



## **Early Learning Scholarship Administration System User Manual**

*Current as of September 11, 2020*

## Table of Contents

System Overview .....	6
<b>ELSA Guidance and Early Learning Scholarships Program Policy .....</b>	<b>6</b>
ELSA Access and Data Privacy.....	7
<i>Secure Access to ELSA: Education Identity and Access Management (EDIAM) Security System Accounts.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>User Access Roles.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>ELSA User Access Steps – EDIAM.....</i>	<i>10</i>
Early Childhood Programs in ELSA.....	10
SSID Number Assignments in ELSA.....	11
<i>Automated SSID Number Assignment .....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Impact of Delayed SSID Number Assignments .....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Child Record Returns – Returned SSID List.....</i>	<i>12</i>
ELSA Navigation Menu .....	14
<i>Scholarship/Area Administrator View .....</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Payment Approver View .....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Menu Additions: Combined Roles and Multiple Organizations .....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>MDE Notices in ELSA.....</i>	<i>15</i>
Funding in ELSA – Fiscal Year Allocations .....	16
<i>Managing Scholarship Funds.....</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>FY Reserve.....</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Allocations Page .....</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Awards by Allocation Detail Page.....</i>	<i>20</i>
ELSA Administration of Scholarships .....	21
Award List Page .....	21
<i>Award List Export.....</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>Award List: Usage Notes.....</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Award Status .....</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>SSID Status in ELSA .....</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>Alert Message Links on the Award List .....</i>	<i>24</i>
Child Scholarship History Page .....	24
<i>Child Scholarship History – Actions.....</i>	<i>25</i>
Scholarship Award Page .....	25
<i>Scholarship Award Page – Data Entry Fields .....</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>Scholarship Award Page – Award Verification Date.....</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>Child Page.....</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>Parent/Guardian Page.....</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>Child Award Page .....</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>Program Selection Page .....</i>	<i>41</i>
Begin New Award / New Award - Child Search Page .....	44
<i>New Child and Award Records.....</i>	<i>45</i>
<i>Awarding Using an Existing Child Record .....</i>	<i>45</i>

<i>Deleting Scholarship Records .....</i>	<i>46</i>
<i>Duplicate Child Records: Prevention, Problems, Actions .....</i>	<i>46</i>
Child Search Function .....	48
Scholarship Renewal.....	49
<i>Renewal Date .....</i>	<i>50</i>
<i>Renewal Amount .....</i>	<i>50</i>
<i>Renewal Errors – Renewal Error List.....</i>	<i>51</i>
ELSA Payment System .....	52
<i>ELSA Payment Process .....</i>	<i>53</i>
<i>Requesting Scholarship Payments.....</i>	<i>55</i>
<i>Area Administrator Reimbursement.....</i>	<i>56</i>
<i>Program Site Selection List, Child Payments for Site Pages: Usage Notes.....</i>	<i>57</i>
<i>Child Payment Page: Usage Notes .....</i>	<i>58</i>
<i>Award Renewal – Payment Requests .....</i>	<i>61</i>
<i>Payment Status View / Payments Page.....</i>	<i>62</i>
<i>Payment Adjustments (Corrections).....</i>	<i>64</i>
<b>Reports in ELSA.....</b>	<b>65</b>
Initial Report Parameters: Usage Notes .....	65
Report – Demographics.....	66
<i>Child Detail .....</i>	<i>67</i>
Report – Programs with Scholarships.....	68
<i>Student Report.....</i>	<i>68</i>
Report – Award Management Report .....	69
Report – Fiscal Allocation .....	69
<i>Child Level Fiscal Review.....</i>	<i>70</i>
<i>Child Award Forecast.....</i>	<i>71</i>
Report – Payment History .....	71
<i>Payment History Detail.....</i>	<i>72</i>
Report – Scholarship Monitoring .....	73
<b>Quick Reference Steps for Scholarship/Area Administrators in ELSA .....</b>	<b>75</b>
Scholarship Awards .....	75
<i>Create a New Child Record and Award.....</i>	<i>75</i>
<i>Award Using an Existing Child Record .....</i>	<i>76</i>
<i>Change the Amount of an Award .....</i>	<i>77</i>
<i>Cancel an Award.....</i>	<i>77</i>
<i>Delete a Child/Award Record .....</i>	<i>78</i>
<i>Renew a Scholarship Award into the Next Fiscal Year.....</i>	<i>78</i>
Program Selections.....	79
<i>Select a Program and Site while Awarding – Pathway I .....</i>	<i>79</i>
<i>Select a Program and Site while Awarding – Pathway II .....</i>	<i>79</i>
<i>Select a Program and Site after Awarding – Pathway I.....</i>	<i>80</i>
<i>Change the Selected Program/Site after Awarding.....</i>	<i>80</i>

Child Information and SSID.....	81
<i>Change Child Data Used for Identification .....</i>	<i>81</i>
<i>Act on a Returned Child Record .....</i>	<i>82</i>
Payments and Attendance .....	82
<i>Request Scholarship Payments in ELSA .....</i>	<i>82</i>
<i>Change Child Payment Amounts in a Payment Request.....</i>	<i>83</i>
<i>Change Child Attendance in a Payment Request.....</i>	<i>84</i>
<i>Change Admin Fee Amounts in a Payment Request.....</i>	<i>84</i>
<b>ELSA: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) .....</b>	<b>86</b>
General System.....	86
▶ <i>What is ELSA? .....</i>	<i>86</i>
▶ <i>What information needs to be entered into ELSA?.....</i>	<i>86</i>
▶ <i>As a public program funded with scholarship dollars, do I have to enter scholarship data into ELSA and include those children in Early Education Student (EE Student) reporting?.....</i>	<i>86</i>
▶ <i>Why am I able to enter ELSA without first having been assigned a specific ELSA role by our organization's Identified Official with Authority (IOwA)? .....</i>	<i>87</i>
Funds and Awarding.....	87
▶ <i>Where are my funds/dollars/monies? .....</i>	<i>87</i>
▶ <i>What does my awarding/spending/available funding look like in 20XX? .....</i>	<i>87</i>
▶ <i>How do I change the year on a scholarship award? .....</i>	<i>87</i>
▶ <i>My organization still has funding available in our allocation for the prior fiscal year, but I cannot create a new scholarship award with those funds because the application documentation for the child I wish to award was not verified prior to the end of that prior fiscal year. What can I do to award the remainder of my funding?.....</i>	<i>88</i>
▶ <i>When using the Begin New Award function, I am not able to select a child's existing record to add a new award from my organization. Why can't I select the record, and what should I do?.....</i>	<i>88</i>
▶ <i>I started a new award, but the Scholarship Year listed on the Child Award page says 2020 even though today we are in FY 2021. How do I change the year on this award?.....</i>	<i>89</i>
▶ <i>Why can't I enter the Award Verification Date on the Scholarship Award page?/ Why can't I enter the Award Start Date on a new Child Award page? .....</i>	<i>89</i>
Data Entry.....	89
▶ <i>What if I do not have a middle name or middle initial for the child? What should I enter? .....</i>	<i>89</i>
▶ <i>What address should I enter if the parent has provided a home address and a mailing address? .....</i>	<i>90</i>
▶ <i>If a child is in foster care, who is the legal guardian and what address should we use?.....</i>	<i>90</i>
▶ <i>What information should we enter if we have a parent with a confidential address?.....</i>	<i>90</i>
▶ <i>I cannot find the program or site the child is attending to make the selection in ELSA:.....</i>	<i>90</i>
▶ <i>I entered some child and/or award information, can I delete the record if this child/award record should not have been created?.....</i>	<i>91</i>
Payments.....	91
▶ <i>When building a payment request, I see the child I want to add listed on the Child Payments for Site page, but I cannot add the child to the payment request, and the child's name is a different color. What is the problem?.....</i>	<i>91</i>
▶ <i>When building a payment request, a child I expect to see is not included in the Children Attending Site list on the Child Payment for Site page. What should I do? .....</i>	<i>91</i>
▶ <i>On the Child Payments for Site page, what does the green "I" icon next to a child's name mean?.....</i>	<i>92</i>

▶ On the Child Payment page, I tried to save the payment and attendance information but was not successful. The message “Payment amount is out of range.” displayed at the top of the page; what does this error mean? .....	92
System Messages and Icons .....	92
▶ A duplicate SSID/child message is displayed. What does it mean and what should I do?.....	92
▶ What does the green exclamation point (!) icon next to a child’s name mean? .....	93
Where can I find other guidance and training resources for the Early Learning Scholarships Program and ELSA?	93

## System Overview

The Early Learning Scholarship Administration System (ELSA) is a secure web application (system) that was created by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) to support implementation and oversight of the Early Learning Scholarships Program. ELSA currently serves as the data and payment system for the real-time management of allocated scholarship funds, administration of child records and scholarship awards, and processing of scholarship and administrative payment requests.

ELSA was launched in January 2015. Between January and June of 2015, the system was used to track scholarships awarded in state fiscal year 2015 (FY 2015). ELSA functionality for FY 2016 opened on September 1, 2015, supporting the tracking of new FY 2016 scholarships as well as management of existing FY 2015 scholarships as children continued to be served with those funds.

As of July 1, 2016, ELSA became a payment system for the Early Learning Scholarships Program. Pathway II award funds are requested through ELSA and paid directly to Pathway II-funded public programs (Head Starts, charter schools, school districts). Pathway II-funded child care programs and Pathway I scholarship payments are made by Area Administrators (AAs), with the AAs using ELSA to request and reconcile payment from MDE.

ELSA has been the primary funding mechanism for the Early Learning Scholarships Program since the finalization of all FY 2016 scholarship payments, though FY 2017 scholarship payments through Tribal Area Administrators were still handled outside of the system. ELSA is now the sole funding mechanism for the Early Learning Scholarships Program.

ELSA remains in active development. MDE distributes system release notes outlining changes made as the system is updated. Notes for update releases with significant changes are distributed to all active ELSA users and are intended to serve as supplements to the ELSA User Manual. Any ELSA-specific questions not addressed by this manual or the release notes distributed since its publishing are best directed to [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us).

## ELSA Guidance and Early Learning Scholarships Program Policy

This ELSA User Manual is a guidance resource that includes system terms, functions, limitations, relationships, action steps, and policy considerations aligned to system use. This document is not intended as a full resource for program policy, nor is it a guide for overall administration of state early learning scholarships or management of scholarship funds.

**ELSA was built to support the Early Learning Scholarships Program but does not enforce or educate on all policy points. For this reason, it is critical for individuals working within ELSA to familiarize themselves with the program policies that should guide their work on scholarships as detailed in the [State Early Learning Scholarships Policy Manual](#) and supplemental implementation guidance as applicable.**

General questions about the Early Learning Scholarships Program are best directed to [MDE.ELScholarships@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELScholarships@state.mn.us). Questions specific to Pathway II scholarship administration are best directed to [MDE.PathwayII@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.PathwayII@state.mn.us).

## ELSA Access and Data Privacy

ELSA is a secure system. Only those individuals performing work for the Early Learning Scholarships Program are permitted to access ELSA, and their activities within the system must align with their assigned program responsibilities. Child-level information entered into ELSA includes personally identifiable information that is private data protected under the federal [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#) as well as the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (MGDPA), [Minnesota Statutes, section 13.32](#).

All ELSA system users have agreed to the [Secure Website User Access Agreements and Acknowledgements](#) in the course of creating their user accounts. All grantees administering scholarships under the Early Learning Scholarships Program have certified they have read and agree to comply with a full statement of assurances that includes details of data practices requirements. The publicly available [Data Practices for Early Learning Scholarship Administrators](#) is a guidance and training resource for those administering scholarships that broadly covers applicable laws, definitions, and data management considerations.

If any individual or group wishes to access data collected through ELSA for any purpose other than what is authorized and required for work under the Early Learning Scholarships Program, they may pursue a formal data request. MDE maintains an informational [Data Requests webpage](#). If any individual or entity requests Early Learning Scholarships Program data from a grantee, including data in ELSA and/or locally stored data, the grantee must notify MDE immediately and await instruction.

MDE publishes various reports on the Early Learning Scholarships Program, most notably the annual *Scholarships Use in Minnesota* report. The most recent publically available reports are posted on the [Early Learning Scholarships](#) page of the MDE website.

## Secure Access to ELSA: Education Identity and Access Management (EDIAM) Security System Accounts

As of September 20, 2019, ELSA access is now managed through the Education Identity and Access Management (EDIAM) security system. All individuals whose work requires access to ELSA must have an EDIAM user account tied to their unique personal information. To gain access to ELSA, an Identified Official with Authority (IOWA) or IOWA Proxy for an organization must assign an access role to the EDIAM account of each individual user who needs to do work for their organization within ELSA.

Each organization must have a designated Identified Official with Authority (IOWA) in place to assign authorized user access roles to individual staff within the EDIAM security system. The IOWA is typically the superintendent or executive director of an organization, but this decision is made at the organization level. MDE follows a formal process for setup of an IOWA that requires documentation with specific language. Instructions for setting up an IOWA and access to the EDIAM security system are provided on the [MDE Data Submissions homepage](#).

*Note: In order to manage scholarships or participate in payment activities, users must have an assigned ELSA access role under the organizational entity that has been allocated funds in ELSA. Reference the [EDIAM Identified Official with Authority list \(MDE-Org\)](#) to see if an IOWA is in place for your organization. Reach out to [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us) to confirm the placement of the organization's allocated funds as needed.*

The Identified Official with Authority, or an IOWA Proxy they have assigned, must annually re-authorize each staff member's ELSA access. The IOWA is sent monthly email notifications listing all users in their organization

with access to at least one MDE secure system whose access is scheduled to expire within the next 45 days if not recertified. The IOwa can review, update, or recertify associated external user access to MDE secure systems within EDIAM at any time. **When an individual with an assigned access role leaves the organization or no longer requires ELSA access for their assigned work, the IOwa should revoke that individual's access promptly.** All organizations and individuals working within ELSA share responsibility for keeping child-level scholarship data private.

### ***Exception: Access Linked to Existing SSID Maintainer Role***

All individuals with active access to the Student ID Validation System (Student ID System/SSID System/SIVS) in the SSID Maintainer role are automatically granted access to ELSA. However, only those SSID Maintainers authorized by a resident school district are responsible for assigning SSID numbers to child records in ELSA. The district MARSS Coordinator is expected to have the role of SSID Maintainer, but there may be more than one individual in a district with this role. Each resident district may locally assign this work, but at least authorized SSID Maintainer in the district is required to be responsible for the work of assigning SSID numbers to child records in ELSA at any given time. **This work in ELSA is required by resident districts a minimum of monthly throughout the calendar year, regardless of the school district calendar.**

*Note: A step-by-step guide is available for SSID Maintainers of resident school districts: Assigning a State Student Identification (SSID) Number in the Early Learning Scholarship Administration System (ELSA). Contact [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us) to request a copy of this guide.*

Some individuals working for organizations other than resident school districts may have an SSID Maintainer access role for the Student ID Validation System that makes them indistinguishable from resident district staff in the user access lists. As a result, these individuals may receive system notifications and large-batch communications related to SSID assignment in ELSA. However, only those SSID Maintainers in resident school districts are responsible for the SSID number assignment work in ELSA.

## **User Access Roles**

Authorization in one of the following roles is required to access ELSA:

- **Area Administrator (AA):** ELSA role intended for staff of Area Administrator and Tribal Area Administrator organizations; allows the user to:
  - Award Pathway I scholarships.
  - Award Pathway II scholarships to children in
    - Any Pathway II-funded program allocated funds under the top-level AA organizational entity.
    - Children in Pathway II-funded child care programs allocated funds under the top-level AA organizational entity.
  - Manage child records and awards associated to the administrator organization.
  - Initiate payment requests to be sent to MDE.
  - Pull system reports available to ELSA users outside of MDE.



- **Scholarship Administrator (SA):** ELSA role intended for staff of Pathway II-funded school district, charter school, and Head Start programs, as well as staff of the statewide administrator of Pathway II-funded child care programs; allows the user to:
  - Award Pathway II scholarships to children in associated Pathway II-funded programs.
  - Manage child records and awards associated to the administrator organization.
  - Initiate payment requests to be sent to MDE.
  - Pull system reports available to ELSA users outside of MDE.
- **Payment Approver:** ELSA role required for all organizations requesting payment through ELSA; allows the user to:
  - Review payment requests initiated by an AA or SA in their organization.
    - Payment entries may be based on program provider invoices.
  - Finalize payment requests, sending the request to MDE for payment processing.
  - Pull system reports available to ELSA users outside of MDE.
- **State Student Identification Number (SSID) Maintainer:** Student ID Validation System role intended for resident school district staff; Within ELSA, allows the user to:
  - Assign SSID numbers to children in ELSA.
  - Validate and generate SSID numbers in the Student ID Validation System.
- **MDE Internal/MDE Internal Read-Only/Admin/Help Desk:** ELSA roles for MDE staff members whose work requires access to ELSA for oversight, development, or support purposes.

**Notice:** Each individual accessing ELSA must do so using their own properly authorized EDIAM user account.

**EDIAM user account credentials (user ID/password) are not to be used by any person other than the individual whose personal information is attached to that user account.** See the posted [Secured Website Systems User Access Agreements and Acknowledgements](#) for detailed EDIAM user account guidelines.

### ***Role Selection Considerations***

The only system-supported access role combinations are that of Scholarship Administrator/SSID Maintainer and Payment Approver/SSID Maintainer for a Pathway II-funded public program.

The Payment Approver role is typically filled by an individual in the funded organization's business office, finance department, or leadership. This role creates a separation of duties within the payment process for each organization requesting payment through ELSA. An individual may not serve as both Scholarship/Area Administrator and Payment Approver for a given organization. However, it is allowable for a single individual to serve as Payment Approver for multiple organizations, and ELSA supports this. Additionally, an individual may have access as a Scholarship Administrator or Area Administrator under multiple organizations. As in other access scenarios, the IOWA of each organization must assign the appropriate access role to the individual's EDIAM user account.

Child care centers and family child care programs that have been granted Pathway II funds do not utilize ELSA at this time. The statewide administrator organization for child care Pathway II scholarships enters awards and makes payment requests in ELSA on behalf of those programs based *Invoice Form* submissions from the programs.

*Note: See the “Pathway II Invoicing and Payments” section of the [State Early Learning Scholarships Policy Manual](#) for more details.*

## ELSA User Access Steps – EDIAM

1. If you do not currently have an EDIAM user account, you will need to make one first. Links and directions for creating an account are available on the [MDE Data Submissions homepage](#).
2. Confirm role assignment: The Identified Official with Authority (IOWA) for your organization must add an ELSA user role assignment to your EDIAM account. While logged into EDIAM, you may view your assigned access roles for ELSA and other systems. Reach out to your organization’s IOWA locally to discuss your ELSA user access role assignment as needed.

*Refer to the [Secure Access to ELSA: Education Identity and Access Management \(EDIAM\) Security System Accounts](#) section of this manual for more details.*

3. Once you have an EDIAM user account and your ELSA user role has been added to that account, go to the [ELSA system homepage](#). Follow the ELSA entry link provided under the “ELSA System Access” heading, then log in with your EDIAM user ID and password when prompted. *If you recently logged into your EDIAM account and your session is still active, you will not be prompted to log in.*

## Early Childhood Programs in ELSA

MDE loads the Parent Aware List of Scholarship-Eligible Programs report file sourced from the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) into ELSA every two weeks, system status and schedule permitting. Once loaded, newly eligible programs and sites are made available for selection in ELSA; those no longer eligible are removed from the Program Selection menus in the system. **Administrators must keep current with scholarship management activities in ELSA to prevent a situation where a program that provided services for an awarded child is no longer available for selection.**

Any program receiving Pathway II scholarship funding is required to maintain a Parent Aware Four-Star rating, and ELSA enforces this requirement independent of the scholarship-eligible program list. If a Pathway II-funded program or any of its sites has a rating lower than Four Stars, those will not be available for selection when setting up a program selection record for an award.

*Note: Please refer to the [State Early Learning Scholarships Policy Manual](#) for further guidance related to eligible programs. If an eligible program/site is missing from the program/site selection list in ELSA, please contact [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us). Public education programs with questions about their Parent Aware rating should reach out to [ParentAware.MDE@state.mn.us](mailto:ParentAware.MDE@state.mn.us).*

## SSID Number Assignments in ELSA

All resident school districts are responsible for assigning State Student Identification (SSID) numbers to the ELSA records of resident children who have been awarded a state early learning scholarship. This is regardless of whether the school district receives Pathway II funds or not. This applies even if the awarded child is not currently attending a district program and/or has not had any contact with the district yet. Each scholarship recipient child is a resident of a school district; that district is responsible for matching the child's ELSA record to their existing Student ID Validation System (SIVS) record or generating a new SIVS record and SSID number to make the match if needed.

*Note: ELSA supports automated assignment of SSID number in the case of a record match between ELSA and SIVS that meets automated validation criteria. Refer to the [Automated SSID Number Assignment](#) section below for more details.*

The child information entered into ELSA is provided to the SSID Maintainer(s) in that child's resident school district as indicated on the Child record page. The information is then compared to the state's Student ID Validation System (SIVS), which houses and validates official SSID numbers for all children receiving an Early Learning Scholarship in addition to those attending Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE), School Readiness, K-12 programs, or otherwise being served with state education funds. This process is not intended to involve interaction with local student information or enrollment systems, and address cross-checks and/or verifications by district staff are not required.

**The expectation is that resident school districts will address child records pending SSID number assignment in ELSA a minimum of monthly throughout the calendar year.** To support this work, ELSA sends out bi-monthly automated reminder emails to all SSID Maintainers authorized under a district with child records pending SSID assignment, on the first and fifteenth of the month. A given child record is included on the SSID Maintainer's "Child SSID Validation List" page until either (a) the SSID number has been successfully assigned to the ELSA record, or (b) the "Return to Admin" function is utilized.

*Note: A step-by-step guide for completing SSID number assignments in ELSA is available for resident school district SSID Maintainers. Contact [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us) to request a copy of this guide.*

Most often, a resident district's MARSS Coordinator is responsible for making SSID number assignments to child records in ELSA, because all MARSS Coordinators require access to the Student ID Validation System in the SSID Maintainer role that also allows access to ELSA. For this reason, the MARSS Coordinator of a district is the primary contact for SSID number assignment questions. However, a resident school district may locally assign this work to another individual with the qualifying SSID Maintainer access role at their discretion, as long as at least one person in the district is identified to do this work at any given point throughout the calendar year.

*Note: [MDE-Org](#) provides a [District MARSS Coordinator](#) contact list.*

Please refer to the policy memo [Student ID Validations for Early Learners](#) for additional guidance related to the assignment of SSID numbers to child records in ELSA. Resident school districts are responsible for assigning SSID numbers to the ELSA records of resident early learning scholarship recipients, regardless of program of attendance, with limited exception. Full details are provided in the policy memo.

## Automated SSID Number Assignment

ELSA runs an overnight process to automatically assign SSID numbers to ELSA child records that are in *Pending* SSID status. Auto-assignment is completed only in cases where the SSID is validated by a match of identifying child information in ELSA and an existing record in the Student ID Validation System (SIVS) that meets automated validation criteria.

