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# EDUCATION FREEDOM

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## Education Freedom Scholarship FAQs



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# General Program

## **What are Tennessee Education Freedom Scholarships?**

Education Freedom Scholarships allow students who are entitled to attend a Tennessee public school in grades K-12 to use state funds for education expenses while enrolled in an EFS-registered Category I, II, or III non-public school located in Tennessee, prioritizing expenses for tuition and fees.

## **Are the ESA, the IEA, and the EFS Programs now the same?**

No, the Education Savings Account (ESA) Program, the Individualized Education Account (IEA) Program, and the Education Freedom Scholarship (EFS) Program will operate as three separate school choice programs. The student application and school application/registration process will be different for each program. For more information on requirements, awards, and participation in each choice program, please visit the following webpages:

- [ESA Program](#)
- [IEA Program](#)
- [EFS Program](#)

Each program operates as a separate platform and account. If you already have a username for ESA or IEA, you will still need to create a new account in the EFS platform.

## **When will the EFS application be available for new students for School Year 2026-27?**

The EFS application will open on January 13, 2026, at noon CT/1 p.m. ET for new 2026-27 applicants and provide scholarships for the 2026-27 school year. The EFS application can be found on the department's [EFS webpage](#). The deadline to apply is January 30, 2026 at 4 p.m. CT/5 p.m. ET.

## **When will the EFS renewal application be available for current EFS recipients to renew for School Year 2026-27?**

The EFS renewal application opened on December 9, 2025, at noon CT/1 p.m. ET for current EFS recipients to provide scholarships for the 2026-27 school year. The EFS renewal application can be accessed via the online portal accessible through the department's [EFS webpage](#). The deadline to apply is January 30, 2026, at 4 p.m. CT/5 p.m. ET

## **How can I stay up to date on the EFS Program?**

The [EFS webpage](#) is the best source for information on the EFS Program. To receive regular updates, please sign up for the [EFS Family Newsletter](#).

# Student Application/Eligibility

## Application Details

### When will the student application be available, and what is the process for families to apply?

- The EFS **renewal** student application for the 2026-27 school year launched on December 9, 2025, at noon CT/1 p.m. ET within your current EFS account in the online portal.
  - The renewal application is only available for students who have an active EFS at the time of application submission.
  - If your 2025-26 application is currently in an Eligible status, you must submit a **new** student application to be considered for a scholarship in the 2026-27 school year.
- The EFS **new** student application for the 2026-27 school year will launch on **January 13, 2026, at noon CT/1 p.m. ET** on [this webpage](#).
- The application deadline for the 2026-27 school year for both renewal and new applications is **January 30, 2026, at 4 p.m. CT/5 p.m. ET**.
- If you created an account in SY 2025-26, regardless of whether you submitted an application, make sure you can still access your account and that your password is up to date.
  - Sign in to your existing account: [https://app.efs.tnedu.gov/users/sign\\_in](https://app.efs.tnedu.gov/users/sign_in).
- If you did **not** create an account for SY 2025-26, please set one up and retain your login credentials so you are ready on January 13, 2026.
  - Create a new account: [https://app.efs.tnedu.gov/users/sign\\_up](https://app.efs.tnedu.gov/users/sign_up).
- The EFS **renewal application** includes four sections:
  - *Student Information*: Information previously provided prepopulates for review and is editable for any updates as needed.
  - *Eligibility*: Applicant will be prompted to confirm whether or not the previously provided documentation demonstrating U.S. citizenship or lawfully presence status is still current. If so, no further action is necessary. If not, applicant must upload updated supporting documentation to demonstrate the **student's** eligibility for the EFS program as either a U.S. citizen (1 document) or lawfully present in the U.S. (2 documents), under one of the immigration categories in the EFS rule (see the EFS Renewal Application Checklist on the [EFS webpage](#)).
  - *TN Residency*: Current EFS recipients must upload two (2) proof documents from the approved list to confirm TN residency. Even if last year's proof documents are still current, you must upload two (2) proof documents again.
  - *Assurances & Submit*: Review and agree to EFS Assurances and a FERPA release.
- The EFS **application for new applicants** includes four sections:
  - *Student Information*: Provide information about the student for whom the EFS application is submitted and the parent/legal guardian.
  - *Eligibility*: Applicant must upload supporting documentation to demonstrate the **student's** eligibility for the EFS program as either a U.S. citizen (1 document) or lawfully present in the U.S. (2 documents), under one of the immigration categories in the EFS rule (see EFS Application checklist on the [EFS webpage](#)).
    - *Priority Categories*: Applicant may respond to additional questions to demonstrate eligibility for priority categories related to income eligibility,

