out-of-System Resident)

This includes such state agencies as the Department of Human Services, the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Children's Services, and/or the Department of Health. This only applies to those students placed by a state agency for the first year of service in an LEA. After the first year, those students generate state and federal dollars as any other student with a disability in the LEA. The Department will pay one hundred percent of the high cost to the LEA as funds are available.

When out-of-system students with disabilities are placed in a group or foster home in an LEA which is not the resident system, the LEA where the students are placed is to follow the required procedures and provide the appropriate educational services. After the first year, these students are reported on the census and may then become Priority 3. Any additional funds received are based on the additional cost of the program.

LEAs can request reimbursement for students in this priority by completing the appropriate grade span page (Pre-K or K-12) for students placed in state special schools. For each student, provide:

- Student ID
- Student DOB
- Agency with legal custody of Student
- Prior LEA of Residence
- The Disability/ies documented on the student's IEP
- The IEP date for the services provided
- Documentation of total General Purpose expenditures incurred by the LEA (for up to five services)
    - The Service types
    - The Service frequency
    - The Service time period
    - The Service expenditure

ePlan auto-calculates the total student expenditure for each student and the sum of all student expenditures for the grade span.

PRIORITY 3: Extremely High-Cost Students Placed and Served By LEA

Some students require extensive and costly special education and related services that create a severe financial burden on the LEA. Additional funds will be used to assist in the provision of such a high-cost program when the additional cost is greater than three (3) times the state's average per pupil expenditures. The percentage of reimbursement for the high cost for Priority 3 is determined based on the available money in the required high-cost discretionary pool and the total amount requested by all LEAs.

When applying for Priority 3, Extremely High-Cost Students, LEAs will be allowed a maximum of 0.3% of the December 1, 2021, census count for the total number of students served. LEAs with a December census count of less than 600 will be allowed to submit up to two (2) high-cost students under Priority 3.

The Dec. 1, 2021, census count for the LEA is pre-loaded to the page. The maximum number of allowable requests for the LEA is auto-calculated and pre-loaded to the page. If these numbers are incorrect, please contact Tracey.Hawk@tn.gov for assistance.

To qualify for a high-cost reimbursement, the General Purpose expenditures must be three (3) times the state average per-pupil expenditure of $11,120.25 for FY 2022 or $33,360.75 for the 2021-22 school year [Section 611(e)(3)(C)]. The State average per-pupil expenditure information is also located on the TN State Report Card.

Allowable expenditures for determining a high-cost student are:

- One-on-one assistance.
- Specialized equipment specific to the student and required to provide free and appropriate public education (FAPE).
- Special transportation exceeding requirements of special education buses/vans.
- Cost of contractual services for an eligible student.
- Other

Non-allowable expenditures for determining a high-cost student are:

- Pro-rated salaries for teachers or teaching assistants already providing special education services.
- Pro-rated salaries of related services personnel already providing services.
- Pro-rated salaries of special education bus drivers and attendants already providing services.
- Pro-rated time of director, supervisor, principal school psychologist, and/or counselor for administrative duties, meetings, etc.
- Specialized equipment/materials already provided by the LEA.
- Legal fees.
- Depreciation of equipment.

The eligible high-cost reimbursement for a student is the Total Student Expenditure minus the LEA's per-pupil expenditure from General Purpose. For students counted on the Dec. 1, 2021, census, the per-pupil Federal funds expenditure is also deducted from the total student expenditure. These deductions are calculated by the department and preloaded onto the page.

LEAs can request reimbursement for students in this priority by completing the appropriate grade span page (Pre-K or K-12) for each student. For each student, provide:

- Student ID
- Student DOB
- School attended in 2022-23
- The Disability/ies documented on the student's IEP
- The IEP date for the services provided
- Whether the Student was reported on the Dec. 1, 2021, census
- Justification for Extremely High-Cost Services
- Documentation of total General Purpose expenditures incurred by the LEA (for up to five services)
  - o The Service types
  - o The Service frequency
  - o The Service time period
  - o The Service expenditure
- ePlan auto-calculates the total student expenditure for each student.
- Enter the General Purpose Funds per-pupil expenditure copied from above.

- If the student was counted in the Dec. 1, 2021, census, enter the Federal Funds per-pupil expenditure. If the student was not counted, enter "0."

ePlan auto-calculates the sum of all student expenditures for the grade span and the sum of the eligible reimbursements for the grade span.

Note: Do not submit more Priority 3 students than the maximum allowable for the LEA. If the LEA's maximum is two, the LEA may only submit at most two Priority 3 submissions.

