



**FAMILY EMPOWERMENT SCHOLARSHIP FOR
STUDENTS WITH UNIQUE ABILITIES
SCHOOL & PROVIDER HANDBOOK**



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Contact Step Up For Students

The Step Up For Students Customer Engagement Center is available Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. EST. Providers and schools who have questions or need assistance can contact Step Up For Students via chat at StepUpForStudents.org, phone at (877) 735-7837, or visit the [Contact Us](#) page on the Step Up For Students website.

Providers should be prepared to provide their name and email address associated with the account, and one of the following:

- Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) school code
- Service provider license number
- Full business/school name
- Full business/school address
- Business tax ID

Overview

The Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA) is a scholarship program that helps parents and guardians customize their student's education.

The student scholarship functions like a bank account from which a parent or guardian directs funds to pay for private school tuition and fees, home education options, therapies, tutoring, and other education-related expenses allowed by law.

Step Up For Students is a nonprofit Scholarship Funding Organization approved by the State of Florida to administer education choice scholarship programs.

This handbook helps guide providers and schools who offer services to scholarship students.

School and Provider Rights and Responsibilities

The requirements for school and provider participation are the same regardless of how a family pays for their services. Providers who accept payment from parents and guardians who seek reimbursement from Step Up For Students and providers who participate in direct payment from Step Up For Students must meet the same requirements.

Providers, including schools, may not limit, restrict, or attempt to control a parent or guardian's use of student funds for tuition, fees, or other eligible expenses.

Data Confidentiality

The information available behind the parent or guardian login in EMA is personal and confidential.

Schools and providers may not ask for or require a parent or guardian to provide the username or password to their scholarship account. Providers should never access a student's scholarship application or account for any reason.



Doing so may result in loss of provider participation and/or scholarship eligibility and funding for the student, as well as financial or criminal penalties.

This policy is intended to prevent misuse of scholarship funds and protect the confidentiality of sensitive financial and educational information that belongs to students and their parents or guardians.

Data Security

Step Up For Students will never ask for the following information via email, phone call, or text message:

- Full account password or any part of it
- Banking details

Providers who receive any communication requesting this type of information or have received a suspicious email must not respond or click on any links. Instead, they should report the activity immediately on the [Contact Us](#) page on the Step Up For Students website.

Maintaining Up-to-Date Contact Information

Providers and schools should keep contact information current, especially their email address. This is the primary way Step Up For Students will communicate important information.

If there is a change of a school or provider's eligibility to participate in scholarship programs, educator or service provider credentials or licenses, physical or mailing address, telephone number, or email address, the information must be updated in EMA and the Florida Department of Education portal when applicable.

General Scholarship Program Information

Scholarship Eligibility Requirements

The Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA) is available to students who are:

- Age three (3) or older (with a 3rd birthday on or before December 31 of the year their parent or guardian applies for a scholarship) or eligible to enroll in a Florida public school (if applicable for their age),
- Less than twenty-two (22) years old,
- Florida residents, or dependent children of active-duty members of the United States Armed Forces who have received Permanent Change of Station (PCS) orders to Florida or renewing students whose home record or state of legal residence is Florida and have received PCS orders outside of Florida, and
- The subject of an IEP (dated within the last three (3) years) or have a diagnosis listed on the [FES-UA scholarship page](#).



Multiple Applications Prohibited

Scholarship program statutes prohibit a student from applying for more than one scholarship for the same student at the same time.

If a parent or guardian applies for both FES-UA and a Florida Tax Credit (FTC) Scholarship or Family Empowerment Scholarship for Educational Options (FES-EO) for the same student, that student will remain on the FES-UA scholarship.

If a parent or guardian has applied for one scholarship for their student and would like their student to participate in a different scholarship program, they must submit a completed scholarship [decline form](#) before applying to avoid a funding delay.

If a student attends an eligible private school, parents or guardians should communicate with their child's school before changing scholarship programs to confirm which scholarships their school accepts.