IEA/ESA program eligibility, or current enrollment in a TN public school.

- *TN Residency*: New applicants must upload two (2) proof documents from the approved list to confirm TN residency.
- *Assurances & Submit*: Review and agree to EFS Assurances and a FERPA release.

### What happens after I submit my application?

- Upon application submission, a confirmation of receipt email will be sent to the family from [Notifications@TheoLearning.com](mailto:Notifications@TheoLearning.com), [efs-notifications@tnedu.gov](mailto:efs-notifications@tnedu.gov), or [EFS.Questions@tn.gov](mailto:EFS.Questions@tn.gov). The time it takes to review an application will depend on the volume of applications received.
- After review of the application is complete, families will receive an email from [Notifications@TheoLearning.com](mailto:Notifications@TheoLearning.com), [efs-notifications@tnedu.gov](mailto:efs-notifications@tnedu.gov), or [EFS.Questions@tn.gov](mailto:EFS.Questions@tn.gov) with a decision and next steps.
- Incomplete Applications:
  - **Incomplete applications will have one (1) opportunity to resubmit the application with corrected documentation. The corrected application must be resubmitted by 4 p.m. CT on the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) business day after email notification of the incomplete status is sent. If the application is not resubmitted or the resubmission is incomplete, your application will be Expired.**
  - **For all applications, only Tennessee residency and/or U.S. Citizenship/lawful presence documentation will be accepted on resubmission of an incomplete application. Information regarding priority category consideration will not be accepted beyond the initial submission of the application. A resubmitted incomplete application will not retain the original timestamp but will be reconsidered within the initially demonstrated priority category.**
  - *Example: Student submits a new application that includes an illegible document to demonstrate U.S. citizenship and, although Student currently attends a Tennessee public school, Student does not include information demonstrating that Student is eligible for Priority 4. Because of the illegible citizenship document, student's application is returned as incomplete. Student may resubmit a citizenship document, but Student may not submit information to demonstrate student is eligible for Priority 4. Student's resubmitted, completed application will be considered in Priority 5, and the order of receipt will be determined by the resubmission date.*

### How will applications be managed if I apply for more than one student in my family?

- An individual application must be submitted for each student intending to participate in the EFS Program in the 2026-27 school year.
- Parent/guardian information and Tennessee residency documentation will be pre-populated on subsequent applications after it is entered in one new student application.
- All applications will be processed by priority category and in the order in which they are received by the department; no preference is given for approval of sibling applications.

### What are the criteria by which the EFS scholarships are awarded in the 2026-27 school year?

If the number of applications received by the Tennessee Department of Education (department)

exceeds the number of EFS available for the 2026-27 school year, then the department shall award EFS in the following order in alignment with the Education Freedom Act:

