

## ELSA Release Notes: June 2020

The Early Learning Scholarship Administration System (ELSA) update released on June 19, 2020, included a change to the selection window for payment service periods, expanded the family information collected on the Parent/Guardian page, and added a new Parent Under 21 priority population indicator. An updated version of the Demographics report was released the same day. Other changes were also included in this release.

### I. Request Payment: Changed Service Period Selection Window

*The Request Payment page is accessible to Scholarship Administrator and Area Administrator users.*

*Navigation Menu >> **Request Payment***

The Service Period selection menu is available on the Request Payment page.

ELSA now limits the selection window for payment service periods to approximately 105 days out from the final day of a service period, which aligns to the regular payment correction window allowed for under Early Learning Scholarships Program policy.

The 105-day window of availability for service periods was first in place at the time ELSA payment functionality was introduced for FY 2017. At a later point, the selection window was extended to approximately six months out from the end of a given service period to allow for entry of MDE-approved late payment requests by Scholarship/Area Administrators. MDE now has internal mechanisms to make older service periods available to organizations with approved late payment requests on a case-by-case basis, so the standard selection window was reverted back to 105 days out from services.

**Note:** Any payment request in a service period 105 or more days earlier than the date of this system update will roll into Held status at 4 p.m. Only MDE administrators can take action payments in Held status. If your organization has one or more held payment requests you wish to have processed, please reach out to [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us) for approval consideration. Be sure to provide the service period and amount of the held request(s) as well as the reason for the late timing.

## II. Parent/Guardian Page: Expanded Collection of Family Information

*The Parent/Guardian page is accessible to Scholarship Administrator and Area Administrator users*

*Award List: "Edit" >> Scholarship Award: Parent/Guardian: "**Update Guardian**"*

Family information is collected on the application and renewal forms for the Early Learning Scholarships Program as answers to a number of optional questions. The list of questions on those forms has expanded in recent years, and this update incorporates the most recent additions into ELSA. The Parent/Guardian page in ELSA now includes the following new sections with multi-select options aligned to program forms:

- **Housing Insecurity**

- Shelter
- Hotel, motel or trailer
- Moving from place to place
- Car, outside or public space
- Doubling up temporarily with other family or friends

- **Heard About EL Scholarships From**

- My Program
- Area Administrator
- Online Research
- Flyer / Advertisement
- Friend/Family
- Community Partner
- Parent Aware / Child Care Aware
- Other
- Another Family in my Program
- Social Media
- Tribal, County or State Service Provider

- **Public Program Participation**

- Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP)
- Free and Reduced-Price Lunch Program (FRPL)
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations
- Head Start
- Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)
- Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Foster Care

### III. Child Page: Added Parent Under 21 Indicator

*The Child page is accessible to Scholarship Administrator and Area Administrator users.*

*Award List: “Edit” >> Scholarship Award: Child: “**Edit Child**”*

A new “Parent Under 21” indicator check box has been added to the Child page under the newly named Child Priority Population Indicators section that includes boxes for the other three priority groups.

If the Parent Under 21 box is checked on the Child page, the SA/AA is prompted to enter the birthdate of the parent on the Parent/Guardian page by the following display message: *Parent Under 21 child priority indicator saved. Enter the parent’s birthdate.*

A corresponding display of the Parent Under 21 indicator is now included in the Child section at the top of the Child Scholarship History page.

The “Parent/Guardian under 21” filter on the Award List is now tied to the new Parent Under 21 indicator flag on the Child page rather than looking to the parent birth date entry.

**Note:** *The Parent Under 21 indicator is intended for use when a child is identified as meeting criteria for priority consideration in this category at the time of application. Their parent must be 21 years old or younger and pursuing a high school diploma or GED® diploma. Please refer to the guidance in the [State Early Learning Scholarships Manual](#) and [Supplemental Guide for Priority Populations](#) as needed.*

### IV. Demographics Report: Use of Parent Under 21 Indicator and Fixes

*ELSA reports are accessible to Scholarship Administrator, Area Administrator, Payment Approver, and MDE Internal users.*

*Navigation Menu >> Available Reports >> “**Demographics**”*

The new Parent Under 21 indicator is now used to identify children included in the “Number of children to parents under 21 years old” count and the Child Detail report linked to from that count. Previously, children were identified for this count using a calculation that determined parent age on the date of award.

As an impact of database changes in an earlier release, child counts in the Demographics report were not accurate. The report has been modified to provide true counts of unique children.

The default “End Date” parameter on the report launch page is now the date at the time of the report launch (current/system date).

## V. Other Changes / Bug fixes

- On the Child Scholarship History page, Ineligible Date has been moved under Birth Date and Consent to Release has been moved under EC Screening Complete.
- Child Ethnicity and Child Race sections have been moved from the Scholarship Award page to the Child page.
- “Other” has been removed as a Child Race option to align with current program forms and related data collections.
- The Child Payment History page available to view when requesting payment was found to be limiting to a view of up to ten transactions. The page has been updated to include the full payment history of the child award with no limit on the number displayed.
- Link to replace the parent has been removed from the add/update view of the Parent/Guardian page. The intended use of this functionality was poorly defined and it was rarely utilized by administrators.
- When newly awarding a previously awarded child, the Parent/Guardian information is copied over to the new Parent/Guardian record created alongside the new award. The Parent/Guardian information remains editable.
- “Scholarship Program” link in the Resources section of the left navigation menu has been updated with the new URL for the [Early Learning Scholarships Program webpage](#).
- MDE administrators now have a service period override function to enable entry of approved late payment requests by external administrators (AA/SA users) by administrative organization.
- The close of a funding fiscal year by MDE administrators now deletes all awards associated to that fiscal year that are in *Incomplete* status.