

PDSES Grant Application Checklist and Approved Purchases Guide

How to get your PDSES application ready before the spring window opens, and what the \$1,500 pays for.



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What the PDSES grant is

The Parent-Directed Special Education Services (PDSES) grant puts \$1,500 into an account you control, and you spend it on approved learning materials and services for a child in special education. The Texas Education Agency pays the vendors directly, so the money never reaches your bank account, and the state will not pay you back for something you already bought. PDSES opens once a year in spring, and Texas funds a set number of accounts each year, so some eligible children in Texas do not get one.



The next application window is published as spring 2027, and the exact dates were not posted as of September 2026. You need a PDSES Parent Portal account on an email address you check daily, your child's state ID, and a current IEP. Get all of that ready now so you can file in the first few days once the dates go up.

Good to know

The grant is a one-time \$1,500 account. Your child qualifies if they are enrolled in a Texas public school or open-enrollment charter in Pre-K through 12th grade, receive special education under an active IEP, and have never received a PDSES or SSES account.

Before the window opens

The Texas Education Agency posts the window months ahead on the SPEDTex site and by email. Have all of this ready anyway, because the prep takes longer than the form does.

- ☐ **Create a PDSES Parent Portal account**

The portal is where you apply, so set the account up months ahead of the window. It was called My SPEDTex until recently.

- ☐ **Use an email address you check every day**

Window announcements, application updates, and the ClassWallet activation notice all arrive by email. Add PDSESHelp@region10.org, PDSESInfo@tea.texas.gov, and info@classwallet.com to your safe-sender list so none of it lands in spam.

- ☐ **Join the PDSES email list**

Program updates and reminders go out on that list. Window dates are also posted on the SPEDTex site, so watch both.

- ☐ **Find your child's 10-digit state Unique ID**

The UID is the easiest way to add your child in the portal. The portal can also look them up by Social Security number, or take a State Alternate ID, which is an S followed by eight digits.

- ☐ **Do not use the district or school student ID**

The number printed on a school portal is a different number, and one that does not match state records stalls your application.

Before the window opens (continued)

☐ **Confirm the IEP is current and active**

Your child has to receive special education under an active IEP for the school year you apply in, and stay eligible while the state reviews the application.

☐ **Decide which parent will apply**

Only one parent can apply for a student, and a student can sit on only one portal account. A second parent who tries to add the same child gets an error.

☐ **Plan a separate form for each eligible child**

Every child gets their own account, and siblings each need their own application.

☐ **Save the program's contact details**

The PDSES team answers at PDSESHelp@region10.org or 1-855-773-3839. ClassWallet answers at help@classwallet.com or 877-969-5536.

Applying, step by step

Step 1: Log into the PDSES Parent Portal

You apply through the PDSES Parent Portal, and you need a portal account to get in. Create it well before the window so you are not resetting a password while the window is open.

Step 2: Add your student

In the portal you add your student with a state ID, and the 10-digit Unique ID is the easiest one to use. The portal can also look your child up by Social Security number, or take a State Alternate ID, which is an S followed by eight digits.

Step 3: Submit the application

Once your student is added, submit the application. Apply in the first days of the window, since applications are funded in the order they arrive within each priority group.

Step 4: Check your status while the state reviews

Your status moves to Submitted, then In Review if you uploaded documents, then either Eligible or Denied. An eligible application is then marked Funded or Waiting to be funded. The Texas Education Agency split the applications from the April 2026 window into three funding groups, and the first group of 19,000 accounts is projected for fall 2026, with the other two projected for fall 2027 and fall 2028. You can check a projected date for your own file with the Funding Timeline Lookup Tool, which takes your 9-digit application ID.

Applying, step by step (continued)

Step 5: Activate ClassWallet within 30 days

Once your child is funded, ClassWallet emails you, and you have 30 days to log in and sign the parental agreement. That email can take up to six weeks to arrive after your status changes to funded, so keep watching your spam folder in the weeks after funding is announced. The account does not open until you sign.

Step 6: Shop the ClassWallet marketplace

The marketplace sorts vendors by category, and some vendors offer direct pay so you can order without going through the general storefront. Each order is reviewed on its own and that review can take up to 30 business days, so order early and write a justification for anything expensive or unusual.

Step 7: Appeal a denial before the deadline

A denial applies only to this grant, and your child's IEP and school services continue as before. Appeals are due by 5:00 pm Central on the last Friday in January following the most recent window.

Priority groups and timing

Stage	How it works	Timing
Window opens	One application window each year, in spring	April 1 to April 30, 2026 for the last cycle
Next window	Dates go out on the PDSES email list and get posted on the SPEDTex site	Spring 2027, with exact dates not posted as of September 2026
Priority group	Students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch are funded first, by law	Taken from economic-disadvantage codes already in state records
Order inside the group	Applications are funded in the order they arrive	Filing early helps, and it does not change the priority order

Priority groups and timing (continued)

Stage	How it works	Timing
Review	The state reviews and processes applications	Over the summer after the window
Funds arrive	Approved accounts are funded in three groups	Fall 2026, fall 2027, and fall 2028
ClassWallet activation	Sign the parental agreement to open the account	Within 30 days of the ClassWallet email
Order review	Each purchase is reviewed on its own	Up to 30 business days

Texas pays for a set number of accounts each year, so an eligible child can still end up on a waitlist. A status of eligible, waiting to be funded means the state agrees your child qualifies and the money has not reached you yet. Placement on the waitlist does not guarantee that an account will be awarded. The program also tells parents not to plan services, purchases, or expenses around an expected award date, because the three funding groups run into fall 2028.

