

## Table of Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	3
<b>PURCHASING POLICIES</b> .....	3
<b>GENERAL PURCHASING PROVISIONS</b> .....	3
<b>ELIGIBLE EXPENSE CATEGORIES</b> .....	4
<b>INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS</b> .....	4
<b>Digital Devices</b> .....	4
<b>Digital Periphery Devices</b> .....	4
<b>Assistive Technology Devices (Devices that allow students to access instruction or instructional content)</b> .....	5
<b>Training On the Use of Eligible Devices</b> .....	5
<b>Maintenance Agreements for Eligible Devices</b> .....	5
<b>Digital Materials</b> .....	5
<b>Stand-Alone Online Class</b> .....	5
<b>Internet Resources</b> .....	6
<b>Sensory Material</b> .....	6
<b>Physical Education</b> .....	6
<b>Books</b> .....	7
<b>Musical Instruments &amp; Equipment</b> .....	7
<b>Electives</b> .....	7
<b>Field Trips</b> .....	8
<b>At Home Classroom Furnishings</b> .....	8
<b>School Supplies</b> .....	9
<b>Learning Manipulatives/Creative Play Items</b> .....	9
<b>Educational Subscription Kits</b> .....	9
<b>Educational Software/Subscriptions</b> .....	10
<b>CURRICULUM</b> .....	10
<b>SPECIALIZED SERVICES</b> .....	10
<b>TUITION AND FEES</b> .....	11
<b>Tuition and Fees at an Eligible Private School</b> .....	11
<b>Tuition and Fees for Tuition and Fees for Home Education Programs</b> .....	12
<b>Tuition and Fees at an Eligible Postsecondary Institution</b> .....	12
<b>Tuition and Fees for an Approved Preapprenticeship Program</b> .....	13

Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA)  
Purchasing Guide 2023-24

<b>Tuition and Fees for a Private Tutoring Program</b> .....	13
<b>Tuition and Fees for Part-Time Tutoring Services or Fees for Choice Navigator Services</b> .....	13
<b>Tuition and Fees at an Approved Online or Virtual Provider</b> .....	15
<b>Tuition and Fees as a Private-Pay Student for Florida Virtual School</b> .....	15
<b>STANDARDIZED TESTING FEES</b> .....	16
<b>CONTRIBUTIONS TO APPROVED COLLEGE SAVINGS PROGRAMS</b> .....	16
<b>Stanley G. Tate Florida Prepaid College Program</b> .....	16
<b>Florida College Savings Program</b> .....	16
<b>CONTRACTED SERVICES PROVIDED BY A PUBLIC SCHOOL OR SCHOOL DISTRICT</b> .....	17
<b>FEES FOR SPECIALIZED SUMMER EDUCATION PROGRAMS</b> .....	17
<b>FEES FOR SPECIALIZED AFTER-SCHOOL EDUCATION PROGRAMS</b> .....	17
<b>TRANSITION SERVICES PROVIDED BY JOB COACHES</b> .....	18
<b>ANNUAL EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION FEES</b> .....	18
<b>TUITION AND FEES FOR AN APPROVED VPK PROGRAM PROVIDER OR AN APPROVED SCHOOL READINESS PROVIDER</b> .....	19
<b>HORSE THERAPY</b> .....	20
<b>MUSIC AND ART THERAPY</b> .....	20
<b>REVIEW</b> .....	20

## Family Empowerment Scholarship for Unique Abilities Purchasing Guide

### INTRODUCTION

Florida state law now requires Scholarship Funding Organizations (SFOs) to prepare a purchasing guide for scholarship students' guardians and update this guide at least annually.

### PURCHASING POLICIES

As per Florida statute s. 1002.394, Family Empowerment Scholarship for Unique Abilities (FES-UA) scholarship funds must be used to meet the educational needs of an eligible student. Using a student's scholarship funds for other purposes is a crime. For example, purchasing a product with scholarship funds, returning that product, and then spending the returned funds on items that do not meet the educational needs of the scholarship student is illegal. Please contact your Scholarship Funding Organization (SFO) if you have questions about the legality of a financial transaction using scholarship funds prior to engaging in this transaction.

SFOs may require guardians to use an online platform for purchases provided their choice of curriculum or academic programs is not limited. SFOs may also reimburse guardians for their purchase of eligible products or services that meet their student's educational needs. Please verify with your SFO that a purchase is eligible for reimbursement before making the purchase. If a guardian purchases a product identical to one offered by an SFO's online platform for a lower price, the SFO is required by law to reimburse the guardian for the cost of the purchase.

