

Tennessee IDEA State Special Schools Transportation Reimbursement Request

2023-24 – FY24

Purpose

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B funds are awarded to each state educational agency (SEA). IDEA Part B funds are used to help provide special education and related services to eligible children with disabilities.

Definition

IDEA Part B State Set-Aside funds, 34 CFR §300.704(b)(4), are reserved for the SEA to support state-level activities including the following categories:

- Monitoring, enforcement, and complaint investigation
- Establish and implement the mediation process, including costs of mediators and support personnel
- Support and direct services
- Technical assistance
- Personnel preparation
- Professional development and training
- Paperwork-reduction activities
- Help Local Education Agency (LEA) provide positive behavioral interventions and support and mental health services for children with disabilities
- Support and improve the use of technology for children with disabilities
- Develop and implement transition programs • Help LEAs meet personnel shortages
- Support capacity-building activities and improve the delivery of services by LEAs
- Alternative programming for children with disabilities who have been expelled from school, and to provide services in correctional facilities, state-operated or state-supported schools, and charter schools
- Support developing and providing accommodations or alternate assessments

The Fiscal Year (FY) 24, School Year (SY) 2023-24, Tennessee IDEA State Special Schools Transportation Reimbursement Request is budgeted under the IDEA Part B category:

Alternative programming for children with disabilities who have been expelled from school, and services for children with disabilities in correctional facilities, children enrolled in State-operated or State-supported schools, and children with disabilities in charter schools.

IDEA State Special Schools Transportation Reimbursement Request 2023-24

State Special Schools Transportation Reimbursement Request amounts **vary annually** based on funding availability, LEA flowthrough, discretionary carry-over, and other funding sources made available to LEAs.

Through surveys and conversations with LEAs, the Tennessee Department of Education (department) obtains input into how IDEA Part B State Set Aside funds are utilized. This information is considered when planning the budget.

The disbursement of IDEA State Special Schools Transportation Reimbursement Requests will be reimbursed as funding is available. For the school year 2023-24, the department will reimburse approved requests at a percentage until funds are exhausted. This reimbursement request is not considered IDEA High Cost. **If an individual student reimbursement request meets the federal definition of IDEA High Cost, the LEA should utilize that reimbursement application.** If requesting reimbursement, the LEA must choose either the IDEA State Special School Transportation Reimbursement Request or IDEA Part B High Cost Reimbursement Request for the special needs student, with assurances that only one application is being utilized for SY 2023-24.

IDEA State Special School Transportation Reimbursements for these general purpose special education expenditures **will affect LEA maintenance of effort** and must be considered by the LEA before applying. The LEA will need to assure they have enough special education expenditures for SY 2023-24 without the application's expenditure amount.

The ePlan Data and Information application for IDEA State Special School Transportation Reimbursement Request will open for SY 2023-24 submissions.

Eligible Category Defined

The Tennessee State Special Schools are the West Tennessee School for the Deaf in Jackson, Tennessee School for the Blind in Nashville, and the Tennessee School for the Deaf locations. Students attend State Special Schools by placement via Individual Education Program (IEP) team decisions. The LEA is responsible for the cost of transportation for the student to attend these schools. These costs may include bus transportation, transportation by parent, and associated costs of transportation by general purpose funds and not already paid for by an existing TDOE contract.

The percentage of reimbursement for IDEA State Special School Transportation will be determined based on the available money in the state set-aside discretionary pool for the respective school year and the total amount approved by all LEAs for this request. Approval will be determined after a review of the IEP(s) and the required supporting documentation for eligible transportation expenditures.

When applying for State Special Schools Transportation reimbursement, LEAs will utilize the application in ePlan and provide all documentation to support the reimbursement request.

Allowable expenditures for determining reimbursement for State Special Schools Transportation must be found in the IEP for the school year date range:

- Special transportation to/from a Tennessee State Special School

Non-allowable expenditures for the FY24 State Special Schools Transportation Reimbursement Request:

- Expenditures for expenses other than those related to transportation costs

The LEAs request reimbursement for students by completing the IDEA State Special Schools Reimbursement Request application in ePlan.

ePlan IDEA State Special Schools Reimbursement Request Application Page:

For each student, provide:

- State Student ID (7-digit number)
- Student Date of Birth
- School attended in 2023-24
- Documentation of total general purpose transportation expenditures incurred by the LEA
 - Service (transportation) type
 - Service frequency
 - Service date range
 - Service expenditure
- ePlan auto-calculates the total student expenditure for each student.

ePlan Related Documents Page:

For each student, submit the following:

- One (1) pdf document for IEP Documentation to include all of the following, in this order:
 - IEP cover page- personal identifiable information (PII) redacted and state student ID included
 - IEP services pages- covering the entire school year; PII redacted, and state student ID included on each page; if there are multiple IEPs, include them, in chronological order.
- One (1) document utilizing the IDEA Reimbursement Request Supporting Document Template provided:
 - One template per student must be provided with the summary of the general purpose direct expenditures found in the financial supporting documentation.
- One (1) pdf document for Supporting Documentation to include:
 - Financial supporting documentation with student PII redacted and state student ID included on each page.

- Documents should be saved as
 - **[Student's Initials][State Student ID number][School Year][IEP]**
Example: "BP 1234567 2023-2024 IEP"
 - **[Student's Initials][State Student ID number][School Year][SUMMARY]**
Example: "BP 1234567 2023-2024 SUMMARY"
 - **[Student's Initials][State Student ID number][School Year][SUPDOC]**
Example: "BP 1234567 2023-2024 SUPDOC"

IDEA State Special School Transportation Reimbursement Submission and Disbursement Process

By June 3rd, the IDEA State Special Schools Transportation Reimbursement instrument will open in ePlan. LEAs must submit the IDEA State Special Schools Transportation Reimbursement application with supporting documentation before it closes on June 30th. The school year 2023-24 the IDEA State Special Schools Transportation Reimbursement application can be accessed through the Tennessee Department of Education's online grants management platform, **ePlan.tn.gov**. When the instrument closes, a cross-collaborative department/IDEA team will review all submitted documentation for approval. The department will determine award amounts and provide notification of award to the Superintendent and IDEA Director. Notification of award disbursement will be made as soon as possible, but no later than January 31st of each fiscal year. If a completion extension is required due to ESY services, please notify Brett.Printz@tn.gov.

For additional support, a technical guide, training opportunities, and office hours will be available. For additional information please contact Brett.Printz@tn.gov.