Related Documents

The **Related Documents** pages allow users to upload external related documents. For each priority category where the LEA seeks reimbursement, the LEA must upload supporting documentation for each service for each student. *Include the IEP service page(s), with personal identifiable information (PII) redacted, as part of the documentation submitted.*

To upload Related Documents:

- Click the **Upload New** link to begin the upload.
- Click the **Choose File** button to browse for the document.
- **Upload** the document and enter a specific name for the document.
- Click **Create** to upload the document.

Summary and Assurances

High Cost Reimbursement Summary

The High Cost Reimbursement Request Summary page contains a table for LEAs to summarize the IDEA High Cost requests. LEAs must provide the total number of Pre-K and K-12 students for which IDEA High Cost reimbursement is requested and the total amount requested per grade span and priority level. For easy comparison, the LEA's maximum submission numbers are pre-loaded to the page. ePlan auto-calculates the total request amount.

High-Cost Reimbursement Request Summary

Priority Level	Maximum Number of Pre-K Submissions	Number of High-Cost Request Submissions	Total Pre-K Amount Requested	Maximum Number of K-12 High Cost Request Submissions	Number of K-12 High Cost Request Submissions	Total K-12 Amount Requested	Total Amount Requested Per Priority Level
Priority 1	N/A		$	N/A		$	$ 0.00
Priority 2	N/A		$	N/A		$	$ 0.00
Priority 3			$			$	$ 0.00
Total			$ 0.00			$ 0.00	$ 0.00

Assurances

Users must review all program assurances thoroughly. All items specified are requirements of the program, legislation, or regulation. Program Assurances are built into the ePlan IDEA High Cost tool on *Program Details* pages or individual *Program Assurances* pages. By checking the assurance check box, the user affirms that they have read and understand all requirements and that the user assures the state education agency (SEA) that the user meets each of the conditions detailed in the Assurances.

Assurances

☐ The Local Educational Agency (LEA) hereby assures the State Educational Agency (SEA) that:

1. The information provided in this request for additional funds is accurate, and each student's evaluation, eligibility, and Individualized Education Program (IEP) are current.

2. Only students with federally recognized disability categories have been included in this request.

3. State and local funds expended for the special education program will demonstrate maintenance of effort to qualify for any federal funds, including those for high-cost students.

4. Documentation is available in the LEA to support these expenditures from General Purpose funds.

5. All reimbursements will be budgeted and expended as General Purpose funds in the 71200 and/or 72220 series for audit purposes.

Checklist

During the department's review of the IDEA High Cost tool, the IDEA High Cost *Checklist* is used to provide feedback to users and communicate corrections that must be made to the IDEA High Cost tool before it can be approved.

After submission, the department reviews the IDEA High Cost tool and marks each section as *OK*, *Not Applicable*, or *Attention Needed*. If the IDEA High Cost tool contains no items that are marked as *Attention Needed*, the IDEA High Cost tool is approvable.

Each section is designated with one of these statuses:

- *Not Reviewed*: No review occurred.
- *OK*: The section has no corrections and is approvable.
- *Coordinator Reviewed*: The section has been reviewed by the coordinator.
- *Attention Needed*: The section has items that need to have corrections completed.
- *N/A:* The section has no items that have to be reviewed.

Users should review the *Checklist* for comments from each High Cost reviewer, if applicable, and for the program section.

If the IDEA High Cost tool contains items that are marked as *Attention Needed*, the IDEA High Cost tool will be returned to the user with a status of *Not Approved*. The user must review the checklist for items that are marked *Attention Needed* and make the necessary changes to those items. Only the checked items in the areas marked *Attention Needed* need correction. Each section marked *Attention Needed* includes notes to explain items needing attention. The user should check for notes and additional comments.

Application Status:	TDOE FPO Divisional Coordinator Returned – Revisions Needed
Change Status To:	Revision Completed

Once the user has made the necessary adjustments, the user resubmits the IDEA High Cost tool for approval. If the department determines that the area is corrected, *Attention Needed* will be changed to *OK* by department leadership. If the items needing attention still have not been corrected, the IDEA High Cost tool will be returned with a status of *Not Approved*.

If the IDEA High Cost tool contains no items that are marked *Attention Needed,* it can be approved.

Validations

ePlan runs IDEA High Cost tool validations as checks to help users complete the IDEA High Cost tool correctly. Users can view validation messages from the *Sections* page, by clicking **Messages** in the Validation

column. Users can view all validation messages in the IDEA High Cost tool or validation messages for the individual section or page.

On the _Validation Messages_ page, items marked **Warning** are validations that users are not required to address prior to submitting the IDEA High Cost tool. Examples of warnings are not uploading an optional related document or budgeting an entire allocation.

Items marked **Error** are incorrect, and users must address each one before submitting the IDEA High Cost tool. Examples of errors are (1) budgeting for more than the allocation, (2) budgeting more indirect cost than is allowable, (3) not budgeting in a section where there is an allocation, (4) not uploading a required related document, and (5) not responding to a required question.