This SSID number auto-assignment processing enhancement was added to ELSA in September 2020 to improve efficiency and mitigate the negative impacts of SSID assignment delays to the extent possible. MDE anticipates that most SSID assignments in ELSA will continue to be completed manually by an SSID Maintainer in the child's resident school district, as minor discrepancies in identifying child information that prevent a record match that meets automated validation criteria are common and persistent. However, as scholarship application processing and data entry practices improve, the automated assignment of SSID numbers in ELSA will be successful more often.

## Impact of Delayed SSID Number Assignments

Scholarship funds cannot be paid out on a child's award until the child's ELSA record has been assigned an SSID number. This is a point of validation. Without timely assignment of SSID numbers, payments may be delayed, causing possible hardship for the scholarship recipient family and/or the early childhood program serving the awarded child. Additionally, extended delays in SSID number assignment in ELSA may result in late identification of duplicate records and invalid awards.

See also: [Duplicate Child Records: Prevention, Problems, Actions](#)

## Child Record Returns – Returned SSID List

In the event that a child record pending SSID number assignment in ELSA is reviewed by an SSID Maintainer and found to have errors or questionable entry elements in one or more of the child information fields (name, gender, birthdate), the SSID Maintainer may use the "Return to Admin" function to send the record back to the administrator of the scholarship record without an assigned SSID number. The SSID Maintainer is required to enter a return note for the administrator; the note should explain the reason for the record return.

Once a child record has been returned using Return to Admin, a gold return notification banner is displayed at the top of the scholarship administrator's Award List upon login. Following the error message link opens the Returned SSID List report page. On this page, the SA/AA is provided with the following details for each returned child record:

Child	Gender	Birth Date	RSD <i>Resident School District</i>	
Maintainer Name	Maintainer Phone	Maintainer Email	Maintainer Notes	Return Date

Possible reasons for a return include a mismatch of the name, birthdate, or gender against the child's existing Student ID Validation System record or other detected data issue. After return, child information requires review and necessary corrections by the administrator of the child's scholarship. Or, in the case of a duplicate child

record, the record may require removal. If removal is required after the details of the child's award have been saved (award not in *Incomplete* or blank status), reach out to [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us).

SSID Maintainers have access to view summary child and scholarship information in ELSA. Although address and other details are included in that summary, review or validation of address information is not a responsibility of the SSID Maintainer and perceived address discrepancies is not a valid reason to delay SSID number assignment. Additionally, no family or child documentation outside of ELSA is required, and requests for copies or originals of documentation from scholarship administrators should not be made by SSID Maintainers. As applicable, any regular enrollment and reporting activities for school district programs also implementing Pathway II scholarships should be separated from SSID assignment activities in ELSA. Contact [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us) if address issues or documentation requirements are cited as the reason for the return of a scholarship recipient child's record.

### ***Action Required on Returned Child Records***

Records in *Returned* SSID status require action on the part of the scholarship administrator. On the Returned SSID List, the SA/AA is able to either "Edit" the child information or "Reset" the SSID status of the record. Before taking either action, it may be necessary to communicate with the SSID Maintainer, parent/guardian of the child, or internal colleagues to determine which elements should be edited in the record, if any. "Reset" should be used when no edits are required.

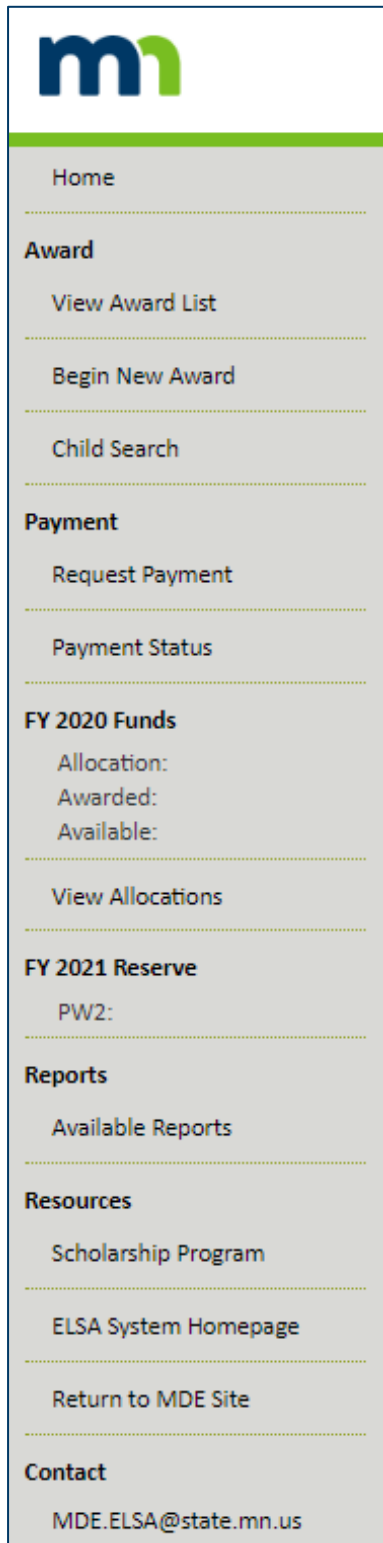
Records are put back into *Pending* SSID status and made available to the SSID Maintainer again after the SA/AA either (a) edits and re-saves identifying child information or (b) resets the record without changes. The record continues to be included on the SSID Maintainer's Child SSID Validation List page until either (a) the SSID number has been successfully assigned to the child record, or (b) the Return to Admin function is utilized again.

Refer to [Act on a Returned Child Record](#) in the [Quick Reference Steps for Scholarship/Area Administrators in ELSA](#) section of this manual.

## ELSA Navigation Menu

The navigation menu in ELSA is positioned on the left side of the browser window. Links to various system pages, summary displays, and contact information are provided. Page links vary by access role.

### Scholarship/Area Administrator View



Navigation link descriptions:

#### Home

Directs to the Award List page within the system.

#### View Award List

Directs to the Award List page within the system. Users have access to child award records created by the user's authorizing organization from this page.

#### Begin New Award

Directs to the New Award–Child Search page within the system. Users are able to create a new child record, or select a child record, then add a new award.

#### Child Search

Directs to the Child Search page within the system. Search function results in access from this page to all child award records in ELSA.

#### Request Payment

Directs to the Request Payment page within the system. Payment request function results in access to child award summaries, current child payment requests, and full payment history after service period and program site selection.

#### Payment Status

Directs to Payments page within the system. Payment List provides access to existing child payments and payment history grouped by payment request.

#### View Allocations

Directs to Allocations page within the system. Users have access to Awards by Allocation Detail page and linked child awards.

#### Available Reports

Directs to Reports page within the system. Users have access to all system data associated to the user's authorizing organization through the linked external user (non-MDE staff) reports.

#### Scholarship Program

Directs to the public Early Learning Scholarships program homepage of the MDE website.

#### ELSA System Homepage

Directs to the public Early Learning Scholarship Administration System (ELSA) homepage of the MDE website.

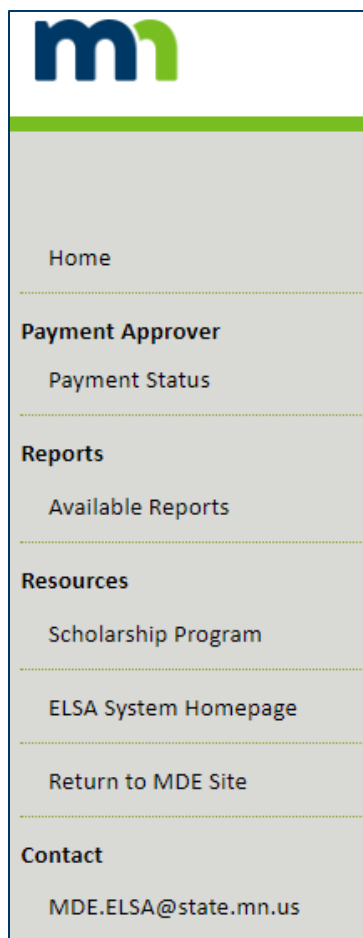
#### Return to MDE Site

Directs to the main page of the public Minnesota Department of Education website.

#### MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us

Initiates an email addressed to the ELSA support address.

## Payment Approver View



Navigation link descriptions:

### Home

Directs to Payments page within the system.

### Payment Status

Directs to Payments page within the system. Payment List provides access to existing child payments and payment history grouped by payment request.

### Available Reports

Directs to Reports page within the system. Users have access to all system data associated to the user's authorizing organization through the linked external user (non-MDE staff) reports.

### Scholarship Program

Directs to the public Early Learning Scholarships program homepage of the MDE website.

### ELSA System Homepage

Directs to the public Early Learning Scholarship Administration System (ELSA) homepage of the MDE website.

### Return to MDE Site

Directs to the main page of the public Minnesota Department of Education website.

### MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us

Initiates an email addressed to the ELSA support address.

## Menu Additions: Combined Roles and Multiple Organizations

In the event that a user has either of the allowable role combinations of Payment Approver/SSID Maintainer or Scholarship Administrator/SSID Maintainer, the left navigation menu will have an added "Validate SSIDs" link below the "Home" link. This link opens the Child SSID Validation List page, allowing for work between ELSA and the Student ID Validation System.

If a user has access to ELSA under the authorization of more than one administrator organization, the left navigation menu will have an added "Change Your Active Org" link available. This link opens the Set Active Organization page, where the user can update their organization view. Only one organization can be active at a time; the default organization is defined by alphabetical order.

## MDE Notices in ELSA

MDE Internal users are able to create and manage banner notices within ELSA. Notices display on a system user's ELSA homepage upon login. For SA/AA users, the homepage is the Award List. For Payment Approver users, the homepage is the Payments page. For users with the SSID Maintainer role and no other ELSA role, the homepage is the Child SSID Validation List.



## Funding in ELSA – Fiscal Year Allocations

MDE allocates Early Learning Scholarships Program funds to Area Administrator organizations and Pathway II-funded programs on a state fiscal year basis. Several funding types are possible: Pathway I, Pathway II, Admin. Any scholarship funds allocated to an organization are reflected in ELSA, those allocations serving as a limitation on the awarding of scholarship funds to children within the system. The organization receiving payments of allocated funds and working within ELSA to manage child records and awards is referred to as the “administrator organization”; “Admin” and “Admin Org” are used throughout the system.

The fiscal year for the State of Minnesota runs July 1 through June 30. The work of verifying eligibility requires a complete scholarship application and must occur in the same state fiscal year as a scholarship is awarded. ELSA uses the Award Verification Date field entry to limit possible Award Start Date (Award Date) entries to the appropriate funding fiscal year. The start of a child’s first award in a fiscal year marks the beginning of their 12-month scholarship year. Should a child age out of scholarship eligibility before the end of that 12-month period, their scholarship year is abbreviated.

In some situations, an award may be cancelled before the end of a child’s scholarship year. Should that occur, an administrator with funds available in the same fiscal year as the scholarship may take the opportunity to “pick up” the child and continue their scholarship year by making a new award. Services provided while a child does not have an active award are not eligible for scholarship payment even if they occur during a scholarship year. Additionally, awards cannot conflict with prior scholarship history.

Children may receive multiple awards over the course of a scholarship year, provided active dates do not overlap. Any additional awards made within that scholarship year carry over the initial Award Verification Date and Award Start Date that were assigned.

As long as the funding fiscal year remains open in ELSA, administrators (AAs/SAs) may increase or decrease the amount of existing awards in that year as needed and as funding allows. Each fiscal year remains open for approximately 24.5 months from its start; MDE announces the close of a fiscal year in advance to all administrators each year.

Any remaining funds will cancel if they have not been expended through a payment request by the close of the certified year, which is the year immediately following fiscal year of the funding. June 30 of the certified year marks the last day of service delivery possibly eligible for payment. The deadline for final payment requests is announced by MDE in advance of the close of a fiscal year; it is aligned with Official Grant Award Notification (OGAN) financial reporting requirements and State of Minnesota fiscal transaction deadlines.

Once MDE has closed a fiscal year after the end of the yearlong certified funding period, ELSA will no longer allow scholarship payment requests for funds in the closed fiscal year to be finalized for payment processing and award records record packages can no longer be edited. Additionally, any *Incomplete* status awards or *Open* status payment requests associated with the closing fiscal year are deleted at the time of close. The close date of the fiscal year varies, but it is typically scheduled for mid to late July. For instance, MDE closed FY 2019 in ELSA as of July 21, 2020.

*Refer to the “Awarding Scholarships” and “Delivering Services and Invoicing” sections of the [State Early Learning Scholarships Policy Manual](#) for more information.*



*Note: Prior to FY 2018, Pathway I funds were associated to a “region” and “Regional Administrator” organization. Now funds are tied to an “area” and “Area Administrator” organization.*

## Managing Scholarship Funds

Scholarship/Area Administrators may only award funds that are available in the funding fiscal year of a given award. Available funds are those that have not been awarded, up to the full allocation amount by funding type (Pathway I or Pathway II). The “Available” amount in the current fiscal year, as determined by system date, is displayed for Scholarship/Area Administrators in the left navigation menu alongside the allocation and total awarded amount for the year. Detailed breakdowns of funding allocations by fiscal year, including lists of awards associated with each funding year, can be accessed by following the “View Allocations” link in the navigation menu. See the [Allocations Page](#) section below for more details.

### ***Funding Fiscal Year vs Scholarship Year***

The funding fiscal year of an award is first determined by the Award Verification Date entered when a child’s initial scholarship award is being set up in ELSA. The Award Start Date (Award Date) assigned must fall within the same fiscal year as the Award Verification Date. For instance, if the Award Verification Date entered is any date July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021, the funding fiscal year for that scholarship award is FY 2021. In that case, the Award Start Date assigned must also fall within FY 2021.

*Refer to the [Scholarship Award Page – Award Verification Date](#) section for information on Award Start Date limitations tied to the Award Verification Date.*

The Award Start Date assigned on the child’s first award in a 12-month period begins that child’s *scholarship year*, which spans either 12 months or the child’s remaining period of age-eligibility, whichever is shorter. Eligible program services delivered within the child’s scholarship year are funded out of the fiscal year of the award. Yearly total award limits are also applied based on the scholarship year.

A scholarship year distinction allows for system enforcement of the statutory restriction of one scholarship per child per year while still allowing for the possibility of multiple, non-overlapping awards within a year. The impact is that eligible service dates in a child’s scholarship year overlap the following fiscal year calendar, known as the *certified year*, to some extent.

Many scenarios are possible, given a child may be awarded a scholarship at any point during the funding fiscal year and then be served under that scholarship for up to 12 months from its start. See below for two examples.

### **Awarding Scenario 1: Pathway II, Program-aligned award**

A child is first awarded a \$7500 Pathway II scholarship on August 30, 2020 [Award Start Date = 08/30/2020]. The award date is within state fiscal year 2021 (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021), associating this scholarship to the Pathway II program’s FY 2021 funding allocation. The child’s scholarship year runs August 30, 2020 through August 29, 2021. The program follows a school year calendar that runs September 2020 through May 2021. In this case, the award is alignment with the program year since all services are anticipated to be delivered are within the dates of the child’s scholarship year.

The child begins attending the program on the first day of the program’s school year, September 4, 2020 [Attendance Start Date = 09/04/2020]. The child attends the Pathway II program through until the end of the

2020-2021 school year in May 2021. Scholarship payments for eligible early childhood program services are requested by the Scholarship Administrator of the Pathway II program on a monthly basis all school year.

At the end of the school year, the family indicates the child will return to the program the following year, starting September 2021. Before the start of the new school year, the child's family submits a completed *Renewal Form* to an administrator in the Pathway II program.

The Scholarship Administrator checks the "Check if Renewal Form is complete" box on the child's Scholarship Award page in ELSA. On the morning of the child's Renewal Date, the system automatically creates a new FY 2022-funded scholarship award for the child with an Award Start Date of August 30, 2021.

### **Awarding Scenario 2: Pathway I or II, Cancelled then "picked up" with new award in same scholarship year**

A child is first awarded a \$7500 Pathway II scholarship on October 20, 2019 [Award Start Date = 10/20/2019]. The award date is within state fiscal year 2020 (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020), associating this scholarship to the Pathway II program's FY 2020 funding allocation. The child's scholarship year runs October 20, 2019 through October 19, 2020.

The awarded child completes the program year at the Pathway II-funded program that made the initial scholarship award, but the family is moving to another area and the child will not continue attendance. The Scholarship Administrator cancels the child's award with an Award End Date of 04/15/2020 (the child's final attendance date) and lowers the Award Amount to the amount expended on the award: \$6000.

The family applies for a Pathway I scholarship award with an Area Administrator in June 2020. The family plans for the child to begin attending a scholarships-eligible program in August 2020. This time is still within the child's FY 2020 scholarship year (October 20, 2019 - October 20, 2020), so this is considered a pick-up scenario.

Before awarding the child, the Area Administrator must determine if (1) they have sufficient funds available in FY 2020, and (2) the child is still eligible to receive additional funds in their scholarship year. A child may receive only up to the maximum of \$7500 per scholarship year, and the Award Amount is limited by the child's initial Pathway II award amount of \$6000. This leaves up to \$1500 for an Award Amount entry on the new award.

The Area Administrator has sufficient FY 2020 funds available and so adds a new FY 2020 Pathway I award of \$1500 to this child's existing ELSA record. In ELSA, the new award carries over the original Award Start Date of 10/20/2019, but the AA enters the new Attendance Start Date of 08/01/2020. Services provided to the child from August through October 19, 2020 (the final day of the child's scholarship year), are paid out of the child's FY 2020 Pathway I award.

The family completes a *Renewal Form* and submits it to the Area Administrator. The AA checks the renewal box in ELSA. As of the child's scholarship year Renewal Date, October 20, 2020, the child begins their new FY 2021-funded scholarship year with an Award Date of 10/20/2020.

*Note: The scholarship maximum (cap) may be adjusted by the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Education. For the most recent policy guidance, please visit the [Early Learning Scholarships webpage](#).*

## FY Reserve

Displayed in **Navigation Menu**

The “FY Reserve” amount displayed in the left navigation menu is the calculated amount of funds anticipated to be needed in the next fiscal year to cover renewing scholarships. The calculation includes active (Award Status = *Awarded*), current fiscal year scholarship awards at the assigned Renewal Amount. As current fiscal year scholarships are cancelled or Award Amount entries adjusted, the FY Reserve for the next fiscal year is recalculated to reflect those changes.

*Note: The FY Reserve uses the prorated “Renewal Amount” of current awards in the calculation. Only scholarships eligible for renewal have an assigned Renewal Amount. See the [Scholarship Renewal](#) section for full details.*

**The FY Reserve amount is intended to be used for planning purposes only.** The amount calculated as the FY Reserve is not necessarily equal to the amount of funds that will be needed to cover award renewals, nor does a displayed FY Reserve amount guarantee that the organization will be funded next fiscal year.

## Allocations Page

Navigation Menu >> **View Allocations**

The Allocations page provides an overview of funding allocations by fiscal year and by type: *Pathway I, Pathway II, Admin* (if applicable). Pathway II funds are further broken down by program name. The default view is of the current fiscal year’s funds; submitting another Fiscal Year selection from the drop-down menu will change the view. Each fiscal year view provides the following columns for each funding type or program row:

- **Allocation:** The full amount of Early Learning Scholarship funds awarded in the selected fiscal year.
- **Awarded:** The total of all Award Amount entries on awards associated with the selected fiscal year.
- **Reserved for Renewal:** The calculated amount of funds required to renew eligible awards from the prior fiscal year into the selected fiscal year.
  - The “Reserved for Renewal” amount is a reference calculation; it does not apply limits to awarding in the selected fiscal year. The calculation is the total of all Renewal Amounts on awards in the prior fiscal year. The Renewal Amount is pro-rated based on award conditions. See the [Scholarship Renewal](#) section for details.
- **Un-Obligated:** This is a reference calculation that is intended to help administrators have a better sense of the true availability of funds after meeting renewal obligations. Associated formulas are displayed on the Allocations page and copied here:
  - Obligated = Awarded + Reserved For Renewal
  - Un-Obligated = Allocation - Obligated
- **Expended:** The total amount that has been requested for payment in the selected funding year.
  - This amount includes child payments in payment requests of any status: *Open, In Progress, Held, Complete*.

## Awards by Allocation Detail Page

Navigation Menu >> View Allocations >> **“Pathway I Allocation”**

Navigation Menu >> View Allocations >> **“[Program]”** Select the name of a Pathway 2 program

This sub-page of Allocations provides a list of every child award associated to the selected fiscal year, providing sortable columns to assist in funds management by award:

- |                |                   |                  |                 |
|----------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| • Child        | • Award Date      | • Award Amount   | • Expended      |
| • Award Status | • Ineligible Date | • Last Paid Date | • Award Balance |

*Note: “Last Paid Date” is the end date of the service period of the most recent payment request to the current date; it does not indicate the most recent date of administrator action or the most recently paid payment request.*

### Awards by Allocation Detail Page: Usage Notes

- Each child name links directly to the Child Award page of the award represented on that line to allow for convenient editing of award information.
- If a child has more than one award in the selected fiscal year, each award is listed separately on this page.
- The “Last Paid Date” is the final day of the most recent payment request service period to include a payment for that child.

*Note: Most recent payment request in this context refers to nearest service period on the calendar with payment history and not the payment request an administrator took action on most recently.*

- This page serves as a tool for periodic review to ensure:
  - Inactive awards are not holding unexpended funds. *Look for:*
    - Award Status = Cancelled; Award Balance >\$0
    - Ineligible date has passed; Last Paid Date indicates final payment made; Award Balance > \$0
  - Child payments are not being missed. *Look for:*
    - Award Status = Awarded; Last Paid Date is unexpectedly blank or many service periods behind
    - Award Status = Awarded; Expended = \$0

*Note: If directly requesting funds in a Pathway II-funded public program, review child attendance and enrollment status to ensure the child is still attending prior to moving forward with adding any child award payments to catch up to other payment requests. Cancel the award if the child has left the program. Refer to the [Cancelling an Award](#) section as helpful.*

## ELSA Administration of Scholarships

A complete scholarship award record that includes the details of a child's award must be saved in ELSA prior to notifying a family that their child is receiving an award. This is the primary point of award validation. In most cases, entering the award information in line with guidance will provide verification that (a) the child to be awarded does not already have an active scholarship under another administrator, and (b) funds are available to make the award.

A complete scholarship award record package in ELSA includes: child and parent/guardian information from the award application submitted by the family, an income verification selection, a Consent to Release selection, administrator attestation and Award Verification Date entries, and saved award details. See the [Begin New Award](#) section of this manual for specifics.

For ease of reference while working within the system, this manual contains a section for most system pages available to an Area/Scholarship Administrator. At least one navigation path to the page is noted at the start of each dedicated page section. Refer to the table of contents for page number listings by section.

Step-by-step instructions for common SA/AA actions within ELSA, such as creating a new award or entering a payment request, are provided in the [Quick Reference Steps for Scholarship/Area Administrators](#) section of this manual.

*Note: Please refer to the [State Early Learning Scholarships Policy Manual](#) for full policy guidance related to the administration of scholarships. The [Pathway II Program Resources for Awardees](#) page of the MDE website provides additional guidance and resources specific to Pathway II-funded programs. For Pathway II administration questions, contact [MDE.PathwayII@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.PathwayII@state.mn.us).*

## Award List Page

*Navigation Menu >> **View Award List***

*Navigation Menu >> **Home***

The entry page view for ELSA administrators is the Award List. All child scholarship records that an organization has entered into ELSA in open fiscal years can be viewed in the Award List.