- Priority 1: Current EFS Recipient - A Recipient in the immediately preceding school year who has a current EFS at the time of application;
- Priority 2: Income Eligibility (100% FRPL, SNAP/TANF, ESA/IEA Eligibility) - An Eligible Student whose annual household income does not exceed one hundred percent (100%) of the amount required for the student to qualify for free or reduced price lunch, as provided in the income eligibility guidelines published by the United States Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service for the most recent school year, or who is an Eligible Student as defined by T.C.A. § 49-6-2602 for an ESA or by T.C.A. § 49-10-1402 for an IEA, in the order in which the department receives Completed Applications;
- Priority 3: Income Eligibility (300% FRPL) - An Eligible Student whose annual household income does not exceed three hundred percent (300%) of the amount required for the student to qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, as provided in the income eligibility guidelines published by the United States Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service for the most recent school year, in the order in which the department receives Completed Applications;
- Priority 4: Current TN Public School Enrollment or Eligible to Enroll in Kindergarten- An eligible Student who, at the time of submitting a Completed Application, is currently enrolled in a Tennessee public school or who is eligible to enroll in Kindergarten in a public school for the respective school year, in the order in which the department receives Completed Applications; and
- Priority 5: All Other Eligible Students - An Eligible Student, in the order in which the department receives Completed Applications.

*Applicants may respond to questions to demonstrate eligibility for multiple priority categories. The highest priority category demonstrated by the application on original submission will be assigned to the application. No additional information provided after the initial submission will be considered for priority categorization. The following information outlines the documentation required to determine eligibility for prioritization categories.*

- *Example: Student submits a new, complete application that includes documentation related to Priority 3 and Priority 4. If the documentation demonstrates eligibility for both categories, or only Priority 3, then the application will be considered in Priority 3, which is the higher category. If the documentation demonstrates eligibility for Priority 4, but not Priority 3, then the application will be considered in Priority 4. If the documentation does not demonstrate eligibility for either category, then the Student will not have an opportunity to submit additional documentation, and the application will be considered in Priority 5.*

All scholarships are subject to available appropriations.

### **Once I apply, what is my next step? When will I know if I'm getting a scholarship?**

Applications will be processed by priority category and in the order in which they are received by the department. Monitor your email inbox that was provided in your application for an email indicating the results of the review from [Notifications@TheoLearning.com](mailto:Notifications@TheoLearning.com), [efs-notifications@tnedu.gov](mailto:efs-notifications@tnedu.gov), or [EFS.Questions@tn.gov](mailto:EFS.Questions@tn.gov). If your student is conditionally approved for a scholarship, then the conditional approval email will contain next steps to choose an EFS-registered school and enroll.

### **What if I do not have an email address?**

Even if submitting a paper application, an email address is required to maintain the application and, if

applicable, eventual enrollment and payment of funds to the EFS-registered school and/or service providers. Please note that paper applications will not be accepted for renewal applications. Renewal applicants must use their existing account holder credentials to submit a renewal application in the online portal.

### **Will families know their place in line once they complete the application?**

No, families will not know their place in line when they complete their application. Families will receive an email confirming that their application has been submitted. Once a completed application is reviewed, a family will know their priority categorization, as demonstrated by the documentation the family provided.

### **How should my 18-year-old student apply for an EFS?**

*IMPORTANT: 18-year-old students must apply on their own behalf and be listed as the applicant and the student on the application* unless the student has executed a valid power of attorney appointing the parent/guardian as the student's attorney in fact, or a judge has appointed the parent/guardian as the student's conservator. If residency or other documentation is not in the student's name, ensure the parent/guardian is included as an Additional Parent/Guardian on the application or the application will be deemed incomplete. For more information, please visit the [EFS webpage](#).

## **General Eligibility**

### **What are the student eligibility requirements?**

- Student is a resident of Tennessee who is entitled to attend a public school in any of the grades kindergarten through twelve (K-12) during the year for which the EFS would be used.
- Student is a U.S. citizen or lawfully present in the United States, as defined in the EFS rule.
- Student will have completed fewer than 13 years of school in K-12 at the beginning of the 2026-27 school year.
- More information regarding required eligibility documentation, as well as optional documentation regarding priority status, can be found in the EFS Application Checklist on the [EFS webpage](#).

### **Can an EFS be used for students enrolled in pre-K programs?**

No. The EFS Program is for eligible students entering grades K-12 for the 2026-27 school year.