Funding for Scholarships

Scholarship Amounts

The amount of funding a student receives for their FES-UA scholarship is based on three factors:

- A student's grade level
- The county where they live
- The level of special education services they receive

Florida students with IEPs are assigned a matrix level of 1 – 5 (251 – 255), based on the support they would receive in a public school.

Students assigned matrix levels of 1, 2 or 3 (251 – 253), or who qualify for the scholarship using a diagnosis by a medical or mental health professional, receive scholarship funding based on average per-student special education funding in their local school district.

Students assigned matrix levels of 4 or 5 (254 or 255) receive greater funding amounts.

Scholarship funding amounts for the 2024-25 school year [are broken down by grade level, county and matrix score here](#).

FES-UA scholarship recipients are not required to disclose their scholarship award amounts to schools or providers.

Previous Gardiner and McKay Scholarship Recipients

Scholarship funding for a student who used a Gardiner or McKay Scholarship in the 2020-21 school year will be the amount the student received for the 2020-21 school year or the [amount calculated according to the 2024-25 funding chart](#), whichever is greater.



For students whose funding is based on a scholarship they received during the 2020-21 school year, the Award Details in EMA may not reflect their actual funding amount. They may incorrectly show the amount the student would have received if their scholarship was funded for the first time during the 2024-25 school year.

Parents and guardians may confirm their student's actual funding amount by multiplying their student's quarterly funding by four.

Scholarship Funding Proration

The amount of funding a student receives is prorated based on the date they are awarded a scholarship.

- Students awarded a scholarship by October 25, 2024 will receive 100% of the total scholarship award amount.
- Students awarded a scholarship by January 25, 2025 will receive 50% of the total scholarship award amount.
- Students not awarded a scholarship by January 25 will not receive scholarship funds in the 2024-25 school year.

Scholarship Funding Schedule

Scholarship funds are deposited into the student's scholarship account on a quarterly basis.

Step Up For Students will receive regular quarterly funding from the state by the following dates:

- Quarter 1:
 - August 1 (renewal students – students who were funded in the 2023-24 school year)
 - September 1 (new students – students funded for the first time in the 2024-25 school year)
- Quarter 2: November 1
- Quarter 3: February 1
- Quarter 4: April 1

Funds will be deposited into the student's account within two weeks after Step Up For Students receives funds from the state.

The above dates are the regularly scheduled funding distributions for the FES-UA scholarship program. Students who miss a regularly scheduled distribution may receive supplemental funding.

If Step Up For Students overpays or makes a payment in error to a school, Step Up will recover excess funds by adjusting future payments to the school. If a school is overpaid after a student switches scholarship programs during the school year, Step Up will reduce a subsequent payment to the school, potentially in the following quarter, to account for the overpayment.



Authorized Uses of Scholarship Program Funds

Scholarship program funds must be used for eligible expenses that meet the individual educational needs of the scholarship student.

Parents, guardians, students, or providers of any services may not bill an insurance company, Medicaid, or any other agency for the same products or the same services that are paid for using FES-UA scholarship funds.

Parents or guardians of students receiving scholarship funds may not take possession of funds at any time and are prohibited from being paid scholarship funds for services provided to their own scholarship student.

If a parent or guardian receives a refund or rebate for any services or goods purchased with scholarship funds, those funds must be returned to Step Up For Students for deposit into the student's scholarship account.

The following categories of items and services are approved uses for the scholarship funds. Eligible expenses and credentialing details are outlined in the [Purchasing Guide](#).