## Award List Export

The "Export" feature available on the Award List produces a CSV format file that can be viewed in Excel or other compatible software. The records included in the file are those seen in the Award List view at the time of the export; filters that have been applied impact the export. The export file includes all of the same elements displayed as columns on the Award List plus additional columns that correspond to the filters available.

### Details included in the export file:

- Child (last, first, middle)
- SSID (0 if not assigned)
- Verifier Initials
- Parent (last, first)
- PW Type
- Award Status

- Award Amount
- Allocation Year (fiscal year)
- Award Date
- Renewal Date
- Program (active)
- Site (active)
- Renewal Form Complete (Yes/No)
- Income Verification
- EC Screening Complete (Yes/No)
- Assigned Group
- Local Code
- Parent Under 21
- Homeless
- Foster Care
- Protective Services

## Award List: Usage Notes

- Default view of the Award List displays only active child awards [Award Status = *Awarded*, *Incomplete*, or blank; child currently age-eligible].
  - In order to view children with *Cancelled* status awards or those who are no longer eligible for a scholarship based on current age (i.e., Aged Out), the “Award Status” filter must be used.
- Default sort order of the Award List is by child last name.
  - To re-sort by the contents of another column, click on the column heading.
  - The selected sort order remains active until either “Reset” in the filter area or “Home,” “View Award List,” or “Begin a New Award” in the left navigation menu are used.
- The legend above the Award List records provides details about the information displayed. Hover over a column label in the legend to see an explanation of the data in the corresponding column.
- To use the filter fields, make your selection(s) and then choose the “Apply Filter.” Filters provided on the Award List:

Last Name	First Name	<i>Apply name filter to</i>
Award Status	Pathway Type	Renewal Form complete
Income Verification		Early Childhood Screening complete
Assigned Group	Local Code	Parent/Guardian under 21
Homeless	Foster Care	Protective Services

*Note: Filtering for “Parent/Guardian under 21” was previously based on the Birth Date entry in an associated Parent/Guardian record. This filter now references the “Parent Under 21” flag/check box in the Child Priority Population Indicators section of the Child page.*

- The **Award Status** filter provides helpful options based on award activity rather than being limited to individually named statuses (e.g., *Awarded*, *Cancelled*). Award Status filter options:

- *All Active* meets both of these criteria:
  - Award Status = *Awarded*, *Incomplete*, blank
  - Current date is prior to child's Ineligible Date (i.e., child not Aged Out)
- Cancelled: Award Status = *Cancelled*
- Aged Out: Current date is on or after child's Ineligible Date
- *Renew within 30/60/90 days*: Renewal Date falls within the selected future period
- *Renewed in past 30 days*: Renewal Date fell within the 30 days prior to the current date
- *Renewals held due to errors*: All awards in the renewal batch held due to errors, not only the award(s) that caused the error(s)
- The Award Status displayed on the Award List links directly to the Child Award page for most records.
  - If the award represented is missing core elements (such consent selection or attestation entries) and the status is blank or *Incomplete*, this link is not available.
- **Pgm** (program) column displays either "Y" (yes) or "N" (no) on each child record line to indicate whether or not a program selection is active for the award. If Y is shown, hovering over the Y will display the name of the current program site selected for that award.
- **Assigned Group** and **Local Code** are optional fields. These fields were added to provide administrators with a way to tag children entered into ELSA so that they may be more easily identified with an organizational group or a particular case manager or other staff member.

*Note: Local Code can be entered on the Child page and is included as a column on the Award Management Report. Assigned Group can be entered on the Scholarship Award page and is available as a filter field on the Award List.*

- In order to search for child records across the whole ELSA system, not just those children on the active organization's Award List, use the Child Search function. A link to the Child Search is located in the left navigation menu. – See the [Child Search Function](#) section provided in this manual.
- A search or filtering of the Award List displays child records based on each child's most recent award under the SA/AA user's authorizing Admin Org that meets the conditions applied.

*Note: The Child Search results display details based on the child's most recent award under any organization.*

## Award Status

- **Awarded**: The Child Award page has been saved with all required information (i.e., the Award Start Date and Award Amount have been saved on the Child Award page); if Pathway II, a program selection is required.
- **Incomplete/blank**: Complete award information has not been added to the child record; the initial program selection for the award, Parent/Guardian entries, and/or portions of the Attestations section on Scholarship Award page may be missing.
- **Cancelled**: The award was active at one time, but is now inactive. It has either been ended by the administrator or was system-cancelled due to non-renewal within the allowable time frame.



## SSID Status in ELSA

- **Pending:** The child record is available to SSID Maintainers within ELSA and awaiting their action. The record is included under the child's resident school district on the Child SSID Validation List where SSID Maintainer actions are available.
  - Child records move into *Pending* SSID status after the first successful save of the Child page.
  - In this status, all identifying information fields on the Child page (name, gender, birthdate) are still available to be edited by the SA/AA.
  - Child records in *Pending* SSID status are included in the overnight automated SSID number assignment processing event. See the [Automated SSID Number Assignment](#) section for more information.
- **Returned:** An SSID Maintainer reviewed the child information and returned the record to the administrator of the scholarship without assigning an SSID number to the child's ELSA record.
  - Records in *Returned* status are only available to the SA/AA; the SSID Maintainer is not able to view or take action on the record while it is in this status.
  - See the [Child Record Returns – Returned SSID List](#) section for additional guidance.
- **SSID Number on display:** Once an SSID number has been validated and assigned to a child's ELSA record, the full number is visible in the SSID column on the Award List and Child Search pages.
  - The SSID number must be assigned and displayed in ELSA in order for the child's award to be eligible for scholarship payments.

## Alert Message Links on the Award List

Upon Scholarship/Area Administrator login, an alert message link may display on the Award List. Currently, only two alert message are possible, each of which links to a special report page. The message referencing child record returns from an SSID Maintainer links to the Returned SSID List page. The message referencing an award renewal error links to the Renewal Error List page. Each of these pages has a devoted section in this manual:

[Child Record Returns – Returned SSID List](#)

[Renewal Errors – Renewal Error List](#)

## Child Scholarship History Page

*Navigation Menu >> View Award List >> Award List: “**View**”*

*Navigation Menu >> Child Search >> Child Search Results: “**Summary**”*

Every award attached to a given child record is visible on the Child Scholarship History page, no matter the current status or funding fiscal year of the award.



## Child Scholarship History – Actions

A “View” action to display summary award details is available for all award records listed on the Child Scholarship History page. Other possible actions from this page include “Edit”, “Reactivate” and “Cancel”. The actions available are dependent upon the relationship of the administrator to the award as well as current record conditions.

### **Reactivate**

On the Child Scholarship History page, a “Reactivate” action button is available on the line of the most recent award in a child’s scholarship history when that award is (1) in *Cancelled* status and (2) being viewed by an Area/Scholarship Administrator with access authorized under the administrator organization that created that award. When used, “Reactivate” removes the Award End Date and moves the status of the award from *Cancelled* to *Awarded*, effectively undoing a cancellation.

*Note: Reactivating an award does not extend the allowable renewal period after the end of a child’s scholarship year. See the [Scholarship Renewal](#) section for all relevant renewal details.*

### **Cancel (aka “Fully Cancel”)**

*Note: The “Cancel” action on the Child Scholarship History page is intended for use only at MDE instruction as part of working through a problem case.*

Taking the “Cancel” action on the Child Scholarship History page moves the award status to *Cancelled*. This action is only available for awards that were renewed by the system’s automated renewal process, after the award created by the renewal process has been removed by an MDE Internal administrator. If an award created through the automated renewal process is removed by an MDE Internal administrator, an additional award cannot be added to the child’s record unless the award that was renewed is in *Cancelled* status. Since a renewed award retains the *Awarded* status even after it has been used to create a new scholarship award in the next fiscal year (the renewal), this additional action to change the award status was needed to “fully cancel” awards in such conditions.

## Scholarship Award Page

*Navigation Menu >> View Award List >> Award List: “Edit”*

*Navigation Menu >> Child Search >> Child Search Results: “Summary” >> Scholarship History: “Edit”*

This page is the first level of a child’s scholarship award record package. Limited data is entered on this page, which has been laid out in rough sections related to the child, parent/guardian, scholarship award, and attestations. Other pieces of the record may be added or updated by following links from this page. Each Scholarship Award sub-page is represented separately in this portion of the manual: Child, Note, Parent/Guardian, Child Award.

The Scholarship Award page is available once the initial child record has been created through the “Begin New Award” process. This page is accessible only to users working under the administrator organization of the award while the funding fiscal year of the award remains open in ELSA.

If a scholarship award record package for a child has been started but not completed, i.e. the award is in *Incomplete* status, an option to “Delete” the records is available at the bottom of the Scholarship Award page.

## Scholarship Award Page – Data Entry Fields

Scholarship Data Field	Type/Format	Logic/Use
<b>Early Childhood Screening complete</b>	Check box	Editable at any time; Check this box if the scholarship application or renewal form indicates the child has had an Early Childhood Screening. If the child has an Early Childhood Screening at a later point while continuing to receive a scholarship, update the record by checking this box and saving the change.
<b>Renewal Form complete</b>	Check box	Editable at any time; Return to the record and check this box after receiving a completed <i>Renewal Form</i> ; save the change. Once this renewal box is checked, the award is included in automated renewal processing overnight on the award Renewal Date and for the 30-day grace period after that date, provided the is in <i>Awarded</i> status.
<b>Consent to Release Information and to Participate in an Evaluation*</b>	Radio buttons: “Yes” and “No”	Editable at any time; Corresponds with the <i>Optional Consent</i> section on the scholarship application and renewal form. If an applicant has written/entered their initials next to the optional consent statement, select “Yes” here when making the entry in ELSA. Consent for this optional release of child scholarship information can be revoked by the applicant at any time, either verbally or in writing and must be updated in ELSA to reflect the most current consent selection as soon as possible after any change.
<b>Award Verification Date*</b>	Date field; MM/DD/YYYY	Editable up to the point that an Award Start Date has been saved for the award; Must be date within the past 90 days, inclusive of the current date; See <a href="#">Scholarship Award Page – Award Verification Date</a> section

Scholarship Data Field	Type/Format	Logic/Use
Preparer's Initials*	Alphanumeric field; Limited character entry (3)	Not editable after initial save
Assigned Group	Alphanumeric field; Limited character entry (5), inclusive of all standard special characters	Editable at any time

*\*Required field*

*Note: Child Ethnicity and Child Race were moved from the Scholarship Award page to the Child page in June 2020.*

## Scholarship Award Page – Award Verification Date

The Award Verification date must be the date the SA/AA, or locally designated staff member, conducted the final verification of the child's scholarship application and eligibility documentation before moving forward with awarding the child in ELSA. The work of final verification for a new award must take place in the same fiscal year as the fiscal year of the scholarship.

The Award Verification Date field was introduced in an ELSA update released on May 31, 2019. All scholarship records saved prior to that release have a blank Award Verification Date entry.

The Award Verification Date is also included in the display of scholarship summary information available on the Child Scholarship History page.

### **Award Verification Date: Usage Notes**

- Determines the funding fiscal year of a scholarship award.
  - Any date from July 1 through June 30 of a given state fiscal year ties the scholarship to that fiscal year.
  - The Award Start Date must be a date within the same state fiscal year as the Award Verification Date of the scholarship.
  - *Example:* A new scholarship has an Award Verification Date of July 15, 2019. This date falls within state fiscal year (FY) 2020. Any award added to this new scholarship will be a FY 2020-funded award.
- Must be a date within the past 90 days, inclusive of the current date.
  - Cannot be a future date.
  - Any SA/AA wishing to award a child more than 90 days out from the date of final verification should contact MDE for case consideration: [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us).

- Must be earlier or the same day as the Award Start Date.
  - The Award Start Date entry on the Child Award page is restricted by the Award Verification Date entered for the scholarship.
  - Final verification may be completed the same day the SA/AA awards the scholarship in ELSA; this is allowable and supported by ELSA.
- Award Verification Date entry is editable until an Award Start Date entry has been saved on the Child Award page.

## Child Page

*Navigation Menu >> View Award List >> Award List: “Edit” >> Child: “Update Child”*

*Navigation Menu >> Begin New Award >> New Award-Child Search: “Create Child Record”*

This is the first page an administrator is prompted to complete when creating a new scholarship award record. This page can be revisited to update child information.

### Child Page – Data Entry Fields

The Child page is divided into several sections: Child Data, Home Address, Income Verification (initial view only), Child Priority Population Indicators, Child Ethnicity, Child Race. Fields that require an entry in all cases are marked with a leading asterisk (\*); policy guidance requires entry of all details provided in the scholarship application and updates provided by the family thereafter.

### Child Data

Child Data Field	Type/Format	Logic/Use
<b>Last Name*</b>	Text field; Limited Latin character entry (24), inclusive of apostrophes and hyphens	Editable during initial record creation and while SSID status is <i>Pending</i> or <i>Returned</i> (i.e., SSID number not assigned)
<b>First Name*</b>	Text field; Limited Latin character entry (24), inclusive of apostrophes and hyphens	Editable during initial record creation and while SSID status is <i>Pending</i> or <i>Returned</i> (i.e., SSID number not assigned)
<b>Middle/M.I.</b>	Text field; Limited Latin character entry (24), inclusive of apostrophes and hyphens	Editable during initial record creation and while SSID status is <i>Pending</i> or <i>Returned</i> (i.e., SSID number not assigned)
<b>Gender*</b>	Radio buttons: “M” (male) and “F” (female)	Editable during initial record creation and while SSID status is <i>Pending</i> or <i>Returned</i> (i.e., SSID number not assigned); Response options aligned to scholarship application

Child Data Field	Type/Format	Logic/Use
<b>Birth Date*</b>	Date field; MM/DD/YYYY	Cannot be a day in the future; Age calculation based on this date must pass check of age eligibility
<b>Name Suffix</b>	Text field; Limited Latin character entry (20), inclusive of apostrophes and hyphens	Editable during initial record creation and while SSID status is <i>Pending</i> or <i>Returned</i> (i.e., SSID number not assigned)
<b>CCAP ID</b>	Numeric field; 8-digit numeric identification code	Editable at any time; Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) identifier shared by members of a participating family that may be sourced from documentation of CCAP program participation.
<b>Local Code</b>	Alphanumeric field; Limited Latin character entry (40), inclusive of special characters	Intended as alternate child identifier, no prescribed use

*\*Required field*

## Home Address

Home Address Field	Type/Format	Logic/Use
<b>Street Address*</b>	Alphanumeric field; Limited Latin character entry (24), inclusive of special characters	Editable at any time
<b>Apt/Unit</b>	Alphanumeric field; Limited Latin character entry (24), inclusive of special characters	Editable at any time
<b>City*</b>	Text field; Limited Latin character entry (24), inclusive of special characters	Editable at any time
<b>Postal Code*</b>	Numeric field; Limited to 5 digits	The United States Postal Service-assigned ZIP Code™ for the area of the combined address in this section
<b>County*</b>	Drop-down selection menu; Pre-populated list of all Minnesota counties	The county location based on the combined home address

Home Address Field	Type/Format	Logic/Use
<b>Resident School District*</b>	Drop-down selection menu; Pre-populated list of active Minnesota school districts sourced from <a href="#">MDE-Org</a>	The residential school district based on the child's combined home address; See the <a href="#">Child Page: Usage Notes</a> section for special instructions related to children in foster care.

\*Required field

## Other Child Data Collection Items

Collection Item	Type/Format	Logic/Use
<b>Income Verification</b>	Alphanumeric field; Limited Latin character entry (24), inclusive of special characters	Response options aligned to scholarship application.
<b>Child Priority Population Indicators</b>	Multi-select check boxes; Limited Latin character entry (24), inclusive of special characters	Once a child has been indicated as part of a priority population, the indicator box in ELSA should remain checked going forward.
<b>Child Ethnicity</b>	Single check box	"Hispanic Indicator" only; Check if "Hispanic/Latino" was marked on the scholarship application.
<b>Child Race</b>	Multi-select check boxes	Options provided based on <a href="#">federal Department of Education reporting requirements</a>

*Note: The Child Ethnicity and Child Race headings and selections were moved to the Child page from the Scholarship Award page in June 2020*

## Child Page: Usage Notes

- Enter full child information as provided on the scholarship application.
  - Do not omit information for expediency. If the application information provided is incomplete or questionable, address this with the applicant prior to creating a child record in ELSA.
  - Do not enter placeholder data in any field.
    - If a piece of required information is not known, connect with the applicant to update the application information before proceeding in ELSA.
    - If the child's middle name or initial has not been provided, leave the middle name field empty.
- Identifying child information fields in the Child Data section are locked for editing once an SSID number assignment has been made to the child record.

- The **Income Verification** selection is available on the Child page when initially creating the child record and during the period that an SSID number is not assigned to the child's ELSA record.
- The address entry fields are tied to an auto-complete feature that checks real address listings for a match as data is entered into the fields. If the web browser in use supports this feature, once enough of the address information has been entered to match with the correct full address displayed as a suggestion, clicking on the suggested address automatically fills in all fields of the Home Address section.
  - This feature is tied to a web-based third-party service. It is possible to have periods when this feature is unavailable while ELSA remains fully functional.
  - The links provided under the address entry fields can assist in filling the Resident School District field based on the address entered or identifying full address information using Minnesota's [Polling Place Finder](#) in the event the auto-complete feature service is unavailable.
  - Most web browsers have built-in form auto-fill features that may interfere with the view of the postal address options presented by the ELSA auto-complete feature. Turn this off in your browser settings as needed.
- If the child is receiving protective services, and this priority identification is being used as income qualification for the scholarship, choose "Foster Care" from the Income Verification selection menu during initial child record creation.
  - Determined in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS).
- If the child is in foster care or receiving child protective services, enter the address where the child is currently residing as the Home Address on the Child page, if available. Update the Resident School District selection based on the address of the home from which the child was removed.

*Note: Policy details are provided in the [Supplemental Guide for Priority Populations](#) posted on the [Early Learning Scholarships Program homepage](#) of the MDE website.*

- For families participating in the state's [Safe at Home program](#), the address on the scholarship application and entered in ELSA should be the safe address used for that program. If there is a scholarship participant not in Safe at Home that needs their address to be confidential, please contact [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us).
- The State displayed in the Child Address section is locked for Minnesota ("MN"); a child must have a home address in Minnesota to be eligible to receive a state early learning scholarship.

### ***Child Data – Personally Identifiable Information***

The personal information that is used to identify a child when validating ELSA records against the Student ID Validation System (SIVS) includes entries made in these fields:

- |             |              |               |
|-------------|--------------|---------------|
| • Last Name | • First Name | • Middle/M.I. |
| • Gender    | • Birth Date | • Name Suffix |

If a child record does not have an SSID number assigned to it [SSID status = *Pending* or *Returned*], SA/AA users can edit child information in the fields above via the Child page.

**If an SSID number has already been assigned to a child record, the administrator cannot make changes to the fields used for child identification without MDE action.** If a child's name, gender, or birth date must be updated

or corrected for any reason, the SA/AA must contact MDE ([MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us)) and request that the SSID status of the child record be unlocked.

Refer to the steps [Change Child Data Used for Identification](#) in the [Quick Reference Steps for Scholarship/Area Administrators in ELSA](#) section as needed.

*Note: A [list of MARSS Coordinator contacts](#) is available through [MDE-Org](#).*

## Parent/Guardian Page

*Navigation Menu >> View Award List >> Award List: "Edit" >> Child: "Update Guardian"*

This is the second required page an administrator is prompted to complete when creating a child's first scholarship award package record. This page can be revisited to update parent/guardian information at any time while the fiscal year of the child's most recent scholarship remains open in ELSA.

First Name and Last Name are the only required fields on the Parent/Guardian page enforced by the system. However, policy requires the administrator to enter all information provided on the scholarship application form and update information as needed based on any scholarship documentation collected at a later time, such as a *Renewal Form*.

Family demographics and other family information provided in response to questions asked on the scholarship application are also collected on this page.

### Parent/Guardian Information

Parent/Guardian Information Field	Type/Format	Logic/Use
<b>Last Name*</b>	Text field; Limited Latin character entry (24), inclusive of apostrophes and hyphens	Editable at any time
<b>First Name*</b>	Text field; Limited Latin character entry (24), inclusive of apostrophes and hyphens	Editable at any time
<b>Birth Date</b>	Date field; MM/DD/YYYY	Cannot be a day in the future; Policy requirement: If the Parent Under 21 indicator is flagged on the Child page, this field is required and a reminder note is displayed on the page.
<b>Primary Phone Number</b>	Phone number field; ###-###-####	Use of this field is at the discretion of administrators
<b>Secondary Phone Number</b>	Phone number field; ###-###-####	Use of this field is at the discretion of administrators

*\*Required field*



## Demographics and Family Information Collections

Field/ Collection Item	Type/Format	Logic/Use
<b>Language Spoken at Home</b>	Drop-down selection menu; List of options sourced from system configuration file	Response options aligned to scholarship application.
<b>Highest Level of Education</b>	Drop-down selection menu; List of options sourced from system configuration file	Response options aligned to scholarship application.
<b>Employment Status</b>	Drop-down selection menu; List of options sourced from system configuration file	Response options aligned to scholarship application.
<b>Interpreter Assistance</b>	Drop-down selection menu; List of options sourced from system configuration file	Response options aligned to scholarship application.
<b>Housing Insecurity</b>	Multi-select check boxes	Policy requirement: Homeless indicator must be checked on Child page when one or more of these selections is marked.; Response options aligned to scholarship application.
<b>Heard About EL Scholarships From</b>	Multi-select check boxes	Response options aligned to scholarship application.
<b>Public Program Participation</b>	Multi-select check boxes; List of public programs that can be used to demonstrate income eligibility for Early Learning Scholarships Program	Policy requirement: If the family uses Option 1 to demonstrate income eligibility, the program used to qualify must be indicated here as well as in the Income Verification selection. All other public programs that were marked on the application should also be checked.; Response options aligned to list of public programs that can be used to demonstrate income eligibility for Early Learning Scholarships Program as provided on the scholarship application

*\*Required field*

### Parent/Guardian Page: Usage Notes

- 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.

- Home Address fields are only available on this page after the “Different than child address” box is checked.
  - The address entry fields are tied to an auto-complete feature that checks real address listings for a match as data is entered into the fields. If the web browser in use supports this feature, once enough of the address information has been entered to match with the correct full address displayed as a suggestion, clicking on the suggested address automatically fills in all fields of the Home Address section.
- If the child is in foster care or child protective services, the foster care agency address should be entered as the Home Address on the Parent/Guardian page. Use the “Different than child address” selection if the child’s current address of residence was entered on the Child page.
- For families participating in the state’s [Safe at Home program](#), the address on the scholarship application and entered in ELSA should be the safe address used for that program. If there is a scholarship participant not in Safe at Home that needs their address to be confidential, please contact [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us).

