Out-of-District Placement Grant Funds

for Children with Disabilities

Procedures and Instructions

Fiscal Year 2019-2020

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## Procedures and Instructions for Out-of-District Placement Funds

### Table of Contents

The references listed below serve as a guide for completing the Out-of-District (OOD) Placement Grant Funds application and submitting a reimbursement invoice:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Procedures for Requesting Out-of-District Placement Grant Funds</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applying for OOD Grant Funds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applying for OOD Funds</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notification of Receipt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denial of Request</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawals or Changes in Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making an Official Reimbursement Request</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Details</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Procedures for Requesting Out-of-District Placement Grant Funds

Set-aside funds are established for special allocations prior to the determination of per pupil allotments. The Out-of-District Placement Grant Funds Program is to assist local education agencies in funding the excess cost of the placement of a student with disabilities in a program not operated by the local education agency. These placements may be public, private, residential, in-state or out-of-state. Payment is not guaranteed and is made when funds are available.

Beginning October 21, 2019, the MS Word fillable applications must be emailed as a password protected document to the SpecialGrants@dpi.nc.gov email address. Applications sent postal mail will not be accepted for the 2019-2020 school year. EC Division personnel will review applicant students’ supporting documentation in ECATS. Other required supporting documentation are also to be emailed. If additional information is needed, the PSU EC Director/Coordinator will be contacted.

Password Protected Email Instructions

- If compatible encryption is not available to both parties, data should be password protected. The password should be given to the recipient through a different medium, such as a phone call. Never provide the password in notes or documents accompanying the actual data file, or another email. Additionally, the password should not be transferred via voicemail.
- When protecting the document with a password, go to File>Info>protect document, in the dropdown. Select Encrypt with password. A box will populate for you to enter a password (passwords are case sensitive).
- Once the document is password protected, save the document as PSU#_PSUName_type of document (i.e. application, update form, etc.) and then email it to specialgrants@dpi.nc.gov

Applications must be submitted within 30 calendar days of the student’s placement. The last day to submit an application is May 15, 2020. The emailed application provides the EC Division with a date and time stamp of the applications submitted. Obtain all signatures prior to emailing.

The estimated amount of funds for reimbursement will be up to, but no more than, 50% of the total cost of the educational placement, minus per student ADM, state, and federal allotments. Reimbursement for OOD placement will be subject to availability of funds and may not exceed the amount set aside for this purpose. Funds may be applied toward the following expenses:

1. Educational and related services;
2. Residential; and
3. Extended school year (when it has been determined by the IEP Team that extended school year is required as part of the IEP).

When a PSU is preparing to hold an IEP meeting and an Out-of-District placement may be a component of the discussions, it is recommended that the PSU provide an informative courtesy call to the EC Division.

As the IEP team reviews the student’s needs and makes the decision to place the student in a program that is outside of the PSU, the PSU must ensure the program meets mandates set forth by Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and North Carolina Policies Governing Students with Disabilities. There is a list of approved programs located on the EC Division webpage under the Policies tab. Select Non-public Schools/PRTFs from the menu. For additional questions, you may contact the Policy, Monitoring and Audit monitor for Non-public Schools.
When a private residential placement has been determined by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team to be the most appropriate placement for a student with disabilities, in-state residential programs should be the first consideration for placement. The PSU should exhaust all possible in-state residential placements before placing a student out of state. All children placed in alternative school settings are entitled to the same rights and procedural safeguards as provided to those children whose IEPs are implemented in the PSU. These rights and protections include provisions that link their IEP goals and objectives to the general education curriculum, establish measures of performance and outcomes consistent with those established for their nondisabled peers and require their participation in the same general state and district-wide assessments (or alternate assessments) as nondisabled students.

Applying for OOD Funds: The application must be submitted for children placed in an out-of-district placement no later than thirty (30) calendar days after the placement has occurred.

- Applications received later than thirty (30) calendar days after placement may not be considered, or they may be funded only from the date of receipt of a complete application package. If unavoidable or unforeseen delays are encountered in submission of applications, the request for an extension of the deadline must be made in writing via e-mail to specialgrants@dpi.nc.gov. The request for an extension will be reviewed by the SPD Section Chief.

Applications must have the following items in place to be processed. See Instructions for submission details.

1. Applicant student must have a current IEP in ECATS. EC Division personnel will be reviewing the IEP to verify services requested. If additional information is needed, the PSU will be contacted.

