2026-27 SCHOLARSHIP SCHEDULE

Private School Scholarship (FTC/FES-EO)

Unique Abilities Scholarship (FES-UA)

Personalized Education Program (PEP)

APPLY • ENROLL • FUND • SPEND

APPLICATION DEADLINES

2026-27	Private School Scholarship	Unique Abilities Scholarship	PEP Scholarship
Renewal Application Season	February 1 to April 30	February 1 to April 30	February 1 to April 30
New Application Season	February 1 to November 15	February 1 to November 15	February 1 to April 30

IMPORTANT: Beginning in the 2026-27 school year, a renewal student is one who was funded for Quarter 4 for the same scholarship they are applying to in the current school year and whose scholarship was not revoked in the prior school year. To retain renewal priority after applying, the family must adhere to all additional renewal deadlines. If a renewal student misses a deadline, they will lose their renewal status and will be considered a new student.

Application Deadline Exceptions: For the Private School Scholarship and PEP Scholarship, some students are excluded from the standard application deadlines and can apply until April 15, 2027. After applying, all additional requirements must be met by May 15, 2027, including accepting the scholarship and enrolling in an eligible private school in EMA, if applicable. Please note that funding is not guaranteed. See our Handbooks to see who qualifies for an application deadline exception.

ACCEPTANCE DEADLINES

Once a student is determined eligible, the next step is for the parent/guardian to let Step Up know if they intend to use the scholarship by accepting or declining it in EMA. ***IMPORTANT: Accepting your scholarship simply notifies Step Up of your intent to use it and does not guarantee funding.*** *See the Program Requirements section below for more details.*

The scholarship should only be accepted once the parent/guardian is sure of their student's plans. Students who have accepted their scholarship and who are found by the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) to be enrolled full-time in a Florida public school will forfeit their scholarship for the ***entire*** year. IMPORTANT: To be eligible for consideration for Quarter 1 funding, a student must be withdrawn from public school by July 31, 2026. Please see our Handbooks for more details.

2026-27	Private School Scholarship	Unique Abilities Scholarship	PEP Scholarship
Renewal Students Must Accept or Decline By	May 31	May 31	May 31
New Students Must Accept or Decline By	December 15	December 15	May 31

Note: If a renewal student accepts after the indicated renewal deadline for their program, they will be considered a new student.

SWITCHING PROGRAMS

A parent/guardian who would like to switch their student's scholarship during the school year will have two opportunities:

PRIOR TO QUARTER 1	PRIOR TO QUARTER 3
Renewal Students: Between February 1, 2026 and June 15, 2026 **New Students:** Between February 1, 2026 and July 15, 2026	**All Students:** Between October 2, 2026 and October 30, 2026

Please Note:
Students presented for Quarter 1 funding consideration will not be able to switch programs until after Quarter 2.

Switching from a Private School Scholarship or Unique Abilities Scholarship to the PEP Scholarship must be completed by the April 30 application deadline for the Personalized Education Program.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS FOR FUNDING CONSIDERATION

Each scholarship has requirements that must be met after a scholarship has been accepted in order to be eligible for funding consideration. While funding is not guaranteed, all requirements must be met by the indicated deadlines in order to be considered for funding.

Please also review the Funding Distribution section below to understand additional criteria that must be met in order for a student to receive funding.

PRIVATE SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP

EMA ENROLLMENT

To be considered for funding, a student must have a completed enrollment in EMA by the following quarterly dates. A completed enrollment includes school submission and parent/guardian approval.

QUARTER 1	QUARTER 2	QUARTER 3	QUARTER 4
Renewal students: June 15, 2026 (Extended to June 26, 2026, for the 2026-27 school year) New students, as well as any renewal students who miss the previous deadline: July 15, 2026 (Extended to July 24, 2026, for the 2026-27 school year)	September 30, 2026	December 15, 2026	February 15, 2027 This deadline applies to transfer students (previously enrolled and funded at a different private school). For students who have not yet enrolled in a private school in EMA following the Quarter 3 deadline, they must be enrolled by January 15, 2027, in order to be considered for any funding for the 2026-27 school year.

IMPORTANT: If a student transfers to a different participating school in the same scholarship quarter, the first school the student attended for ten (10) days or more during that scholarship quarter will receive the full quarter's payment. *(See the Quarterly Funding Distribution section below for a breakdown of quarters.)*

REQUIREMENT FOR PRIOR PEP STUDENTS

If a Private School Scholarship student previously participated in the PEP Scholarship and completed the prior school year with the scholarship, the student's norm-referenced end-of-year assessment results must be submitted in EMA by May 31, 2026, in order for the student to be eligible for any 2026-27 funding consideration.

UNIQUE ABILITIES SCHOLARSHIP

REQUIREMENT FOR PRIOR PEP STUDENTS

If a Unique Abilities Scholarship student previously participated in the PEP Scholarship and completed the prior school year with the scholarship, the student's norm-referenced end-of-year assessment results must be submitted in EMA by May 31, 2026, in order for the student to be eligible for any 2026-27 funding consideration.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS

- Enrollment is NOT required for students who receive the Unique Abilities Scholarship.
- For more information on Unique Abilities Hybrid options, including requirements, please see our Handbooks

PEP SCHOLARSHIP

STUDENT LEARNING PLANS (SLP)

All students must have a 2026-27 Student Learning Plan (SLP) submitted in EMA by May 31, 2026 to be considered for funding.

PRIOR YEAR ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Renewal students only must have their prior year norm-referenced end-of-year assessment results submitted in EMA by May 31, 2026 to be considered for funding.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS

- Enrollment is NOT required for students who receive the PEP Scholarship.
- For more information on PEP Hybrid options, including requirements, please see our Handbooks.