### **Once a family receives a scholarship, do they need to reapply every year?**

Yes. Families must reapply for each recipient student every year. Current recipients will complete an abbreviated renewal application in the online portal.

### **Can a family apply for more than one student?**

Yes. The family must submit a separate application for each student. The online portal will copy certain elements of the applications, including parent/guardian contact and Tennessee residency documentation, from one new application to another within the same family.

### **If a student is already enrolled in a non-public school, can the student apply for and receive a scholarship?**

Yes. However, the student must **enroll** in an **EFS-registered** Category I, II, or III non-public school to

become a recipient of EFS funds. A list of EFS-registered schools is available on the [EFS webpage](#).

**Does a student have to be currently enrolled in an EFS-registered school before applying?**

No. However, the student must **enroll** in an **EFS-registered** Category I, II, or III non-public school to become a recipient of EFS funds. A list of EFS-registered schools is available on the [EFS webpage](#).

**Can a homeschooling student apply for and receive a scholarship ?**

Yes. However, the student must **enroll** in an **EFS-registered** Category I, II, or III non-public school to become a recipient of EFS funds. A list of EFS-registered schools is available on the [EFS webpage](#).

## Verifying Eligibility Requirements

**To prove Tennessee residency, may I provide one proof document from each parent/guardian? For example, a utility bill lists one parent, but the driver's license that I upload is for another parent.**

Yes, provided both documents list the same address as listed on the application and both parents/guardians are listed on the application.

**May I provide the same type of proof document to demonstrate Tennessee residency. For example, may each parent upload a driver's license?**

Yes, provided both documents list the same address as listed on the application and both parents/guardians are listed on the application.

**What date is considered for Tennessee residency documents?**

- For residency documentation, the issued date is what determines whether a document meets the date requirements (e.g., issued within the last 90 or 365 days).
- Effective dates on documents do not meet the requirement unless they also clearly show the date the document was issued or generated. For example, an insurance policy card that demonstrates a year-long coverage period only meets this requirement if it also includes an issuance date within the last 90 days.
- Due dates on documents do not meet the requirement unless they also clearly show the date the document was issued or generated.
- Please ensure your document includes a visible issued date within the required timeframe.
- Please reference the EFS application checklist on the [EFS webpage](#) for examples of accepted documentation.

**Can a mother's copy of the student's birth certificate be used to prove U.S. citizenship?**

No. If using a birth certificate to prove U.S. citizenship, it must be an official birth certificate (not the mother's copy) issued by a state, jurisdiction or territory of the United States, including Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, Swains Island, and Guam.

**Can I submit my student's Social Security card for proof of U.S. citizenship?**

No, a Social Security card is not allowable proof of U.S. citizenship.

**Where can I obtain a copy of the student's birth certificate?**

For a Tennessee birth certificate, the quickest way to obtain one is to go in person to your county's health department to request it. Turnaround times when requesting official birth certificates from

state vital records offices may vary.

- Please note that Puerto Rican birth certificates issued before July 1, 2010, shall not be accepted.

### **I don't currently live in Tennessee, but I will move to Tennessee before the new school year. Can I apply for a scholarship now?**

If you are able to demonstrate residency in the state of Tennessee using approved documents listed in the [handbook](#) and on the [application checklist](#), then you are eligible to apply now.

For example, if you are still in the process of moving to the state, but you already have a mortgage or lease in place, you can submit that documentation.

### **What is 100% of the free or reduced lunch income (Priority 2)?**

This chart lists the federal income guidelines at 100% by household size for the upcoming school year of the EFS Program.

Household Size #	100% of 2024 Federal Free or Reduced-Price Lunch Guidelines
2	\$37,814
3	\$47,767
4	\$57,720
5	\$67,673
6	\$77,626
7	\$87,579

### **What is 300% of the free or reduced lunch income (Priority 3)?**

This chart lists the federal income guidelines at 300% by household size for the upcoming school year of the EFS Program.