- Instructional materials
- Curriculum and curriculum materials
- Specialized services
- Tuition and fees:
 - At an eligible private school
 - For home education instructional programs*
 - At an eligible post-secondary institution
 - At an approved pre-apprenticeship program
 - For dual enrollment
 - For a private tutoring program
 - For part-time tutoring services or Choice Navigator services
 - At an approved online or virtual provider
 - As a private pay student for Florida Virtual School (FLVS)
- Standardized testing fees
- Contributions to approved college savings programs
 - Stanley G. Tate Florida Prepaid College Program
 - Florida 529 Savings Program
- Contracted services provided by a public school or school district
- Fees for specialized summer education programs
- Fees for specialized after-school education programs
- Transition services provided by job coaches



- Annual home education evaluation fees
- Tuition and fees for an approved VPK Program provider, an approved School Readiness provider, or an eligible private school
- Fees for horse therapy
- Fees for music and art therapy

A home education instructional program is a provider that enhances or enriches learning opportunities for PEP and homeschool students. It is not the same as a home education program as defined in s. 1002.01(1), F.S.

Eligible Private Schools

An “eligible private school” is defined in s. [1002.395\(2\)\(i\)](#), F.S. as a private school located in Florida that educates students in any grades K-12 and meets the requirements of state laws governing [private schools](#) and scholarship programs.

If a private school fails to meet the requirements in state law, the state education commissioner may determine the private school is ineligible to participate in the scholarship program. Tuition or fees paid to a private school that does not participate in the scholarship program are not eligible for reimbursement.

Private schools interested in serving students through FES-UA must be registered with the Florida Department of Education and must have completed the department’s requirements for participation. Schools can call (800) 447-1636, contact their local Florida Department of Education [Regional Managers](#) or visit [Requirements for Participating in State Scholarship Programs](#).

Setting Up an Account in EMA

Eligible private schools should not create a provider account in EMA. A unique invitation link will be sent to the school by email once a school has been approved by the FLDOE. Once the school receives the link, an EMA account can be created.

When creating an account, the dashboard options will be limited until the profile setup is complete. Some school information will auto-populate based on FLDOE records. As an eligible, participating private school providing full-time education, setting up an EMA account will require payment information including the account type, email, phone number, full name, and complete address. As part of the EMA account creation for eligible private schools, an electronic W-9 must be completed. Please ensure the information entered on the digital version matches what is on file with the IRS.

Account users will have the ability to make changes to the school’s profile. Account contacts will receive general communication from EMA. The email address and phone number for each account contact and account user should be unique to that individual. An account user’s email address can only be used at one school. A different account user email address must be



entered when setting up an account in EMA for a school with multiple locations. The physical address of each location must match what is on file with the FLDOE.

Note: Account contact and account user email addresses cannot be used as parent/guardian or provider account email addresses.

Adding Tuition and Fees in EMA

Once an eligible private school has an account created in EMA, tuition and fees may be added by doing the following:

1. Input the maximum tuition amount for each grade level approved to serve under the “Tuition” tab.
 - Additional tuition and fees should be entered for any applicable eligible fees (listed below) for scholarship students that will enroll.
 - Schools can create a specific tuition and fees group to streamline the invoicing process (e.g., multi-student discount, parishioner discount, employee discount, etc.).
 - Fees included in a school’s tuition and fee schedule must be required for enrollment.
2. Submit tuition and fee schedule. Once submitted, and the tuition and fees are reviewed by Step Up For Students, the school’s account in EMA will reflect a “Verified” status.
3. Begin to enroll students (see below).

Eligible fees include:

- Academic services fee
- Activity fee (i.e. choir, band, etc.)
- Application fee (payable in the fiscal year preceding the academic year)
- Athletics fee
- Club fee
- Book fee
- Enrollment fee
- Graduation fee
- Registration fee (payable in the fiscal year preceding the academic year)
- Security fee
- Technology fee
- Test fee
- Uniform fee (basic uniform pieces purchased from a school-required vendor)

Prohibited fees:

- Annual funds
- Before- or after-school care
- Costs associated with scholarship management
- Food fees (i.e. lunch)
- Fundraising fee/donation fee/volunteer waiver fees
- Giving funds



- Optional fees
- Shoes and accessories fees

Direct Billing in EMA

Full-Time, In-Person Eligible Private School Students

Eligible private schools may enroll FES-UA scholarship students in EMA. Enrollment through EMA is for scholarship students who will be educated full-time, in-person at the school's physical location.