Per Florida Statute s. 1000.21(5), "Parent" means either or both parents of a student, any guardian of a student, any person in a parental relationship to a student, or any person exercising supervisory authority over a student in place of the parent. For the purposes of the Purchasing Guide, the term "Guardian" will be used to include all eligible parents and guardians above who manage an ESA account for an eligible FES-UA student.

### GENERAL PURCHASING PROVISIONS

Product Safety: For safety reasons, SFOs review manufacturers' recommended minimum age use when determining if an education product is appropriate for a student.

Monetary Benefit: A family may not receive a payment, refund, or rebate of scholarship funds from a vendor.

Duplicate Billing: Products or services paid for by another agency (e.g., health insurance, Healthcare Savings Accounts (HSAs), or a School Readiness program) may not be submitted for reimbursement.

Medical Services: With the exception of those Specialized Services outlined in FES-UA law (including licensed ABA, Speech, Occupational, or Physical therapies), medical services (including doctors' visits, examinations, and medical devices) are not eligible expenses.

Out-of-State Service Providers: With the exception of credentialed providers whose services may be delivered virtually (e.g., tutors, licensed therapists), services must be delivered in Florida.

Purchase Location: Purchases made online through the direct buying platform must be shipped to the Florida residential address associated with the student's scholarship account.

Prorating Payments for Multi-User Items: Other family members often use products purchased with scholarship funds. Consequently, funding for these multi-user items is prorated to only cover the scholarship student's cost.

Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA)  
Purchasing Guide 2023-24

Public Schools Equivalency: Whether a product or service is available in public schools helps SFOs determine whether an item may be purchased with scholarship funds.

Pre-Authorizations:

- The Pre-Authorization process may be used to determine the eligibility of a purchase prior to spending funds.
- In some categories, Pre-Authorization is required.

### **ELIGIBLE EXPENSE CATEGORIES**

FES-UA scholarship funds may be used to purchase educational products and services in legislatively defined categories outlined in Florida statute s. 1002.394(4)(b). Spending limits and frequency of purchase policies are listed below by item and category.

### **INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

Eligible instructional materials include:

#### **Digital Devices**

- Desktop Computer
- Laptop Computer
- Web-centric Laptop Computers (such as Chromebook or Surface)
- Tablet
- e-Reader
- Game consoles (must be purchased with educational software)

Prohibited Items:

- Gaming Systems/Consoles purchased without accompanying educational software.
- Cellular Phones
- Smart Watches

Frequency of Purchase: 2 years

#### **Digital Periphery Devices**

- Keyboard
- Computer Monitor
- Mouse/Touchpad/Trackball
- Printer (including 3D Printers)
- Speakers
- Headsets
- External Drive (including Hard Drive and Flash Drive)
- Scanner
- Digital Pencil
- TTY/TDD Conversion Modems
- Virtual and Augmented Reality Headsets/Googles
- Wands and Sticks
- Wi-Fi Routers, Modems, and Extenders

Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA)  
Purchasing Guide 2023-24

*Multiples of items require a Pre-Authorization.*

**Assistive Technology Devices (Devices that allow students to access instruction or instructional content)**

Examples include the following:

- Augmentative Communication Device
- Braille Displays
- Braille Embossers
- FM System
- Interactive Metronome
- Light Signaler Alerts
- Proloquo2Go
- Reading Tools
- Screen Magnifiers/Enlargers
- Screen Readers
- Sip-And-Puff Systems
- Smart Board
- Speech or Voice Recognition Programs
- Student Response Systems
- Talking and Large Print Word Processors
- Test-to-Speech (TTS) or Speech Synthesizers
- TTY/TTD Conversion Modems
- Vibroacoustic Therapy

Additional Assistive Devices may be eligible with Pre-Authorization

**Training On the Use of Eligible Devices**

Scholarship funds may be used to train guardians or students on how to use digital devices, digital peripheral devices, or assistive technology devices.

**Maintenance Agreements for Eligible Devices**

Maintenance agreements for eligible devices purchased with FES-UA funds are eligible. Maintenance agreements are service agreements with a device manufacturer or vendor to support regular service on that device. Maintenance agreements do not include warranties, extended warranties, or service contracts.

**Digital Materials**

Scholarship funds may be used to purchase digital material such as CDs, DVDs, and digital documents, including ebooks, and audiobooks. Subscription or membership access to eBooks or Audiobooks for the student is eligible.

**Stand-Alone Online Class**

Guardians may purchase online courses that are appropriate for their scholarship student. Scholarship funds may not be used to pay for full-time online instruction. A stand-alone online class does not permit live, interactive instruction.

Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA)  
Purchasing Guide 2023-24

### Internet Resources

Guardians may use scholarship funds to pay for in-home internet services at the Florida residential address associated with their student's scholarship application. Modem or router rental from the internet service provider and billed with a monthly internet service is also eligible.