ALL PROGRAMS

PUBLIC SCHOOL WITHDRAWAL

Beginning in the 2026-27 school year, certain students considered for funding may be required to verify that they are no longer enrolled in a public school.

Please note that students identified by the Florida Department of Education as being enrolled in a public school through the crosscheck process will be notified of additional steps required.

Additional information can be found in our Handbook.

Quarter	Population	Required Action	By This Date
Quarter 1 (September)	Students considered for Quarter 1 funding in August are not required to take any action at this time. Students considered for Quarter 1 funding in September must complete an attestation in EMA by September 15, 2026. More details can be found in the Funding Student Accounts section below.		
Quarter 2	Students considered for funding **for the first time** for the Quarter 2 payment; excluding students aged 3, 4 or entering kindergarten and students who received Quarter 4 funding in the 2025-26 school year.	Submit proof of public school withdrawal with a date of withdrawal on or before September 30, 2026, to be considered for Quarter 2 funding. *Note: For these students to be considered for Quarter 1 **and** Quarter 2, proof of public school withdrawal with a date of withdrawal on or before July 31, 2026, must be submitted.*	September 15, 2026
Quarter 3	Students considered for funding **for the first time** for the Quarter 3 payment.	Submit proof of public school withdrawal with a date of withdrawal on or before December 31, 2026, to be considered for Quarter 3 funding.	December 9, 2026
Quarter 4	Only new students eligible for a deadline exception may be considered for Quarter 4 funding. Those students will be notified of any required action and applicable deadlines. *(Private School and PEP only)*		

FUNDING DISTRIBUTION

QUARTER 1 (JULY 1 - SEPTEMBER 30)	QUARTER 2 (OCTOBER 1 - DECEMBER 31)	QUARTER 3 (JANUARY 1 - MARCH 31)	QUARTER 4 (APRIL 1 - JUNE 30)
FUNDS ARRIVE FROM THE FLDOE TO STEP UP FOR STUDENTS BY:			
Renewal students: August 1, 2026 New students, as well as any renewal students who missed the applicable renewal deadlines for the August payment: September 1, 2026	All students: November 1, 2026	All students: February 1, 2027	All students: April 1, 2027
To be considered for funding, the student must meet all requirements and deadlines.			

FUNDING STUDENT ACCOUNTS

It may take up to two (2) weeks to fund student accounts once funds are received from the FLDOE. Step Up will notify families if any additional action is needed prior to funding.

Please review the following sections to understand additional criteria, if applicable, that must be met in order for a student to receive funding.

STUDENT ACCOUNT BALANCE

To receive additional funding, a student's available scholarship balance must be less than or equal to the amount listed below by each deadline. Failure to meet this requirement by the deadline may result in scholarship funds being returned to the funding source.

Quarter	By This Date	Private School Scholarship	Unique Abilities Scholarship	PEP Scholarship
Quarter 1	August 15, 2026 (For students included in the August payment) September 15, 2026 (For students included in the September payment)	Account balance must be less than or equal to $24,000	Account balance must be less than or equal to $50,000	Account balance must be less than or equal to $24,000
Quarter 2	November 15, 2026			
Quarter 3	February 15, 2027			
Quarter 4	April 15 , 2027			

PUBLIC SCHOOL ATTESTATION

Beginning in the 2026-27 school year, new students who are presented for Quarter 1 funding must complete an attestation in EMA confirming whether or not the student is in public school to receive Quarter 1 funding. This must be completed by September 15, 2026.

Note: If confirmed that the student is in public school, the family will need to submit proof of public school withdrawal with a date of withdrawal on or before July 31, 2026.

SPENDING AND PAYMENT DEADLINES

SCHOOL TUITION AND FEES

For Private School Scholarship students and any Unique Abilities Scholarship students who are enrolled in an eligible participating private school in EMA, invoices will be generated as students are funded. Schools have 30 calendar days from when an invoice is generated to approve. Once approved by the school, the parent/guardian has 30 calendar days to approve.

Florida law requires payment of tuition and fees invoices for full-time enrollment to be initiated within seven (7) business days of school and parent/guardian approval. Funds may take up to five (5) business days to arrive in the school's account.

SPENDING

Families must purchase items or services for the 2026–27 school year between July 1, 2026, and June 30, 2027. Note: Please see our Handbooks to learn about eligible reimbursements before the scholarship year begins or for advanced services.

For families using MyScholarShop, purchases remain subject to review and may take up to two (2) weeks for processing.

REIMBURSEMENT REQUESTS

Families submitting reimbursement requests for the 2026-27 school year must do so by July 31, 2027. Reimbursement requests may take up to 60 days to be reviewed and processed after all necessary documentation has been received. If a reimbursement request is placed “on hold” pending additional documentation or revisions, the 60-day review period starts over when the requested information is received.

REIMBURSEMENT PAYMENT

For approved reimbursement requests, the payment will be issued within seven (7) days via direct deposit (ACH), PayPal or check.

INACTIVE ACCOUNTS

If a student’s account has no spending activity for two (2) consecutive fiscal years (July 1 to June 30), the account will be closed, and any remaining funds are required to be returned.

Please note that reimbursement requests and MyScholarShop (MSS) purchases remain subject to review and processing times. Families whose account may be at risk of being labeled a “nonspender” are strongly encouraged to submit reimbursement requests and complete MSS purchases as soon as possible to ensure spending is reflected on the account by June 30.

PLEASE NOTE

This document does not take the place of our handbooks. These dates are determined based on current information and could be subject to change. Additional supplemental deadlines and funding dates may also be added by the FLDOE. Any date additions or changes will be communicated by Step Up For Students in a timely manner. Families, schools, and providers are encouraged to review the Handbooks and Purchasing Guides for additional information.