New Directors Monthly Update: October 2018

SHARS Reimbursement Report Survey

October 31, 2018 is the deadline for LEAs (local educational agencies, which includes ISDs and Open-Enrollment Charter Schools) to submit the SHARS Reimbursement Report Survey to TEA. Information regarding the reporting requirement is found in the 9/27/18 To The Administrator Addressed Letter.

Is This Survey Requirement Applicable to Me?

This requirement is applicable to all LEAs that (a) received IDEA-B funds in 2017-2018, (b) regardless of whether your LEA participates in SHARS (School Health and Related Services) Reimbursement.

a) If you received IDEA-B funds from TEA via the 2017-2018 Special Education Consolidated Grant application, the requirement is applicable to you. If you were a member of a special education shared services arrangement (SSA)* in 2017-2018, the requirement is applicable to you.
   o Even though members of an SSA don’t receive the IDEA-B funds directly from TEA, the Fiscal Agent receives the funds on behalf of the members. So, technically, members of a special education SSA receive IDEA-B funds.

b) Even if your LEA does not participate in SHARS, you must submit the survey and indicate in the survey that your LEA does not participate. TEA needs a response from everyone.

What is SHARS Reimbursement?

The School Health and Related Services (SHARS) program allows LEAs (including special education SSAs*) to request reimbursement for Medicaid-related services provided to certain students with disabilities. Services must be medically necessary and reasonable to ensure that children with disabilities are able to participate in the educational program. The ARD committee determines SHARS services.

TEA’s SHARS webpage provides information on participation in the SHARS Reimbursement program.

Participation in the SHARS Reimbursement program is optional.

If you have additional questions regarding the SHARS Reimbursement program, please contact Evelyn Villarreal at ESC-20: Email evelyn.villarreal@esc20.net or call (210) 370-5479.

Why Must I Complete the Survey?

When LEAs participate in SHARS Reimbursement, the money they receive goes into the LEA’s general fund to be spent on anything the LEA chooses. Even though the reimbursement was generated on special education services provided by the LEA, the reimbursement does not have to be spent on special education. The reimbursement can be spent on anything.

Some LEAs choose to spend the reimbursement on additional special education expenditures, although they are not required to do so.

TEA needs to know if the LEA chose to use the reimbursement on additional special education expenditures. Since the reimbursement went into the LEA’s general fund, TEA is dependent on the LEA to self-report on whether the SHARS Reimbursement was spent on additional special education expenditures.
Why Does TEA Need to Know if I Spent the SHARS Reimbursement on Additional Special Education Expenditures?

SHARS Reimbursement has a connection to Maintenance of Effort (MOE), a fiscal requirement of IDEA-B. The IDEA-B MOE requirement specifies that LEAs must spend the same amount of state and/or local funds on special education expenditures as they spent during the previous year, unless they qualify for certain exceptions and adjustments. TEA reviews and compares the dollar amount of the LEAs’ special education expenditures made from state and/or local funds to determine if the LEA is compliant with MOE.

If an LEA participates in SHARS Reimbursement and spends the reimbursement on additional special education expenditures, TEA must subtract that amount from the total special education expenditures being analyzed for MOE compliance. If the LEA does not participate in SHARS Reimbursement, or does participate but doesn’t spend the SHARS Reimbursement on additional special education expenditures, there is no effect on the amount of expenditures used toward determining MOE compliance.

Since the SHARS Reimbursement is added to the LEA’s general fund, the only way TEA can know if the LEA spent the SHARS Reimbursement on additional special education expenditures is through self-reporting by the LEA. That is the purpose of the SHARS Reporting survey.

Action Steps

1) Ensure your LEA completes the SHARS Reimbursement Report Survey by the deadline of 10/31/18.
   a. It is a local decision on which LEA staff member submits the survey. It might be the Special Education Director or it might be business office staff.

2) Keep a copy for your records.
   a. After submitting the survey, you will be able to download a PDF copy of your survey responses.
   b. You will also receive a confirmation email after submitting the survey.
   c. It is important to keep a copy of your survey response because you (or your business office) will need this information when performing a self-analysis of MOE compliance.

3) If your response to the survey was option 3 (you participate in SHARS Reimbursement and you spend the money on additional special education expenditures), keep documentation that supports the dollar amount you report on the survey. TEA might select your LEA during a random validation review and will ask for the supporting documentation.

*Applicable to Special Education SSAs; Not applicable to RDSPD SSAs (Regional Day School Programs for the Deaf) Not applicable to VI (Visual Impairment) Cooperatives