### Sensory Material

Sensory materials that encourage learning through sensory stimulation are eligible.

Eligible items include:

- OT Augmentation
- PT Augmentation
- Sensory Swings
- Specialized Furniture/Comfort Chairs
- Airwalkers
- Therapy Chairs
- Balance Balls
- Sensory tables
- Manipulatives & Hand On Materials
- Fidgets/Boinks
- Sensory Lighting (including Lava Lamps, Bubble Tubes)
- Sensory Bundles

### Physical Education

Authorized P.E. expenses include sports lessons, fees, or equipment (subject to manufacturer's age recommendations), including:

- Home Playsets/Swing sets (including rubber mulch or safety materials)
- Exercise Equipment (including stationary bikes, treadmills/walking pads, weight benches)
- Ping Pong Tables/Table Sports (Ping Pong, Basketball Shooting Games, Foosball Tables, Air Hockey)
- Sports lessons (including individual training or group trainings)
- Sports Equipment (balls, basketball goals, racquets, etc.)
- Team fees (including registration, equipment rental, and competition fees)
- Stand-Alone Athletic Event Fees (including foot or bike race registrations, endurance events, Special Olympics Registrations)
- Gym/fitness memberships or "Class Passes" (for the student only), including on demand fitness classes.
- Individual trampolines
- Swim goggles, snorkels, masks, fins
- Skateboards
- Kayaks, Canoes, Surfboards, Boogieboards, Skim boards, Stand-Up Paddleboards

Note: Adaptive exercise equipment is eligible with Pre-Authorization.

Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA)  
Purchasing Guide 2023-24

Prohibited Items:

- Motorized equipment (treadmills or walking pads are eligible)
- Trampolines (individual exercise trampolines are eligible)
- Motorized Boats
- Motorized scooters or ride-ons (including golf carts)
- In-Ground or Above Ground Swimming Pools
- Single-admission leisure events (including equipment rental)
- Activities occurring outside of the state of Florida that are not Pre-Authorization
- Pool Tables

## Books

Books are neither capped in annual spending nor subject to frequency of purchase. Two copies of a book are permitted in the event that the second copy is used as a parent or companion reader. However, requests for more than two copies of the same book will be denied.

Books with content that may pose a threat to the student or others or promote violence or criminal behavior are ineligible for purchase.

## Musical Instruments & Equipment

Prohibited Expenses: Maintenance, tuning, insurance or service agreements and repair of instruments.

## Electives

Lessons, equipment, or consumables generally associated with elective or enrichment (non-core academic subjects), may be purchased, including:

- Music Lessons
- Art Lessons
- Art Supplies (including subscription kits)
- Club Fees (such as Boy/Girl Scouts, and 4H/FFA Clubs)
- Cooking Lessons
- Cooking Supplies (including subscription kits)
- Drama Lessons
- Foreign Language Lessons
- Sewing Lessons
- Sewing Supplies
- Animal Husbandry Lessons or Training Programs
- Animal Husbandry Supplies
- Woodworking/Building Lessons or Training Programs
- Woodworking/Building Supplies (tools must satisfy manufacturer age recommendations)
- Mechanical Lessons or Training Programs
- Gardening or Horticultural Lessons or Training Programs
- Garden Supplies (tools must satisfy manufacturer age recommendations)
- Safety items (including protective gloves and goggles)
- Programming/Digital Production Lessons
- Enrichment Classes/Courses

Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA)  
Purchasing Guide 2023-24

Eligible providers for enrichment or elective subjects should have one of the following:

- A valid or expired Florida educator's certificate.
- At least 3 years of experience in the relevant subject area as demonstrated by employment records.
- Currently enrolled in a postsecondary educational institution as a student of the relevant subject area.
- A degree from a postsecondary educational institution in the relevant subject area.
- A certification or national accreditation in the relevant subject area.

Prohibited Items:

- Commercial-Grade Tools/Equipment

*These reimbursements requests must be accompanied by educational benefit documentation (standardized form will be provided)*

### Field Trips

The following items are eligible for student admission only. Family admissions reimbursements will be prorated to cover only the student's cost. A student's ticket price must be age appropriate. Tickets or admission must be purchased directly from the venue/vendor. Secondary market or resale tickets are not reimbursable.