Household Size #	300% of 2024 Federal Free or Reduced-Price Lunch Guidelines
2	\$113,442
3	\$143,301
4	\$173,160
5	\$203,019
6	\$232,878
7	\$262,737

### **Do I need to submit my entire Form 1040 document?**

No, if you choose to demonstrate eligibility for priority categories 2 or 3, the sections of the 1040 document listed below must be submitted with your application:

- The name, address, entire list of dependents, and Line 9 of the document must be visible. The student's name must be listed as a dependent.
- If there are dependents listed on an additional dependent statement, then that statement must be included in the upload.
- If you are providing a Form 1040X, please ensure you include the full Form 1040X that was filed to demonstrate dependents.

- A handwritten Form 1040 is not acceptable.

### **Can I submit a tax transcript or W-2 instead of my Form 1040?**

No, only 2024 Form 1040 tax returns may be used to verify the income eligibility for EFS Scholarships.

### **What documentation can I use for SNAP/TANF verification?**

- Current (within last 365 days) benefits documentation that lists the name of the parent/legal guardian or student must be provided.
- If you are providing an eligibility letter for a household member not listed as a parent/legal guardian or student on this application, please upload additional documentation from the One DHS portal that lists the eligible student (e.g. a screenshot of the household member list).
- The program team must be able to identify the parent/guardian listed on the application, the student applicant, and the date the benefits started to determine if the SNAP/TANF requirement will be satisfied.

### **What information do I need to have available when responding to Priority 4: Current TN Public School Enrollment or Eligible for Kindergarten?**

If your student is not entering kindergarten in 2026-27, you will need:

- The name of your student's current public school district
- The name of the public school your student currently attends

If your student is entering kindergarten in 2026-27, you will complete all necessary information on the Student Information page of the application. You will select kindergarten in the grade level drop-down on the Student Information page and enter the student's birthdate, which must be on or before September 30, 2021.

# Funding Disbursement and Use

## How much will each scholarship recipient receive? Will it change from year to year?

The EFS amount will likely change each year. The EFS scholarship is 100% state funded and equivalent to the Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement (TISA) education funding formula base per student. All scholarships are subject to available appropriations.

## What can I purchase with scholarship funds?

- The Education Freedom Act requires EFS funds to first be used to pay tuition and fees at an EFS-registered Category I, II, or III non-public school. Any remaining scholarship funds available after payment of tuition and fees may be used for the following educational expenses:
- Textbooks, curricula, instructional materials, and uniforms at the EFS-registered Category I, II, or III non-public school in which the student is enrolled;
- Tuition, textbooks, curricula, and instructional material fees for approved educational summer education programs and specialized after-school academic programs (*EFS funds cannot be used for afterschool or summer childcare programs*);
- Tutoring services provided by an individual or agency who meets department requirements (*an individual must hold an active TN teacher license, and an agency must have accreditation through one of the groups listed in [SBE Rule 0520-01-24-.07\(1\)\(b\)\(2.\)](#)*);
- Transportation to and from the EFS-registered Category I, II, or III non-public school in which the student is enrolled (*fees are paid only to a commercial fee-for-service provider (e.g., a bus); this does not include private transportation by a parent, family member, or participating student.*);
- Fees for early postsecondary opportunity courses, examinations, or entrance examinations required for college admission and industry credentials as approved by the department;
- Educational therapies or services for participating students provided by a department-approved licensed therapist; and
- Computer hardware, technological devices, or other department-approved technology fees. (*This use is permitted only if the technology is used for educational needs, is purchased at or below fair market value, and is purchased through a registered school or service provider.*)
  - Students may **not** use EFS funds to purchase internet services or any type of software. **Note:** *If the software is part of an approved expense (i.e., a bundled package), it is allowable because it is not an additional expense.*
  - If EFS funds are used to purchase computer hardware or a technological device, a student's account **may not purchase more than one device per student per year.**
  - Technology purchases must be made directly through the portal in the Marketplace.
- Families must confirm receipt of all technology and uniform deliveries in the portal. To do this, click on Marketplace Orders, and then, click the "Confirm Receipt" button.

