



The Johnson County Empowerment/ECA School Ready Scholarship Program

Thank you for your interest in the Johnson County Empowerment/Early Childhood Iowa Area's (JCE/ECIA) **School Ready Scholarship** program.

The School Ready Scholarship Program can assist to fund full- or part-time preschool in a quality early education setting for eligible 3- and 4-year-old children.

Each Scholarship has a **Parent/Provider Agreement** that is signed by the parent, the early education provider, and JCE/ECIA. The Agreement includes specific information about each scholarship.

Below are some frequently asked questions to help you decide if you would like to be a program partner. If you have additional questions, you may contact the Early Childhood Coordinator at 319-356-6090 or empower@johnsoncountyiowa.gov

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. How much will the scholarship pay?

A1. Scholarships reimburse at your (Provider's) private pay rate up to the maximum amount stated in the Parent Provider Agreement. Scholarships provide tuition assistance up to the amount charged to all families in the program, to a maximum amount identified in the Parent Provider Agreement.

Q2. Most families pay in advance. Can I bill in advance?

A2. No. You will provide the service before submitting the invoice for payment. State funds do not allow pre-payment for services. You will invoice us at the end of the service period. Service period may be weekly or monthly, depending on your policies.

Q3. How do I request payment?

A3. At the end of each billing period, submit a signed invoice (provided to you as an excel document) for the approved hours/dates of services provided. Along with the invoice, send attendance records (signed by a parent) for all children receiving scholarships. Invoices are to be received by the 10th working day after the last day of the billing period. Invoices will be sent to:

Johnson County Empowerment
Attention: School Ready Scholarships
855 S. Dubuque Street, Suite 202B
Iowa City, IA 52240

Q4. How will I get paid?

A4. You will receive payment from Johnson County Empowerment/ECIA. Checks are issued by the Johnson County Treasurer's office.

Q5. What if our rates go up?



A5. The amount of tuition listed in the Agreement will remain in effect for the entire Agreement period. If you know that tuition will increase, notify Empowerment before the Agreement is signed so it can reflect the increase.

Q6. If there is a family co-pay, who collects it?

A6. Family co-pay is arranged between you and the parent. The parent is responsible for paying the you directly.

Q7. How long does it take to get paid?

A7. Invoices received by 9:00 a.m. on a Tuesday will be paid the following Friday.

Q8. Does the Scholarship cover deposits and registration fees?

A8. Scholarships can pay for up to half of any tuition deposits and/or registration fees that are also charged to private pay families. Parents pay the other half directly to you.

Q9. Does the Scholarship cover late fees or other fees?

A9. No. The parent is responsible for any late fees, late pick-up charges, transportation fees, or activity fees. The parent will pay those fees directly to you. You are responsible for collecting all fees assessed to the family directly from the parent.

Q10. Does the Scholarship cover transportation costs?

A10. No, Scholarships do not cover transportation costs.

Q11. Do I get paid when the child does not attend?

A11. Scholarships will pay for absences if this policy is also applied to private pay families. Scholarships will pay for only one calendar week of absences before a family is considered to have "abandoned" the program. Families may contact the provider and Johnson County Empowerment in advance of the absence to request an exception to this policy. Holidays will be paid only if the child is scheduled to be in attendance and these days are charged to private pay families.

Q12. Can I ask the family for additional funds?

A12. You may request additional payment from the parent for additional charges, services, days, and/or hours of care beyond what is covered in the Agreement. You may not charge families any fees that are not charged to other private pay families. You may not request additional payment from the parent for services covered by the Agreement.

Q13. The child has Child Care Assistance (CCA). Can we bill both CCA and Scholarships?

A13. You may not receive School Ready Scholarship Program funds for services that are being or could be reimbursed with federal, state, or local funds. Programs cannot supplant funds including federal (e.g. Head Start, state-administered Child Care Assistance), state (e.g. Shared Visions, Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Olds), or local (e.g. Home Ties, agency-specific early education contracts) funds.



Q14. Child Care Assistance (CCA) doesn't cover the full cost of the program. Do Scholarships pay the difference?

A14. No. Providers may not bill Scholarships or the family for the difference between the private pay rate and CCA reimbursement.

Q15. Our program wants to ask the family to leave. Can we do this?

A15. The provider and parent are expected to utilize multiple interventions to support the child's development before a child is expelled from a program. The parent will be asked to have the child assessed for developmental, behavioral, and medical issues. Programs are expected to utilize early childhood mental health consultation (e.g, the CART Program) and/or cooperate with a special education evaluation. If these things have happened and there is still reason to expel the child, you must give the parent and Empowerment/ECIA at least 10 working days' notice in writing before the expulsion. If these things have not happened, or you don't provide the required notice, you may become ineligible to receive Scholarship funds and be removed from the program.

Q16. What happens if the family decides to go to a different program?

A16. The Scholarship is child-specific. If the child changes programs, the Scholarship will go with the child. Any unspent scholarship funds remain with Empowerment.

Q17. If the family leaves the program without giving us notice, will we still get paid?

A17. The Scholarship will pay for up to one calendar week (5 consecutive days) of absence. At that point, unless other arrangements have been made, we will consider the child to have left the program. You will be paid for the first 5 consecutive days, but will not receive any additional payment.

Q18. Is there an attendance requirement?

A18. Yes. Children are expected to attend at least 75% of the time they are scheduled in order to receive full payment. If a child's attendance falls below 75%, you will contact the parent or Empowerment to develop a plan to increase attendance.

Q19. What preschools are eligible to participate?

A19. Eligible programs will have achieved and be current in at least one of the following:

- NAEYC or NAFCC accreditation
- QRS 3-5 or QRIS 1-5
- IQPPS Verified in the past 5 years
- ECERS-R (by CCR&R) average score of 5 and no score less than 2 in the past 5 years