- Museum Admission
- Aquarium/Zoo Admission
- Programs or Events at Museums/Zoos/Aquariums
- Museum or Library Memberships
- Aquarium/Zoo Memberships
- Ticketed Events (including plays, musicals, or orchestral performances)
- Admission to Cultural Programming Events or Facilities
- Admission to a Florida theme park
- School Field Trips fees paid to an Eligible Private School

*These reimbursements requests must be accompanied by educational benefit documentation (standardized form is provided)*

### At Home Classroom Furnishings

Furnishing used to create an at-home classroom are eligible expenses, including:

- Desk (age/size appropriate)
- Chair (age/size appropriate)
- Storage (including bookshelves and storage or organization containers)
- Architect/Drafting Table (age/size appropriate)
- Picnic Table
- Televisions (up to 55")



Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA)  
Purchasing Guide 2023-24

- Indoor Projector
- Standing or Drop-Down Screens
- Whiteboards
- Rugs or Foam Tiles
- Maps/Globes/Atlases
- Bulletin Boards
- Timers/Clocks
- Educational Posters/Visual Supports

Prohibited Items:

- Multiples of an item type

Frequency of Purchase: Televisions may be purchased once every 2 years.

### **School Supplies**

School supplies generally found or required in classrooms may be purchased, including:

- Writing Utensils
- Crayons/Colored Pencils/Markers
- Math tools (Abacus/Compasses/Protractors/Rulers)
- Tape/Paperclips/Staplers
- Calculators
- Paper
- Notebooks/Folders/Binders
- Planners/Organizers
- Bookbags (Backpacks, Tote Bag, Messenger Bags)
- Lunchboxes

### **Learning Manipulatives/Creative Play Items**

Eligible items utilized for tactile learning, academic practice, or creative play including:

- Legos
- Dolls (and accessories)
- Stuffed Animals
- Blocks
- Dominoes/Marbles
- Puzzles
- Board/Card Games
- Chess/Checker Sets
- Dress Up Clothing
- Play Kitchens
- Water Tables

Games or puzzles with content that may pose a threat to the student or others or that promote violence or criminal behavior are ineligible for purchase.

### **Educational Subscription Kits**

Educational Subscription Kits curated and mailed to the home by a kit company are eligible for reimbursement. Subscriptions must be age and size appropriate.

### **Educational Software/Subscriptions**

The following items are eligible for single use/student pricing only. Reimbursements for multi-user access subscriptions will be prorated to only cover the student's cost.

Eligible items include:

- Software Subscriptions (Word Processing, Microsoft Office, Adobe, Video or Music Editing Software, LexisNexis, QuickBooks)
- Magazine Subscription
- Newspaper subscription

Prohibited Expenses

- Video/TV/Online Streaming Services
- Musical Streaming Services
- In-Game Purchases or Credits
- Live Television
- Social Media (except LinkedIn Learning for Students)

### **CURRICULUM**

State policy defines curriculum as a complete course of study for a particular content area or grade level, including any required supplemental materials, teachers' manuals, and associated online instruction.

For the purposes of this section, a complete course of study may include postsecondary programs aimed at career readiness or trade certification.

Guardians may choose to submit a Pre-Authorization to determine expense eligibility prior to purchasing a curriculum.

Curricula must be publicly available for SFOs to determine eligibility. Curricula that poses a safety threat to the student or others will not be approved.

### **SPECIALIZED SERVICES**

Specialized services are those provided by the approved providers listed below or a Florida hospital.

Services may be delivered outside Florida if credentialed. Online delivery is eligible.

For the purposes of this section, an approved provider is licensed by the [Florida Department of Health](#) to perform the service, approved as a provider by the [Agency for Persons with Disabilities](#), or approved as a [Specialized Instructional Services \(SIS\) Provider by the Office of Early Learning](#). An approved provider must provide services in the specialized area in which they are approved. These services include:

- Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services provided by a [Board Certified](#) Behavior Analyst (BCBA)
- Services provided by a Florida licensed Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP)
- Services provided by a Florida licensed occupational therapist
- Services provided by Florida licensed physical therapist
- Services provided by a Florida licensed listening and spoken language specialist

Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA)  
Purchasing Guide 2023-24

- Psychotherapy or counseling by a Florida licensed Psychologist, Mental Health Counselor, or Clinical Social Worker

Here are links to help verify specialized service provider credentials:

- [Agency for Persons with Disabilities \(APD\)](#)
- [Florida Department of Health](#)
- [Specialized Instructional Services \(SIS\) / Early Learning Coalition](#)
- [Behavioral Analyst Certification Board \(BACB\)](#)

## TUITION AND FEES

### Tuition and Fees at an Eligible Private School

Tuition and fees at an eligible private school may be covered by a Family Empowerment Scholarship.

Not all private schools are eligible to participate. Schools must meet state eligibility criteria and elect to participate in the FES program with the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE). A list of schools eligible to serve scholarship students can be found at the [Florida Private Schools Directory](#). Choose “Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA).”

The agreed upon amount of tuition and fees for each student is a contractual agreement between the guardian and their eligible private school. We recommend guardians communicate with their preferred private school about what is required before enrolling their student.