## Child Award Page

*Navigation Menu >> View Award List >> Award List: “Edit” >> Scholarship Award: Scholarship Summary: “**Add Scholarship**” or “**Update Scholarship**” (conditional action)*

*Navigation Menu >> View Award List >> Award List: “[**Award Status**]”*

*Navigation Menu >> View Allocations >> “Pathway 1 Allocation” >> “[**Child**]”*

*Navigation Menu >> View Allocations >> Pathway 2 Allocations: “[Program]” >> “[**Child**]”*

The Scholarship Award page is considered the first level of a child scholarship record package, but the Child Award page collects and displays the core award elements: Award Date, Award Amount, etc. The Scholarship Summary section visible on the Scholarship Award page displays information entered and saved on the Child Award page. The details of an award can be managed only on the Child Award page, which is broken down into the following sections: Child, Award Information, Program Selection.

Saving the Child Award page with all of the required elements is what completes a scholarship award package and changes the Award Status to *Awarded* in the system. The required elements to complete an award differ between the pathway types. Pathway I awards need only to have all of the required field entries on the Child Award page save to be *Awarded*, as there is a 10-month period allowed for the family to choose an eligible program in which to use their child’s scholarship. However, Pathway II awards must have all of the required entries on the Child Award page and the Program Selection page to be fully *Awarded*, because Pathway II funds are tied to the program making the award.

The “Award End Date” field and “End Date Reason” selection menu are available only when returning to the Child Award page after an initial save of that page with all required entries. Saving the Child Award page with an Award End Date entry and End Date Reason selection changes the Award Status to *Cancelled*.

Refer to the [Cancelling an Award](#) section or [Cancel an Award](#) steps as needed.

### Child Award Page – Data Entry Fields

Award Information Field	Type/Format	Logic/Use
<b>Scholarship Type*</b>	Drop-down selection menu: Pathway I or Pathway II (conditional list)	Available at time of initial award creation; Options available based on funding of the administrator organization.
<b>Award Start Date*</b>	Date field; MM/DD/YYYY	Available at time of initial award creation in a 12-month period; Restricted by Award Verification Date; Policy requirement: May not be earlier than the Award Verification Date, <b>and</b> may not earlier than the date of parent/guardian signature on the scholarship application.
<b>Award Amount*</b>	Currency field; Five-digit entry of dollars, with or without additional decimal and two-digit cents entry; No symbols (omit dollar sign)	Available and editable at any time while the funding fiscal year remains open in ELSA.; Restricted by pathway type award limit in the funding fiscal year, available administrator funds, child scholarship year award total, total award expenditures.; Policy requirement: Assigned Award Amount must be aligned to awarding guidance.
<b>Award End Date</b>	Date field; MM/DD/YYYY	Available after initial creation of the award with all required elements, as long as the award is active and the funding fiscal year of the award remains open in ELSA; Restricted by active award dates, scholarship year, program selection attendance dates, award payment history.
<b>End Date Reason</b>	Drop-down selection menu; Pre-populated list of options aligned with allowable reasons for cancelling a scholarship award outlined in policy guidance.	Available after initial creation of the award with all required elements; Required if an Award End Date entry is present; Policy requirement: The reason for ending/cancelling the award must be allowable under policy. The “Other” option is intended for very limited use, most often as directed by MDE, and does not indicate an award may be cancelled for any reason.

\*Required field

### Child Award Page: Usage Notes

- The **Child** section displays summary information carried over from the Child page. Return to the Child page to edit this information.

➤ **Award Information**

○ **Scholarship Year**

- Cannot be edited by the administrator.
- This is the funding fiscal year the award is associated to based on the Award Verification Date and any initial Award Start Date (Award Date) in the previous 12 months.

○ **Year Award Total**

- Displayed on the Child Award page only after the save of a child's initial award in a fiscal year (i.e., only displayed when a scholarship is being updated).
- Cannot be edited by the administrator.
- Calculated total of award amounts in the child's scholarship history in the same funding fiscal year of the award represented in the current page view.
- This amount does not include amount of the award represented in the current page view.
- The sum of the Year Award Total and the Award Amount must be less than or equal to the allowable scholarship maximum (cap) that applies in the fiscal year of the award.

○ **Scholarship Type**

- Selected by the administrator when creating the award. Cannot be changed after the initial save.
- The Scholarship Type options available to an administrator are based on the existing funding types associated to the administrative organization.

○ **Award Start Date**

- Required to be a date on or after the Award Verification Date and within the same fiscal year as the Award Verification Date.

*Refer to the [Scholarship Award Page – Award Verification Date](#) section for information on Award Start Date limitations tied to the Award Verification Date.*

- If a child has had a prior award in the previous 12 months, the system carries over the initial Award Start Date to each later award within that scholarship year.
- This date cannot be edited once saved.

○ **Award Amount**

- Field formatted for dollars and cents; up to five digits with two decimal places are accepted, symbol entry (such as a dollar sign) is not accepted.
- Can be added or changed at any time after awarding a scholarship, even if the award has been cancelled.
- Minimum of one dollar applied when creating a new award or editing an award that is in Awarded status.
- Limited by the amount of funds the administrator has available in the funding fiscal year of the award.

- Limited by the amount of funds already spent on the award (Expended); cannot be lower than the Expended amount.
- Limited by the amount of funds available to the child in the child's scholarship year.
  - ▶ **Example:** The FY 2021-funded scholarship year of a child with an initial Award Date of 12/01/2020 continues through 11/30/2021. If the child has already been awarded the scholarship maximum in funds in a prior award, \$7500 as of this writing, a second award cannot be made within the child's scholarship year because no funds are available to the child.
  - ▶ *Note: The scholarship maximum (cap) may be adjusted by the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Education. For the most recent policy guidance, please visit the [Early Learning Scholarships webpage](#).*
- When to adjust the Award Amount:
  - ▶ *Cancellation of an award:* After all final billing amounts for services provided to the child have been determined (by final invoice or other), reduce the Award Amount to equal the total amount to be paid out (i.e., expended) on the award. If all payment requests have already been entered into ELSA at the time of cancellation, the Award Amount entry should equal the Expended amount on the Child Award page.
  - ▶ *Over-awarded scholarship:* If award funds will not be used by the end of a recipient's 12-month scholarship year, the Award Amount may be decreased. This is necessary only if the funds are needed to create new awards or increase the amount of other active awards in the same funding fiscal year.
  - ▶ *Under-awarded scholarship:* If a recipient's full award amount will be used before the end of the 12-month scholarship year, the Award Amount may be increased, within allowable limits.

*Note: Refer to the [State Early Learning Scholarships Policy Manual](#) for further guidance concerning setting and adjusting the amount of a scholarship award.*

#### ○ **Expended**

- Defined by the system; cannot be edited by the administrator.
- Equals the total amount of all child payments entered into payment requests under this award.
- This includes existing child payments of any status; the Expended amount is updated as soon as a child payment is added to a payment request.

#### ○ **Renewal Date**

- Defined by the system; cannot be edited by the administrator.
- Represents the first date of the child's next scholarship year.
- If the child award is renewed by the administrator, the next FY award will have this Renewal Date as the Award Date.
- If a child is not age-eligible for renewal at the end of the scholarship year, the Renewal Date displays as "Not Renewable" in place of a date.

*Note: Refer to the [Scholarship Renewal](#) section of this manual for more details.*

- **Renewal Amount** is set by the system and will be the Award Amount assigned to the renewal award in the next fiscal year, provided the award administrator renews the award.
  - Upon renewal, the Award Amount of the next scholarship year's award can be edited as needed.
  - If the award is not renewable, the Renewal Amount displays as \$0.00.

*Note: Refer to the [Scholarship Renewal](#) section of this manual for more details.*

- **Award End Date**
  - This field is available only when editing the Child Award page after the initial save of that page with all required field entries.
  - Entering and saving an Award End Date and End Date Reason selection cancels the award.
  - Entry date is intended to be (a) the child's final date of attendance at the most recent program site, (b) the date the administrator determines cancellation is required, or (c) the date the parent indicates as the date of scholarship cancellation when giving notice to end the scholarship.
  - Once saved, an Award End Date cannot be edited. Avoid entering a future date.
  - In some circumstances, an award may be system cancelled with an auto-assigned Award End Date equal to the final day of the child's scholarship year.

*Note: If an award is cancelled in error, the "Reactivate" function may be used to remove the Award End Date and reason, restoring the award to Awarded status. See the [Child Scholarship History – Actions](#) section for more details.*

- **Ineligible Date**
  - Determined by the system; cannot be edited by the administrator.
  - This date is the first September 1 that the child will be five years old, as determined by the Birth Date entry on the Child page.
  - Updating the Birth Date entry on the child page also updates the "Ineligible Date" if impacted.
- **End Date Reason**
  - A selection must be made at the time of cancellation (i.e., when entering an Award End Date).
  - If the true allowable reason for cancellation is not represented in the options, "Other" can be selected.
    - ▶ "Other" is not intended to be a common or default selection. If you find that you frequently select this option because a common scenario that is an allowable cancellation reason is not represented in the list, please reach out to [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us) with details.
  - In some circumstances, an award may be system cancelled and will reflect an auto-assigned End Date Reason of "System cancelled."

*Note: If you encounter an error message on the Child Award page that is not explained by the usage guidance provided above, or you believe your case requires special consideration, reach out to [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us).*

## ***Cancelling an Award***

When necessary, an administrator may cancel any active award associated to their authorizing organization in ELSA as long as the funding fiscal year remains open in the system. To cancel a scholarship award, the award must be updated with an Award End Date, an End Date Reason and, as needed, an adjusted Award Amount.

The Award End Date entered should be either the child's last date of attendance or enrollment at the selected program site or, in cases of unused awards, the same as the Award Start Date. **The Award Amount of a Cancelled status award should be equal to the total amount of Expended funds on that award at the point of cancellation, provided no future payment requests will be entered.**

*Note: If an award is cancelled in error, the "Reactivate" function may be used to remove the Award End Date and reason, restoring the award to Awarded status. See the [Child Scholarship History – Actions](#) section for more details.*

## **End Date Reason**

The End Date Reason selections offered in ELSA are the most common allowable reasons for cancelling a scholarship award. When cancelling a scholarship, the administrator must enter an Award End Date as well as select the applicable End Date Reason from these options:

- Child moving out of state.
- Child is changing programs with Pathway I scholarship. *[Removal planned for 2020]*
- Child moving out of Pathway II program area.
- Child has completed their 12 months and family does not want to renew.
- Family has been unresponsive for 60 days.
- Family has not responded to renewal requests.
- Child was not enrolled in a program before 10 months.
- Program costs now funded through ECSE. (Early Childhood Special Education)
- Program costs now funded through VPK. (Voluntary Prekindergarten)
- Program costs now funded through School Readiness +. (School Readiness Plus)
- Child no longer enrolled and attending Pathway II program.
- Child later determined ineligible.
- Family chose to cancel before completing the full scholarship term. *[To be added in 2020]*
- Other.

*Notes: 1. Please refer to the [State Early Learning Scholarships Policy Manual](#) for further guidance related to allowable reasons for cancellation. Contact [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us) with questions. 2. In 2020, MDE plans to make changes to the available End Date Reason selections.*

### **Cancellation Scenario 1: Award with Some Funds Expended**

A child was awarded a new FY 2021 Pathway I scholarship with an Award Start Date of 11/04/2020 and an Award Amount of \$7500.

The family selected an eligible early childhood program for use of their child's state early learning scholarship. The child began attending the program on November 18, 2020. After two weeks, the program began submitting regular invoices for eligible services to the Area Administrator (AA) to receive scholarship payments.

The family's situation changed in December, and they decided to move to Wisconsin at the end of January. The family notified the AA of their move, sharing that the child's last date of attendance at the eligible program was January 17, 2021.

The AA received a final invoice from the program for dates through January 17, 2021. The total amount expended on the award after final payment requests was \$1500.

To cancel this award, the administrator should visit the Child Award page and do the following:

- Enter 01/17/2021 as the Award End Date.
  - This is the date of the child's last attendance at the eligible program where the scholarship was being used.
- Change the Award Amount entry from \$7500 to \$1500.
  - The new award amount is equal to the amount expended after final invoice payments.
  - This action frees up \$5000 in unspent FY 2021 Pathway I funds to award to other children.
- Select "Child moving out of state." as the End Date Reason.
- "Save" the Child Award page to complete cancellation.
  - The system will assign the Award End Date of 01/17/2021 as the Attendance End Date on the program selection record as a result of this save.

### **Cancellation Scenario 2: Award with No Funds Expended, No Program Services Provided**

A child was awarded a new FY 2021 Pathway II scholarship with an Award Start Date of 09/01/2020 and an Award Amount of \$5000.

Although the child was enrolled and scheduled to attend the program at the time of award, the administrator is later notified that the child has not attended/will not attend the program. The child's unused award from the program must be cancelled.

To cancel this award, the administrator should visit the Child Award page and do the following:

- Enter 09/01/2020 for the Award End Date.
  - This is the date of the child's last attendance day at the Pathway II program that made the award.
- Change the Award Amount entry from \$5000 to \$0.
  - This action frees up the \$5000 of unspent FY 2021 Pathway II funds to award to other children.



- Select “Child no longer enrolled and attending Pathway II program” as the End Date Reason.
- “Save” the Child Award page to complete cancellation.
  - The system will assign the Award End Date of 09/01/2020 as the Attendance End Date on the program selection record as a result of this save.

## Program Selection Page

*Navigation Menu >> View Award List >> Award List: “Edit” >> Scholarship Award: Scholarship Summary: “Add Scholarship” or “Update Scholarship” (conditional action) >> Child Award: Program Selection: “**Add a Program Selection**” or “**Edit**” (conditional action)*

The Program Selection page accessed through the Child Award page is used to create or edit a program selection record. Program selection records are site-specific. Each scholarship award can support multiple program selection records, provided attendance dates do not overlap and the dates fall within the active date range of the award. The Program Selection page collects and displays attendance and full details for the selected program site.

The attendance dates in combination with the program and site selections in the program selection record(s) are used to determine the service periods and sites where a child is available to add to a scholarship payment request.

Any program selection record on an award can be edited; the administrator can update the attendance dates and other details as needed. If the most recent program selection record has no payment history associated with it, that record can be deleted. If a site change is required, a new program selection record must be added to the award. The first program selection record must either be deleted or have an Attendance End Date entry saved to allow for the new program selection record to be added.

Refer to the condition-specific program selection steps available in the [Quick Reference Steps for Scholarship/Area Administrators in ELSA](#) section as needed.

### **Program Selection Page: Usage Notes**

- All required elements of the Program Selection record must be saved to complete a Pathway II award [Award status = *Awarded*]. Required fields are marked with an asterisk (\*) on the page.
  - Pathway II funds are associated with only one program and the child must be enrolled to receive an award. Pathway I awards allow for a period of up to 10 months for program selection, so those can be fully awarded without a program selection record.
  - For a Pathway II award, if the required fields on the Child Award page have been saved but the award does not have a program selection record, the award status is *Incomplete*.
- **Attendance Start Date**
  - Must be a date on or after the Award Start Date.
  - If the child has previous scholarship history, must be a date after the Attendance End Date of the most recent program selection record in the child’s history.

- The date entered is intended to be the child's first scheduled date of attendance at the program site under this scholarship award.
- **Attendance End Date**
  - Must be a date after the Attendance Start Date on the same record.
  - If there is payment history at the program site for which attendance is being end-dated, the earliest Attendance End Date possible is the first day of the last service period with a payment.
  - If the award is cancelled, must be a date on or before the Award End Date.
- **Base Tuition**
  - Entry pulls into the Child Payment page when requesting payment.
  - This field is best used by entering either the flat rate tuition amount for each billing service period or the hourly/daily rate as a reference amount, whichever is most useful to the administrator based on the selected program and/or invoicing schedule.
  - Refer to [Child Payment Page: Usage Notes](#) in the [ELSA Payment System](#) section later in this manual.
- **Scheduled Attend Days**
  - Refers to the number of days of attendance expected for the child in each period of service covered by payment request (i.e., billing period).
  - If the number of scheduled attendance days each billing period is expected to vary, enter the anticipated average number of scheduled days or refrain from making an entry in this field.
  - Entry pulls into the Scheduled Attendance Days field on the Child Payment page when requesting payment.
  - Must be a whole number less than or equal to 31; a minimum of monthly payment requests/invoicing is required from programs.
- **Scheduled Attend Hours/Day**
  - Refers to the amount of instructional time expected for each day of attendance at the program.
  - Entries must be in hours (do not enter minutes, days, or other time increments); Convert time as needed, using decimal entries to include partial hours.
- The program sites available for selection are those included on the most recently loaded Parent Aware List of Scholarships-Eligible Programs sourced from DHS.
  - Pathway II programs must maintain a Four-Star Parent Aware rating to remain eligible to award scholarships. If their program rating drops below Four-Star, no sites will be available to select. Only sites covered under the program's Parent Aware rating are included as eligible.
  - See the section [Early Childhood Programs in ELSA](#) earlier in this manual for more information.
- For Pathway I awards, filters are available for program/site menus to help narrow down the list of programs available in the drop-down. The filters apply to combined program site records, except the "Site" filter.

- Using the Site filter performs a text search of the name of individual program sites, but the Program selection step cannot be skipped. Filtering searches using the Site field will result in a Program selection menu that is restricted to only those programs with sites that include the text entered.
- Use “Select Program” after choosing a program from those available in the drop-down menu. This is the confirmation action.
  - If the selected program has multiple sites, select the site of attendance, then finish by using “Select Site” as the next confirmation action.
- A program or site change requires a new program selection record.
  - Refer to the condition-specific program selection steps available in the [Quick Reference Steps for Scholarship/Area Administrators in ELSA](#) section as needed.

*Notes: 1. Site-level payment details and site record history are reliable as of December 21, 2018. “Program Start Date” entries were converted “Attendance Start Date” entries as part of this change. Reliable site change history is not available for records created prior to December 21, 2018. 2. If you encounter an error message on the Program Selection page that is not explained by the usage guidance provided above, or you believe your case requires special consideration, reach out to [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us).*

#### **Program Selection Detail section data entry fields:**

<b>Program Selection Detail Fields</b>	<b>Type/Format</b>	<b>Logic/Use</b>
<b>Attendance Start Date*</b>	Date field; MM/DD/YYYY	Editable as long as the program selection record is the most recent on the award
<b>Attendance End Date</b>	Date field; MM/DD/YYYY	Editable after initial page save, as long as the program selection record is the most recent on the award
<b>Base Tuition</b>	Currency field; Five-digit entry of dollars, with or without additional decimal and two-digit cents entry; No symbols (omit dollar sign)	Editable as long as the program selection record is the most recent on the award
<b>Scheduled Attend Days</b>	Numeric field; Whole number of days ≤ 31	Editable as long as the program selection record is the most recent on the award
<b>Scheduled Attend Hours/Day</b>	Numeric field; Two-digit entry of hours, with or without additional decimal and two-digit partial hour entry;	Editable as long as the program selection record is the most recent on the award; Entry must be ≤ 24 hours

Program Selection Detail Fields	Type/Format	Logic/Use
<b>Program*</b>	Drop-down menu;	List impacted by filter options: City, Program Type, Parent Aware Rating, Site (name); Entry is display-only after save Available at time of initial save of the program selection record information; Selection options sourced from of current eligible programs list
<b>Site*</b>	Drop-down menu of sites if multiple, single site auto-selected	Program must be selected first; Entry is display-only after save

*\*Required field*

*Note: MDE plans to begin requiring “Scheduled Attendance Days” and “Scheduled Attend Hours/Day” field entries on the Program Selection page. A future ELSA update will enforce this requirement.*

## Begin New Award / New Award - Child Search Page

Navigation Menu >> **Begin New Award**

To create a new scholarship award, the Begin New Award function must be used. Scholarship Administrator and Area Administrator users have access to this function.

The first step/page of the Begin New Award function is “New Award - Child Search.” It is intended for use only at the point that an administrator wishes to move forward with awarding a child. For system-wide searches related to pre- and post-award administrator work, the stand-alone record search function accessible from the left navigation menu link “Child Search” is the most appropriate tool.

Child record results on the New Award-Child Search page are limited to return records for only those children who are currently age-eligible or were eligible within the available payment service periods. Age-eligible children are defined in this context as those who were younger than 5 years old on September 1 of the current state fiscal year. A child’s assigned ineligible date is the first September 1 that they are age 5 or older.

Instructions for use of the New Award - Child Search page are displayed on the page:

*Use the search to identify existing record matches for children you wish to award. Take care with this step, as it aids in the prevention of duplicate child records in ELSA and difficulties that stem from duplicates.*

***Please begin this search entering only the first few letters (one to three) of the First Name and Last Name.***  
*Review the search results, looking for possible matches for the child to be awarded. If a match is found, “Select” the existing child record to move forward with awarding. If no match is found, choose “Create Child Record” to proceed.*

*Note: The “Create Child Record” button is made available only once the search has resulted in 10 or fewer records.*

## New Child and Award Records

Using “Create Child Record” opens the Child page, pulling in the portion of the child information that was used during the preceding search step. Next, the administrator is to enter all required and applicable child information into the fields provided. Entering and saving child information on the Child page is the step that creates a new child record in ELSA.

Detailed steps for creating a new child scholarship record and award are provided in the [Quick Reference Steps for Scholarship/Area Administrators](#) section. In addition, the [Child Page](#) section provides specific usage notes for that page.

## Awarding Using an Existing Child Record

When starting the “Begin New Award” process in ELSA, you must first search for the child you wish to award. **If an existing record for the child is found in the system, the “Select” button under the “Begin new Award” column must be utilized to add a new award to that existing record.** If you are not sure whether or not one (or more) of the child records in the search results is a match for the child you wish to award, communicate with the family and/or the previous administrator to determine the situation before taking any further action in ELSA.

**NOTICE:** Using the “Create Child Record” option instead of selecting the existing record leads to the creation of a duplicate child record. Any award attached to a duplicate child record is considered invalid, unless determined otherwise by MDE Early Learning Scholarships Program staff. See the section [Duplicate Child Records: Prevention, Problems, Actions](#) later in this manual.

After choosing “Select” to add a new award to an existing child record, the Scholarship Award page opens, and the administrator may move forward with adding all parts of the new award record package. Refer to the steps to [Award Using an Existing Child Record](#) found in the [Quick Reference Steps for Scholarship/Area Administrators](#) section of this manual as needed.

### Awarding Using an Existing Child Record: Notes

- If the Award Start Date field is pre-filled and cannot be edited:
  - If a child record has an attached award that started at any point in the previous 12 months (i.e., the Renewal Date has not passed on the most recent award), the Award Start Date of the initial award in the funding fiscal year is carried over to the new award.
    - Awarding a previously awarded child who is still within their scholarship year but does not have an active award is commonly referred to as “picking up a cancelled scholarship.”
- If the “Select” button is not available next to a matching child record:
  - An existing child record is not available to be selected for a new award if the child (a) has an active award (Award Status = *Awarded*, *Incomplete*, or is blank) or (b) is no longer age-eligible (Aged Out).
  - *Note: The family is the first point of contact for questions about the status of a previous award. However, the scholarship history for any child record may be viewed by choosing “Summary” next to the record. On the Child Scholarship History page, administrator information is visible for each award, providing a starting point of contact if coordination with the previous administrator is necessary.*

- Full guidance concerning “picking up” a cancelled/inactive scholarship from another administrator can be found in the [State Early Learning Scholarships Policy Manual](#). The system enforces some of the applicable policy restrictions at the point of saving the Child Award page:
  - Funds must be available in the child’s scholarship year (12-month period from the start date of the child’s first award in a given funding fiscal year).
    - **Example:** If the child is attending a Four-Star program and the first award in the child’s 12-month scholarship year was \$4000, then the new administrator may award up to \$3500 when picking up the child within the same funding year. The total award limit for one child in a scholarship year is \$7500 as of this writing, which is enforced by the system. Additionally, the Four-Star program rating allows for the full \$7500 award under policy.
    - The current system-enforced limit on the total of all award amounts in a child’s scholarship year is \$7500 for Pathway II awards, but Pathway I has a higher system limit only to accommodate remaining legacy scholarship recipients from a prior state program.
    - *Note: The scholarship maximum (cap) may be adjusted by the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Education. For the most recent policy guidance, please visit the [Early Learning Scholarships webpage](#).*
  - The Attendance Start Date of the initial program selection record on the new award must be a date that falls after the end date on the previous award.