Enrollment in EMA is optional for FES-UA students and will allow schools to invoice scholarship funds directly from students' accounts quarterly. Payments will be made to schools within seven (7) business days after both the school and the parent or guardian approves the invoice in EMA from the private school. If a school is expecting an invoice, but has not yet received it, or needs to delete an invoice, it should [contact the Customer Engagement Center](#).

Schools participating in the scholarship program cannot charge a different rate for scholarship students and non-scholarship students. The same published tuition schedule must apply to all students, whether on scholarship or paying privately.

Step Up For Students commits the total amount of tuition and fees, up to the amount of funding a student was awarded that school year, to the selected school. Step Up For Students bills the student's account quarterly for tuition and fees before a parent or guardian can access any remaining scholarship funds.

When a student enrolls in an eligible private school, the school and parent or guardian must both certify the agreed-upon tuition and fee rate for the student. The agreed-upon tuition and fee rate for the student may include discounts or other considerations. The rate can be less, but not more than, the school's published maximum tuition and fee rate for the student's grade level.

The agreed-upon tuition and fee rate for a student in EMA should not exceed any amount the parent or guardian has agreed to pay the eligible private school.

For example: If a school and a parent agree to a tuition and fee rate of \$10,000, the amount charged in EMA should be \$10,000 or less.

Eligible private schools may charge more than the value of the scholarship and in some cases, may decide to provide scholarship students with supplemental financial assistance at their own discretion. Schools should work with parents and guardians if they are required to pay the difference between the value of the scholarship and the full tuition and fees.

Note: If a school charges more than a student's scholarship amount for tuition and fees, families may choose to pay for the difference using rollover funds in their account. To be paid directly



from scholarship funds, the school must set up a tuition and fees service offering in EMA. A video with details on how schools can navigate the EMA Marketplace is [available here](#).

Student Award Details

Parents and guardians with students enrolled in a full-time, in-person, eligible private school who wish to pay scholarship funds directly to the school will need to provide an Award ID to the school at which they wish to enroll. Upon enrollment in EMA, the school can review the expected payment for that student, which will be the lower of the enrolled tuition and fees or the student's annual award amount. Parents and guardians are not required to provide award amounts to schools, and the FES-UA scholarship does not require enrollment for the student account to be funded. Parents and guardians of FES-UA scholarship students can choose to pay out-of-pocket and seek reimbursement. More information about scholarship amounts is available in [Scholarship Amounts](#).

Part-Time Eligible Private School Students

Eligible private schools may also enroll students on a part-time basis if they attend in-person and may choose to accept direct payment by creating service offerings in the EMA Marketplace.

The eligible private school must be participating in FES-UA to provide part-time enrollment to FES-UA scholarship students. FES-UA students cannot enroll in a PEP Hybrid school, but they may enroll part-time if the school is also an FES-UA eligible private school.

Schools may not enroll part-time FES-UA scholarship students in EMA, as private school enrollment is for full-time, in-person learners only. Schools must set up a service offering in EMA for part-time students.

Note: A virtual, remote, or online instruction program provided by a private school is not an eligible expense for scholarship funds. An eligible private school may not receive funds for these services and may not submit such service in the EMA Marketplace.

DOE-approved online and virtual providers may provide these services through the EMA Marketplace but are not eligible to set up as an eligible private school and enroll students in EMA. Providers wishing to offer virtual instruction to scholarship students must complete the approval process outlined [here](#) to be approved by the FLDOE before submitting their services as a service offering in EMA.

Individual Classes, Extracurricular Activities, or Services at an Eligible Private School

Students enrolled full-time at an eligible private school may use any scholarship funds remaining after paying for full-time tuition and fees to take individual classes or participate in extracurricular activities at a different eligible private school.

Students who wish to do so must not enroll in multiple private schools as a full-time student.



Each class or activity must be paid for through the school's EMA marketplace account or by reimbursement.

