

## **R7-2-1503. Department Responsibilities**

The Department shall:

1. On or before March 1 of each year, provide the Board with a handbook, developed in consultation with parents of children on the Program, that includes information relating to policies and processes of ESAs and complies with A.R.S. § 15-2401 et seq and this Article. The Board shall adopt the handbook on or before May 1 of each year. The Board shall limit substantive changes to the handbook to once every three years. The Board may approve changes to the handbook more frequently than every three years to conform and comply with changes to statute or this Article or at the Board's discretion. The handbook shall be posted on the Department's website and distributed to parents and shall clearly identify changes from the prior version, and include the date and time the new handbook was changed;

2. Establish a dedicated call center for exclusive use for the ESA Program that works in conjunction with the Exceptional Student Services division of the Department or its successor division. Subject to review and approval by the Board, the Department may contract with a third party to operate the call center;

3. Implement customer service performance management policies, procedures, and metrics;

4. Provide training to parents who use the private financial management firm contracted to assist with financial management of the program;

5. Beginning with the first regular Board meeting of 2021, provide a quarterly report to the Board on the ESA Program, including:

a. The number of students in the program disaggregated by eligibility, grade level and the school district or charter school associated with each student;

b. The annual award amount associated with each student;

c. The number of ESA applications received, approved and denied in the preceding quarter, including the justification for the denied applications;

d. The number of applications processed within 45 days of receipt and the number of administratively incomplete applications;

e. A summary of any parent input or feedback collected pursuant to R7-2-1503(6) and how the Department is responding to concerns submitted as part of the process;

f. Information on the private financial management firm contracted to assist with financial management of the Program, including:

i. The number and eligibility type of accounts utilizing the firm,

ii. The number of providers and vendors on the firm's platform,

- iii. Communications and training provided to parents,
  - iv. Concerns from parents submitted to the Department, the Treasurer and the private financial management firm and how the Department, Treasurer and private financial management firm are addressing the concerns, and
  - v. Any other information the Board requests.
6. Establish and provide to the Board a process to collect parent input and feedback regarding the Program.