



Individualized Education Account (IEA) Program

Summer 2016 Parent Information Session

Presentation Agenda

1. What is the IEA Program?
2. Who is eligible for the IEA Program?
3. How much funding will be awarded to each student's IEA?
4. What can IEA funds be spent on?
5. What do I need to consider before applying?
6. How do I enroll my child in the IEA Program?
7. Where can I go to find information on the IEA Program?
8. Questions? Feedback?

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**What is the IEA
Program?**

Introduction to the IEA Program

- The Individualized Education Account (IEA) Program **was adopted by the state legislature in 2015.**
- The IEA Program creates **accounts** (IEAs) for **eligible students** with disabilities to use **public funds** for educational purposes.
- The program provides **options** for parents to **choose** the educational opportunities that best meet their child's own unique needs.

IEA Program Overview

- The program is **statewide**; a student can reside in any school district in Tennessee.
- There is **no cap** on the number of students who can participate and/or the number of IEA accounts that can be established.
- The IEA Program will **go into effect** in the 2016-17 school year.
 - Student **application window** will open by **Aug. 2, 2016**.
 - Applications are due **Oct. 14, 2016**.
 - Students will **enroll** in the program beginning **Jan. 1, 2017**.

Parent Rights and Responsibilities

- By placing your child in the IEA Program, a parent is agreeing to:
 - take **full legal responsibility for the education** of your child including obtaining services necessary to educate your child; and
 - **waive all** of your child's **rights to services** under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (**IDEA**).



Parent Rights and Responsibilities

- Children in the IEA Program **will not receive any services through the public school system.**
- Children in the IEA Program will **no longer have an IEP or services plan** through the public school system.

IEA Program School Options

- Students in the IEA Program **cannot be enrolled full-time** in a public school as their school of record.
- Students can either be:
 - enrolled as an **independent homeschooled student** registered with the school district, or
 - enrolled in a **private school** (including private virtual schools).
- Students **can transfer from one participating school to another** during the year at any time.

Independent Home School

“Independent” home school students are those which are registered with the school district.

Parents who choose to home school their child(ren) **are solely responsible for the education of their child:**

1. Parents select their child’s curriculum
2. Parents must set learning benchmarks and ensure their child is making sufficient academic progress
3. Parents must determine what services their child needs and procure/ contract with vendors to provide all those services and accommodations

Independent Home School

Requirements:

- *Intent to Home School* form (any time within school year)
 - Must be completed each year
- Parent must have GED or High School Diploma
- Proof of immunization
- Attendance record for 180 days, 4 hours per day
- Parents may use any curricular program they choose
- Parent creates diploma

Testing Independent Home School Students

- Homeschooled students enrolled in the IEA Program must be tested in grades **3 through 9**.
- If a home school student in **grade 9** is taking a course for which there is a state board approved, secure, standardized, end-of-course test, that student should be required to take that end of course exam.
- School districts are **not required** to test students enrolled in Category IV **church-related schools** (umbrella schools).

Testing Independent Home School Students

Can a parent of a home school student choose to provide some other form of assessment rather than state mandated assessments?

Yes, the state home school law requires that the test must be:

- standardized, administered by a professional testing service within 30 days of the statewide assessments, *and* the results provided to the school district for review.

Students enrolled in the IEA Program must either take the state TCAP assessment *or* one of the approved norm-referenced tests listed in the IEA Parent Handbook.

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**Who is eligible for the
IEA Program?**

Student Eligibility

Students must meet the following **four** eligibility criteria to enroll in the IEA Program:

1. Student must be a Tennessee resident.
2. Student must have an **active IEP** through a public school district at the time of their application to the IEA Program.

Kindergarten Information

- If a student has an **active IEP prior to enrolling in kindergarten (i.e., in pre-K) and the IEP is active at the time of request for participation in the IEA Program**, the student will be eligible to receive an IEA without having to attend a Tennessee public school
- However, the student **may have to be enrolled in a public school (e.g., pre-K) to keep the IEP active** until the date of enrollment in the IEA Program.
- *Please note: for more information about IEPs, parents should contact their school district.*

Students Recently Moved to TN

- Students who recently moved to Tennessee must have an **active IEP** in the state from which they moved.