#### Eligible Fees:

- Application Fees (payable in the Fiscal Year preceding the academic year)
- Registration Fees (payable in the Fiscal Year preceding the academic year)
- Uniform Fees (basic uniform pieces purchased from a school-required vendor; shoes and accessories are not eligible).
- Book Fees
- Technology Fees
- Test Fees
- Athletics and Club Fees
- Graduation Fees

#### Prohibited Fees:

- Fundraising Fees/Donation Fees/Volunteer Waiver Fees
- Annual Funds
- Giving Funds
- Therapies or services as fees (Credentialed Services including tutoring and therapies should be billed in their categories)
- Costs associated with scholarship management
- Optional Fees

NOTE: Field Trip Fees at an Eligible Private School are reimbursable to the guardian under the Instructional Materials – Field Trip expense category.

### **Tuition and Fees for Tuition and Fees for Home Education Programs**

Scholarship funds may be used to pay tuition and fees for programs, courses, or classes offered to home education students. These services must be part of the student's sequential instruction per the definition of a home education program.

A "home education program" means the sequentially progressive instruction of a student directed by his or her parent in order to satisfy the attendance requirements of ss. [1002.41](#), [1003.01](#)(13), and [1003.21](#)(1).

"Parent" is either or both parents of a student, any guardian of a student, any person in a parental relationship to a student, or any person exercising supervisory authority over a student in place of the parent (s. [1000.21\(5\)](#)).

To visit the Department of Education's website for additional information about home education programs, click this link: [Home Education Programs](#).

The following considerations apply when determining whether a program is an eligible home education program tuition & fee expense. Eligible programs must:

- Be a program selected by the parent as a part of their home education student's parent-directed instruction. (Programs may not be full-time or full-time equivalent). Private schools, virtual schools, and public or charter schools are not considered home education program.
- Provide courses and/or activities for home education students that enhance or enrich the child's learning opportunities.
- Have publicly available/reviewable program descriptions of courses and/or activities.
- Have a published tuition & fee schedule.
- Be in a non-residential physical location (cannot be in a home) **and**
- Be a business organization (tuition and fees may not be payable to an individual, with the exception of regional program directors or designated liaisons of national home educational communities).

Full-time education is not eligible for payment under a Home Education Program and must be considered under the Eligible Private School or the group Full-Time tutoring.

**All other live instruction, whether in-person or via remote access online, must meet the requirements for part-time tutoring services to be reimbursed by FES-UA funds.**

Parents may submit a Pre-Authorization request to have a proposed home education program provider reviewed for approval.

### **Tuition and Fees at an Eligible Postsecondary Institution**

Tuition and fees required for enrollment at an eligible postsecondary institution, or a program offered by an eligible postsecondary institution, is covered by FES-UA.

Eligible postsecondary institutions include:

- A Florida College System institution
- A state university
- A school district technical center
- A school district adult general education center

Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA)  
Purchasing Guide 2023-24

- An independent college or university that is eligible to participate in the William L Boyd, IV Effective Access to Student Education Grant Program under s. 1009.89
- An accredited independent postsecondary educational institution, as defined in s. 1005.02, which is licensed to operate in the state of Florida

Tuition and fee schedules must be published and made publicly available.

#### **Tuition and Fees for an Approved Preapprenticeship Program**

Tuition and fees for an organized course of instruction designed to prepare a person 16 years of age or older to become an apprentice in a course approved by and registered with the department and sponsored by a registered apprenticeship program under s. [446.042](#).

Tuition and fee schedules must be published and made publicly available.

#### **Tuition and Fees for a Private Tutoring Program**

Tuition and fees required for enrollment in an eligible Private Tutoring Program, authorized under s. [1002.43](#) are covered.

Requirements for approved Private Full-Time Tutors include:

- The tutor must hold a current, valid Florida teaching certificate for the subject or grade level in which they will tutor
- For grades K-3, full-time tutoring is considered 720 hours per school year
- For grades 4-12, full-time tutoring is considered 900 hours (equivalent to 180 teaching days)
- A tutor seeking to provide services must certify compliance with relevant statutes, including attendance requirements, and file annually a W9 form with the appropriate Scholarship Funding Organization prior to the receipt of education savings account funds (ESA), and then annually thereafter. The FLDOE may institute a standardized compliance form.

A full-time private tutor receiving ESA funds may not serve more than 5 students at one time. However, a full-time private tutor may provide tutoring for up to 25 students if the following facility requirements are satisfied:

Private tutoring may be provided for up to students in any commercial building with a valid certificate of occupancy, library, community service, museum, performing arts, theatre, cinema, or church facility; in any facility or on any land owned by a Florida College System institution or university; in any similar public institution facility; and in any facility recently used to house a school or child care facility licensed under s. 402.305 within the preexisting zoning and land use designations of the facility without obtaining a special exception, rezoning, or a land use change so long as the provision of such tutoring meets all applicable state and local health, safety, and welfare laws, codes, and rules, including those pertaining to fire safety and building safety.