## Deleting Scholarship Records

If a scholarship award record package has been started but not completed, i.e. the award is in *Incomplete* or blank status, an option to “Delete” the current record package is available to the administrator at the bottom of the Scholarship Award page. If the child has scholarship history other than the current award, this delete action removes only those records tied to the new award package, leaving the child record and previous scholarship history intact. If the child had no other scholarship history, then this delete action removes the child record alongside all award package records.

Once elements required to complete entry of an award have been saved, Scholarship/Area Administrator users are not able to delete an award. If an award was entered in error, identified as a duplicate, or if removal is otherwise warranted, MDE may purge the records. Reach out to [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us) as needed.

## Duplicate Child Records: Prevention, Problems, Actions

Duplicate child records create problems at various stages. Ensuring compliance with state statute, proper management and tracking of awards, validation and assignment of an SSID number, and allowable payment activities are all negatively impacted when duplicate child records are present in ELSA. Preventing the creation of duplicate child records is an important part of administering scholarships. **Do not create more than one child record per child.**

*Note: There is a process for making updates or corrections to child record information in ELSA that does not involve creating a new child record. Refer to [Child Data – Personally Identifiable Information](#) section and the [Change Child Data Used for Identification](#) steps as needed.*

## Preventing Duplicates

As discussed earlier in the manual, the first step when entering a new award is conducting a search of existing child records. The record search is intended to be conducted using partial child information. Using this method decreases the likelihood that an existing record match will be missed. **In the majority of cases, duplicate record creation can easily be prevented by administrators during the “New Award - Child Search” step.**

ELSA prevents the creation of duplicate child records only when all child data elements are an exact match to an existing system record. For this reason, administrator review is the most important prevention tool. A duplicate child record can be created even when there is only a slight difference in data. The following table provides case illustrations of duplicate records that could be created due to a mismatch in only one identifying child data field:

First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix	Birthdate	Gender
Angel	Luz	Flores Gomez		7/16/2015	F
Angelica	Luz	Flores Gomez		7/16/2015	F
Patrick	A	Brown		4/25/2017	M
Patrick	Andrew	Brown		4/25/2017	M
Sally	Sophia	Anderson		12/12/2013	F
Sally	Sophia	Andersom		12/12/2013	F
Kai	D	Sato	Jr	10/1/2013	M
Kai	D	Sato	N/A	10/1/2013	M
Eileen	C	Larson		3/13/2014	F
Eileen	C	Larson		3/31/2014	F
Hamsa		Ali		1/1/2015	M
Hamsa		Ali		1/1/2015	F

*Note: If a child identified in the search step has the exact same name, birthdate, and gender as a child you wish to award, but they are not the same child, contact [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us).*

## ***Problems with Duplicates***

**Any award attached to a duplicate child record is considered invalid, unless determined otherwise by MDE.**

This means any funds paid on an award attached to a duplicate record may need to be refunded to MDE.

If a duplicate child record is created by an administrator, the record will often be identified as a duplicate during SSID number validation. SSID Maintainers are not able to complete SSID number assignment on a record that has been determined to be a duplicate; the record is returned to its administrator. Since ELSA will not allow child award payments if the child record does not have an SSID number assigned, discovering a duplicate at this stage is the next best thing to prevention. The duplicate record must be removed by MDE and the administrator of the duplicate may either award the child using the original record or move forward without awarding the child.

A child may have only one active award at a time and there are award limitations by 12-month scholarship year. If awards on the original and duplicate records overlapped, or the child received payment beyond the limit for the scholarship year, repayment of funds is likely to be required by MDE.

## ***Actions for Duplicates***

If you discover a duplicate child record, contact [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us) for instructions. Provide limited child details (name abbreviation and birthdate) to assist with record identification.

## **Child Search Function**

### *Navigation Menu >> Child Search*

The Child Search page linked to in the left navigation menu is a stand-alone, whole-system child record search function.

- Child Search requires an entry in either Last Name or First Name. Once a character has been entered in either field, the “Search” button becomes active.
- The display limit for records is 100.
  - If more than 100 records are returned in the search results, those records are not displayed. Instead, a message displays in the Child Search Results portion of the page:  
*“Search resulted in [X] records. Child Search limit: 100. Refine your search to display results.”*
- The columns provided for Child Search Results are sortable.
- “Last Activity on or after” filters by most recent award activity date, which includes activities such as saving an update on the Child Award page or the start of a new scholarship. This is date does not reference payment activity.
  - This filter field is pre-filled with the start date of the previous fiscal year. The date entry can be removed or adjusted prior to conducting the record search.



## Scholarship Renewal

Scholarships may be renewed each year the child remains age-eligible. Program policy requires that the parent/guardian submit a Renewal Form to the administrator of their child's scholarship if they wish to renew the child's award into the next year. The SA/AA must check the "Check if Renewal Form is complete" box, commonly referred to as the "renewal box," on the Scholarship Award page of the renewing award after receipt of that form. Once checked, ELSA will automatically renew the scholarship award of that child into the next fiscal year as part of a batched overnight process. Automated renewal processing occurs early the morning of the child's Renewal Date, and will succeed in renewing the award provided the following criteria are met:

- The child is age-eligible.
- The most current award is in *Awarded* status.
- If a Pathway I scholarship:
  - The administrator organization has sufficient funds to cover the Renewal Amount of the award in the renewal year (current fiscal year).
  - Either the selected program/site is eligible or no program has been selected.
- If a Pathway II scholarship:
  - The administrator organization has sufficient funds to cover the Renewal Amount of the award in the renewal year (current fiscal year).
  - The selected program/site is eligible.
- No other awards included in the same processing batch fail to renew due to error.

ELSA processes an award renewal batch each night. The batch includes all scholarship awards that meet renewal criteria and have reached their Renewal Date. If an award is past its Renewal Date and has not successfully renewed into the next year, ELSA continues to include that award in the renewal batch for the next 30 days.

*Note: Provided the administrator checks the renewal box, a scholarship may be renewed for any remaining period of eligibility in the next fiscal year, be it one week, ten months, or other. Best practice is to cancel the award before renewal when the award will not be utilized in the next fiscal year.*

The renewal process creates a new scholarship award record in the next fiscal year, updating the Award (Start) Date and the Renewal Date of the child's scholarship. The month and day of the Award Date on the original award carry over to the new award, but the year is changed to bring the date into the current fiscal year. – For example, A FY 2018 award with an Award Start Date of 04/15/2018 renews as a FY 2019 award with an Award Start Date of 04/15/2019.

In order to assist with tracking award renewals in line with policy, the Award Status filter on the Award List page has selection options for viewing awards that will renew within 30, 60, or 90 days out from the current date. There is also an Award Status filter option for viewing awards that renewed within the past 30 days. Additionally, when requesting payment, an alert icon (green "I") displays next to the name of any child whose scholarship award is either due to renew into the next fiscal year or was newly awarded within the month of the selected service period.

*Note: Please take care to appropriately request payment for services to children with recent award renewals. Payment requests for service dates prior to the Renewal Date must be paid out of the prior award and not the new award in the current funding fiscal year that was created by the renewal. See the [Award Renewal – Payment Requests](#) section for details.*

## Renewal Date

The Renewal Date is displayed on the Child Award page and in some reports. The system uses the Award Start Date (Award Date) on the child's initial scholarship award in the previous 12 months as its reference point for setting this date. Provided the child is age-eligible to renew into the next scholarship year, the Renewal Date is exactly one year after the initial Award Date in the child's current scholarship year. If the child is not age-eligible for renewal, the system displays "Not Renewable" instead of a Renewal Date.

A child may only receive one scholarship per year, but multiple awards may be created under that single scholarship year, provided they do not overlap. The start of the child's initial award in a 12-month period (i.e., their first Award Date) begins the child's scholarship year and ties that and any additional awards in the next 12 months to the funding fiscal year that was current on that initial award date. The Renewal Date marks the beginning of the child's next scholarship year, funded out of the next fiscal year.

## Renewal Amount

Each scholarship award eligible for renewal is assigned a "Renewal Amount" by the system. This is the amount that will be filled in as the Award Amount on the next year's scholarship award if that award is created by the system's automated renewal process.

If the child remains age-eligible for the full 12 months of their next scholarship year (the year their award is renewing into), then the Renewal Amount is equal to the current Award Amount on the renewing award. If the child will lose age eligibility in the next scholarship year, the Renewal Amount is calculated by prorating the Award Amount to reflect the partial year of services.

**Example:** A child's 2021-funded award of \$5000 is scheduled to renew into FY 2022 on 03/01/2022. However, the child loses age eligibility for scholarships 09/01/2022, which means the child will only have a six-month scholarship year rather than a full 12-month scholarship year. The Renewal Amount on this award is \$2500, half of the current Award Amount, to reflect the six-month scholarship year.

Although the Renewal Amount of an award cannot be changed by an administrator directly, this amount is updated whenever a change to the Award Amount entry on the renewing scholarship award's Child Award page is saved. Additionally, after a scholarship renews and a new award in the current fiscal year is available to the administrator, the Award Amount entry on that new award can be updated.

A scholarship award's Renewal Amount is displayed on the Child Award page and represented as the "Next Year Reserve Amount" on the Child Level Fiscal Review sub-report of the Fiscal Allocations report. Additionally, the Renewal Amount is used in the calculations of "FY Reserve" and "Reserved for Renewal" in the context of allocations.

## Renewal Errors – Renewal Error List

In the event that one or more renewal fails due to error, the system displays an alert message link on the administrator's homepage (Award List). All awards under the same administrator and funding allocation that were processed in the same batch will also fail to renew. Additionally, if the award error(s) that caused the batch to fail are not resolved, all subsequent award renewal processing attempts will also fail. For this reason, failed renewals should be addressed as soon as possible.

When an alert message indicating one or more failed renewals is displayed on the Award List page, it includes the number of renewals that produced an error and the additional number of pending renewals that are held back from processing as a result of those errors. Follow the message link to the Renewal Error List page to view the awards with errors.

To review those awards that were prevented from renewing due to errors on other renewals in the same batch, use the "Renewal held due to errors" selection of the Award Status filter on the Award List page. The filtered results include all awards in the renewal batch, those with and without identified errors.

### Renewal Error List

*Award List >> Message: "[X] PW[1/2] errors occurred during the renewal process. [X] PW[1/2] renewals are pending until the errors are corrected: Click on this link to view."*

The Renewal Error List is a report page of individual awards that failed to renew due to error. Administrators should review the status provided for each award and make the necessary changes or updates. Once all renewal error causes have been resolved, the corrected awards (and all other awards pending renewal in the same batch that may have been delayed) will process overnight and clear the error message.

Error statuses (i.e., error causes):

- **Insufficient Program Funds/Insufficient Allocation:** The Renewal Amount (i.e., Award Amount for the new year) cannot be covered by the current amount of available funds. Possible resolution actions:
  - Make funds available in the fiscal year of the renewal.
  - Adjust the Award Amount down to within the available amount to bring the Renewal Amount within range.
  - Cancel the renewing award as of the final day in the scholarship year (day before the Renewal Date), then add a new award in the current fiscal year to the existing child record using the Begin New Award function.
    - *Note: MDE approval and instructions specific to the renewal case are required if the Award Verification Date that applies was in an fiscal year other than the fiscal year of the renewal scholarship award. Refer to the section [Scholarship Award Page – Award Verification Date](#) as needed. Contact [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us) for case review.*

*Note: If there is more than one award in a given renewal batch, and the sum of all Renewal Amounts in the batch is greater than the amount of funds currently available in the applicable allocation, an "Insufficient Allocation" error is displayed for one or more awards in that batch, but the Renewal Error List may not display all awards that are counting toward the renewal totals for that batch. Use the Award Status filter on the Award List to see the full list of awards in the renewal batch as needed.*

- **Ineligible Program/Site:** The current program/site selected for the award is no longer eligible to receive scholarships or the award did not have an active program selection at the time of renewal. Possible resolution actions:
  - Set an Attendance End Date for the ineligible program/site in the program selection record of the child's current award. (*Pathway I only*)
  - Update the program/site selection on the current award to match the child's current site of attendance, assuming the current program/site is eligible and attendance began before the renewal.
  - Cancel the scholarship award.
  - Cancel the scholarship award as of the final day in the scholarship year (day before the Renewal Date), then add a new current fiscal year award to the child's record and select the child's current program and site of attendance, assuming the new program site is eligible.
    - *Note: MDE approval and instructions specific to the renewal case are required if the Award Verification Date that applies was in a fiscal year other than the fiscal year of the renewal scholarship award. Refer to the section [Scholarship Award Page – Award Verification Date](#) as needed. Contact [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us) for case review.*

**To review those awards that were prevented from renewing due to errors on other renewals in the same batch, use the “Renewal held due to errors” selection of the Award Status filter on the Award List page.**

*Note: Even if renewal errors prevent an award from renewing before the end of that award's renewal fiscal year, the new award year will still be in the renewal year of the first attempt once errors are cleared and that award's renewal batch is successfully processed. In other words, a FY 2020 award that fails to renew before the end point of FY 2020 is still able to renew as a FY 2020 award once renewal errors have been resolved. This is limited by the 30-day administrative grace period for renewal after the award Renewal Date.*

## ELSA Payment System

ELSA serves as the payment system for the Early Learning Scholarships Program in addition to being the system for the tracking and management of awards. For payment to be made out of scholarship funds allocated in FY 2017 and funding years thereafter, all Area Administrators of Pathway I scholarships and Pathway II-funded public programs must request direct payment through ELSA. Scholarship payments for Pathway II-funded child care programs are requested through ELSA by the statewide administrator organization for child care Pathway II scholarships based on invoices submitted to the administrator by the program providers.

Eligible early childhood programs serving Pathway I scholarship recipients do not work within ELSA at this time. In order to receive payment of scholarship funds, those programs must submit an *Invoice Form* to the applicable Area Administrator organization. Invoice information is reviewed and entered into ELSA payment requests by Area Administrator organizations, who then make payments to the submitting programs.

Refer to the Pathway I section of the [Early Learning Scholarships Program homepage](#) and the [State Early Learning Scholarships Manual](#) as needed for more information about payment/billing/invoicing/reimbursement of administrative costs.

## ELSA Payment Process

### Overview

ELSA payment requests are initiated by those individuals authorized to manage scholarship awards for their organization – i.e., those with a Scholarship Administrator (SA) or Area Administrator (AA) access role for ELSA. Each payment request must be finalized by a Payment Approver authorized by the same organization the request was initiated under. Once finalized, MDE processes the payment request through agency and state systems, resulting in final payment to the organization via the Statewide Integrated Financial Tools (SWIFT) system. In summary:

1. SA/AA builds a payment request containing individual child scholarship payments or admin fees for a selected service period.
2. SA/AA submits the payment request to the Payment Approver within ELSA.
3. Payment Approver reviews and finalizes each service period payment request.
4. MDE processes payment to the administrator organization.

### Timing

- Pathway II-funded public education programs receiving direct scholarship payments are required to request payment of scholarship funds in ELSA a minimum of monthly throughout the program year.
- The statewide administrator for Pathway II-funded child care programs should enter invoice information into an ELSA payment request as soon as possible, and within 30 days, after receipt of a completed *Invoice Form* from the awarding program.
- Area Administrator organizations, including the statewide administrator of Pathway II child care programs, should enter invoice information into an ELSA payment request as soon as possible, and within 30 days, after receipt of a completed *Invoice Form* from a program serving scholarship recipients.
  - To mitigate risk, administrator organizations that pay invoices should be sure to enter all child payments included in each invoice into ELSA before paying out scholarship funds to the invoicing program.
- ELSA allows for selection of a given service period until approximately 105 days out from the end of that period.
  - Under program policy, the submission window for payment requests is 105 days from a given service period. This window includes the one-month period during which submissions are expected to occur under normal circumstances as well as an additional period of approximately 2.5 months to allow for corrections. Service periods are no longer available for selection after approximately 105 days out from the final day of the period.
    - Payment corrections initiated by revised *Invoice Form* submissions should be sent from the program to the appropriate administrator organization within 90 days of services. This allows the additional 15 days of the 105-day window for the administrator organization's actions in ELSA.
  - Payment requests that have not been approved by the organization's Payment Approver prior to the point at which that service period is no longer available for selection will roll into Held payment status.

*Notes: 1. Administrators may reach out to [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us) to request approval of late payment request entries. If approved by MDE, instructions will be provided. 2. Refer to the [Payment Status View](#) section as needed.*

- Payment requests are processed through MDE internal systems as a weekly batch. A payment is included in the batch if received before 4 p.m. on Monday. Typically, a payment processed in the Monday batch is paid out of SWIFT and marked “Complete” in ELSA by Wednesday afternoon the same week. Delays may occur.
  - MDE will send notices to administrator organizations when a payment processing delay or processing schedule change is known in advance.

*Note: Any questions regarding the status of a payment request made through ELSA may be directed to [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us). See the [SWIFT Update](#) page maintained by [Minnesota Management and Budget](#) for news about SWIFT system status and changes.*

### **Service Periods in ELSA**

- Starting with FY 2019 (July 1, 2018), ELSA service periods were redefined to align with the bi-weekly service periods of the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) calendar.

*Note: The CCAP-aligned bi-weekly ELSA service periods may cross state fiscal years. However, there is no impact on invoicing or payment requests when this occurs. Requests for payment are tied to the scholarship year of each child.*

- For organizations submitting monthly payment requests by calendar month, the SA/AA must select the ELSA service period containing the final day of the month.
  - Example: When submitting a payment request for the month of August 2020, select the 08/24/2020-09/06/2020 service period in ELSA, because that service period covers the final day of August.
- Service periods become available for selection in ELSA on the start date of the service period. An SA/AA may begin adding child payments to a payment request as soon as it opens, but the request for payment on a child’s award must not be finalized until services included in the child payment have been provided.

### **Pathway I and Pathway II Child Care Payments (eff. FY 2017)**

All programs serving Pathway I scholarship recipients must submit an *Invoice Form* to the Area Administrator organization that awarded the scholarship in order to receive scholarship payments. Pathway II-funded child care programs must submit an *Invoice Form* to their statewide administrator, Milestones as of this writing, in order to receive scholarship payments. The administrator organization enters the invoice information into ELSA to request payment from MDE.

*Note: Please refer to the [State Early Learning Scholarships Policy Manual](#) for further guidance related to Pathway I and child care Pathway II scholarship payments. Area Administrator information is provided on the [Early Learning Scholarships homepage](#) of the MDE website.*

## Requesting Scholarship Payments

### Part I: Scholarship/Area Administrator Actions

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

1. Follow the “Request Payment” link found in the left navigation menu.
2. On the Request Payment page, select the service period under which you are requesting payment from the drop-down menu, then follow “Scholarship Payment” below.
  - For organizations submitting monthly payment requests/invoices, select the ELSA service period containing the final date of the service month.
3. From the Program Site Selection List, choose the name of the program site the child(ren) you are adding to the payment request attended during the selected service period.
  - See also: [Program Site Selection List, Child Payments for Site Pages: Usage Notes](#)
4. On the Child Payments for Site page, the Children Attending Site list displays all awarded children who are eligible to be included in the payment request. Choose the “Add” action to include a child in the request.
  - See also: [Program Site Selection List, Child Payments for Site Pages: Usage Notes](#)
5. On the Child Payment page, fill in the Attendance section with the true attendance counts for the period of service covered by the payment request, then enter all applicable tuition, fees, and subtractions.
  - See also: [Child Payment Page: Usage Notes](#)
6. Verify the attendance data (check the box), review all other entries, then save.
7. Back on the Child Payments for Site page, continue to build the payment request by adding children, entering the applicable attendance and billing details, then saving them to the request.
8. Once you have completed building the full payment request for the service period, and you are confident that the information is accurate and not likely to need adjustment, visit the Payment Status page using the link in the left navigation menu.

*Navigation Menu >> **Payment Status***

9. On the Payments page, choose “Submit” next to the payment request(s) you are ready to move forward.
10. Enter a note for your organization’s Payment Approver(s). *[Optional]*
11. Choose “Submit” below the note box to complete submission of this payment request to your organization’s Payment Approver(s).
  - ELSA sends an email notification to all Payment Approvers authorized under the submitting SA/AA’s organization. The email addresses used are pulled from EDIAM user account information.



## Part II: Payment Approver Actions

Navigation Menu >> **Payment Status**

Navigation Menu >> **Home**

1. Follow “View” to review the child payment details for a payment request.
2. To approve the payment request, sending it forward to MDE for payment processing, choose “Finalize” in the Action column on the main Payment Status page.
  - The “Finalize” action is not available to the Payment Approver(s) until the payment request has been submitted to them by an SA/AA in the same organization.
    - See also: [Part I: Scholarship/Area Administrator Actions](#)
  - If the payment request is not ready for approval, communicate with your colleague(s) in the Scholarship Administrator or Area Administrator role. Administrators are able to edit a payment request up to the point it has been finalized by a Payment Approver.
    - Note: In the event that an error is identified in a payment request that was recently finalized (within the same day), it may be possible for an MDE Internal administrator to undo the finalization, giving the SA/AA an opportunity to correct the error before the payment request is processed. Contact [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us) for assistance.
    - See also: [Payment Adjustments \(Corrections\)](#)

## Area Administrator Reimbursement

Administrative funds reimbursement requests should be made through ELSA on a monthly basis. This type of request is initiated via the “Request Payment” link in the left navigation menu, following “Admin Fee Payment” after selection of a service period. The process is similar to that of requesting scholarship payment, but involves additional approval by MDE as outlined:

1. AA initiates a request for “Admin Fee Payment” in ELSA.
  - The Admin Fee payment is bundled with any other open payments being requested in the same service period.
2. AA submits the payment request containing the Admin Fee request to both MDE and their organization’s Payment Approver(s).
  - The “Submit” action on the Payment Status page in ELSA sends an automated notification email to both the Payment Approver(s) and the assigned MDE staff member with approval authority for any payment request containing Admin fees.
  - When submitting a payment request containing Admin fees, the following information must be included in the AA’s note entry to support MDE review:
    - Name of staff member requesting the payment
    - Period of administrative work included in the payment request



- Fiscal Year to charge
- Total amount being requested

### 3. Review and communication:

- a. Payment Approver reviews the Admin Fee request for errors, communicating with the MDE representative and their AA colleague(s) as needed.
- b. MDE Authorized Representative for Area Administrator grants, or an assigned alternate, reviews the Admin Fee payment request submitted by the AA, communicating with the submitting AA and Payment Approver as needed.

