

prenda

Arizona

ESA Details

Overview

How to Use State Funding to Pay for
a Child's Microschool Experience

What is ESA?

The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) administers Arizona's universal [Empowerment Scholarship Account \(ESA\) program](#). It is funded by state tax dollars and provides parents with direct access to their child's education funds, enabling them to choose the learning environment and resources that best suit their child's needs.

ESA funds can be used to pay for a student's microschool experience, including paying the student's quarterly Prenda invoices.

What is Prenda's relationship with ESA?

Prenda is an approved ESA vendor and classified as an in-person / online learning program provider.

Prenda makes it easy for guides to set up and operate a microschool that can accept ESA funds. Prenda assists guides with many financial administrative tasks, such as not needing to become their own vendor with ADE and generating parent invoices on their behalf. This enables guides to start a microschool quickly and receive compensation for it easily.



Does signing a student up with Prenda guarantee that they will get ESA funding?

No. Applying for and securing ESA funding happens with the Arizona Department of Education and is a separate process from enrolling with Prenda. Signing a student up for Prenda does not guarantee a student's ability to secure ESA funds. As an ESA educational vendor, Prenda has no direct influence on a family's ability to receive an ESA contract.

Who is eligible for the ESA program?

The ESA program is available to **all Arizona students in grades kindergarten through twelve**. Kindergarteners must be 5 years old by January 1st of the contract year to be eligible for the program.

Although the program is open to all students, parents are required to complete the application, approval, and contract-signing process with ADE in order to qualify for ESA funds for their child. **Typically, this process takes around 3-6 weeks.**

Students with ESA funding cannot be enrolled in a public school. A student can remain enrolled in public school while going through the ESA application process; however, **the student must be withdrawn from public school before the ESA contract is signed.**

What is the ESA application process?

The ESA application is open year-round and typically begins in May for the following school year.

Step 1: Apply

The legal parent or guardian of the student applies for an ESA contract on the ADE ESA website [HERE](#). The adult applying must submit a separate application for each child and provide the student's **birth certificate** and **proof of residency** documents. [Learn more about acceptable ESA application documents.](#)

Tip: Make sure to include a front and back color image of the birth certificate and that the name of the adult completing the application is clearly listed on the proof of residency. Families have reported lengthy delays in getting approved by not including complete documents with the original application.

Applications for students with disabilities require additional documentation including the student's MET Evaluation Report, Individualized Education Program (IEP), or 504 Plan.



Step 2: Wait and resubmit any documents

ESA applications can take up to 30 days to process and the final determination is sent via email. [Applicants may check their status on the ESA website](#). If ADE reaches out about any incomplete documents, the family must resubmit them right away, and the 30-day processing timeline resets.

Tip: Submit a [help desk ticket](#) and call the ESA help desk at (602) 364-1969 once documents have been resubmitted to expedite the approval process.

Typically, families are **approved within 3-6 weeks**; however, some families have reported taking more than 3 months to get approved. All families are strongly encouraged to apply early and reach out to the ESA help desk often to get updates on their application status.

Please note: Prenda does not monitor students' ESA application statuses.

Step 3: Sign the ESA contract

Once a child has been approved for ESA funding, an approval email and an ESA contract will be sent to the parent via email. **ESA funding will begin on the date the contract is signed.**

As a reminder, the student must be withdrawn from public school *before* the ESA contract is signed.

Step 4: Wait for funds in ClassWallet

ClassWallet is the financial management portal used by ADE to manage a student's ESA funds. After the contract has been signed, funds typically take 2-3 weeks to show up in a student's ClassWallet account. Actual deposit times may vary. Parents will use ClassWallet to pay their child's Prenda invoices.



How much funding will students receive?

ESA students receive 90% of the funding that their school would have received had they attended their local public school.

Students with *no disabilities* in grades 1–12 receive approximately **\$6000–\$9000** per school year, and kindergarten students receive approximately **\$4,000–\$5,000** per school year. Students *with disabilities* may receive higher amounts, and the funding amount varies widely depending on the disability category.

Review the [ADE's Approximate Annual ESA Funding Chart](#) to get an idea of expected allocated amounts.

Arizona state law determines actual funding amounts, which vary depending on what school district a student lives in, the current school year's enrollment, and other various state funding factors.

What if ESA funds do not cover the total fee on a child's Prenda invoice?

Most families can pay their entire Prenda invoice with state funds. However, if the invoiced amount is higher than the amount of ESA funding a student receives, then the student's family is responsible for paying the difference out of pocket.

