

# High Cost Services Webinar

2024-2025 School Year



October 1, 2024

# Agenda

- High Cost Services Overview
- Allowable and Unallowable Costs
- Eligible Amount Requested
- Allocation Methodology
- Application Process
- Timelines
- Questions

If you are experiencing audio difficulties, please make sure that your speakers are on and that your volume is at a suitable level.

Please type questions into the Q&A or chat box as we go along.  
**Dial in by phone: 1 312 626 6799**  
**Meeting ID: 953 0616 8608**



# High Cost Services Overview



# Overview of High Cost Services

The High Cost Services (HCS) fund was established to support school systems who serve Louisiana students with disabilities who have the most difficult needs by providing additional funding for high-cost special education and related services.

Approximately \$16.4 million dollars are available for the 2024-2025 school year.

- In Round 1, this includes \$2.76 million from IDEA state set aside funds and \$12 million from MFP funds.\*
- In Round 2, this includes an additional \$1.64 million from IDEA state set aside funds.

*\*Note: The availability of MFP funding is subject to change as the result of the Legislative session.*



# Overview of High Cost Services

A school system is eligible to apply for the HCS fund on behalf of any student who meets the student eligibility criteria:

- The student is age 3-21 with an active Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
- The total cost to educate the student in the prior school year exceeded three times the average per pupil expenditure (\$16,708).

$$3 \times \$16,708 = \mathbf{\$50,124^*}$$

- All costs for which the school system requests reimbursement are explicitly stated in the student's IEP.

*\*The school system must keep accurate internal records of all prior year expenses used for justification that the student meets the eligibility criteria of the grant, as all expenses are subject to further audit.*

# Overview of High Cost Services

The HCS fund includes two rounds:

Round 1: Students enrolled in previous school year *and* currently enrolled.

Round 2: New students who joined your school system from July 1, 2024 to September 30, 2024.

HCS funds are student specific and cannot be used to support other students.

- If the student approved for funds no longer needs the services designated in the application, or if the student withdraws or transfers to another LEA, the school system that was allocated funds must notify the LDOE in writing no later than 10 days after the student's status changes.
- The LEA that received funds will not be eligible to retain any remaining unobligated or unexpended funds.



# Overview of High Cost Services

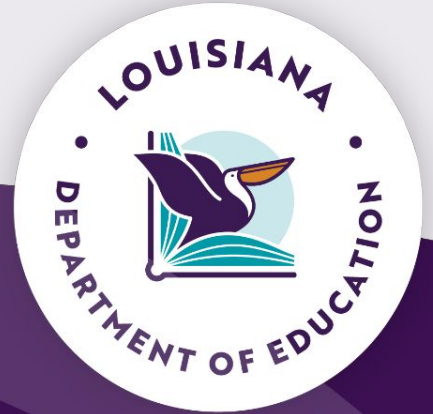
Any remaining unobligated or unexpended funds will follow the student who transfers to any LEA within the state if the system or school requests or confirms the need for funds.

Any specialized equipment purchased with HCS funds will follow the student to any LEA within the state and shall become part of the receiving LEA's inventory list.

LDOE staff will monitor High Cost Services and student jurisdiction through the enhanced Special Education Reporting (eSER) system and other auditing systems.



# Allowable and Unallowable Costs





# Allowable Costs

Details about allowable and unallowable costs can be found in the [2024-2025 High Cost Services State Plan](#).

Even if an allowable cost, the materials, services, supports, and personnel **must be documented and clearly described** in the student's IEP in order to be eligible for reimbursement.



# Allowable Costs

Certified teachers or interpreters in specific low incidence disability areas, e.g., Deaf/Hard of Hearing and Visual Impairment, where students are receiving the majority of their services from a generically certified special education teacher. Both specialty teachers, interpreters, and any 1:1 teachers must be described on the IEP.

One-on-one or two-on-one paraprofessional support to address the student's high cost services. The terms "child specific aide" or "1:1 or 2:1 paraprofessional" must be indicated on the IEP.

Special transportation costs are limited to personnel, equipment, or services required for the specific high need cost as identified on the IEP. Any transportation costs not specific to the high need student or prorated for this student are unallowable. Services must be provided directly to the student and must be clearly described on the IEP under "Special Transportation."

Specialized equipment or supplies. The specialized equipment and supplies must be described in the student's IEP.

Specialized training for staff, described in the student's IEP, needed to implement the student's high cost services.

Related services, such as nursing services, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech/language pathology, educational interpreters, mental health professional counselor that are above and beyond what the majority of students in the school are receiving. A typical service delivery model is considered to be 30 minutes twice a week, therefore the related service has to be above and beyond this.

# Unallowable Costs

Basic classroom costs, such as teachers, curriculum, materials and supplies, transportation (other than student specific special transportation as described in the IEP) and other routine costs associated with the provision of special education and related services to students with disabilities.

The salary and benefits of a bus driver are not reimbursable if the student qualifying as high cost and other students (not qualifying as high cost) are on the bus at the same time. Any transportation costs not specific to the high need student or prorated for this student are unallowable.