4. Once approved by MDE via an email communication, the Payment Approver may finalize the request containing the Admin Fee payment in ELSA.

*Note: Area Administrators may reach out to [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us) for the name and contact details of the MDE staff person currently assigned to review Admin Fee payment requests. As of this writing, it is Sandy Myers, Early Learning Supervisor ([sandra.myers@state.mn.us](mailto:sandra.myers@state.mn.us)).*

### **Fiscal Year for Admin Fee Payments**

Area Administrators must make the appropriate Fiscal Year selection on the Admin Payment page. All fees entered into the Admin Payment page will be funded out of the selected fiscal year. After the close of a given funding fiscal year, that year is no longer available for selection when requesting Admin payments.

*Note: Under guidance current as of publishing, AA organizations may request payment against their FY 2020 Admin funding allocation for work performed through June 30, 2021, with a final payment request deadline of July 15, 2021. Payment may be requested against the FY 2021 Admin allocation for work performed through June 30, 2022, with a final payment request deadline of July 15, 2022.*

### **Admin Fee Payment Adjustments (Corrections)**

Refer to the [Payment Adjustments \(Corrections\)](#) section of this manual. If you have questions about Admin Fee corrections that are not fully addressed by that section, please reach out to [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us) or the MDE staff contact for Area Administrators for instruction.

## **Program Site Selection List, Child Payments for Site Pages: Usage Notes**

*Navigation Menu >> Request Payment >> Request Payment: “Scholarship Payment” >> Program Site Selection List: “[Site Name]”*

- A child is included as eligible for payment at multiple sites during one service period if attendance dates in the program selection records of the child’s award(s) active during the period indicate scholarship use at more than one site.
  - Child scholarship payments are site-specific to support financial reconciliation. *Prior to December 21, 2018, child scholarship payments were only reliably tied to a program.*
  - To confirm a single payment, pull a Payment History Detail report as needed. See the [Report – Payment History](#) section of this manual for additional information.

- A program or program site is displayed on the Program Site Selection List if at least one child award associated to that program/site in the selected service period.
- Following the “View” on a child award record line opens the Child Payments page, which displays full payment history for that scholarship award.
- A green icon with an exclamation point (!) next to a child name indicates either (1) the Renewal Date of their scholarship award is at some point during the month of the selected service period, or (2) the child has a new award with an Award Start Date (Award Date) in the month of the selected service period. Hover over the icon to display the reason.
  - A child is listed twice in the service period of their scholarship award’s Renewal Date if the award has renewed successfully, one record line for the award in the previous fiscal year and one record line for the award in the current fiscal year that was created as a renewal.
  - Refer to the [Scholarship Renewal](#) and [Award Renewal – Payment Requests](#) sections for further guidance as needed.
- Child names appear grey/gold in color and the “Add” button is not available on the Child Payments for Site page when the child is not eligible for payment. Hover over the child name to display the reason. Possible reasons the child is not eligible for payment include:
  - Child’s ELSA record does not have an SSID number assigned, or
  - Award attestations have not been completed by the current administrator.

## Child Payment Page: Usage Notes

*Navigation Menu >> Request Payment >> Request Payment: “Scholarship Payment” >> Program Site Selection List: “[Site Name]” >> Child Payments for Site: Children Attending Site: “[Child Name]”*

- **Expended** is the sum of all child payments requested on the award, including those payments not yet completed.
- Following “View Recent Payments” opens a pop-up window displaying the five most recent payments made on the child award.
- “Absent 10 or more days” applies in circumstances where the child has been absent on scheduled days for 10 consecutive days within or leading into the period of service covered by payment request (i.e., billing period) of the child payment being entered.
- If the Program Details section of the Child Award page has entries saved for the following fields, those amounts pull into companion fields on the Child Payment page: Scheduled to Attend, CCAP Payment, Base Tuition (Tuition/Request Amount).
  - The pre-filled fields on the Child Payment page are editable, but the amount in the source field can only be updated on the Program Selection page accessed through the “Edit” option on the Child Award page.
  - Refer to the [Child Award Page](#) and [Program Selection Page](#) sections for additional information.
- **Invoice #** may be used by the administrator according to their preference. Here are some suggested uses:
  - AA: The number on the paper invoice received from a program.
  - SA: Invoice information received from business office staff in their organization.

- AA/SA: Initials identifying the staff person who entered the invoice, coded tracking information, etc.

### ***Attendance Reporting***

Programs must track and report the number of days each scholarship recipient child was scheduled to attend and was absent during each service period. Those reporting attendance should be mindful of the fact that each service period will likely have a different number of business days, meaning the number of days a child is scheduled to attend in each service period often fluctuates.

Administrators are required to submit a payment request containing attendance data if a scholarship recipient is enrolled in and attending the selected program, regardless of whether scholarship funds are being requested for that period of service. If the tuition and/or fees are being covered by another source, enter the full tuition and/or fees into the payment request and enter the subtractions as applicable. If the program is not charging tuition and/or fees for the period of service represented in the payment request, \$0.00 should be entered into the Tuition/Request Amount field. For those administrators who collect this information via invoices, outreach and coaching on these policies with the program providing services may be needed to ensure accurate reporting.

#### **Every payment request must include the following attendance information:**

- **Scheduled to Attend:** The number of days that the child was scheduled to attend during the selected service period. This is not to reflect the total number of days the child was present, it is the total number of *scheduled* days.
- **Days Absent:** The number of *scheduled* days the child was absent.
  - Example: If a child is scheduled every Monday and Tuesday, do not include Wednesday through Friday as absent days. Only the number of Mondays and Tuesdays the child missed should be included.
- **Absent 10 or more days:** Check the box only if a child has missed ten consecutive *scheduled* days.
- **Program Holidays:** The number of holidays the program was closed that fell on days the child would have been scheduled to attend based on their usual schedule.
  - Example: If the program observed holidays on Tuesday and Wednesday, and the child was scheduled to regularly attend the program on Tuesdays and Thursdays, the number of Program Holidays for that period would be one (1).
- **Closure Days:** The number of vacation or other non-holiday days the program was closed that fell on days the child would have been scheduled to attend based on their usual schedule.
  - Example: If the program was closed for a snow day or provider vacation day on a Monday, and the child was scheduled to regularly attend the program on Mondays and Tuesdays, the number of Closure Days for that period should be one (1).

*Note: Please refer to the [State Early Learning Scholarships Policy Manual](#) for further guidance related to attendance as well as required administrator (AA/SA) actions in cases of 10 or more consecutive absences.*

## Attendance Guidance for School Districts, Head Starts, and Charter Schools

MDE has determined that school-based and Head Start programs should not report holidays that are included in their program calendar when reporting attendance in ELSA payment requests. Holidays should not be counted in the total scheduled days or entered as holidays in ELSA or when submitting invoices to an Area Administrator. However, if students were expected to be in attendance but school was cancelled for something like a snow day, that day would be included in the count of scheduled days and closure days.

### ***Tuition and Allowable Fees***

#### **Tuition/Request Amount**

The “Tuition/Request Amount” amount entered into a payment request should be equal to the full tuition cost, or slot cost portion, for the selected service period prior to any other payments (scholarship, CCAP, or family co-payment) being applied.

If an amount has been saved into the “Base Tuition” field of the Program Selection page, that entry is pulled into “Tuition/Request Amount” field of the Child Payment page automatically when adding a child payment to a payment request. Even if the amount pulls in from the Child Award page, the Tuition/Request Amount is editable on the Child Payment page.

#### **Base Tuition**

Suggested use of the “Base Tuition” field on the Program Selection page is either to enter the portion of slot cost or flat tuition amount for each payment request or a reference amount that represents the daily or other time period rate.

- **Daily rates:** A set daily service rate can be entered into the Base Tuition field. The Tuition/Request Amount entered on a payment request is then equal to that service rate times the number of scheduled attendance days in the service period selected. This can serve as a check for administrators entering invoice information.
  - This field entry strategy can be used for other rate periods (such as weekly).
- **Programs with set tuition or costs per child for the length of the program** may divide the award amount by the number of months they anticipate serving the child to determine a monthly Base Tuition rate to save in the award record.
  - This is applicable for school-based and Head Start programs awarding based on instructional hours and may also apply for other programs dependent on the business model.
  - Divide the monthly Base Tuition amount by two if submitting two payment requests per month.

*Note: Refer to the [Program Selection Page: Usage Notes](#) section for additional guidance as needed.*

#### **Allowable Fees**

In addition to the Tuition/Request Amount, there are other allowable expenditures that may be charged to scholarships. Some of these fees may be already be included in the Tuition/Request Amount entry if represented in a Pathway II-funded program’s plan (e.g., transportation) or a bundled service rate. If the cost of one of the allowable fees has already been included in the tuition amount, do not enter an additional reimbursement amount under “Additional Fees” in ELSA.

*Note: Please refer to the [State Early Learning Scholarships Policy Manual](#) for further guidance related to fees eligible to be covered by scholarship funds (i.e., Allowable Fees). Pathway II-funded programs should reach out to [MDE.PathwayII@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.PathwayII@state.mn.us) with any questions.*

### **Subtractions: CCAP and Other Payments**

Scholarship funds are not the only payment source for early childhood programs providing services to scholarship recipient children. The program may also apply Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) payments, family co-payments, staff discounts, and other payments against the fees/costs of services provided for those children. Entering any expected or received additional payment for services into payment requests in the “Subtractions” section reduces the total Amount Requested for the payment request.

*Note: Please refer to the [State Early Learning Scholarships Policy Manual](#) for further guidance.*

### **Award Renewal – Payment Requests**

Administrators must take care in tracking the timing of scholarship award renewals. When an award renewal occurs, the any amount requested for payment should be true to the services provided under each scholarship year. For this reason, it may be necessary to request two child payments for a single period of service, splitting costs for services between two awards in different scholarship funding years. To remind administrators of scholarship renewals, a green exclamation point (!) alert icon displays next to the name of any child on the Children Attending Site list (Child Payments for Site page) whose scholarship award has its Renewal Date at some point during the month of the selected service period.

*Note: Refer to the [Scholarship Renewal](#) section for more information about the renewal process.*

The Child Payments for Site page displays a record line for each child award considered eligible for payment in the selected service period for the selected program site. During the service period in which a child’s award has renewed, that child’s name is listed twice on the Children Attending Site list section of the page, each line representing an award in a different funding fiscal year (one prior to renewal, one after). The “Year” of an award is the funding fiscal year out of which requested funds will be paid.

*Note: If entering monthly payment requests, the Renewal Date may not fall within the service period of the full-month payment request. In that case, it may be necessary to submit a payment request in the ELSA service period of the renewal in addition to the primary payment request for that billing period (under the ELSA service period that includes the final day of the billing month).*

**Example:** You are requesting payment for the entire month of March 2021. Sam’s FY 2020 award renewed into FY 2021 on March 6, 2021, and she was scheduled to attend three of those first five days of the month. The program charges \$50 per day; Sam was scheduled for 20 days that month. Three of the 20 scheduled days fell before March 6, so \$150 (\$50 x 3 days) should be charged to the FY 2020 award. The remaining 17 days of service in March should then be requested for payment out of the new FY 2021 award.

*Note: Public education programs with Pathway II scholarship funding who determine costs by program slot may have the option not to split payment between funding fiscal years during the month of a scholarship award’s renewal. Please contact [MDE.PathwayII@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.PathwayII@state.mn.us) with any questions.*

## Payment Status View / Payments Page

Navigation Menu >> **Payment Status**

The Payment Status view/Payments page is available to Payment Approver and Scholarship/Area Administrator users. Payment Approvers land on this page when entering ELSA.

The Payments page view gives visibility of payment requests for service dates in the past calendar year. The full history of an administrator organization's ELSA payment requests are available in the [Payment History report](#).

In the default view, the Payments page displays only payment requests in *Open* and *In Progress* status. *Complete* status requests can be displayed by selecting the link in the instructional text at the top of the page.

ELSA payment requests are processed in weekly batches. All payment requests that have been finalized by the Payment Approver (*In Progress* status) as of 4 p.m. on Monday are included in that week's transaction batch. In most cases, the state's accounting system (SWIFT) processes this transaction batch from ELSA on Tuesday. If the payment is made on Tuesday, then by Wednesday after 4 p.m. the ELSA status is updated as *Complete*. Delays are possible; the status in ELSA remains *In Progress* until the receipt files from SWIFT are received.

Refer to the [ELSA Payments Process](#) section for more processing and timing details.

### Payment Statuses

- **Open:** The payment request has been created and may be edited. Once submitted to the Payment Approver(s), the request may be finalized.
  - In *Open* status, the contents of the payment request can be edited by the SA/AA.
- **In Progress:** The request has been finalized by the Payment Approver and sent to MDE for processing.
- **Complete:** MDE has made the payment to the organization, as confirmed by a SWIFT receipt file.
- **Held:** The payment request was not finalized by the Payment Approver in ELSA during the system window of availability for the service period of that payment request (approx. 105 days out from service dates). Requests in this status are no longer able to be finalized by the Payment Approver within the ELSA system and will not be paid out without MDE staff intervention.

*Notes: 1. Upon becoming aware of a Held payment request, contact MDE at [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us). 2. Administrators may reach out to [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us) to request approval of late payment request entries. If approved by MDE, instructions will be provided.*

### Payments – Actions

The actions available from the Payments page are dependent upon the access role of the user as well as the status of the payment request. Actions available from this page include “Edit”, “View”, “Delete”, “Submit” and “Finalize.”

#### Edit

Scholarship/Area Administrator users may “Edit” any payment request in *Open* status. The “Edit” action link directs to the Program Site Selection List for the service period of the payment request being edited. Choosing a

site opens the Child Payments for Site view, where all current child payments included in the payment request may be viewed or edited and new child payments added as needed. – “Edit” is essentially a shortcut that links back to the usual path for requesting payment.

## **View**

A “View” action is available to all Payment Approver and SA/AA users for all payment requests listed on the Payments page, regardless of the status. Following “View” opens the Payment Detail page, which provides a view of all administrative fee payments and child scholarship payments included in the payment request, grouped by program site.

If the user is an SA/AA and the request is in *Open* status a “Delete” action is available for individual payment entries on the Payment Detail page.

If the user is an SA/AA and the status of the request is *In Progress* or *Complete*, then the “Edit” action is available on the Payment Detail page. Following “Edit” opens the Child Attendance page, where updates can be made to attendance entries that were entered into the child payment details when requesting payment.

## **Delete**

Scholarship/Area Administrator users may “Delete” any payment request in *Open* status. This action deleted the payment request in its entirety; all administrative fee payments and child scholarship payments included in the request are removed by this single action.

## **Submit**

Scholarship/Area Administrators use “Submit” to send a payment request forward for Payment Approver action. Choosing “Submit”, the administrator is given the option to enter a note for their organization’s Payment Approver(s), which is included in an email notification sent out to the Payment Approver(s) at the email address(es) on their EDIAM account(s). After the payment request has been submitted to the Payment Approver(s), the “Finalize” action becomes available to the Payment Approver(s) in their view of the Payments page.

The “Submit” action is only available for payment requests in *Open* status, and taking this action does not change the payment status. Additionally, this action may only be taken on a payment request once. However, since it does not change the status, edits may still be performed on the payment request as needed until a Payment Approver has finalized the payment request.

## **Finalize**

Payment Approver users are given the option to “Finalize” a payment request from the Payment page if an AA/SA from their organization has taken the “Submit” action on their end. Finalizing the payment request moves the status from *Open* to *In Progress*, sending the payment request forward to MDE for processing through state payment systems.

Once the “Finalize” action has been taken on a payment request, it cannot be undone. MDE staff are also not able to intervene. For this reason, Payment Approvers should be sure to take time to properly review the contents of each payment request before choosing to finalize.



## Payment Adjustments (Corrections)

A given service period remains available for selection in ELSA for approximately 105 days after the final day of that period to accommodate payment corrections. Outside of the 105-day submission window set by policy and enforced by ELSA, no additional payment requests are permitted without MDE approval. Additionally, any initiated payment requests that have not yet been finalized (those in *Open* status) may be edited by the SA/AA at any point prior to either (a) being finalized or (b) the close of the 105-day service period selection window, whichever comes first.

### ***Underpayment of Scholarship Funds – Positive Correction Required***

During the 105-day (3.5 months) submission window allowed for by policy, additional scholarship payment requests may be made through ELSA to correct for underpayment on a child's award, as long as the funding fiscal year has not been closed by the state. Please contact [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us) regarding any positive corrections outside of this submission window.

**Example:** If a CCAP reimbursement were to come in lower than initially anticipated, additional scholarship funds may be required to cover fees for services during those periods. In such a case, additional scholarship funds may be requested to cover the child's program costs, assuming the child's award limit has not been reached and there are funds available in the allocation funding year of the award.

*Note: Administrators may reach out to [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us) to request approval of late payment request entries for (1) service periods that are no longer available for selection past the 105-day cutoff or (2) payment requests that will not be finalized in ELSA during the submission window. If approved by MDE, instructions will be provided.*

### ***Overpayment of Scholarship Funds – Negative Correction Required***

In the event that payment of scholarship funds has been made in amount greater than what was actually due, the required negative correction procedure will be determined by MDE based on the situation. For scholarship payments, MDE will consider factors such as: the current award status of the child; the child's attendance status at the program; the amount of overpayment. In some cases, MDE may determine that the administrator should adjust future payment requests to make up the difference. However, true negative corrections must either be entered as ELSA transaction adjustments by MDE staff or handled in coordination with MDE Agency Finance outside of ELSA. Contact MDE for guidance: [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us).

### ***Administrative Funds Corrections***

Should a correction be required for an Admin Fee payment request that has already been finalized, please reach out to the MDE Early Learning Scholarships Team contact who regularly reviews and approves these requests to discuss options. Alternatively, reach out to [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us) for guidance. If caught immediately, MDE may be able to reopen the payment request to allow edits.



## Reports in ELSA

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

Reports are secured by MDE-Org number; external users (i.e., users who are not MDE staff) are able to see only information entered into ELSA under their authorizing organization(s). The one exception to this is the Scholarship Monitoring report.

**Example:** A Scholarship Administrator (SA) whose only authorizing organization is Stillwater Area Public Schools is able to see only records that either they or another SA for their program have entered into ELSA in reports they pull. If this SA pulls a Programs with Scholarship report, their report results will not include Pathway II scholarship recipients who are being served by other programs. Additionally, reports this SA pulls do not include any Pathway I recipients, even if one or more Pathway I scholarship recipients are being served in the same Stillwater Area Public Schools early childhood program.

**A digital reference workbook containing navigation notes and column headers for Excel versions of ELSA reports is available upon request. Contact [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us) to request this file.**

*Note: Records displayed in the Award List view may be exported in a CSV file format directly from that page. Refer to the [Award List Export](#) section for details.*

## Initial Report Parameters: Usage Notes

Each ELSA report provides a different combination of initial report parameters that can be used to filter report results as needed. Those parameters offered on multiple reports are explained in this section. Specific report guidance is available in the sections that follow.

- **Admin Org:** The organization receiving payments of scholarship funds directly from MDE and working within ELSA to manage child records and awards is known as the “administrator organization.” In report parameters and columns “Admin Org” is commonly used.
- **Fiscal Year (Year):** Parameter to restrict report results to one specified state fiscal year of the scholarship funds. Refer to [Funding Fiscal Year vs Scholarship Year](#) for more information.
- **Program Type:** Parameter selection list populated based on full history of site-level record information in ELSA; not impacted by other parameters.
- **Program:** Parameter selections populated with the names of all programs active during the Fiscal Year selected, as applicable.
- **Site:** Parameter selections populated with the names of all sites active during the Fiscal Year selected, as applicable.
- **Start Date and End Date** parameters are used to define a date range that references the Award Start Date (Award Date) of scholarship awards.
  - Since (1) the initial award date within a 12-month period determines the funding fiscal year of the scholarship and (2) the initial award date is carried as the Award Date for any subsequent awards

within the same 12-month scholarship year, the Start Date and End Date parameters can be used as a proxy for limiting report results by fiscal year.

- Example: To limit your record results in a report to only FY 2021 scholarships, enter the Start Date as July 1, 2020 and the End Date as June 30, 2021.

- Report results will only include those child award records that have an Award Start Date saved. Blank status award records are not visible in reports.

➤ **Award Status:** As a report parameter, Award Status limits report results to only those records with a current award status matching the selection.

- Date parameters cannot be used in combination with this Award Status parameter to view historical award status information or track status changes for an individual award.
- Report results are still limited to the records associated with the administrator organization pulling the report.
- Limitation scenarios:
  - If a child had an active award for all of FY 2019, but the award was cancelled in FY 2020, then the report function will consider the Award Status as *Cancelled* for reports pulled over any time period, including dates in the active year of FY 2019.
  - If Administrator A cancels a child's award, then Administrator B picks up that child record and adds a new award to the record, the result is the child award record will be visible on Administrator A's reports as "Cancelled" and Administrator B's reports as "Awarded."

➤ **Output Format:**

- **HTML** format displays report results in a webpage view;
- **EXCEL** and **EXL2K** format produce an Office Open XML (.xlsx) spreadsheet file download;
- **PDF** format produces a file in portable document format (PDF) file download.

*Note: Each ELSA report is available in at least one of the three output formats listed, but not all formats are available for every report.*

## Report – Demographics

This report provides summary demographic data of children and parents in various categories as aggregate counts of unique children. The **Child Detail** sub-report is available from priority group counts and the count of children who have not received an early childhood screening, as indicated in ELSA.

- Includes children who have been awarded a scholarship.
- Includes each child only once in each count (i.e., counts are de-duplicated), even if a child has multiple awards or program selection records in the selected date range or had their scholarship renewed.
- County and Region parameters are based on the address entered on the Child page.
- Age is calculated as of September 1 of the fiscal year in which the child was awarded.

- Children who were less than 1 year old on September 1 of the funding fiscal year of their scholarship are represented in the “0” age count. This includes children who were not born until after September 1.
- The Demographics report includes aggregate counts and percentages of the following:
  - Parent Demographics (Family Demographics)
    - Education (level)
    - Eligibility reason
    - Employment (status)
    - Language (spoken most at home)
    - Parent age (over 21/under 21)
  - Child Demographics
    - CCAP ID (Yes/No)
    - Child age
    - Enhancement (Yes/No)\*
    - Ethnicity
    - Expansion (Yes/No)\*
    - Homeless (Yes/No)
    - Protective services (Yes/No)
    - Race
    - Multi-Race (combinations)
    - Screened (Yes/No)
- HTML version of Demographics report: Access the Child Detail report by following one of the report launch links available from displayed child counts.

*\* Enhancement and Expansion are legacy data points that previously referred to planned use of scholarship award funds by the serving early childhood program.*

## **Child Detail**

The Child Detail sub-report of the Demographics report provides a filtered view of limited child, parent, and award information for select groups to aid in related administrative work.

- Use the launch links from the following child counts to produce a Child Detail report filtered for that group:
  - Parent Age: *Number of children to parents under 21 years old*
  - Foster care: *Yes*
  - Homeless: *Yes*
  - Protective Services: *Yes*
  - Screened: *No*
- Included in the Child Detail report:
 

○ Child name	○ Apt/Unit	○ ZIP code
○ Birth date	○ City	○ Res(ident) school district
○ Address	○ State	○ Parent last name

- Parent first name
- Program start date
- Local code
- Phone (number)
- Award status
- Program name
- Fiscal year

## Report – Programs with Scholarships

This report provides a list of program sites with the count of scholarship recipient children attending each, broken out by funding type (Pathway I, Pathway II). The **Student Report** is also accessed through this report.

