

THE ARKANSAS CHILDREN'S EDUCATION FREEDOM ACCOUNT (EFA) PROGRAM

The LEARNS Act created the Arkansas Children's Educational Freedom Account (EFA) Program to benefit Arkansas parents by allowing them to access funds allocated for their child's education and have an active role in choosing how those funds are spent to meet their child's needs. Here are some common questions for the 2023-24 school year.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR THE EFA PROGRAM?*

In 2023-24, children *must* meet one of the following criteria:

- Currently participating in the Succeed Scholarship Program
- Have a disability defined by the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA)
- Currently in or has ever been in foster care
- Homeless
- Child of active duty military
- Entering kindergarten for the first time
- Attending an "F" rated school found here <https://myschoolinfo.arkansas.gov/>
- Attending a school district classified Level 5 — Intensive support under § 6-15-2913 or § 6-15-2915

HOW MUCH DOES AN EFA PROVIDE?*

By law it is 90% of the state's annual base per pupil funding from the prior year. In 2023-24, it will be approximately \$6,671.

HOW CAN I APPLY FOR THE EFA PROGRAM?

The exact application process, including requirements for proving eligibility, is being defined right now by the state Department of Education. By law, it will include both online and physical application options.

WHAT CAN I DO WITH FUNDS IN AN EFA ACCOUNT?*

In 2023-24, EFA funds can only be spent on tuition, fees and other required expenses at a private school participating in the EFA program.

WHAT SCHOOLS PARTICIPATE IN THE EFA PROGRAM?

Private schools must be accredited or seeking accreditation and meet other specific criteria in order to participate (Act 237 of 2023, page 1 line 1). The process by which they apply to participate is being created by the Department of Education.

**Student eligibility and allowed expenses, as well as the amount provided, will grow in 2024-25 school year and again in 2025-26.*

If you have any questions about EFA eligibility or use, or any other questions at all about the LEARNS Act, please contact us at questions@thereformalliance.org or call us at 501-244-9028.