What you can buy and what you cannot

Category	Clears review	Does not clear review
Technology	One computer and one tablet per student, plus learning software	Extra computers or tablets beyond that limit
Curriculum	Books, structured literacy programs, and practice materials	Food and drinks
Sensory tools	Noise-canceling headphones, weighted lap pads, visual schedules, timers, first-then boards	Medical supplies, including first aid kits, thermometers, and hygiene items
Communication	AAC devices and apps, which give a child a way to communicate besides speech	Smart speakers and streaming devices

What you can buy and what you cannot (continued)

Category	Clears review	Does not clear review
Furniture	Desks, chairs, and organizers used for direct learning	General furniture for the house
Services	Speech therapy and private tutoring, where a vendor is listed that year	Daycare, legal advocacy fees, and evaluation or assessment fees
Household and security	Nothing in this category clears review	Cleaning supplies, vacuums, coffee makers, kitchen items, appliances, doorbell and surveillance cameras

Every purchase has to show a direct educational benefit, and each order is reviewed on its own. The published price limits are \$250 for headphones, \$400 for printers, \$300 for monitors, \$300 for desks, \$200 for desk chairs, \$100 for sports equipment, \$100 for speakers, and \$100 for microphones. The guidelines say that list does not cover every threshold, so other items may have limits too. You can go over a limit if you write a justification naming the learning goal the item serves, and ordering several of the same item can get an order flagged as excessive. Which sensory or communication tools help an autistic child is a clinical question, so ask the people who work with your child before you spend, especially on an AAC device. If you are not sure an item or a service will clear review, email PDSESpurchasing@region10.org before you order.

Mistakes to avoid

All of these can be fixed before you apply.

☐ **Waiting until the window's last week**

Awards go out in order within each priority group, so file in the first days of the window.

☐ **Entering the wrong student ID number**

The portal needs the 10-digit state UID, and a district or school number does not match state records, which stalls your application.

☐ **Missing the ClassWallet activation email**

Check spam in the weeks after funding is announced, because the parental agreement has to be signed within 30 days.

☐ **Placing an order before you check the rules**

ClassWallet handles returns, refunds, and order cancellations. Replacements for items that are damaged, lost, or stolen are rarely approved, and a denied order costs you weeks of review time, so confirm an item qualifies before you order.

Mistakes to avoid (continued)

☐ **Assuming the grant will pay for ABA therapy**

PDSES pays for services with a direct educational benefit, and the program does not list ABA therapy among its approved service types. Email PDSESpurchasing@region10.org before you order any therapy service.

☐ **Skipping the application because funding might run out**

A waitlisted application can still be funded later, and the program is clear that a place on the waitlist does not guarantee an account.

☐ **Filing one application for two eligible children**

Each child gets their own account, so each one needs a separate form.

☐ **Assuming a past SSES account does not count**

SSES is the same grant under an older name, so a child who received one in a past year is not eligible for PDSES.

Sources

Sources change over time, so check each one before you act on it.

SPEDTex: PDES overview and eligibility

<https://spedtex.org/resources/pdes>

SPEDTex: PDES frequently asked questions

<https://www.spedtex.org/resources/pdes/frequently-asked-questions>

SPEDTex: PDES application process and application statuses

<https://www.spedtex.org/resources/pdes/application-process>

SPEDTex: PDES projected funding timelines and lookup tool

<https://spedtex.org/resources/pdes-application-projected-funding-timelines>

PDES purchasing guidelines, July 2025

<https://www.spedtex.org/sites/spedtex.tea.texas.gov/files/2025-07/PDES%20Purchasing%20Guidelines%20-%20English%202007-2025.pdf>

PDES Parent Portal

<https://parentportal.spedtex.org>

SPEDTex: PDES providers and vendors

<https://www.spedtex.org/resources/pdes/providers-and-vendors>

SPEDTex: criteria for becoming a PDES service provider or vendor

<https://www.spedtex.org/resources/pdes-criteria-and-information-becoming-service-provider-or-vendor>

SPEDTex: PDES and ClassWallet

<https://www.spedtex.org/resources/pdes-classwallet>

ClassWallet: Texas programs

<https://classwallet.com/texas/>

Texas Education Agency bulletin: 2026 PDES application window

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/TXTEA/bulletins/3ee0603>

This kit is general information and is not medical or legal advice. Talk to a qualified professional about your child's situation.

Start ABA through insurance or Medicaid

PDSES pays for learning tools and for services with a direct educational benefit, and the program does not list ABA therapy among its approved service types. ABA is usually approved and paid through insurance or Medicaid, which is why families start it there. You do not have to wait for the spring window to begin. Alpaca Health checks your Texas coverage, matches your child with an independent, credentialed BCBA, and submits the authorization paperwork for you. Sessions run at home, at school, at daycare, in-center, or by telehealth, and your BCBA can coordinate goals with the school team so the tools you buy with grant money get used in therapy too.



When you are ready

Start with Alpaca Health →

<https://secure.alpacahealth.io/signup>



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