

Educational Savings Accounts for Students with Unique Abilities

THE OPPORTUNITY

What can a Family Empowerment Scholarship For Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA) do for my Child?

With a Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA), your child has more learning options

The family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA) is different than other state scholarships in that it allows parents to Personalize the education of their children with unique abilities by directing money Toward a combination of programs and approved providers. These include schools, Therapist, specialists, curriculum, technology – even a college savings account.



GREETINGS FROM FLORIDA!

Welcome & Introductions

Florida's Education Savings Accounts
for Students with Unique Abilities


Compelling Why



What We Know

**"If you've met one individual with autism,
you've met one individual with autism."
Dr. Stephen Shore**

Families of children with unique abilities
need the most flexibility to customize their
child's education.






DOES MY CHILD QUALIFY?

Eligibility Requirements

This scholarship is for Florida students 3 years old through 12th grade or age 22, whichever comes first, with one of the following diagnoses:

- Anaphylaxis
 - Autism spectrum disorder
 - Being a high-risk child
 - Cerebral Palsy
 - Down syndrome
 - Emotional or a behavioral disability
 - Hearing impairment, including deafness
 - Hospital or homebound
 - Identification as dual sensory impaired
 - Intellectually disability
 - Language impairment
 - Muscular dystrophy
 - Orthopedic impairment
 - Other health impairment
 - Phelan-McDermid syndrome
 - Prader-Willi syndrome
 - Rare disease
 - Specific learning disability
 - Speech impairment
 - Spina bifida
 - Traumatic brain injury
 - Visual impairment, including blindness
 - Williams syndrome
- 



How it Works!

- Parent Applies – SFO determines eligibility
- DOE Cross Check and awards funds based on Matrix
- DOE sends funds to SFO quarterly
- SFO deposits funds into individual parent accounts quarterly
- Parent uses funds
 - reimbursement format
 - MyScholarshop design
 - tuition invoicing



PARTICIPATING
PRIVATE SCHOOLS
OR HOME
EDUCATION



THERAPISTS &
SPECIALISTS



CURRICULUM



TECHNOLOGY



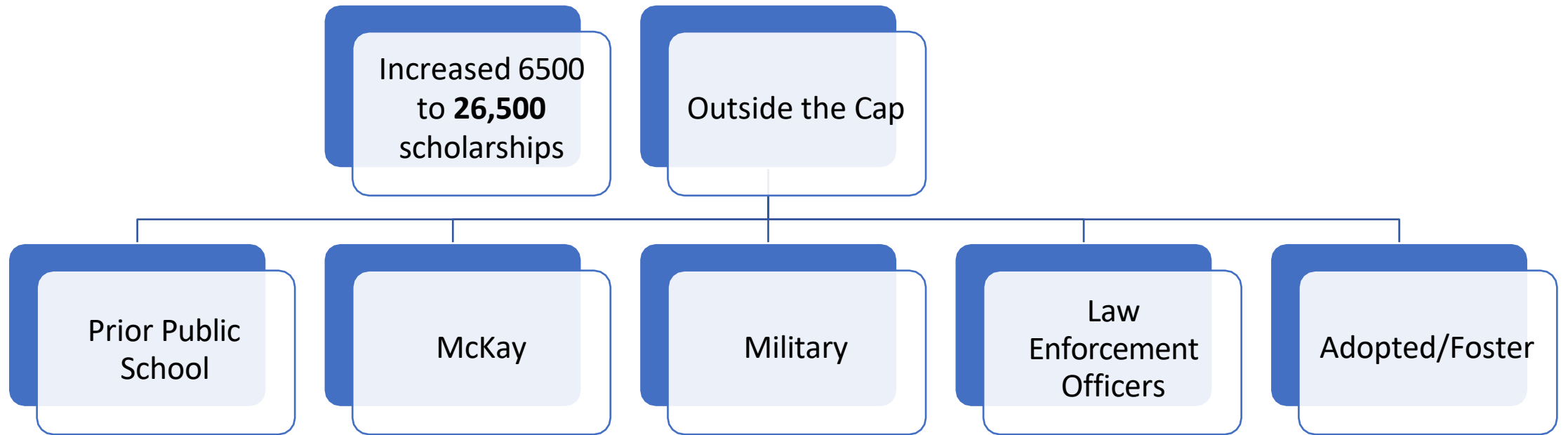
COLLEGE SAVINGS
ACCOUNT OR
APPROVED
POST-SECONDARY
INSTITUTION

How the FES-UA Scholarship Works

“Our programs in Florida have been game changers for our family and I am proud and humbled to share our experiences with change makers! My experience in this "world" comes mainly as a parent speaking candidly with lawmakers about my life and my children and what help we needed and received that has made their education soar in trajectories we never had imagined when they were able to be educated in a place that suited their individual needs best! I always get emotional talking about our journey and it is genuine.”