Student Eligibility

3. Student must have one of the following disabilities listed in their IEP as either their primary or secondary disability:
 - a. autism
 - b. deaf-blindness
 - c. hearing impairments
 - d. intellectual disability
 - e. orthopedic impairments
 - f. traumatic brain injury
 - g. visual impairments

Student Eligibility

4. Student must meet at least **one** of the following requirements:
 - a. was previously enrolled in a Tennessee public school during the two semesters (one full school year) immediately preceding the semester in which the student receives an IEA;
 - b. is entering kindergarten;
 - c. moved to Tennessee within six months prior to the date the student receives an IEA; *or*
 - d. received an IEA in the previous year.

Kindergarten Information

- If students are entering kindergarten in August 2016, the student would need to be **enrolled in, and attend, a public school for the fall 2016 semester** in order to be eligible to enroll in the IEA Program in Jan. 2016.

Student Eligibility

- All parents **must notify the school district** in which they reside that their child is enrolled in the IEA Program.
 - Including parents of students entering kindergarten and students who recently moved to Tennessee
 - Contact information for the IEA liaison for your school district is posted on the IEA webpage
 - Parent must notify school districts **before the student's first date of enrollment** in the IEA Program.
 - Parents should notify districts after they sign the IEA contract.

Term of the IEA

- A student who enrolls in the IEA Program will remain eligible until the student:
 1. withdraws from the IEA Program (including return to a public school),
 2. graduates from high school (including passing the GED or HiSET), **or**
 3. reaches 22 years of age by Aug. 15 for the next school year

Withdrawal from IEA Program

- Students **can withdraw from the IEA Program** at any time and return to the school district. Parents must:
 - **notify the TDOE and the school district** in which the student resides; and
 - report to the TDOE **which school** the student will attend, including return to the public school district.
- If the student **returns to the school district**, parents must request, in writing, an **evaluation for eligibility**, in order for the student to be eligible for services.
 - The school district shall treat the request as a request for an **initial evaluation**.

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**How much funding will be
awarded to each student's
IEA?**

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How much funding will students receive?

- The maximum amount of the IEA annual payment is equal to the **per-pupil state and local funds** required through the state's education funding formula (BEP) account for the school district in which the student resides and is zoned to attend.
- This amount **does not include** federal funds *or* additional education funds that local governments contribute to the school district beyond the BEP required local match.
- The department will **subtract four percent** from this amount for administrative fees.
- The average amount of the IEA annual payment is approximately **\$6,300**, but will vary per district.

**Average Per
Student State and
Local BEP Funding
Amount for the
District the
Student Lives in**

=

**Annual
Amount of
Student's IEA
Award**

Minus

**4% state
admin fee**

Funding Disbursement & Reporting

- Parents will receive funding in **four, equal, quarterly payments** deposited into an IEA account.
- The TDOE will use a prepaid **debit card** system to distribute IEA funds to parents/ students – Xerox is the vendor.
- Parents will have to submit **receipts and expense reports each quarter**.
 - The TDOE will determine the process for reviewing the receipts.
 - Receipts must be received before next quarterly payment is disbursed.

General Guidelines for Use of IEA Funds

- **Funds roll over**, so parents are not required to spend the entire sum each quarter.
- **50 percent** of the annual IEA award must be spent by the close of each contract year.
- After graduating from high school, or reaching 22 years of age, **unused funds in an IEA account** from prior years can be used in subsequent years, **up to four years**, for postsecondary education.

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**What can IEA funds be
spent on?**

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Tuition or Fees at a Participating School

- Parents may use IEA funds for tuition, fees, and/or required textbooks at a **participating school**.
- Private schools must **apply to the TDOE to participate in the IEA Program** and meet the **qualifications** set in the IEA Parent and Provider Handbooks.
- The **list of participating schools** will be posted on the IEA webpage after the school application window opens.

Educational Therapies

- IEA funds can be used to pay for **educational therapy**.
- Therapy must be provided by a **licensed or accredited practitioner or provider** who meets the requirements set in the IEA Parent Handbook.
- Account holders must receive **pre-approval from the TDOE** before spending IEA funds on therapy.
- This form must be **submitted once per school year** for each provider.