## Do families need to claim this scholarship on their taxes? Will a 1099 be issued?

The EFS is not considered taxable income pursuant to the Education Freedom Act. A 1099 will not be issued.

## How are the scholarship payments distributed, and what is required from the school to receive them?

- EFS funds are managed via the online portal and are not directly paid to the parent, legal guardian, or student. The online portal facilitates payments to schools, and other approved purchases must be made through the portal's online Marketplace. Account holders will use the portal to track account balances, expenses, and upload any required documentation.
- Funds will be disbursed in the online portal on a quarterly basis throughout the school year, beginning in late summer. EFS registered schools are made aware of the distribution schedule below; however, billing schedules are determined by each school in the family-school contract.

Allocation Dates	Allocation Percentages
August 15	Quarter 1 – 50% EFS Funds Disbursed
October 15	Quarter 2 – 20% EFS Funds Disbursed
January 15	Quarter 3 – 20% EFS Funds Disbursed
March 15	Quarter 4 – 10% EFS Funds Disbursed

- To receive the funds for participating EFS students, a school must first complete the EFS registration process, which can be initiated by a verified school representative emailing [EFS.Questions@tn.gov](mailto:EFS.Questions@tn.gov).

### **Are families required to spend all EFS funds each year?**

No. Funds available in a scholarship account are available to a recipient beyond the academic year in which they are awarded, in alignment with the *Unused Funds* section of the EFS Handbook on the [EFS webpage](#). Funds that remain when the student withdraws from the EFS program for any reason, including high school graduation, are forfeited.

### **Can EFS funds be utilized at a school located outside of Tennessee?**

No, funds must be used at an EFS-registered Category I, II, or III non-public school located within the state of Tennessee.

### **What happens if a student withdraws from the school during the year?**

A school must refund any prepaid tuition amounts covered by EFS funds if the student withdraws during the school year. If a participating student enrolls in the program for less than an entire school year, then the scholarship for that school year will be prorated based on the number of days enrolled. A school must refund any pre-paid amount of the scholarship that exceeds the prorated amount.

### **What happens if a student receiving an EFS scholarship moves out of Tennessee during the school year?**

If a student withdraws from the EFS Program, including due to moving out of state during the school year, a school must refund any prepaid tuition amounts covered by EFS funds. If a participating student enrolls in the program for less than an entire school year, the scholarship for that school year will be prorated based on the number of days enrolled. A school must refund any pre-paid amount of the scholarship that exceeds the prorated amount.

# Schools

## Registration and Roles

### **What are the requirements for a non-public school to accept EFS funds?**

The school must be physically located in Tennessee, be a Category I, II, or III non-public school, and register to receive EFS funds with the Tennessee Department of Education by the communicated deadline. A school located in Tennessee has a physical location owned or leased by the non-public school located in the state of Tennessee where students may receive educational services and testing and registers with the department to receive funds from the program.

### **What are the requirements for Category I, II, and III non-public schools?**

The requirements for non-public schools are set by the State Board of Education and can be found [here](#). This information can also be found on the department's [non-public schools webpage](#).

### **How does a school register for the EFS program?**

Schools not already accepting EFS funds will complete a registration form to accept funds from the department. Please email [EFS.Questions@tn.gov](mailto:EFS.Questions@tn.gov) if you would like to receive a registration form. Schools currently accepting EFS funds will be asked to renew their registration with the program.

The school registration process for the EFS Program is different from the school application process for the ESA and IEA programs, which require separate applications for each program.

### **Will schools appear on an approved list that can accept EFS scholarships?**

Once a Category I, II, or III non-public school has registered with the department to receive EFS funds, the school's name will be listed on the EFS webpage to signal the school's participation to families.

### **Are registered schools required to provide a different curriculum, adjust hiring practices, or alter religious instruction?**

No. According to the Education Freedom Act, non-public schools that enroll recipients must have the maximum freedom to provide for the educational needs of recipients without governmental control.