- Eligible expenses include: academic services, athletics/clubs/activities participation, individual classes, and testing.

Payments made to a private school that is not approved by the Florida Department of Education to participate in a student's scholarship program cannot be reimbursed.

Pre-K Eligible Private School Students

Beginning with the 2024-25 school year, eligible private schools may enroll FES-UA scholarship students in EMA for pre-K programs.

A student can only enroll in an eligible private school with an active account in EMA.

Schools may enroll FES-UA eligible pre-K students full-time or part-time through EMA for in-person learning. Payments will be made to schools within seven (7) business days after the parent approves the invoice in EMA from the private school.

Full-Time Private Tutoring

FES-UA and PEP scholarship students are permitted to use their scholarship funds to pay for full-time tutoring services. Providers who offer full-time tutoring services may accept direct payment by creating service offerings in the EMA Marketplace.

Requirements for approved private full-time tutors include:

- Tutors must hold a current, valid Florida teaching certificate for the subjects or grade levels in which they provide instruction;
- 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) per school year;
- Tutors must complete a private tutoring participation agreement and certify compliance with relevant statutes, including attendance requirements. They must also annually file a W-9 form with the appropriate Scholarship Funding Organization before they receive payment with ESA funds, and annually thereafter.

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

- Any commercial building with a valid certificate of occupancy, library, community service, museum, performing arts, theatre, cinema, or church facility.
- Any facility or on any land owned by a Florida College System institution or university or similar public institution facility.
- Any facility recently used to house a school or childcare 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.

Full-time tutoring may be used to fulfill Florida compulsory school attendance requirements. It is not an allowable expense for scholarships that require students to enroll full-time in an eligible private school.

Part-Time Tutoring

FES-UA, FES-EO, FTC, PEP and New Worlds Scholarship Account students may use their scholarship funds to pay for part-time tutoring services. Providers who offer part-time tutoring services must meet one of the following criteria:

- Holds a valid Florida educator's certificate
- Holds a valid professional standard teaching certificate issued by another state
- Is certified by a nationally or internationally recognized research-based training program as approved by the department, including:
 - The Barton Reading & Spelling System
 - The Orton-Gillingham Approach
- Holds an adjunct teaching certificate
- Has a bachelor's or graduate degree in the subject area of instruction
- Holds a valid certificate issued by the national Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) or the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE)
- Has an official FTCE score report indicating a passing score on a Florida subject area exam, not more than 10 years old
- Has a passing score report that is not more than 10 years old, above the intermediate level, on both the oral and written exams for a foreign language subject area (excluding French, German, or Spanish) administered by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL)
- Has a form provided by a Florida school district and signed by the school district, indicating there is no standardized exam in the subject area, but the person has attained the essential subject matter competencies and subject area specialization requirements
- Has a valid Statement of Status (SOE) issued by Educator Certification that indicates the educator is eligible for a Professional Certificate
- For a subject requiring a master's or higher degree (i.e., Reading), has a score report indicating a passing score on a Florida subject area exam (not more than 10 years old) and a valid Statement of Status of Eligibility (SOE) issued by Educator Certification that indicates the educator is eligible for a Temporary or Professional Certificate.



Qualified part-time tutors have no minimum hour requirements and no maximum number of students they may serve at one time.

Students Transferring Schools

Enrollment in an eligible private school in EMA is not required for FES-UA scholarship students. Students utilizing the private school option may transfer their scholarship among eligible participating private schools. If a parent or guardian is not satisfied with the private school they have chosen, they may find another one.

If a parent or guardian requests to withdraw or transfer their student from a school, the school should provide their withdraw/transfer policy. Once the student has withdrawn or transferred, the school must promptly unenroll the student in EMA. A student cannot be enrolled in a new eligible private school in EMA until they have been withdrawn from the prior school in EMA.

The transfer process may include a final payment to the private school the student is leaving. If a school is owed an additional payment, the payment must be approved by the parent or guardian. If the school has been overpaid, Step Up For Students will invoice the school for the overpayment.

