

Georgia Grant for High Cost Funds (GHCF)

Questions and Answers

1) Who are the children this program is intended to support?

Eligible children ages 3-21 who have been determined by the IEP Team to be a student with a disability and in need of special education. These children, due to the severity of their disabilities, require multiple high cost special education services, related services, assistive technology and/or special adaptive equipment needs. Due to the cost of these services, local districts are under extraordinary financial pressure.

2) Are there costs that are not allowed under GHCF?

Unallowable costs include the following: legal fees, court costs or other costs associated with a cause of action brought on behalf of a child with a disability to ensure a free appropriate public education, non-extraordinary nursing costs, English as a Second Language Instruction, indirect costs, and administrative and leadership costs associated with the provision of the services to the child.

3) What if the student moves during the school year?

Since this is a grant based on costs already incurred by the LEA, only an LEA that has reached the threshold of eligibility (over \$27,000) may apply.

4) How do I file an application for the GHCF?

Grant applications should be submitted online at www.gahcf.org. For application resources, go to GaDOE.org to the special education webpage and click on "Budget, Grants and Consolidated Application" link. You will find the Grant for High Cost Funds at the bottom of the page with an online submission manual, completed sample application and a Q & A.

5) When is the GHCF application due?

The grant application may be submitted any time from January through the deadline of February 15 each year. An announcement will be made in the Director's eBlast after approval of awards by the State Board. The system must post the grant and budget the funds in the Consolidated Application for approval prior to draw down of the funds. Funds must be expended prior to the close the current school year.

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6) What is meant by direct educational cost as eligible costs?

Salaries and fringe benefits are allowable costs for any special education personnel who work directly with a high needs student. These costs should be prorated based on the amount of time the individual staff member provides direct services to the child. Other staff who work directly with high cost students are also eligible. Direct services to the child by a counselor, school psychologist, social worker, and/or nursing services beyond those typically required in a school are also eligible. Bus drivers and monitors are additional personnel costs that are allowable on a prorated basis.

7) Can the district claim “indirect costs” or “costs on behalf of” the high cost child?

“Indirect costs” or “costs on behalf of” are not eligible costs for reimbursement through the GHCF. Examples of these costs are general administration, facility construction costs, secretarial services or IEP meetings that do not pertain to the direct instruction of a child.

8) The district pays tuition for a high cost student to a private provider. Can these costs be claimed and by whom?

The system paying the claim to the private provider will need to secure an invoice that outlines the direct educational and related service costs that were a part of the tuition bill (excluding indirect costs). Transportation as a specialized related service necessary to transport a child is allowable. However, it must be included in the student’s IEP. **Additionally, the private provider/school must adhere to the standards applicable to the LEAs regarding the provision of FAPE.**

9) What would be examples of assistive technology, adaptive equipment and other allowable costs?

Special adaptive equipment, supplies and materials are eligible costs, if they are unique to an individual child and are needed to provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). Special adaptive equipment may include computers, Braille writers, changing tables or sensory integration equipment. Assistive technology may include personnel costs, assistive technology devices, augmentative communication tools and/or computer adaptations. Costs are incurred during the current school year only.

10) Must assistive technology be listed on the IEP?

Yes, these items must be documented on the student’s IEP.