

ALLOCATION DESCRIPTION

This funding is provided to address the costs associated with providing Early Childhood Services (ECS) instructional programs and services for **funded children** including **children with special education needs**. This is an allocation method only; **school jurisdictions** have the flexibility to use these funds to best meet their local needs.

ALLOCATION FORMULA

$$\text{ECS Base Instruction Allocation} = \text{Number of funded children} \times \text{ECS Base Instruction Rate}$$

ALLOCATION CRITERIA

1. Base instruction funding is provided for each **funded child** enrolled in an **ECS program** with a **school jurisdiction** that provides access to at least 475 hours of ECS instruction.
 - a) Some modification to this requirement is allowed for **children with special education needs** (mild, moderate, or severe and gifted and talented) who because of their special education needs or young age cannot be accommodated by a 475-hour program (e.g. they may require more or fewer hours).
 - b) Some **children with severe disabilities/delays**, either because of their disability or young age, may benefit from a combined program involving **centre based programming** hours and **family-oriented programming** sessions. A combined program must have a minimum of four **family-oriented programming** sessions to qualify for funding. See definition of **family-oriented programming** in the Glossary of Terms for more details.
2. An approved **ECS operator** must be prepared to accept and organize programming for all **funded children** for whom programming is requested, including **children with special education needs**.
3. A child referred to in Section 30(1)(a) of the *School Act* is not a resident or non-resident student of a **board**, therefore, **school jurisdictions** shall not use the residency or non-residency of the **parent** of a child in a district or **division** to:
 - a) deny a funded child access to the program; or
 - b) differentiate fees charged for the program.

4. For the purpose of claiming ECS Base Instruction funding, the ECS count must not include any **funded child** counted by another **ECS operator** for funding purposes in the school year. A **funded child** can only be claimed for funding by one **ECS operator** per year. The **school jurisdiction** claiming the **funded child** is responsible for ensuring the **funded child** was not claimed by another **ECS operator** in the current school year.

However, if a **funded child** is attending more than one **ECS program** on the **count date** and a resolution cannot be reached as to which **ECS operator** should count the **funded child**, then the ECS Base Instruction funding will be split accordingly. For example, a **funded child** may be enrolled in a morning program with one **ECS operator** and also enrolled in an afternoon program with another **ECS operator**.

Revised

If neither operator is aware of the duplicate enrollment until Alberta Education has identified the enrollment conflict and if, at that time, a resolution cannot be reached as to which **ECS operator** should count the **funded child**, then the ECS Base Instruction funding is split accordingly. If the child is a program unit funded (PUF) child, the ECS operator with the PUF will receive the ECS Base funding.

5. **School jurisdictions** are eligible for one year of ECS Base Instruction funding for regular ECS **funded children**. **Funded children** must be at least 4 years 6 months of age and less than 6 years of age on September 1. Alberta Education will not provide more than one year of funding for a regular ECS **funded child**. Note: the minimum age may vary depending on the school entrance age policy of the **school jurisdiction** the **funded child** will enter.
6. A **funded child with a disability/delay** may qualify for more than one year of funding. See definition of **funded child** in the Glossary of Terms. Note that an ECS **funded child** may not receive more than 3 years of ECS funding in total.
7. Alberta Education provides funding for a basic 475 hour **ECS program** which includes support for instructional salaries and benefits, learning resources, furnishings and equipment. **School jurisdictions** may not charge a fee for services provided within the basic 475-hour program.
8. A **school jurisdiction** may charge a fee to **parents** of **funded children** in a basic 475-hour program to offset non-instructional costs such as supplies, snacks and field trips.
9. **School jurisdictions** that offer an **ECS program** with more than 475 hours may charge a reasonable fee to cover the cost of the additional program hours.
10. Individuals aged 5 years and 6 months or older, but less than 6 years of age on September 1 are counted as **funded students** (rather than as **funded children**) if they are eligible to enter Grade 1 under the school entrance age policy of the **school jurisdiction**. The exceptions to this are:

- a) if the **funded child** has spent less than the number of years in the program for which he/she is eligible for funding, i.e., received less than three years of program unit funding; or
- b) if the **funded child** has not enrolled in an **ECS program** prior to this age; or
- c) if the **funded child** has been identified as **developmentally immature** (Code 10). This child is not eligible for special education needs funding and should not have been identified with special education needs in prior years.

In these circumstances, when in the opinion of the **school jurisdiction** and the **parent**, an **ECS program** is considered the most appropriate program; the individual is counted as a **funded child** under ECS.