If a student transfers to a different participating school in the same quarter, the first school the student attended for ten (10) days or more during that quarter will receive the full quarter's payment.

The parent or guardian and the two schools may negotiate any amount owed to the new school from the quarterly payment made to the first school. This is not required, but, in the spirit of partnership for the good of the student, is highly recommended.

The school should withdraw the student in EMA within five (5) business days of their last day at the school.

Annual Assessment Requirements

An eligible private school must also annually administer or make provision for students participating in the scholarship program in grades 3 – 10 to take a standardized assessment approved by the Florida Department of Education.

Students with disabilities for whom standardized testing is not appropriate are exempt from this requirement. Those students must complete the [Standardized Testing Exemption Form](#).

A participating private school must report a student's scores to the parent or guardian and annually report the scores of all applicable students to an independent researcher by Aug. 15. More information on this requirement is [available from the department here](#).

A participating private school that chooses to administer statewide standardized assessments must submit a request in writing to the FLDOE by March 1 for the subsequent school year.



Service Providers

Setting Up an Account in EMA

Other education service providers wishing to receive direct payment from families must [set up a provider account in EMA](#) and submit a catalog of eligible services. Providers that require a credentialed or certified individual must also create an account in EMA and link to the business provider account. More information on service categories that require a credentialed/certified individual is available in the [Purchasing Guide](#).

Additional information, including explanations of service provider account types and [school and provider checklists](#), is available through the [school and provider page](#) on the Step Up For Students website.

Note: The phone number used for two-step verification when logging in to EMA must be multifactor authentication compatible. The phone number must be able to receive a verification code through text or call. Phone numbers that are answered with an automated recording will not work.

Account Types

A service provider is a person or organization authorized to provide services to scholarship students. Schools should not create business or personal provider accounts.

Providers should create a business account if they own or operate a business that will bill for services or contract with or employ service providers whose services to students will be payable to the business. All employees of a business who provide services that require individual credentials must create a personal account in EMA. Once employee personal accounts are created, the business must approve and connect the employee's personal account to the business account in EMA.

A personal provider should create a personal account if they:

- Have a qualifying credential or license to qualify provide services, and
- Are employed by, or contracted with, an approved business in the EMA Marketplace.

Note: A business account must be submitted and approved prior to a personal account being linked to a business account.

Once a personal account is approved in EMA, it must be linked to an approved business account. A personal provider must request to join an approved business account by logging in to EMA and selecting the "Businesses" tab and then choosing "Find Businesses" to submit a request to join.

A provider should create a business and personal account if the criteria for creating a business account is applicable (see above) and the business owner is a credentialed or licensed individual that qualifies to provide services. For example, if a provider owns or manages a



tutoring business and also provides individual tutoring, a business and personal account would need to be created.

Service categories that require a personal account and must be linked to an approved business account in EMA:

- Specialized Services (ABA, SLP, OT, PT)
- Tutoring Services (full-time and part-time)
- Music Therapy
- Art Therapy
- Choice Navigator
- Annual Home Education Evaluation

If a business has multiple locations, the service offering contact information and email address should be specific to each location so that families are able to search and find the correct business location in the EMA Marketplace. However, each location must be under the same tax ID and bank account for invoicing purposes.

A personal account will not receive payment for services. Direct payment will be made to the associated business account. Individuals who create a personal account in EMA must provide the required documentation based on service type in order to be approved. An individual provider does not manage invoicing or billing.

Payment Options

Parents and guardians can pay schools and providers directly through EMA or can pay for services out of pocket and submit reimbursement requests.

Parents or guardians may request supporting documentation from providers to support reimbursement requests.

Direct Payment for Services

As explained above, Step Up For Students allows schools and providers to receive direct payment for some eligible educational services.

Schools wishing to participate in direct payment for tuition must establish tuition and fees and [enroll full-time, in-person scholarship students](#) in EMA.