A non-public school that enrolls recipients is not required to alter its creed, practices, admission policies, hiring policies, or curriculum in order to accept recipients.

### **Is there a cap on how many scholarships a school can receive?**

No.

### **Will there be additional qualifications that are needed for schools to accept EFS scholarship recipients?**

No.

### **If a school accepts EFS students and then there are changes to the program that cause the school to no longer want to participate, can the school stop the process at any time?**

Yes, if the school no longer wishes to participate, they may inform the department.

## Student Admission

### **Is a school required to accept EFS students who apply?**

No. EFS-registered Category I, II, or III non-public schools that enroll recipients must have the maximum freedom to provide for the educational needs of recipients without governmental control. A non-public school that enrolls recipients is not required to alter its creed, practices, admission policies, hiring policies, or curriculum to accept recipients.

### **How will EFS student enrollment at the school be handled?**

Student acceptance for a particular school is determined by the school's own admissions process and does not include the department.

### **Can the EFS scholarship be awarded to the family before receiving admission to a school so that the schools can offer admission knowing that the family will get the scholarship?**

Yes. A family may apply and be conditionally approved for the EFS scholarship before enrolling in a school. However, the student must enroll in an EFS-registered Category I, II, or III non-public school to become a recipient of EFS funds. Families are encouraged to share their notification of EFS approval with their school of choice as soon as it is determined.

### **How is athletic eligibility impacted if a family wishes to take advantage of the funds available from the Educational Freedom Act and transfer to an independent school?**

A student's eligibility for interscholastic athletics is established by the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association (TSSAA). For more information on athletic eligibility, please reference [this FAQ](#) from TSSAA.

### **Once approved for one of the scholarships, what is the deadline for confirming enrollment in an EFS-registered school?**

Student enrollment must be confirmed by the school in the EFS Portal by June 30, 2026, or the student's scholarship offer will expire.

## Supporting Families

### **How are schools notified of a family's approval?**

The department encourages communication between families and schools regarding a student's EFS approval. A family will be notified via email when they have been approved for the EFS. The family will select their school of choice in the online portal. The school will be able to view a list of scholarship recipients who have selected the school, and then the school administrator will confirm the student's enrollment in the portal to finalize the scholarship approval.

### **Can a student apply for both an EFS and an ESA?**

Yes. However, the student can only participate in one of the programs.

### **How can schools help prepare families for the application process? What should schools do if there are interested parents/guardians?**

The department encourages schools to share resources such as this FAQ document and the [EFS webpage](#) with families.

## Assessment

### **Are schools required to administer the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) test?**

No, schools can use their current nationally standardized achievement test. Administering the TCAP is not required. In alignment with existing SBE requirements for Category I, II, and III non-public schools, EFS-registered schools receiving EFS funds must ensure that students in grades 3 through 11 participate either in a nationally standardized achievement test that is aligned to the respective non-public school's instructional plan or the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) tests in math and English language arts for the grade in which the student is enrolled, each year of enrollment in the EFS Program.

### **Will a list of approved standardized tests be accessible before a school commits to participating in the EFS?**

Schools may use their current nationally standardized achievement test in alignment with existing State Board of Education requirements for Category I, II, and III non-public schools.

### **Are the test scores of students involved in the EFS Program the only scores that must be submitted to the Office of Research and Education Accountability (OREA)?**

Yes.

### **What testing data must be reported, how will it be reported, and how will it be used?**

The Education Freedom Act requires each private school that enrolls scholarship recipients to annually administer the TCAP or a nationally standardized achievement test. Each private school must provide the results of those tests for scholarship recipients to the Office of Research and Accountability (OREA). Prior to the reporting deadline, OREA will publish the form schools will use to provide the results. In addition to the required test results for scholarship recipients, the form will include fields for race, sex, and household income level. OREA will provide additional guidance to private schools as the reporting deadline approaches. Test results and other data pertaining to students who are not scholarship recipients are not subject to the reporting.