If the user does not address all **Error** validations, ePlan will not allow a user to submit the IDEA High Cost tool. Click on the **Review** link to go to the identified page to make corrections.

Submission

When all IDEA High Cost tool sections and pages are complete and any validation errors are cleared, the IDEA High Cost tool is ready for submission and the approval process. Refer to the *ePlan User Access* section of this guide or the individual IDEA High Cost tool guide for the approval workflow.

To submit the IDEA High Cost tool for review, the user changes the IDEA High Cost tool status on the *Sections* page to **Draft Complete**. This generates an email to the next user in the approval workflow who must review the draft and click **Approved** (or **Not Approved**) at the top of the *Sections* page.

Once the IDEA High Cost tool receives approval from the TDOE Program Director, users may begin **submitting reimbursements.**

How to Print in ePlan

Users may print or download a PDF from the *Sections* page.

- To print the entire IDEA High Cost tool, click the **Print** link across from the word "*All*" at the top of the *Sections* page. **NOTE:** *Print requests do not include any uploaded related documents.*
- To print an entire section, click on the **Print** link to the far right of the section name. In the example shown, the user is printing the entire **ESEA Requirements** section.
- To print a single page, click on the **Print** link across from the name of the page.
- To choose multiple pages, check the **Print Select Items** box at the top of the print column to select more than one page. The **Print** links appear as checkboxes. Select all text boxes for the desired print request.
- Select the checkboxes and click **Print** at the top of the column.
- The **Print Request** screen pops up. Users may rename their print job here.
- Click **Print**.
- The **Generating Document** screen appears. The system takes 20–30 seconds to generate small print documents. For larger files, expect an email from the ePlan system when the file is ready to download.

The PDF generated by ePlan appears at the top of the page from the **TDOE Resources** menu item. The PDF link remains in **TDOE Resources** for five (5) days. Users may use the **Delete** links to remove any print jobs.

Troubleshooting

The following are answers to common questions about ePlan application functionality.

User Access

If an ePlan user is not able to work in the High Cost tool, it is usually due to one of these three reasons:
- The user is not using the **Google Chrome** browser. For best results: always use Google Chrome to access ePlan. ePlan does not have the same functionality in other browsers.
- The tool is not in the right work step or status. Users can only edit the IDEA High Cost tool when it is in **Draft Started** or **Revision Started** status.
- The user does not have the right role to work on the IDEA High Cost tool. When hovering the cursor over **Change Status To** options, a tooltip appears that indicates the roles with access to make the status change. This tooltip lists the names of individual users associated with each permitted role. Users can also access the address book to see which roles an ePlan user has.

The ePlan address book for each organization contains a list of every user that has an ePlan role.
- The LEA Role Contacts list all the roles. If the role is not listed in the address book, no one has been assigned to that role.
- The LEA Funding Application contacts are contacts selected for a funding application.
  - A contact is not the same as a role. A role assigns access to complete a task in ePlan.
- User Access forms are in ePlan's TDOE Resources in the User Access Form folder.
  - Users do not need an ePlan role to access TDOE Resources.

See **ePlan User Access** for more information about the ePlan status workflow and user roles.

Validation Messages

- This feature shows any errors that will prevent an application from moving forward.
- Click the messages under *Validation* on the *Sections* page to see any errors or warnings.

Post-Submission

When users need to revise the IDEA High Cost tool after changing the status to ***Draft Completed*** prior to the submission deadline, contact the next approver in the workflow and ask that they change the status to ***Not Approved*** to return the application access to the previous user in the workflow. If the tool has proceeded through the workflow to the TDOE Program Director, users can contact the program director or ePlan Help to request that the tool be returned to the previous step in the workflow.

A complete list of ePlan program contacts is available **here**.

Inbox

Several ePlan functions automatically generate emails that the system sends to users. The **_Create Comment_** function prompts ePlan to send an email message to the selected recipients. **System Notifications** are sent to users because of a **Status Change** to support **_Workflows_**.

All email messages sent or received by a user through ePlan can be accessed from the **_Inbox_**. The **_Inbox_** section of ePlan contains the **_Email Message Archive_** and **_Items Awaiting Approval_**. The **_Email Message Archive_** will contain all emails sent to or received from another ePlan user through the system. Users may select the time period to display. Messages received by the user will appear first; scroll down to the lower half of the page to view sent messages. Comments with email notifications can be accessed from the **_Inbox_** in addition to the **_History Log_** section of the IDEA High Cost tool.

When a **_System Notification_** is generated related to a **_Status Change_** that requires the user to complete an approval step, users will find these in **_Items Awaiting Approval_**.