Tutoring Services

- IEA funds can be used to pay for tutoring services.
- Tutoring services must be provided by a **tutor who meets the requirements** set in the IEA Parent Handbook.
- Account holders must receive **pre-approval from the TDOE** before spending IEA funds on tutoring services.
- There is an approved list of tutoring subjects

Computer Hardware & Technological Devices

- Computer hardware must be used for the student's **educational** needs and either:
 - is a required device for communication or physical access to instruction, **or**
 - allows a student to access instruction or instructional content.
- Account holders are required to get **approval** from a licensed physician *or* the TDOE **before** purchasing computer hardware or technological devices with IEA funds

Curriculum and Supplemental Materials

- Curriculum is defined as a **complete** course of study for a particular **content area or grade level**.
- Supplemental materials are an approved expense if they:
 - **are required** by the curriculum **and**
 - meet the **criteria** provided by the TDOE.
- Account holders **may** receive pre-approval for curriculum and supplemental materials by submitting the *Curriculum Pre-Approval Request Form*

What are Supplemental Materials?

- Examples of supplemental materials include:
 - Science experiments
 - Flashcards
 - Workbooks
 - Calculators
 - Lab equipment

Field Trips

- Field trips are considered **curriculum** *and* must be **educational** in nature
- Account holders must receive TDOE approval **prior** to the field trip
- IEA funds cannot be used to pay for:
 - **overnight** trips
 - **out-of-state** fieldtrips
 - **transportation** to/from fieldtrips

Transportation

- Must be a **commercial transportation** provider, such as a taxi or bus service
 - It does not include private transportation by a parent or participating student.
- Transportation fees can only be used for transportation **to participating schools and providers** (including approved tutors and therapists).
- Account holders must get **a receipt** for transportation expenses paid using IEA funds.

Test Fees

- Account holders can use IEA funds to pay for the following:
 - Nationally standardized norm-referenced achievement tests
 - AP tests, IB tests, CTE exams
 - Any examinations related to college or university admission including:
 - SAT
 - ACT

ABLE TN

- Contributions to **achieving a better life experience (ABLE)** account for the benefit of the student enrolled in the IEA Program.
- ABLE TN is a savings program designed to help individuals challenged by physical and/or mental disabilities to put aside extra money to pay for qualified expenses.
- For more information, visit: <http://abletn.gov/>

530 Coverdell Education Savings Account

- Up to **\$2,000 of the annual IEA award** may be contributed to a 530 Coverdell Account.
- A Coverdell must:
 - be opened in the account holder's name only and
 - be awarded for the student enrolled in the IEA Program.

Public School Services

- Account holders **may** contract with school districts to provide services to the student.
 - However, school districts are **not required** to contract with IEA account holders.
- IEA funds can be used to pay tuition and fees required by the public school district to participate in class(es).

Postsecondary Tuition, Fees, and Textbooks

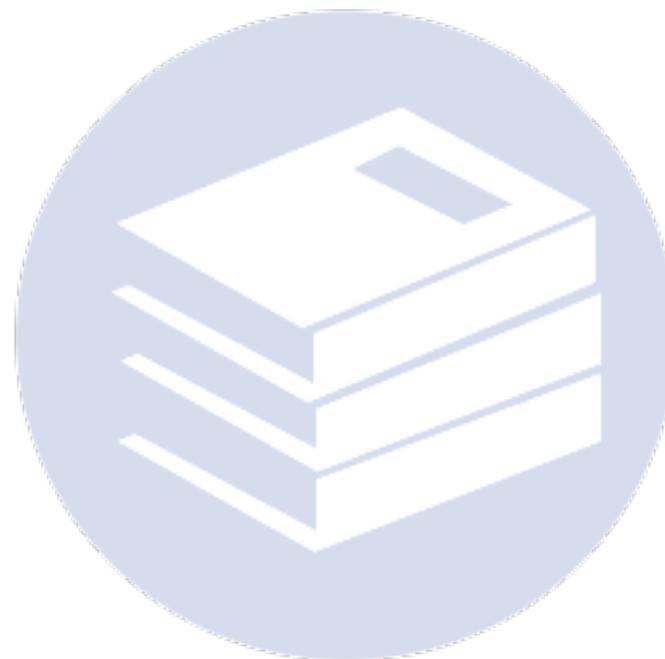
- IEA funds can be used to pay for **tuition, fees, and/or required textbooks** at eligible postsecondary institutions.
- **Eligible** postsecondary institutions include:
 - Tennessee public community college, college of applied technology, or university of the University of Tennessee system or the Tennessee Board of Regents systems
 - Private postsecondary institutions accredited by an organization listed in the IEA Parent Handbook (pg. 40)

Additional Approved Expenses

- **tuition and fees for online learning programs and courses** provided by a Category III nonpublic school.
- **bank fees for the management** of the IEA by private financial management firms.