11. Individuals aged 6 years or older, but less than 7 years of age on September 1 are counted as **funded students** except individuals who are in an **ECS program** and are:
 - a) **developmentally immature** (Code 10); or
 - b) entering an **ECS program** for the first time.

These individuals (a or b) are counted as **funded children**.

12. An individual who is eligible to proceed to Grade 1, but who has been identified as **developmentally immature** and whose program plan involves both ECS and Grade 1 instruction may be counted either as a **funded child** or as a **funded student**.
13. Individuals aged 6 to 7 years old, who require another year of ECS and who have been assessed as having special education needs (mild, moderate, severe or gifted and talented) must be counted as **funded students**.
14. Under no circumstances can an individual be counted as both a **funded student** and as a **funded child** in the same school year.
15. A **school jurisdiction** that receives provincial funding must ensure that **parents** can access a basic **ECS program** of 475 hours for their **funded children** without any charge for instruction.
16. When a **funded child** (not a child with special education needs) lives in a remote area and where there is no ECS program offered in a **school** within a reasonable transportation **distance**, the **school jurisdiction** may provide an **ECS home program** so that the child may have the opportunity to experience an **ECS program**. A certificated teacher must plan, deliver and evaluate the program and the program must have at least twenty-two visits to the family home for a minimum of 1.5 hours each -considered equivalent to a basic 475-hour kindergarten program. The frequency, setting and structure of an **ECS home program** must be determined in consultation with **parents**. An **ECS home program** is not a home-education kindergarten program and it is not **family-oriented ECS programming**.

DOCUMENTATION AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

1. Funding for ECS Base Instruction is made on the basis of **funded child** registration information submitted to Client Relationship Services.
2. For **ECS programs** beginning in September, the **count date** enrollment information must be submitted by the **submission date** (October 3) to the Client Relationship Services.
3. A second enrollment count can be taken on March 3 for **funded children** who are between the ages of 3 years 6 months to less than 4 years 6 months old on September 1 and who:
 - have **mild to moderate disabilities/delays** or who are gifted and talented; or
 - are eligible for English as a Second Language (ESL) funding; or
 - are eligible for Enhanced ESL/Francisation funding.

New

The March 3 count provides 50% ECS Base Instruction funding for in-year enrollment growth of these children. This count must be submitted by March 6.

4. For **ECS programs** beginning after the **count date**, the count will be taken as of the last **operating day** in the month in which the **ECS program** begins. The information must be submitted within three weeks of that day to the Client Relationship Services.

ECS programs beginning after the **count date** must also submit a letter to the Director of the School Finance Branch indicating that they are a late starting program, the start date of the program, and a list of all ECS children enrolled with their Alberta Student Numbers (ASN's). This information must be submitted to the School Finance Branch by November 30.

5. Adjustments to enrollment data:
 - a) if an adjustment is required to the enrollment data reported to the Client Relationship Services, **school jurisdictions** must ensure that changes are made to their modification file.
 - b) after receiving your first Revenue Allocation and Credit Enrollment Reporting System (RACERS) data, any modification required can be submitted using the "Add, Modify, Delete" form in the Funding Event Systems (FES) or using the paper form (Form 06AE1.2c), by the April 30 deadline.
6. An **ECS home program** must be approved by the Director of the Governance Support Branch on an individual child basis.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. Refer to Part 8, Section 8.7, Enrollment Counts and Conflicts, for additional information.

FEES AND DEDUCTIONSPortable Classroom Rental Fee:

Alberta Education will deduct from the funding amount due to a **school jurisdiction** a rental fee of \$100 a month (plus GST) for each ECS portable classroom under an existing lease agreement with Alberta Infrastructure. New requests for portable classrooms will not be considered.

Monthly fee deductions will be made for programs that operate for partial months if the program begins before the 15th day of the month or ends on or after the 15th day of the month.

Subject to Ministerial approval, a **school jurisdiction** will be given the opportunity to purchase a portable that is under an existing lease agreement with Alberta Infrastructure and is in good repair. Alberta Infrastructure is responsible for the disposition of a portable if it is no longer required or if the cost of maintenance and repair can no longer be justified.

School jurisdictions will need to apply under the current Capital Funding Plan for space required to replace the ECS portable.

REFERENCES

Kindergarten Program Statement Revised September 2005

Early Childhood Services Policy 1.1.3

Early Childhood Services Regulation AR 31/2002

Program Unit Funding: A Handbook for ECS Operators