Related services costs that are provided at the same level as all other students with disabilities. For example, **a typical service delivery model is 30 minutes twice a week.**

Construction costs such as buildings and sidewalks.

Legal fees, court costs or other costs associated with a cause of action brought on behalf of a student with a disability to ensure a FAPE for the child.

LEAs may not use IDEA funds to pay for medical services eligible under the State Medicaid Program per guidance from the United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP).

# Eligible Amount Requested for Reimbursement



# Eligible Amount Requested for Reimbursement

eGMS will indicate the amount of eligible reimbursement for each student based on the total cost amount entered to educate the student in the prior year (2023-2024) compared to the eligibility criteria of the grant.

The average per pupil amount (\$16,708) is subtracted from the eligibility criteria a student must meet to be eligible to participate in the grant (\$50,124).

The remaining balance is subtracted from the total cost to educate the student in the previous year to populate the amount that can be requested for reimbursement.



# Eligible Amount Requested for Reimbursement

Example: If the total cost to educate the student in the prior year was \$65,000, the LEA may apply for reimbursement of up to \$31,584.

The average per pupil amount (\$16,708) is subtracted from the eligibility criteria a student must meet to be eligible to participate in the grant (\$50,124).

The remaining balance (\$33,416) is subtracted from the total cost to educate the student in the previous year (\$65,000) to populate the amount that can be requested for reimbursement: \$31,584.



# Allocation Methodology



# Allocation Methodology

The Department assembles a team to review all applications to determine allowable and eligible costs for each student. In order to be equitably distributed, the total allocation provided to city and parish school systems versus other public schools shall be proportional to the share of total qualifying applications submitted by city and parish school systems versus other public schools.

For each LEA, the eligible costs are totaled and used to calculate the Percent Impact on the budget of the LEA by assessing the eligible amount as a percent of total state and local revenue.

The Percent Impact will be ranked from highest to lowest within the two separate categories: school systems and other public schools.





# HCS Procedural Safeguards

**HCS funds are not intended to replace any existing federal, state, or local special education funds.**

**HCS funds are student specific and cannot be used to support other students.**

Any specialized equipment purchased with HCS funds will follow the student to any public school system or school within the state.

If the student approved for funds no longer needs the services designated in the application, or if the student withdraws or transfers to another school system or school, the system or school that was allocated funds must notify the LDOE.

Remaining funds will follow the student who transfers to any public school system or school within the state if the new system or city requests or confirms the need for the funds. Other unused funds will revert back to the state.



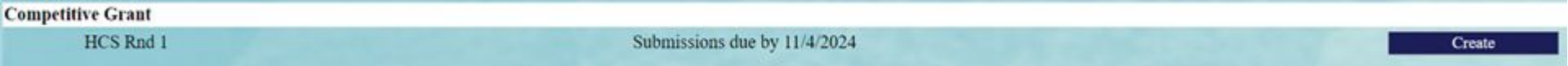
# Application Process



# Application Process

The application for the HCS fund is included as a competitive application on the Department's electronic Grants Management System (eGMS).

To access the application, appropriate school system personnel should log in to eGMS and complete HCS fields in the LEA Central Data (HCS Contact Information and HCS Assurances) tab. Once completed, the HCS Round 1 tab will show up in the Competitive section on your GMS Access Select page.



On the GMS Access Select page, click the “Create” button.



# Application Process

School systems will enter information for students for whom they will submit applications in the Student Data tabs.

School systems can submit applications for up to 60 students in Round 1 and up to 36 students in Round 2.

Student names and other personally identifiable information are not allowed. LEAs must use the student's state ID (LASID). The student identifier field is where you will enter the student's state ID.

Materials, services, supports, and personnel requested in the application must match the information in the student's current IEP.







# Student Data Pages

**Step 4:** Based on that maximum request amount, school systems will then list the services, personnel, materials, and support for which reimbursement is requested. This includes indicating the section of the IEP in which LDOE reviewers can find the activities described. The sum total of these activities must match the maximum request amount.

\*The school system must maintain accurate internal records of all expenses from the prior year used for justification that the student meets the eligibility criteria of the HCS fund as all expenses are subject to further audit.