Full Description of Approved Expenses

- The **IEA Parent Handbook** posted on the IEA webpage has the complete **description** of each of the approved expenses and explains the **process** for parents to receive **pre-approval** for designated expenses.



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**What do I need to
consider before
applying?**

Parent Rights and Responsibilities

- By placing your child in the IEA Program, parents are agreeing to:
 - Take **full legal responsibility for the education** of your child including obtaining services necessary to educate your child
 - **Waive all** of your child's **rights to services** under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (**IDEA**)

Key Considerations Before Applying

Parents should consider the following:

1. **All** of their child's educational **needs**
2. The **education options** available
3. The services that their child is **currently receiving** and the cost of those services
4. The **amount of funding** their child will receive in the IEA Program and what **services that funding would cover**

All Student Rights & Services are Waived

Students in the IEA Program:

- **will not receive any services or accommodations** through the public school system;
- will **no longer** have an **active** Individualized Education Program (**IEP**);
- **will not be eligible for the services** listed in the IEP through the public school system, including test accommodations; **and**
- **will not** be able to get a **services plan** through a public school district.

Student Assessments

- Students in **grades 3-8** must take either **TCAP or a norm-referenced assessment in English language arts and math.**
 - Results must be reported to the parent.
 - TDOE will require parents to submit verification of assessment administration each year.
- **Will the results of the student assessments be publicly released?**
 - No, the TDOE will not compile, track, or publicly release student assessment results; student assessment results submitted to the TDOE will only be reviewed to verify that the student has taken the required assessments.

Where do Students Take the Assessments?

Assessment

Private School Students

Homeschool Students

State Tests
(TNReady)

Parents should contact the private school to ask them to order the tests from the state. The private school would administer the test.

Parents should contact the school district with which they are registered in order for their student(s) to take the assessment.

Norm-
Referenced
Tests

Parents should contact the private school to ask if the school could order and administer the test. Depending on which test the parent chooses, the test could be ordered directly from the testing company or administered through a local testing center.

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**How do I enroll my child
in the IEA Program?**

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Enrolling in the IEA Program

- Student **application window** will open **Summer 2016**.
 - Announced through *IEA Update* and posted on **IEA webpage**.
 - Applications are due by **Oct. 14, 2016**.
- Students will **enroll** in the program beginning **Jan. 1, 2017**.
- Parents must **renew** the IEA every year.
 - Renewal application for 2017-18 due **June 1, 2017**.
- Students can apply to participate in the IEA program **once per year**.
 - 2017-18 IEA Application due **April 3, 2017**.



Three Step Enrollment Process

Step 1: Parents submit IEA Application to the TDOE; the TDOE determines student eligibility and notifies the parent.



Step 2: Parents sign IEA Contract with the TDOE.



Step 3: Parents notify the school district they reside in that student is receiving an IEA.

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**Where can I go to find
information about the
IEA Program?**

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IEA Webpage, Update, & Email Address

- IEA Webpage: <http://www.tn.gov/education/section/iea>
- Monthly IEA Email Newsletter, **IEA Update**
 - Subscribe by going to the IEA webpage
 - Archived updates from prior months are posted on the webpage
- Contact the IEA Team:
 - IEA.Questions@tn.gov
 - (615) 253-3781



Parent Information Sessions & Resources

- The TDOE has created parent resources including **how-to guides** and **PowerPoint tutorials** that are posted on the IEA webpage.
- The **IEA Program Brochure** is posted online and was mailed to parents of all eligible students who have an active IEP in Tennessee.
- The TDOE is planning to conduct **training** for parents/students who participate in the IEA Program in spring 2017.



Thank you!
Questions? Feedback?

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Department of
Education

Districts and schools in Tennessee will exemplify excellence and equity such that all students are equipped with the knowledge and skills to successfully embark on their chosen path in life.

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