2. A signed copy of the contract. Contracts should cover the placing PSU’s approved school year and specify days for extended school year services if applicable (reminder, from a fiscal point of view, ESY occurs at the beginning of a fiscal year (July-August). For children placed in another PSU, contracts should specify which PSU will receive average daily membership (ADM), federal (December 1 child count), and state (April 1 child count) allotments for the current school year. The PSU is to also provide a copy of the Purchase Order associated with the contract.

3. The school calendar from the out-of-district unit where the student will receive educational services (not the PSU calendar).

4. Within the application, special education and related services costs must be computed individually, based on the services listed in each student's IEP; therefore, the total cost for each student will vary. The computation for residential and extended school year should also be done individually. Authorized expenditures include:
   - Educational services, special education teachers and teacher assistants;
   - Related services (such as audiology, occupational and physical therapy, speech, etc.);
   - Adapted physical education;
   - Residential cost (residential cost applies to public and private in-state and out-of-state residential placements) and
   - Extended school year, if applicable

Notification of Approval will be provided via a memo to the PSU Exceptional Children Program Director/Coordinator. Approved services listed on the memo will be associated with the application requests. Reimbursement is based on actual cost of educational and related services for the placing PSU’s approved school year of service. This information is to be reported at the time the reimbursement request is submitted, after all services have been provided and all invoices have been paid.

Denial of Request: If an application is denied, or partially denied, the PSU will be notified via a memo indicating the reason for denial to the Director of the Exceptional Children Programs.
Withdrawals or changes in services: The Exceptional Children Division must be notified of any change using the student’s status, eligible required services, or withdrawal of student, no later than ten calendar days after the student has withdrawn or is no longer requiring educational and related services. Form OOD-3 must be completed and emailed password protected as per aforementioned instructions.

Making an Official Reimbursement Request: The OOD billing period is for one school year; the reimbursement request should be submitted via email using MS Word fillable OOD-2 Out-of-District Placement Reimbursement Invoice, on or before May 15th of that school year. However, when that is not possible, invoices received after this date will be paid during the next fiscal year. The reimbursement is paid as a direct pay to the PSU from federal funds; due to the fiscal calendar of federal funds, funding for the reimbursement may not be available until the second or third fiscal quarter.

- Invoice billing periods for educational services must be computed on a daily basis. Daily costs will be reimbursed based on the placing PSU’s approved school year. Invoices should indicate the number of days the student was served.

Along with the submission of the on-line reimbursement invoice, the PSU must submit to the Exceptional Children Division the following documents per the instructions included in this manual.

- Copies of the completed/fulfilled contract purchase order(s).
- Copies of invoices showing services provided, dates of the services, and amounts billed.
- Copies of canceled check(s) or other proof of payment showing the actual cost of services; these must align with the invoices, and services must align with the contract.

After the request is received, it will be reviewed and approved before going to the Division of Financial and Business Services for payment.

- ADM, state, and federal per child allotments the PSU received during the 2019-2020 fiscal year will be deducted by the Exceptional Children Division. These are funds the PSU received for applying toward payment of the student’s educational and related services.

Other Details:

ADM and State Exceptional Children and Federal [IDEA 2004 (Part B)] allotments must be verified and used to pay for placement of each student. Allotment information in the application, contract, and invoice should coincide. Justification must be provided for discrepancies. PSUs will be credited as follows:

- If the student received the ADM in the unit of legal residence, that unit will be credited with receipt of ADM, state, and federal allotments unless otherwise verified.
- If the student is placed in a private or out-of-state school and received no ADM, the unit of legal residence will not be credited with receipt of ADM. The unit of legal residence will be credited with receipt of state and federal allotments unless otherwise verified.
- If the student is placed in another PSU, verification that the serving unit received the ADM is needed. The unit of legal residence will be credited with receipt of state and federal allotments unless otherwise verified.

ODD funds reimbursed through this program are provided as a direct pay to the PSU. The funds should be placed in the account from which the bills were paid. If local funds were used, then these funds may be used to replace them.
The priorities for use of available OOD funds, with Priority 1 students’ services reimbursed prior to Priority 2, are as follows:

**Priority 1:** Special consideration will be given to students ages 3 through 21 served in private schools and continue in those placements (IEP documentation required) and students ages 3 through 21 placed for the first time in private schools (IEP documentation required).

**Priority 2:** Students placed in programs in other PSUs.

The records pertaining to OOD placement are subject to an audit both during and after the completion of the school year.