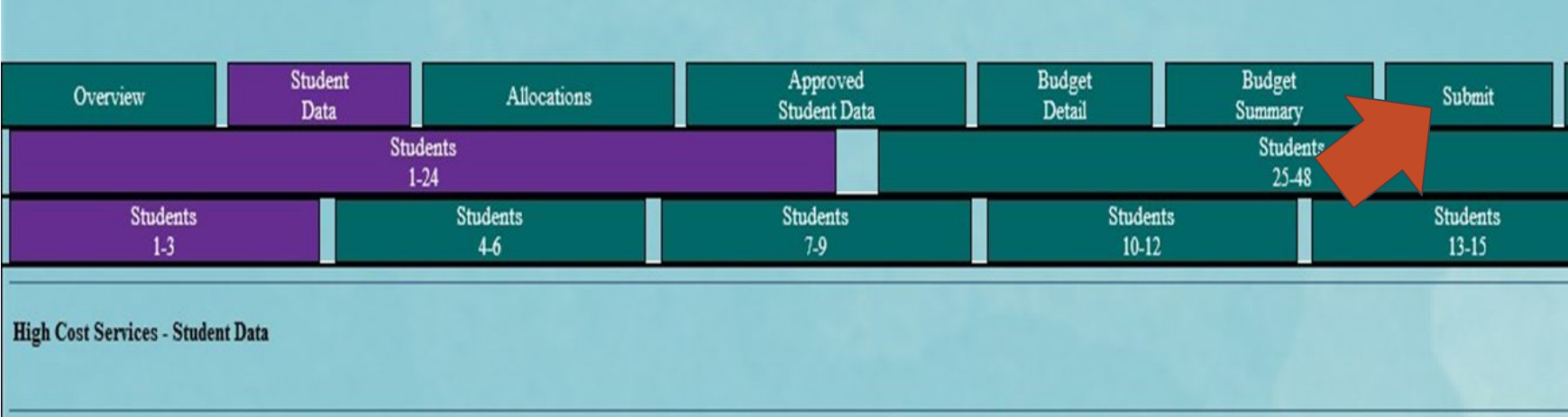
# Process Before Submission

School systems should verify the following information before submitting the application:

- **Student IDs are accurate.**
  - IDs should match in EdLink 360 and SER.
- **Enrollment dates in EdLink 360 align with HCS enrollment requirements.**
  - Students should have enrollment dates from previous school year with the LEA and current enrollment in the LEA. (Round 1)
  - Students should have an enrollment date between 7/1/24-9/30/24. (Round 2)
- **Budget items in the application are clearly documented in the students' IEPs.**

# Submission

**Step 5:** Once the application is complete, click the “Submit” button.



The screenshot shows a navigation menu with the following items: Overview, Student Data, Allocations, Approved Student Data, Budget Detail, Budget Summary, and Submit. Below the menu, there are sections for 'Students 1-24' and 'Students 25-48'. The 'Submit' button is highlighted with an orange arrow. Below the navigation menu, there is a section titled 'High Cost Services - Student Data'.

Overview	Student Data	Allocations	Approved Student Data	Budget Detail	Budget Summary	Submit
Students 1-24			Students 25-48			
Students 1-3	Students 4-6	Students 7-9	Students 10-12	Students 13-15		

High Cost Services - Student Data

# Process After Submission

There are several layers to the review process for the original application:

- **Preliminary Review**
  - 3 level programmatic review (Level 1, Level 2, and Prelim Approver)
- **Allocation Development**
  - Occurs by School System Financial Services (SSFS) outside eGMS
- **Assigned Allocations**
  - Approved students entered into eGMS
- **Final Review**
  - Verify approved students and assigned allocations

Upon approval of final review, an amendment can be created to submit the budget.

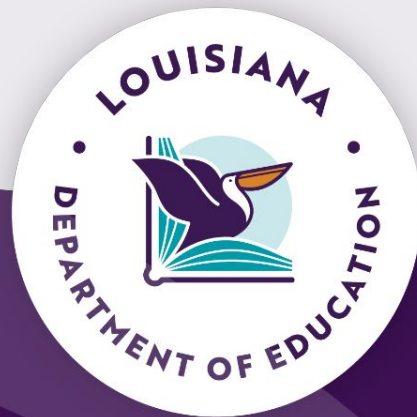


# Amendments

Creating an amendment:

- On the Access/Select page, select the “Amend” button.
- Once the amendment opens, use the “Page Lock Control” tab to unlock the pages needed.
- On the Page Lock Control tab, select “Expand All”. Select the pages that need to be unlocked to complete the budget.
- Complete the Budget Detail tab.
- Run a Consistency Check (located on the “Submit” tab).
- Once the application passes the consistency check, “Submit to LDE” for review.

# Timelines



# Round 1 Timeline

Tentative Schedule	Action Item
October 7	Application Opens
November 4	Application Closes
October 7 - December 30	Preliminary Review
January 3 - February 5	Allocation Development
February 6 - February 13	Allocations Assigned in eGMS
February 14 - February 24	Final Review
February 25 - June 30	Amendments Submitted

# Round 2 Timeline

Tentative Schedule	Action Item
December 2	Application Opens
January 10	Application Closes
December 2 - February 7	Preliminary Review
February 11 - April 14	Allocation Development
April 15 - April 21	Allocations Assigned in eGMS
April 22 - April 30	Final Review
May 1 - September 30	Amendments Submitted



# Questions?

Programmatic Questions  
[ashley.augustine@la.gov](mailto:ashley.augustine@la.gov)

Application Questions  
[ldoe.grantshelpdesk@la.gov](mailto:ldoe.grantshelpdesk@la.gov)