Tuition and fee schedules must be published and made publicly available.

#### **Tuition and Fees for Part-Time Tutoring Services or Fees for Choice Navigator Services**

Tuition and Fees for part-time tutoring, or fees for Choice Navigator services are covered by FES-UA.

Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA)  
Purchasing Guide 2023-24

Part-time tutoring includes tuition and fees for services provided by a person who:

- Holds a valid Florida educator's certificate pursuant to s. 1012.56, F.S.;
- Holds an adjunct teaching certificate pursuant to s. 1012.57, F.S.;
- Has a bachelor's degree or a graduate degree in the subject area in which instruction is given;
- Is certified by a nationally or internationally recognized research-based training program as approved by the department; or
- Has demonstrated a mastery of subject area knowledge pursuant to s. 1012.56(5), F.S. by one of the following ways:
  - For a subject requiring only a baccalaureate degree for which a Florida subject area examination has been developed, achievement of a passing score on the Florida-developed subject area examination specified in state board rule;
  - For a subject for which a Florida subject area examination has not been developed, achievement of a passing score on a standardized examination specified in state board rule, including, but not limited to, passing scores on both the oral proficiency and written proficiency examinations administered by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages;
  - For a subject for which a Florida subject area examination has not been developed or a standardized examination has not been specified in state board rule, completion of the subject area specialization requirements specified in state board rule and verification of the attainment of the essential subject matter competencies by the district school superintendent of the employing school district or chief administrative officer of the employing state-supported or private school;
  - For a subject requiring a master's or higher degree, completion of the subject area specialization requirements specified in state board rule and achievement of a passing score on the Florida-developed subject area examination or a standardized examination that is directly related to the subject specified in state board rule;
  - Documentation of successful completion of a United States Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center program;
  - Documentation of a passing score on the Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT); or
  - For a subject requiring only a baccalaureate degree for which a Florida subject area examination has been developed, documentation of receipt of a master's or higher degree from an accredited postsecondary educational institution that the Department of Education has identified as having a quality program resulting in a baccalaureate degree or higher in the certificate subject area as identified by state board rule.

Tuition and fee schedules must be published and made publicly available.

A “Choice Navigator” means an individual who meets the credentialing requirements of a Part-Time Tutor (above) and who provides consultations, at a mutually agreed upon location, on the selection of, application for, and enrollment in educational options addressing the academic needs of a student; curriculum selection; and advice on career and postsecondary education opportunities. A Choice Navigator may not oversee or exercise control over the curricula or academic programs of a student.

Fee schedules must be published and made publicly available.

### **Tuition and Fees at an Approved Online or Virtual Provider**

Tuition and fees required for enrollment at an eligible or approved online or virtual provider are covered by FES-UA.

Approved Online or Virtual Providers include:

- An approved private online provider under s. 1002.45(2)(a), F.S.
- A program offered by the Florida Virtual School in which the eligible student is enrolled as a private paying student. (Note: If a student is enrolled in FLVS as a public-school student the student will be considered a public-school student and will be ineligible for a Family Empowerment Scholarship)
- An approved online course offered pursuant to ss. 1003.499 or 1004.0961, F.S.
- A private virtual school that meets the requirements of s. 1002.421, F.S.

The Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) has approval authority for these funding categories. The FLDOE may publish or maintain a list of approved online or virtual providers pursuant to the above statutory authority.

#### **FLDOE Approved Online Course Providers**

- Accelerate Education (Grades K-5 for 2022-23)
- Apex Learning (Grades 9-12 for 2022-23)
- Edison Learning (Grades 6-12 for 2022-23 to 2024-25)
- eDynamic Learning ULC (Grades 6-12 for 2022-23)
- Founders Education LLC (Grades 9-12 for 2022-23)
- Grade Results, Inc. (Grades K-12 for 2022-23 to 2023-24)
- My Virtual Academy (Grades 9-12)
- National Highway Safety Administration (Grades 9-12)

#### **FLDOE Approved Virtual Instruction Program (VIP) Providers**

- Accel Schools East (Grades K-12 for 2022-23)
- Connections Education of Florida, LLC (Grades K-12 for 2018-19 to 2024-25)
- Edgenuity (Grades 6-12 for 2018-19 to 2024-25)
- Edmentum (Grades 6-12 for 2020-21 to 2022-23)
- Graduation Alliance (Grades 9-12 for 2022-23)
- K12 Florida (Grades K-12 for 2018-19 to 2024-25)
- Mater Virtual Academy (Grades 6-12 for 2020-21 to 2023-24)
- Optima Domi (Grades K-8 for 2022-23) Rev. 07--2022
- Somerset Virtual Academy (Grades 6-12 for 2018-19 to 2023-24)

### **Tuition and Fees as a Private-Pay Student for Florida Virtual School**

Tuition and fees required for enrollment as a private-pay student at Florida Virtual School (FLVS) are covered by FES-UA.