- A child is counted in each time period that child has an award; counts are de-duplicated in a combined period when the child's awards reflect the same program site.
  - Example: If a child's first award was made in FY 2019, then that award renewed in FY 2020 without a site change, the child is counted in this report both when a date range covering all of FY 2019 is used and when a FY 2020 date range is used. The child is not included twice in the count for the site when the Start Date and End Date range covers both the child's FY 2019 and FY 2020 award dates in one report pull, because the count is de-duplicated in that case. If the child's scholarship history during the date range of the report includes more than one site, the child is included in the count at each site.
- County parameter references the site address information.
- Scholarship awards that do not have an associated program selection record are not included in record results for this report.
- *HTML version of Programs with Scholarships report:* Access the **Student Report** by following one of the report launch links available from displayed scholarship counts.

### Student Report

The Student Report is a sub-report of the Programs with Scholarships report that provides limited child, parent, and award information for each child included in the count for a program site.

- Use a launch link from a count of scholarships displayed in the Pathway I and/or Pathway II column to produce a Student Report.
- If a child has more than one program selection record associated with a particular site in the date range the report covers, the count of scholarships in the main report is a unique count (de-duplicated), but the child award information is included in the Student Report multiple times.
- Award details included in the Student Report:
  - Child name
  - Parent name
  - Award date
  - Birthdate
  - Gender (M/F)
  - Award amount
  - SSID status
  - Award status
  - Program start date

## Report – Award Management Report

The Award Management report provides a list of all child scholarship award records that meet the conditions of the selected report parameters.

- Includes child award records in each time period that child had a scholarship award (including awards produced by renewal).
- Includes a child award record line for each program site selection active during the chosen time period.
  - Any award with a program selection change will appear on this report once for each program selection record in the history of the award, even if the child has a single scholarship award. A child being displayed twice on this report does not indicate a duplicate child record or multiple awards in most cases.
    - Use the Child Search function and Child Scholarship History page to investigate possible duplicate records or awards, if needed.
- County parameter is based on the site address information.
- Included in the Award Management Report:
  - Admin org name
  - Admin org ID
  - Program name
  - Site name
  - Child name
  - Birthdate
  - M/F (Gender)
  - Priority population (Y/N)
  - SSID status
  - Screening complete (Y/N)
  - Award status
  - Award date
  - Attendance Start date
  - Award end date
  - Award amount
  - Resident school district
  - Child county
  - Parent/guardian first name
  - Parent/guardian last name
  - Phone
  - Mailing address: Street
  - Mailing Address: Apt/Unit
  - Mailing Address: City
  - Mailing Address: Postal Code
  - Local code
  - Attestation date

*The full details of each record are available only in the Excel version of the Award Management Report.*

*Note: The Award Management report is a revised version of the report previously known as the Invoice Report.*

## Report – Fiscal Allocation

For the selected Fiscal Year and Admin Organization, the initial level of the Fiscal Allocations report displays a summary of funds use broken up by Funding Type (Pathway I, Pathway II, Admin). This report houses two significant sub-reports: **Child Level Fiscal Review**, **Child Award Forecast**. In Addition, the **Payment History Detail** report is accessible through the Child Level Fiscal Review report, and the **Admin Fee Payment Detail** is accessible through the **Admin Fee Payment Summary**.

- Provides visibility of the amount of funds: Awarded, reserved for renewal, obligated, remaining, expended

- **HTML version:** Pathway I, Pathway II, and Admin funding type labels provide launch links for more detailed sub-reports.
  - Pathway I: Access the **Child Level Fiscal Review** report or **Child Award Forecast** report by following this funding type link.
  - Pathway II: Access the **Fiscal Allocation by Program** report with allocation breakdowns by Admin Org and Program by following this funding type link.
    - Resulting program-centered fiscal review is grouped by Admin Org with breakdowns by program allocation. The default sort order is alphabetical first by Admin Org name, then by program name.
    - Access the **Child Level Fiscal Review** report and **Child Award Forecast** report filtered for a specific program by following any program name link.
  - Admin: Access the Admin Fee Payment Summary report that provides full Admin Fee payment history by following this funding type link.
    - Access the **Admin Fee Payment Detail** by choosing the launch link from either the fiscal year or the Admin Org name.
      - This detail report provides a breakdown of Admin Fee payments by accounting code (line item) for each service period.

## **Child Level Fiscal Review**

The Child Level Fiscal Review report provides fiscal summary information for each child award in the fiscal year selected for the initial parameters of the Fiscal Allocations report run.

- Report results are progressively filtered by the link followed: Pathway Type, Admin Org, Program
- Access a **Payment History** report filtered for a single child award by following the detail report launch link from any child name.
  - Child name links to the Payment History report only when the child's award has payments in its history.
  - The **Payment History Detail** report specific to the child award can be launched from links in the Payment History report.

*Note: For additional details, see the [Payment History](#) report section below.*

- Included in the Child Level Fiscal Review report:
 

○ Fiscal year	○ Award Amount	○ Award balance
○ Admin ID	○ Award Status	○ % Year passed since award date
○ Scholarship Admin (Admin Org)	○ Award end date	○ Next year reserve amount
○ Child name	○ Last paid on	○ Local code
○ Award date	○ Amount expended	○ Ineligible date
	○ % Expended	

*Note: “Last paid on” is the end date of the most recent service period payment request to the current date, it does not indicate the most recent date of administrator action or the most recently paid payment request.*

## Child Award Forecast

The Child Award Forecast report provides award summary information as well as a calculated award adjustment opportunity for each child award in the fiscal year selected in the initial parameters of the Fiscal Allocations report run.

- **This Child Award Forecast report is intended to be a tool used in forecasting, primarily for administrators of Pathway I scholarship awards.** The calculated “Award Adjustment Opportunity” does not dictate administrator action on any award; factors other than those considered in this calculation may be relevant.
- Launching this report opens a parameters page that displays the carried Fiscal Year and Admin Org parameter selections from the main report and presents an additional optional parameter:
  - ☐ *Limit calculation of the Award Forecast to a maximum of \$ [\_\_\_\_\_]*
- Detailed notes from the February 2018 release of this report are available by request. The notes define each element of the “Award Adjustment Opportunity” calculation. Send requests to [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us).
- Included in the Child Award Forecast report:

○ Child name	○ Award service end date	○ Expended
○ Priority population	○ Award service duration (A)	○ Forecast multiplier (A/B)
○ Program type	○ Award amount	○ Award forecast
○ Program name [HTML]	○ Service start date	○ Award adjustment opportunity
○ Award status	○ Last paid on	○ Local code
○ Award date	○ Days served (B)	

*Note: “Last paid on” is the end date of the most recent service period payment request to the current date, it does not indicate the most recent date of administrator action or the most recently paid payment request.*

## Report – Payment History

The first level of the Payment History report provides a summary list of all initiated scholarship payments broken down by program and service period. The available sub-report, **Payment History Detail**, includes individual child payment details.

- **Payment Status- Start Date** and **Payment Status- End Date** parameters are used to set a date range that references the most recent payment status date.
  - The **Status Date** represented in this report reflects the most recent date that a payment request changed status.
    - Payment status is shared by all site-level payment records that are bundled in the same payment request, even though the Payment History report displays separate record lines for each site-level payment.

- The payment status date is not the date the individual child payment or collective site-level payments in the same period were entered or last edited. In other words, this is not a date that tracks invoice activity.
- **Service Period Start Date** and **Service Period End Date** parameters are used to set a date range that references the ELSA service period of a payment record.
- **Status** references the current payment status of payment requests.
  - Each payment request may contain multiple site-level payment records; the status of a payment request is shared by all site-level payment records that are bundled in the same payment request.
  - Possible statuses of a payment request: *Open, In Progress, Held, Complete*
    - *Failed* is a legacy payment status that is no longer used in ELSA but remains available in the Status parameter selection list for historical reporting purposes.
  - Refer to the [Payment Statuses](#) section for additional details as needed.
- Included in the Payment History report:
 

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fiscal year</li> <li>○ Program name</li> <li>○ Site name</li> <li>○ Service period</li> <li>○ Financial breakdown (funding type and fiscal year)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Status (payment request)</li> <li>○ Status date (payment request)</li> <li>○ Request amount (total)</li> <li>○ Provider invoice #</li> </ul>
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- *HTML version of the Payment History report:* Access the **Payment History Detail** sub-report by following one of the report launch links available from displayed record information.

## ***Payment History Detail***

The Payment History Detail sub-report provides a filtered, detailed view of individual child scholarship payments. The navigation path to this detail report from the top-level Payment History report determines the filtering that is applied to generate report results.

- Use a launch link from the displayed fiscal year, program name, service period, financial breakdown, or status (moving from left to right through the columns on the report) to produce a report that has been progressively filtered by those pieces of information.
  - Examples:
    - Following the fiscal year link to launch the Payment History Detail report results in a report that includes all of the child scholarship payments that meet the initial Payment History report parameters for the admin organization for that entire fiscal year.



- Following the program name link to launch the Payment History Detail report result in a report that includes only those child scholarship payments that meet initial Payment History report parameter, for the fiscal year listed on the same record line, for the named program.
- Included in the Payment History Detail report:
  - Program name
  - Site name
  - Financial breakdown
  - Child name
  - Service period
  - Program tuition (request amount)
  - Other fees
  - CCAP payment
  - Other payment
  - Adjust(ment) amount
  - Amount requested
  - Scheduled to attend
  - Days absent
  - # Holidays
  - # Closure days
  - 10 consecutive absence
  - Provider invoice# (Invoice #)

## Report – Scholarship Monitoring

The Scholarship Monitoring report provides a view of all of child awards across a selected Fiscal Year, as well as subtotals by child for award amounts and absent days. This report includes scholarship data from records created by the administrator organization of the individual pulling the report in ELSA as well as relevant data elements from full child scholarship history across all administrators. The intended use of this report is to assist in monitoring for (a) absent day count totals, (b) the totaled amount of all funds awarded in the full scholarship year of the child, and (c) award amounts in relation to awarding thresholds by Parent Aware Star Rating based on current program selection information.

- Parameter selections unique to the Scholarship Monitoring report:
  - ☐ Only show awards where FY subtotal of award amount exceeds \$ [default entry: **7500**]
  - ☐ Only show awards where award amount exceeds the Parent Aware star rating threshold
  - ☐ Only show awards where total days absent exceeds [default entry **25**]

*Note: Selecting more than one of these parameter boxes produces a report with records that meet all of the conditions checked (i.e., parameters are applied based on “AND” logic).*
- Each child award meeting the parameter selections will display on a single line on the report produced.
- Children with a single award in the fiscal year have the following elements displayed bold on their award line on this report:
  - **Child**
  - **Award Amount**
  - **Days Absent**

- Children with multiple awards in the fiscal year have an additional “**FY\_subtotal**” line with all elements displayed bold. Children with multiple awards in the fiscal year have a line on the report for each award, but their single awards are not displayed bold.

*Note: ELSA development plans for 2020 include updating the Scholarship Monitoring report to add parameters for service period date range and a new Priority Population indicator column.*

# Quick Reference Steps for Scholarship/Area Administrators in ELSA

This pull-out section provides detailed steps for the most common actions taken by Scholarship Administrators and Area Administrators working within ELSA. For more detailed guidance, please refer to the [State Early Learning Scholarships Policy Manual](#) or the applicable section(s) in the body of the full ELSA User Manual.

## Scholarship Awards

### Create a New Child Record and Award

1. Follow the “Begin New Award” link found in the left navigation menu in ELSA.
2. On the New Award–Child Search page that opens, conduct a search of existing child records:
  - Enter the first 1-3 letters of the child’s first and last names into the appropriate search fields, then choose the “Search” button.
  - Review the list of child records that displays in the Child Search Results section to ensure a record does not already exist for the same child.

**Note:** *This is an essential step that aids in the prevention of duplicate child records. Only continue with step 3 if the child you wish to award is not listed in your search results. As needed, refer to the [Awarding Using an Existing Child Record](#) section earlier in this manual and/or the [Award Using an Existing Child Record](#) steps below. If the child has an existing ELSA record that requires correction, move forward with awarding using the record as-is, then refer to the [Change Child Data Used for Identification](#) steps.*

3. Select the blue “Create Child Record” button to open a new Child page.
4. On the Child page, enter all of the required child information, as well as all other child information provided on the scholarship application form. After all applicable fields have been filled out, choose “Save” at the bottom of the page.
5. On the Scholarship Award page that opens, select “Add Guardian” on the right side of the page next to the Parent/Guardian section. Enter full parent/guardian details and family information as available and applicable, then select “Save” at the bottom of the page.
6. On the Scholarship Award landing page, take the following actions while referencing the child’s scholarship application and documentation:
  - If applicable, check the box to indicate the child had an **Early Childhood Screening**.
  - Make the appropriate selection of “Yes” or “No” under the **Consent to Release** heading.
  - Enter the **Award Verification Date** that applies.
    - Refer to the [Scholarship Award Page – Award Verification Date](#) section for more details as needed.

- Read through the Attestations statements, entering **Preparer's Initials** after review.
  - Choose "Save" at the bottom of the page to retain changes.
7. Still on the Scholarship Award page, select "Add Scholarship" to the right side of the Scholarship Summary section.
8. On the Child Award page:
- Select the **Scholarship Type** as applicable.
  - Enter the **Award Start Date**.
  - Enter the **Award Amount**.
  - "Save" the changes to the Child Award page.
    - For Pathway I awards, if you have the child's program selection information, proceed to the steps [Select a Program and Site while Awarding – Pathway I](#).
    - For PW-II awards, the Program Selection page will open to prompt immediate entry of program site details after saving all required Child Award page elements. Refer to the steps [Select a Program and Site while Awarding – Pathway II](#).

Refer to the [Child Award Page: Usage Notes](#) section for details of displayed information and entry field guidance as needed.

## Award Using an Existing Child Record

1. Follow the "Begin New Award" link found in the left navigation menu in ELSA.
2. On the New Award–Child Search page that opens, search for the child's existing record. Follow the instructions provided at the top of the page.
3. Once you have identified the child's existing ELSA record in the search results, choose "Select" under the Action column on the right side of the record line.
4. After selecting the record, the Scholarship Award page will open. Review and update the Child and Parent/Guardian information as needed.
5. Update any other Scholarship Award page information, then scroll down to the lower portion of the page to...
  - Make the appropriate **consent selection**,
  - Enter the **Award Verification Date**,
  - Enter **Preparer's Initials**,
  - "Save" the page changes.

6. Choose “Add Scholarship” (or “Update Scholarship”) next to the Scholarship Summary section, then refer to step 8 of the [Create a New Child Record and Award](#) steps above to finish.

*Note: If this child has award history in the previous 12 months, the Award Verification Date and Award Start Date will carry over to this new award as a continuation of the child’s scholarship year. Refer to [Managing Scholarship Funds](#) as needed.*

## Change the Amount of an Award

1. Search for the record either in the Award List or using Child Search.
  - From the Award List page, choose “Edit” on the child record line to open the Scholarship Award page.
  - From the Child Search page, choose “Summary” to open the Child Scholarship History page. Choose “Edit” on the record line of the award you wish to update to open the Scholarship Award page.
2. On the Scholarship Award page, select “Update Scholarship” next to the Scholarship Summary section.
3. On the Child Award page, enter the new total amount of the award into the Award Amount entry field in the Award Information section. Remember to omit a dollar sign.
4. Choose “Save” at the bottom of the page to finish.

*Note: See the [Child Award Page: Usage Notes](#) section for information about the Award Amount, including limitations enforced by the system.*

## Cancel an Award

1. Search for the record in the Award List. Choose “Edit” on the child record line to open the Scholarship Award page.
2. On the Scholarship Award page, select “Update Scholarship” next to the Scholarship Summary section.
3. On the Child Award page:
  - Adjust the **Award Amount** to equal the amount expended through the final period of program attendance;
  - Enter the **Award End Date**;
  - Select the applicable **End Date Reason**;
4. Choose “Save” at the bottom of the page to finish.

*Note: Refer to [Cancelling an Award](#) earlier in this manual for more details, including example cancellation scenarios.*

## Delete a Child/Award Record

*As a Scholarship/Area Administrator, you can only delete an award if entry of all required elements of that award has not been completed, i.e. the Award Status must be Incomplete or blank. See the section [Deleting Scholarship Records](#) for more information.*

1. Search for the record in the Award List. Choose “Edit” on the record line to open the Scholarship Award page.
2. On the Scholarship Award page, scroll to the bottom. Select “Delete” below the Attestations section.
3. Confirm the delete action in the pop-up window that displays.

## Renew a Scholarship Award into the Next Fiscal Year

1. After receiving a completed Renewal Form from the parent/guardian of the scholarship recipient child, search for the active award record either in the Award List or using Child Search.
  - From the Award List page, choose “Edit” on the child record line to open the Scholarship Award page.
  - From the Child Search page, choose “Summary” to open the Child Scholarship History page. Choose “Edit” on the record line of the award you wish to update to open the Scholarship Award page.
2. On the Scholarship Award page that opens, check the box next to “Check if Renewal Form is complete” in the Child section of the page.
3. To finish, choose “Save” at the bottom of the page.
4. On or after the Renewal Date of the award, confirm the new award in the current fiscal year is active by checking the Allocation Year displayed for the child on the Award List.

*Note: The Renewal Form is expected to be received by the administrator of the scholarship prior to the Renewal Date of the child’s scholarship award. Provided the award is eligible for renewal and the renewal box has been checked, ELSA will create the new scholarship in the next fiscal year on the morning of the Renewal Date as part of a batched **overnight process**.*

*Refer to the full [Scholarship Renewal](#) section earlier in this manual for additional details as needed.*

## Program Selections

### Select a Program and Site while Awarding – Pathway I

1. Save the required award details on the Child Award page.
2. On the Child Award page, select the “Add a Program Selection” button available in the Program Selection section at the bottom of the page.
3. On the Program Selection page:
  - Enter the child’s **Attendance Start Date**.
    - The Attendance Start Date entry should be the first date the child will attend the program at the site selected later on the same page.
  - Enter other program details (Base Tuition, Scheduled Attend Days, Scheduled Attend Hours/Day).
    - Refer to the [Program Selection Page: Usage Notes](#) section for guidance on program detail fields.
  - Select the name of the program from the **Program** drop-down menu. Confirm by clicking “Select Program” to the right of the menu.
    - If there is no choice of site (one site, displays as selected automatically), stop here and save the page to complete the program selection record.
  - If the program has multiple eligible sites, choose the name of the applicable site from the **Site** drop-down menu. Confirm by clicking “Select Site” to the right of the menu.
4. “Save” changes to the Program Selection page.

### Select a Program and Site while Awarding – Pathway II

1. Save the required award details on the Child Award page to move to the Program Selection page.
2. On the Program Selection page:
  - Enter the child’s **Attendance Start Date**.
    - The Attendance Start Date should be the first day the child will attend the program at the site selected later on the same page.
  - Enter other program details (Base Tuition, Scheduled Attend Days, Scheduled Attend Hours/Day).
    - Refer to the [Program Selection Page: Usage Notes](#) section for guidance on program detail fields.
  - Select the name of the program from the **Program** drop-down menu. Confirm by clicking “Select Program” to the right of the menu.
    - If there is no choice of site (one site, displays as selected automatically), stop here and save the page to complete the program selection record.

- If the program has multiple eligible sites, choose the name of the applicable site from the **Site** drop-down menu. Confirm by clicking “Select Site” to the right of the menu.
3. “Save” changes to the Program Selection page.
    - This completes entry of a Pathway II award, moving the award’s status to *Awarded*.

## Select a Program and Site after Awarding – Pathway I

1. Search for the child in the Award List. Choose “Edit” on the child record line to open the Scholarship Award page.
2. On the Scholarship Award page, select “Update Scholarship” next to the Scholarship Summary section.
3. On the Child Award page, continue by following the steps to [Select a Program and Site while Awarding – Pathway I](#).

## Change the Selected Program/Site after Awarding

1. Search for the record either in the Award List or using Child Search.
  - From the Award List page, choose “Edit” on the child record line to open the Scholarship Award page.
  - From the Child Search page, choose “Summary” to open the Child Scholarship History page. Choose “Edit” on the record line of the award you wish to update to open the Scholarship Award page.
2. On the Scholarship Award page, select “Update Scholarship” next to the Scholarship Summary section.
3. On the Child Award page, go to the Program Selection section. Click the “Edit” button to the right of the current program selection record.
4. On the Program Selection page, enter an Attendance End Date for this program site, then save the page.
5. Back on the Child Award page, choose the “Add a Program Selection” button now available at the bottom of the page.
6. On the Program Selection page, enter the Attendance Start Date and any needed program detail entries.
7. Select the new program and site combination from the drop-down menus.
  - For site changes on a Pathway II award, click “Select Program” to make the site selection menu available.
  - Use the “Select Program” and “Select Site” buttons to confirm your selections as needed.
8. Choose “Save” at the bottom of the Program Selection page to finish.

*Note: Pathway II awards can only support a change in site. A program change cannot be made on a Pathway II award, because award funds are tied to the program’s Pathway II allocation.*



## Child Information and SSID

### Change Child Data Used for Identification

#### ***Change Child Data – Child Record without SSID Number Assigned***

*When the SSID status of a child record is Pending or Returned, the administrator of the child's scholarship may edit the child information fields on the Child page, including all name field as well as birth date and gender, updating or correcting previous entries as needed.*

1. On the Award List or Child Search page, choose “Edit” on the record line of the child whose information you wish to update/edit.
  - Alternatively, if the record is *Returned*, you may visit the Returned SSID List and follow “Edit” from that page directly to the Child page. Skip step 2 below if you follow this path.
2. On the Scholarship Award page, choose “Update Child” to the right of the Child summary section.
3. On the Child page, edit/update the entries in the child information fields as needed.
4. Choose “Save” at the bottom of the Child page to retain any changes.

#### ***Change Child Data – Child Record with SSID Number Assigned***

*When the SSID status of a child record displays as the child's full SSID number, the administrator of the child's scholarship cannot edit the child information fields on the Child page, including all name field as well as birth date and gender. If changes are needed, MDE staff may unlock the SSID assignment to allow for updates.*

1. Email [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us) to request that the SSID number assignment be unlocked. Include the following details for review and record identification:
  - The reason child information needs to be changed.
  - 2-3 letter abbreviation of the child's first and last names, as currently in ELSA.
    - Example: Pa. Bro.
  - Full birth date, as currently in ELSA.
2. If MDE unlocks the SSID assignment to allow for changes to child information, the SSID status is moved to *Returned*. Follow the steps above ([Child Record without SSID Number Assigned](#)) to make changes as needed. After completing those steps, the SSID status on the record is set to *Pending* and is ready for SSID re-assignment.
3. Contact the MARSS Coordinator, or another identified SSID Maintainer contact, of the child's resident school district to notify them of the change to child information.