Prenda encourages guides to take ESA funding amounts into consideration when setting their guide fee.





When does funding begin?

ADE distributes funds quarterly, and **funding begins in the quarter that the ESA contract is signed.**

These are the quarterly dates as explained on the [ADE ESA FAQ website](#):

Q1: July 1 – September 30

Q2: October 1 – December 31

Q3: January 1 – March 31


Q4: April 1 – June 30

A new ESA contract signed anytime between July 1 – September 30 will receive Q1 funds, a contract signed between October 1 – December 31 will receive Q2 funds, etc. Quarterly funds are not prorated. This means a student will receive the full quarterly funding allotment no matter when in the quarter their contract is signed.

The first funds typically take about 3 weeks to be deposited into a student's ClassWallet account once the ESA contract is signed. Subsequent funds are typically added between the 20th and the 31st of the first month of each quarter, though actual deposit dates can vary.

Tip: If a full school year of ESA funding is desired, it is extremely important that the student's family begins the application process early and does everything they can to have a signed contract by September 30th of the school year.

Families enrolled with Prenda in Q1 who do not have a signed contract by September 30th will be responsible for paying their Q1 invoice out of pocket.



How often does Prenda invoice families and how often are Prenda guides paid?

Prenda invoices students quarterly to match the quarterly distribution of ESA funds to families.

[Learn more about how to download and pay a Prenda invoice.](#)

Prenda pays guides quarterly *after* each student's invoice is paid in full.

Families are expected and encouraged to pay their quarterly Prenda invoices through the ClassWallet portal as soon as they have received their quarterly ESA funds so that their child's guide may be paid without delay.



Questions?

Please reach out to us at <https://www.prenda.com/contact>.

We'd love to support you every step of the way in using ESA funds for your Prenda microschool experience!

ESA Resources

[ESA Website](#)

[ESA Application](#)

[ESA Application Status](#)

[ESA Eligibility Requirements](#)

[AZ ESA Helpdesk](#)

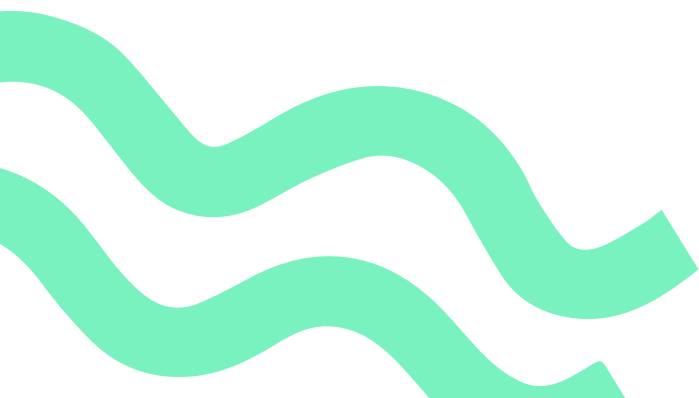
- ESACallCenter@azed.gov
- (602) 364-1969

[ESA FAQs](#)

[2023-2024 ESA Parent Handbook](#)

[ClassWallet Support](#)

[How to pay a Prenda invoice via ClassWallet](#)



Top Tips for Success



1: Start Early

- Begin the [ESA application process](#) as early as possible, ideally in May for the upcoming school year.
- Early applications provide ample time for processing, reducing the risk of delays in approval.

2: Complete Documentation Carefully

- Submit [complete and accurate documents](#) with the initial ESA application to avoid delays.
- Include front and back color images of the birth certificate, and ensure the adult's name is clearly listed on proof of residency.

3: Monitor Application Status

- Regularly check the status of the ESA application [on the ADE website](#).
- Promptly respond to any requests for additional documents to prevent unnecessary delays in the processing timeline.
- Submit a [help desk ticket](#) and call the ESA help desk at (602) 364-1969 once documents have been resubmitted to expedite the approval process.
- Sign the ESA contract as soon as it arrives in your email.

4: Understand Quarterly Funding Schedule

- Familiarize yourself with the [quarterly funding schedule](#) (Q1-Q4).
- Ensure the contract is signed by September 30th for a full school year of ESA funding and to avoid out-of-pocket payments for Q1 invoices.

5: Utilize ClassWallet Efficiently

- Learn how to navigate and use ClassWallet for managing ESA funds.
- Pay [Prenda invoices promptly through ClassWallet](#) once ESA funding is received.

6: Communicate with Prenda

- Maintain open communication with Prenda to address any concerns or questions about the ESA funding process.