Students utilizing Florida Virtual School (FLVS) must be enrolled as a private-pay student. FLVS will submit reimbursement requests to Step Up For Students, which must be approved by the guardian prior to payment being released. If a student is enrolled in FLVS and funded as a public-school student, the student may lose eligibility and funding for Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA).

Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA)  
Purchasing Guide 2023-24

Tuition and fee schedules must be published and made publicly available.

### **STANDARDIZED TESTING FEES**

Fees associated with standardized testing or examinations may be covered by Family Empowerment Scholarship funds.

Approved standardized testing or assessments include:

- Nationally standardized, norm-referenced assessments
- Advanced Placement (AP) examinations
- Industry certification examinations
- Assessments related to postsecondary education.
- Other assessments as outlined in the Family Empowerment Scholarship Purchasing Guide

### **CONTRIBUTIONS TO APPROVED COLLEGE SAVINGS PROGRAMS**

Contributions to the Stanley G. Tate Florida Prepaid College Program pursuant to s. 1009.98, F.S. or the Florida College Savings Program pursuant to s. 1009.981, F.S. for the benefit of the eligible student, may be covered by the FES.

#### **Stanley G. Tate Florida Prepaid College Program**

The following plans are eligible for contributions:

- 1-Year University Plan
- 4-Year University Plan
- 2-Year College Plan
- 4-Year College Plan
- 2+2 Florida Plan
- Dormitory Plan

The following restrictions on scholarship fund contributions apply.

- Contributions may be made only on behalf of the eligible scholarship student.
- The account owner cannot change the beneficiary of an account that contains scholarship funds.
- Any privately contributed funds in the account will be used to pay plan benefits before the scholarship funds.
- If a Prepaid College account is closed the money will go back to the open scholarship account along with any interest accumulated, or to the State of Florida if the scholarship account has been or is being closed.
- If a student's scholarship account closes for any reason money in the student's Florida Prepaid account contributed through the scholarship will be returned to the State of Florida

#### **Florida College Savings Program**

The following restrictions on scholarship fund contributions apply.

- The account type must be an UTMA or UGMA.
- The account owner cannot change the beneficiary of an account that contains scholarship funds.
- The privately contributed funds in the account (if any) will be used to pay plan benefits before the scholarship funds.



Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA)  
Purchasing Guide 2023-24

- If a Florida 529 College Savings account is closed, the money will go back to the open scholarship account along with any interest accumulated, or to the State of Florida if the scholarship account has been or is being closed.
- If a student's scholarship account closes for any reason, any money in the student's 529 College Savings account contributed through the scholarship will be returned to the State of Florida.
- If a student has an existing Florida 529 College Savings plan, scholarship funds will be managed in a separate account from private funds that are invested.

*Please note: Although 529 funds may be used to pay for private school expenses, FES-UA funds may not be used at a private school that is not an FES-UA eligible private school.*

### **CONTRACTED SERVICES PROVIDED BY A PUBLIC SCHOOL OR SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Contracted services provided by a public district or charter school, or school district may be covered by the Family Empowerment Scholarship.

A scholarship recipient may take courses, participate in programming (including after school, extracurricular, supplemental, or summer school programs) or receive services from a public school (including charter schools and the Florida Virtual School), if the student contracts for classes/services on a private pay basis.

The guardian can pay for services and request reimbursement, or the school district can choose to be paid directly as a provider.

There is no requirement for public district or charter schools, or school districts, to contract for services with a scholarship participant or to set up an account for payment as a provider. Participation is optional for the public schools and/or districts.

A student who receives contracted services under this paragraph is not considered enrolled in a public school for scholarship eligibility purposes. However, if the district reports the student for any FTE funding or other state funding, the student will be ineligible for the Family Empowerment Scholarship.

### **FEES FOR SPECIALIZED SUMMER EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

Fees for specialized summer education programs (or other programs during standard school breaks) meeting eligibility criteria are covered by the Family Empowerment Scholarship.

The term "specialized" means a program developed specifically for students with special or unique needs or a program that can meet the student's needs.

Overnight educational camps may be permitted with Pre-Authorization and documentation of the educational benefit from a physician or licensed therapist.

Published fees must be provided to the SFO prior to receipt of any FES-UA funding. Proof of attendance is required.