*Note: The SA/AA must proactively communicate with the resident district SSID Maintainer regarding any child data changes to ensure (a) proper actions are taken in the Student ID Validation System (SIVS), and (b) the original SSID number is re-assigned to the same ELSA record. [MDE-Org](#) provides a [District MARSS Coordinator](#) contact list.*

## Act on a Returned Child Record

1. Follow the returned SSID message link displayed at the top of the Award List to open the Returned SSID List.
2. On the Returned SSID List, review the note provided by the SSID Maintainer who returned this child record without an assigned SSID number.
  - If the note does not sufficiently explain the reason for the return of this record, or other discussion with the SSID Maintainer is needed, utilize the contact details provided and reach out to the SSID Maintainer directly (outside of ELSA).
3. Determine the action to take:
  - **Reset:** If the child information in ELSA is correct as it is currently entered (no changes are needed), “Reset” the record.
  - **Edit:** If the child information in ELSA requires updates/corrections, choose “Edit” to open the Child page. On the Child page, proceed to make the necessary changes. “Save” the page to finish.

Taking either of the actions above will move the SSID status from *Returned* to *Pending*. In *Pending* status, the child record will once again be available to the SSID Maintainer within ELSA and SSID assignment work can continue on their end.

Refer to the [SSID Number Assignments in ELSA](#) section of this manual for more details. As needed, reach out to [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us) for additional guidance. A step-by-step guide for SSID Maintainers is available upon request.

## Payments and Attendance

### Request Scholarship Payments in ELSA

1. Follow the “Request Payment” link in the left navigation menu.
2. Select the service period of the payment request from the drop-down menu, then choose “Scholarship Payment” to continue.
3. On the Program Site Selection List page, follow the link from the name of the program site to move to the Child Payments for Site page.
4. On the Child Payments for Site page, you will see a list of awarded children who can be added to the payment request for the chosen service period and program site. Choose the “Add” action to move forward with entering a child award payment.
  - Refer to the [Program Site Selection List, Child Payments for Site Pages: Usage Notes](#) section of this manual for additional information as needed.
5. On the Child Payment page, fill out the Attendance section with the correct attendance data for the period of service covered by this request, then enter all applicable tuition, fees, and subtractions.

6. Verify the attendance data (check the box), review all other entries, then choose “Save” at the bottom of the page.
  - The Child/Award Information section at the top of the Child Payment page provides a summary that includes the award’s expended amount and a link to view recent payment history, among other details.
7. Continue to build the payment request for the chosen service period by adding children, entering the applicable attendance and billing details, then saving them to the request.
8. Once you have completed building the full request, and you are confident that the information is accurate and not likely to need adjustment, follow the Payment Status link in the left navigation menu to open the Payments page.
9. On the Payments page, choose “Submit” next to the payment request(s) you are ready to move forward.
10. On the Submit Payment page, enter a note for your organization’s Payment Approver(s). *[Optional]*
11. Choose “Submit” below the note box to complete submission of this payment request to your organization’s Payment Approver(s).
  - After you submit this payment request, ELSA will send an email notification to all ELSA Payment Approvers authorized by your organization. The email addresses used are pulled from EDIAM user account information.
  - After you submit the payment request, the “Finalize” action becomes available to your Payment Approver(s).
  - Refer to [Requesting Scholarship Payments: Part II: Payment Approver Actions](#) as needed.

## Change Child Payment Amounts in a Payment Request

*Individual payment amounts in a payment request can only be changed while the payment request is in Open status. See [Payment Status View / Payments Page](#) for more details. Refer to [Payment Adjustments \(Corrections\)](#) if a payment request that was made for the wrong amount is in In Progress or Complete status.*

1. Follow the “Payment Status” link in the left navigation menu.
2. On the Payments page, identify the payment request containing the child attendance that you wish to update. Follow “View” to the right of that payment request.
3. On the Payment Detail page, find the child whose payment need to be updated. Follow the link from the amount of the payment.
4. In the pop-up window, choose the “Edit” action.
5. On the Child Payment page, make changes to the tuition, fees, and subtractions entries as applicable.
  - You may also correct the attendance counts as needed during this step.
6. Choose “Update” at the bottom of the page to save all changes.

## Change Child Attendance in a Payment Request

### ***If the payment request is in Open status...***

1. Follow the “Payment Status” link in the left navigation menu.
2. On the Payments page, identify the payment request containing the child attendance that you wish to update. Follow “View” to the right of that payment request.
3. On the Payment Detail page, find the child whose attendance counts need to be updated. Follow the link from the amount of the payment.
4. In the pop-up window, choose “Edit”.
5. On the Child Payment page, make changes to the attendance counts, payment amounts, and any other information that requires correction.
6. Choose “Update” at the bottom of the page to save all changes.

### ***If the payment request is in In Progress or Complete status...***

1. Follow the “Payment Status” link in the left navigation menu.
2. On the Payments page, identify the payment request containing the child attendance that you wish to update. Follow “View” to the right of that payment request.
  - If the payment request you are looking for has already been marked *Complete*, you must use the link in the instructional text at the top of the page to display that payment request.
3. On the Payment Detail page, find the child whose attendance counts need to be updated. Choose the “Edit” action.
4. On the Child Attendance page, make changes to the attendance counts.
5. Choose “Update” at the bottom of the page to save all changes.

## Change Admin Fee Amounts in a Payment Request

*Administrative payments can only be initiated by Area Administrators. Admin Fee amounts in a payment request can only be changed while the payment request is in Open status. See [Payment Status View / Payments Page](#) for more details. Refer to [Administrative Funds Corrections](#) section if a payment request that was made for the wrong amount is in In Progress or Complete status.*

1. Follow the “Payment Status” link in the left navigation menu to open the Payments page view.
2. On the Payments page, choose “View” on the line of the payment request containing the Admin Fee amounts you wish to change.
3. On the Payment Detail page that opens, follow the link from the amount displayed on the line of the payment summary in the Admin Payments section of the page.

- If you wish to delete all of the admin fees included in this payment request, choose “Delete” on the line of the payment summary in the Admin Payments section of the page. Confirm the action in the pop-up window to finish.
4. In the Fees pop-up window, choose “Edit” to open the Admin Payment page.
  5. On the Admin Payment page, makes changes to the admin fee entries as needed.
  6. Choose “Update” at the bottom of the page to save all changes.

# ELSA: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

## General System

### ► ***What is ELSA?***

ELSA is the Early Learning Scholarship Administration System. The system was created to provide state oversight of the Early Learning Scholarships Program. Since FY 2017, ELSA has been serving as the payment system for Early Learning Scholarships Program funds as well as the real-time system in which child scholarship awards and associated data and funds are managed.

### ► ***What information needs to be entered into ELSA?***

ELSA went live in January of 2015. Since that time, use of the ELSA system has evolved. Here is an outline of what should be entered into ELSA (effective FY 2017):

- Area Administrators:
  - All Pathway I scholarships awarded after 7/1/2014.
  - All new Pathway I scholarships as they are awarded.
  - All new Pathway II awards made by associated child care programs, as notified by the program.
  - Pathway I and Pathway II child care award payment requests (information from program invoices) from FY 2017 forward; child attendance data included.
- Pathway II-funded Head Starts, charter schools, and school districts:
  - All Pathway II scholarships that were awarded after 7/1/2014.
  - All new Pathway II scholarships as they are awarded.
  - Pathway II payment requests for their program from FY 2017 forward; child attendance data included.
- SSID Maintainers for resident school districts:
  - Starting 7/1/2015: SSID numbers for all scholarship recipient children in ELSA who are residents of the SSID Maintainer's authorizing school district (pulled in from the Student ID Validation System after generating/validating in that system).

### ► ***As a public program funded with scholarship dollars, do I have to enter scholarship data into ELSA and include those children in Early Education Student (EE Student) reporting?***

ELSA is a scholarship-specific system for administering state Early Learning Scholarships, which includes managing child scholarship records and payment of associated funds. EE Student is for reporting demographics and program enrollment for those children participating in: School Readiness, Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE), Head Start (elective participation of some grantees). We recognize that there is likely some overlap in

data entry for public early childhood programs and will automate work as possible as systems develop. Changes are expected as MDE enrollment data collections move to Ed-Fi and as other work progresses.

► ***Why am I able to enter ELSA without first having been assigned a specific ELSA role by our organization's Identified Official with Authority (IOwA)?***

All individuals with an SSID Maintainer role in the MDE Student ID Validation System (SIVS) are automatically granted access to ELSA. Individuals in this role do not need to have an ELSA role assigned to their EDIAM user account, and so IOwAs will not see an ELSA role called "SSID Maintainer" available in EDIAM. If logging into ELSA opens to the SSID Validation List page, or you have the "Validate SSIDs" link in the left-hand navigation menu, then you have an active SSID Maintainer role in the Student ID Validation System. If you need an additional access role in ELSA because you will manage child scholarship records or approve payment requests, the appropriate ELSA role may be assigned to you on your EDIAM user account by the IOwA of your organization.

See also: [ELSA Access and Data Privacy](#); [SSID Number Assignments in ELSA](#)

## Funds and Awarding

► ***Where are my funds/dollars/monies?***

If at any point you are unsure of how your funds are being used in a particular funding fiscal year, explore the Allocations and Awards by Allocation Detail pages in ELSA for summary and award-centered information. Additionally, the child level of the HTML version of the Fiscal Allocations report provides the same level of detail as the Awards by Allocation Detail page, but it is available in Excel output format. For child payment details, the Payment Status page and Payment History reports are also available.

See also: [Allocations Page](#); [Awards by Allocation Detail Page](#); [Reports in ELSA](#)

► ***What does my awarding/spending/available funding look like in 20XX?***

Refer to the Allocations and Awards by Allocation Detail pages in ELSA for summary and award-centered information by fiscal year. The child level of the HTML version of the Fiscal Allocations report provides the same level of detail as the Awards by Allocation Detail page, but it is available in Excel output format. For child payment details, the Payment Status page and Payment History reports are available.

If you are a Scholarship Administrator or Payment Approved for program that has been awarded Early Learning Scholarships – Pathway II funds, you may also reach out to [MDE.PathwayII@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.PathwayII@state.mn.us) as needed.

See also: [Allocations Page](#); [Awards by Allocation Detail Page](#); [Reports in ELSA](#)

► ***How do I change the year on a scholarship award?***

Administrators are not able to change the scholarship year of an award. A scholarship becomes associated to a funding fiscal year for 12 months beginning with the initial Award Start Date (Award Date). The Renewal Date listed on the Child Award page and elsewhere refers to the date that starts the child's next scholarship year and

is the point at which the scholarship is funded out of the next fiscal year's funds allocation. If the scholarship award has reached (or passed) its Renewal Date but the new scholarship tied to the current fiscal year has not been created yet, the scholarship has not renewed. The allocation year, or funding fiscal year, of an award is displayed on the Award List view and elsewhere.

See also: [Scholarship Renewal](#); [Managing Scholarship Funds](#); [Award List Page](#)

► ***My organization still has funding available in our allocation for the prior fiscal year, but I cannot create a new scholarship award with those funds because the application documentation for the child I wish to award was not verified prior to the end of that prior fiscal year. What can I do to award the remainder of my funding?***

While no new scholarships may be awarded using funds of a fiscal year if the June 30 end date has passed without award verification having been completed, you may be able to use your remaining funds in another way. One way would be to increase the Award Amount for one or more of your scholarship recipients with an active award in that previous fiscal year who have time remaining in their scholarship year and are currently awarded at a lower amount than guidance would allow for given the services the child is receiving. Another way the previous year's funds may be utilized is by "picking up" a child with a prior year award with a status of Cancelled (either PW-I or PW-II funding type) and awarding that child using their existing scholarship record. The child that is picked up may then be served under the new award until the end of their 12-month scholarship year (i.e., until the Renewal Date on the award) or until the child is no longer age eligible (i.e., until the Ineligible Date).

*Note: If you have questions about appropriate use of funds from prior fiscal years or would like more detailed guidance to funding in ELSA, please refer to the [State Early Learning Scholarships Policy Manual](#) or contact MDE at [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us). Pathway II-funded programs should contact [MDE.PathwayII@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.PathwayII@state.mn.us).*

See also: [Managing Scholarship Funds](#); [Awarding Using an Existing Child Record](#)

► ***When using the Begin New Award function, I am not able to select a child's existing record to add a new award from my organization. Why can't I select the record, and what should I do?***

Child records cannot be selected for a new award if either (a) the child aged out of eligibility for scholarships more than 105 days ago or (b) the child has an existing active award (Award Status = *Awarded*). In the case of (b), typically you will want to choose another child to award or connect with the family to discuss their intent. Reach out to [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us) with questions.

*Note: The availability of aged out children is tied to the earliest available service period dates for payment requests. In special cases, MDE may lift this restriction and provide resolution instructions specific to the case.*

See also: [Begin New Award / New Award - Child Search Page](#); [Awarding Using an Existing Child Record](#)



► ***I started a new award, but the Scholarship Year listed on the Child Award page says 2020 even though today we are in FY 2021. How do I change the year on this award?***

This year cannot be changed. The reason the award is automatically associated to the previous funding fiscal year is that the child is still within their 12-month scholarship year that began in FY 2020. This child can only be awarded and served with FY 2020 funds until their Renewal Date. The Renewal Date displayed on the Child Award page marks the first day the child is eligible to be awarded in the next scholarship year; you must wait until this date or after to award and serve the child using FY 2021 funds. Additionally, the child's FY 2020 award must be in *Cancelled* status to meet conditions for adding a new award. If the Renewal Date has passed and the FY 2020 award status remains Awarded, this means the child is still eligible for automated renewal and not yet available for new awarding.

See also: [Managing Scholarship Funds: Funding Fiscal Year vs Scholarship Year](#); [Child Award Page](#)

► ***Why can't I enter the Award Verification Date on the Scholarship Award page?/ Why can't I enter the Award Start Date on a new Child Award page?***

If today's date is still within the child's 12-month scholarship year funded out of the previous fiscal year's allocation, the Award Verification Date and Award Start Date entries carry over to any new award and those fields are not available to edit.

If the Award Verification Date field is available but you are not able to save the date you are entering, this is likely because the date you are entering is more than 90 days in the past. If you verified eligibility more than 90 days ago, you will either need to re-verify eligibility or reach out [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us) to request late entry of an award.

See also: [Managing Scholarship Funds: Funding Fiscal Year vs Scholarship Year](#); [Scholarship Award Page – Award Verification Date](#); [Child Award Page](#)

## Data Entry

► ***What if I do not have a middle name or middle initial for the child? What should I enter?***

Enter as much information on the middle name as was provided on the application, if it is reasonable to assume the application was completed with the full legal name. If the whole name is provided, enter the whole name. If a middle initial is provided, enter the initial without a period. If no middle name is provided, leave the field blank in ELSA and follow up with the applicant as appropriate.

If the parent/guardian provides the middle name or initial later or on associated enrollment paperwork, the child name information can be updated in ELSA. If the SSID number has already been assigned to the ELSA record, MDE is able to unlock that SSID status to allow for updates to identifying child information. Contact [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us) with questions.

See also: [Child Page: Usage Notes](#); [Child Data – Personally Identifiable Information](#)

**► What address should I enter if the parent has provided a home address and a mailing address?**

The address field on the Child page is intended to be filled in with the home address where the child resides. Administrators also have the option of entering a different address for the parent/guardian on the Parent/Guardian page if one is provided.

If you wish to track a different address for the parent/guardian, mark the “Different than child address” checkbox on the Parent/Guardian page. The Resident School District selection should be made based on the child’s home address. If you enter a mailing address in ELSA, enter it into the Home Address section of the Parent/Guardian page and be sure to track the resident address under the Home Address field on the Child page to ensure the correct Resident School District association.

*Note: Special address entry instructions apply if the child is identified as in foster care or receiving child protections services. Refer to the [Supplemental Guide for Priority Populations](#) for full details.*

**► If a child is in foster care, who is the legal guardian and what address should we use?**

For children in foster care, the county or tribal social services agency is the legal guardian of the child. A representative of the agency with authority to do so, generally identified as the foster care case worker, must complete and sign the scholarship application or renewal form. The agency should share resident school district based on the address of the home from which the child was removed, and this is what is used for the Resident School District selection in ELSA. The agency may also provide the foster parent’s address as the child’s current resident address, but the administrator should override the auto-filled Resident School District selection in ELSA if needed.

*Note: Policy details are provided in the [Supplemental Guide for Priority Populations](#) posted on the [Early Learning Scholarships Program homepage](#) of the Minnesota Department of Education website.*

**► What information should we enter if we have a parent with a confidential address?**

For families participating in the state’s [Safe at Home program](#), the address on the scholarship application and entered in ELSA should be the safe address used for that program. If there is a scholarship participant not in Safe at Home who needs their address to be confidential, please contact [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us).

Every individual with access to ELSA has limited security clearance to view and/or add parent and child data. What someone can see and do in the system is based on their assigned user access role and authorizing organization. However, all system users, including school district SSID Maintainers, are able to see child record information for at least some number of children in the system. This information includes the address entered into ELSA. Given this, confidential address considerations are necessary.

**► I cannot find the program or site the child is attending to make the selection in ELSA:**

The list of eligible programs in ELSA is created using the Parent Aware List of Scholarships-Eligible Programs sourced from the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS). Programs that are eligible to receive Early Learning Scholarships are updated every two weeks. If a program or site has lost its eligible Parent Aware status, the program/site will no longer be available for selection when adding a program selection record to a

scholarship award. In most cases, children attending a program that has lost eligibility can remain in the program and continue to receive the scholarship until their award renewal date, so ELSA will maintain the program selection on the child's award. If the program/site remains ineligible when the child's scholarship is up for renewal, the child must change programs/sites in order to use scholarship award funds to pay for services.

*Note: Refer to the [Early Childhood Programs in ELSA](#) section of the ELSA User Manual and the [State Early Learning Scholarships Policy Manual](#) for additional details.*

**► *I entered some child and/or award information, can I delete the record if this child/award record should not have been created?***

If an award has been made in ELSA by completing entry of all required elements in the award record package, then the SA/AA cannot delete the award or child record. If a child has an *Incomplete* or blank status award, then the SA/AA is able to delete that award. In those conditions, the "Delete" action button is available on the bottom of the Scholarship Award page, below the Attestations section.

See also: [ELSA Administration of Scholarships; Deleting Scholarship Records](#)

## Payments

**► *When building a payment request, I see the child I want to add listed on the Child Payments for Site page, but I cannot add the child to the payment request, and the child's name is a different color. What is the problem?***

If a child name is grayed out (may appear gold in color) on the Child Payments for Site page, that child is ineligible for payment. Hover over the child's name to see a reason. The most common reason is that an SSID number is not assigned to that child's ELSA record, but it may be that the attestations have not been completed on the scholarship record. Either of these two conditions makes the child record ineligible for payment. Once an SSID number has been assigned in ELSA, or the attestations section on the Scholarship Award page has been completed, the "Add" action button will become available for that child award on the Child Payments for Site page.

See also: [SSID Number Assignments in ELSA; Program Site Selection List, Child Payments for Site Pages: Usage Notes](#)

**► *When building a payment request, a child I expect to see is not included in the Children Attending Site list on the Child Payment for Site page. What should I do?***

If a child is not included on the Children Attending Site list, most likely that child's award record does not indicate the child attended the selected program during the selected service period. Review and update the program selection record(s) on the child's award as necessary. If the program selection information is correct, make sure you have chosen a service period during which the child attended the site. If the child had attendance dates during the service period you selected, next check to make sure you selected the correct site for the payment.

Another possible reason the child may not be listed is that the child aged out of scholarship eligibility before the service period of the payment request, or the child was age-eligible during that period but it has been an extended period of time since the child's Ineligible Date. If you have questions or concerns about the child's eligibility for scholarship payment during a particular service period, reach out to [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us).

See also: [Program Selection Page](#); [Program Site Selection List](#), [Child Payments for Site Pages: Usage Notes](#)

► ***On the Child Payments for Site page, what does the green “!” icon next to a child's name mean?***

The answer to this question is provided in the [System Messages and Icons](#) section below.

► ***On the Child Payment page, I tried to save the payment and attendance information but was not successful. The message “Payment amount is out of range.” displayed at the top of the page; what does this error mean?***

An “out of range” error on the Child Payment page means that the amount of the child payment the administrator tried to save was higher than the amount still available to spend on this award. Review the award summary information at the top of the Child Payment page. – The funding fiscal year of the award, award amount, expended amount, and remaining award balance (“Available”) are displayed in that section. – Some possible actions based on the summary information:

- Edit the child's award to increase the Award Amount to a higher allowable amount, then return to request the payment;
- Request no additional funds for services delivered to this child under this award, save the payment request with attendance counts for the billing period and a Tuition/Request Amount entry of \$0, explore other funding options or reach out to the invoicing program;
- Follow Request Payment again, this time selecting the award in the correct FY for the payment. *This is a possible action when the child's scholarship award has recently renewed.*

See also: [Managing Scholarship Funds](#); [Child Payment Page: Usage Notes](#); [Award Renewal – Payment Requests](#); [Scholarship Renewal](#)

## System Messages and Icons

► ***A duplicate SSID/child message is displayed. What does it mean and what should I do?***

A message referring to duplicate child records is most often seen when an SSID Maintainer is attempting to assign an SSID number to a child record in ELSA. If the duplicate SSID message happens in this context, it means the automated system match process found another child record in ELSA that has the same Student ID Validation System (SIVS) record and SSID number match as the record currently being reviewed for SSID number assignment, and the other (most likely original) child record already has the SSID number assigned to it in ELSA. Essentially, this message means there is a duplicate child record in ELSA. Duplicate child records are considered invalid and require removal by MDE.

If a duplicate child record message displays after choosing the “Create Child Record” action when you are using the Begin New Award function, or when saving the Child page, this means that the identifying child information you have entered is an exact match for an existing child record.

See also: [Duplicate Child Records: Prevention, Problems, Actions](#)

► **What does the green exclamation point (!) icon next to a child’s name mean?**

When building a payment request, children with either an award renewal or brand new award at some point within a month of the selected service period will have a green exclamation point (!) icon next to their names. If an award renewal has processed and the new award is available in the selected service period, the child is listed twice; once for the scholarship award in the previous fiscal year, once for the scholarship award in the renewed fiscal year. Based on attendance during this period and the Renewal Date of the previous award, payment amounts requested during the service period of renewal may need to be split over two fiscal years.

See also: [Scholarship Renewal](#); [Program Site Selection List](#), [Child Payments for Site Pages: Usage Notes](#)

## **Where can I find other guidance and training resources for the Early Learning Scholarships Program and ELSA?**

- [MDE Early Learning Scholarships program webpage](https://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/early/sch) (<https://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/early/sch>)
- [MDE Early Learning Scholarship Administration System \(ELSA\) webpage](https://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/datasub/ELSA) (<https://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/datasub/ELSA>)
- [MDE Pathway II Program Resources for Awardees support webpage](https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/early/elprog/sch/pathII/) (<https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/early/elprog/sch/pathII/>)
- For assistance with Pathway II implementation in your program and related funding inquiries, please email [MDE.PathwayII@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.PathwayII@state.mn.us).
- For assistance with ELSA system-related questions and resource access, please email [MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELSA@state.mn.us).
- For general inquiries related to the Early Learning Scholarships Program, please email [MDE.ELScholarships@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELScholarships@state.mn.us).
- For general assistance related to other State of Minnesota early learning programs, email the Early Learning Services division at [MDE.ELS@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ELS@state.mn.us).