New providers wishing to participate in direct payment for educational services from scholarship students (funded for the first time 2023-24 or later) must [set up a business or personal account in EMA](#) and submit a service catalog.

Parents and guardians cannot request direct payment to a provider until after the service has been rendered.



Reimbursement Requests

Parents or guardians who choose to pay for eligible tuition and/or fees to an eligible private school or items or services out of pocket to a provider may apply to have those expenditures reimbursed from their student's scholarship account.

Step Up For Students approves reimbursement of items within the guidance of Florida statutes related to the scholarship program, as well as FLDOE rules and Step Up For Students policies and procedures and reserves the right to close or deny any reimbursement request submitted for payment.

Reimbursement Documentation

Documentation required for reimbursement is dependent on the category in which the service(s) are located. Details regarding the requirements for each service category are available in the [Parent Handbook](#) and [Purchasing Guide](#).

Reimbursement Timing

Reimbursement requests are year specific. Parents or guardians requesting reimbursements using scholarship funds from the 2024-25 school year may submit the request any time after the purchase is made, prior to the reimbursement deadline, as long as the items or services were purchased between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025.

In addition, reimbursements for purchases made in the following categories between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024, are eligible for reimbursement with scholarship funds:

- Eligible Private School Tuition and Fees
- Home Education Instructional Program Tuition and Fees
- Public School Contracted Services
- Full-Time Private Tutoring
- State-Approved Virtual Instruction Provider

In these instances, parents or guardians should submit the reimbursement requests during the school year in which the service is rendered (or curricula is used), but the proof of purchase may be from the immediately preceding fiscal year.

For example, if an eligible private school required a tuition payment for the 2024-25 school year by June 15, 2024, the parent or guardian can apply for reimbursement for that payment any time between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025, as long as the proof of purchase is dated July 1, 2023, or later.

Note: For eligible private schools, this policy is not applicable to anything outside of standard tuition and fees (e.g. summer programs, after-school programs, etc.)

This policy is intended to help parents or guardians cover expenses they paid for in advance in preparation for the 2024-25 school year.



Advance Reimbursement

Parents or guardians can apply for reimbursement for services up to three months in advance. For example, if a tutor asks for payment in advance, a parent can apply on September 1 for reimbursement of tutoring fees paid through the end of November.

Requests submitted for services more than three months in advance may be approved through the remainder of the school year, up to one year, if the provider attests that the services paid in advance are non-refundable.

Parents or guardians must submit a signed and dated letter from the provider stating the payment is non-refundable or submit published policies from the provider showing these requirements.

Compliance

Schools

If there is a change in a school's eligibility to participate in scholarship programs, the Florida Department of Education will notify Step Up For Students. Step Up For Students is not permitted to disburse funds to any school whose approval to participate in scholarship programs has been suspended or revoked.

Providers

When a provider account is created, the account will be reviewed for appropriate credential information for the submitted service category. Creating a provider account does not guarantee approval for service offerings submitted.

If misuse, misrepresentation or fraudulent activity occur, Step Up For Students reserves the right to suspend or revoke a provider's status and the release of any payments will cease.

For More Information

- [Schools and Providers Login and Resources](#)
- [Schools and Providers Marketing Toolkit](#)
- [Parent and Guardian Resources](#)
- [FES-UA Handbook Feedback Form](#)
- [FES-UA Purchasing Guide](#)
- [FES-UA Parent Handbook](#)
- [FES-UA Scholarship Information](#)
- [Scholarship Decline Form](#)

Contact Information

Step Up For Students wishes all schools and providers a productive and fun-filled 2024-25 school year.

There are three ways to reach Step Up For Students:



Chat with a live agent at StepUpForStudents.org



Call (877) 735-7837



Submit inquiry through [Contact Us](#)

The Customer Engagement Center is generally open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. EST. During peak periods, hours may be extended. For Customer Engagement Center hours, please visit the [Contact Us](#) page on the Step Up For Students website.