### **FEES FOR SPECIALIZED AFTER-SCHOOL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

Fees for after-school education programs meeting eligibility criteria are covered by the Family Empowerment Scholarship.

Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA)  
Purchasing Guide 2023-24

Please see definition of “specialized” above.

Published fees must be provided to any SFO prior to receipt of FES-UA funding. Proof of attendance is required.

For students aged 16 and up, full or half day education programs is permitted with Pre-Authorization.

### **TRANSITION SERVICES PROVIDED BY JOB COACHES**

Students ages 14 through 22 may submit reimbursements for transition services by job coaches. Job coaches must meet one of the following criteria.

- Hired by the private school as a job coach.
- Hired by the school district as a job coach.
- The criteria/training of the Florida Agency for Persons with Disabilities for job coaches.
- The criteria/training of the Florida Association of Rehabilitation Facilities.
- Have an Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ARCE) certification.
- Have an Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE) certification.
- Have an Institution for Community Inclusion certification.
- Employment Specialist Vendor for Vocational Rehabilitation.

Types of Transition Services that may be provided by the job coach:

- Conducting career and interest assessments
- Self-determination/Self-advocacy training
- Employability/Soft skill education
- Job development
- Job training
- Interview skill development and support—assistance with preparation and post interview, resume development
- Onsite job coaching
- Follow-along support to maintain employment
- Monitoring and re-training for changes on the job site
- Benefits planning and financial literacy services (ex. working with the student to understand the impact of work on SSI benefits and income)
- Advocacy services (ex. working on benefit issues, social security, facilitating transportation services)
- Career Exploration
- Career Counseling
- Inclusive programs with multiple services where job training or coaching is a defined, regular component of the program.

Scholarship participants should explore all available State resources including Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and financial aid. Vocational Rehabilitation helps high school youth with disabilities establish a foundation for a seamless transition to individualized training, education, and employment. For more information on VR’s Transition Program visit the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

### **ANNUAL EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION FEES**

Fees for annual evaluations of the educational progress of a home education student as required under s. 1002.41(1)(f), F.S. is covered by the Family Empowerment Scholarship.

Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA)  
Purchasing Guide 2023-24

Eligible evaluation methods include:

- Evaluation of a student's educational progress upon review of the portfolio and discussion with the student by a teacher holding a valid regular Florida certificate to teach academic subjects at the elementary or secondary level.
- Administration of any nationally normed student achievement test administered by a certified teacher.
- Administration of a state student assessment test by a certified teacher at a location and under testing conditions approved by the school district.

**TUITION AND FEES FOR AN APPROVED VPK PROGRAM PROVIDER OR AN APPROVED SCHOOL READINESS PROVIDER**

Tuition and fees associated with programs offered by Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program providers approved pursuant to s. [1002.55, F.S.](#) and school readiness providers approved pursuant to s. [1002.88, F.S.](#) are covered by the Family Empowerment Scholarship.

Families are encouraged to contact their local Early Learning Coalition for information about eligible VPK or School Readiness Providers.

This category includes tuition and fees for the educational needs of the student and may cover a full-day program.

Eligible Fees:

- Application Fees (payable in the Fiscal Year preceding the academic year)
- Registration Fees (payable in the Fiscal Year preceding the academic year)
- Uniform Fees (basic uniform pieces purchased from a school-required vendor; shoes and accessories are not eligible).
- Book Fees
- Technology Fees
- Graduation Fees

Prohibited Fees:

- Fundraising Fees/Donation Fees/Volunteer Waiver Fees
- Giving Funds
- Therapies or services as fees (Credentialed Services including tutoring and therapies should be billed in their categories)
- Costs associated with scholarship management
- Optional Fees
- Nursery or Daycare Fees

Approved VPK and School Readiness services may not be billed under an Eligible Private School.

Tuition and fee schedules must be published and made publicly available.

Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA)  
Purchasing Guide 2023-24

**HORSE THERAPY**

Horse therapy fees may be covered by the Family Empowerment Scholarship.

This category includes fees for services provided at a center that is a member of the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International. To find a PATH certified center in Florida, [click here](#).

*The PATH certification must be issued to the center and not to individuals working at the center.*

**MUSIC AND ART THERAPY**

Music and art therapy fees may be covered by the Family Empowerment Scholarship.

This category includes fees for services provided by a therapist who is certified by the Certification Board for Music Therapists or credentialed by the Art Therapy Credentials Board, Inc.

To find a therapist in Florida certified by the Board for Music Therapists, [click here](#).

To find a therapist in Florida credentialed by the Art Therapy Credentials Board, Inc., [click here](#).

**REVIEW**

Step Up For Students has placed a [feedback form](#) on our website where guardians may submit suggestions for improving this Purchasing Guide. Step Up will periodically review these suggestions and implement improvements when appropriate.