-Katie Swingle, parent of children with Autism

2022 FES-UA Legislative Updates



2022-23

McKay

Scholarship

Transition

Evolution tuition only to ESA

27K+ kids – doubled!

Outside cap categories

Eligibility categories expanded

Small-town parents leading on education choice

- Wauchula, population 5,001, is home to homeschool mom Sandra Shoffner and her 6-year-old Elliott, who is on the autism spectrum. For the past two years, Shoffner [has used a state-funded education savings account, or ESA, to carefully cobble together](#) a learning program for her son.
- “There are so many options with this scholarship,” she continued. “Without it, I’d have a fraction of this.”



FES-UA Application Status As of 5/16/22

Students on Submitted Apps by Student Scholarship Status

Student Scholarship Status	FES-UA New	FES-UA Renewal	FES-UA Total
Awarded	8071	34508	42579
Continuing	18	388	406
Declined	1	5	6
Denied	4	0	4
Pending	10,051	84	10,135
Wait List	1	0	1
Total Students on Submitted Apps	18146	34985	53131

Average Scholarship Award

9,770

Average Funded Amount

9,855.36

Awarded Student Count

27,433

Private School Enrollments

13,017

VPK and Early Learning Provider Enrollments

361

Processing School Year

August 2021-June 2022

Gender

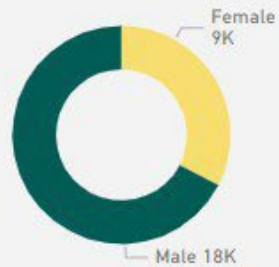
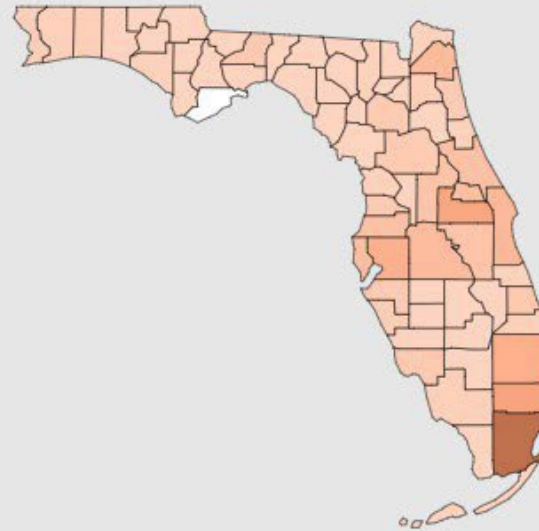
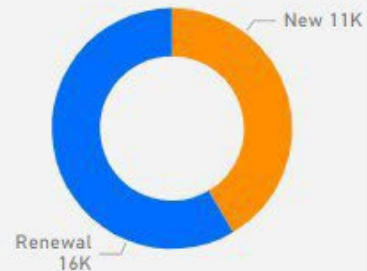
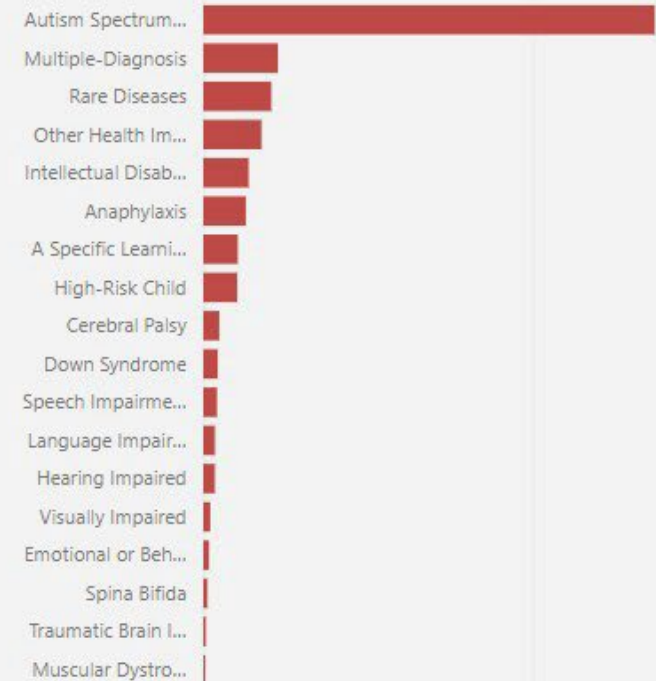
All

Diagnosis Type

All

Estimated Excluded From Cap

All

Gender

County

Student Type

Diagnosis


K

10K

FUNDING – Matrix of Services

A Matrix of Services is **completed using information found in the student's IEP by an individual or group of individuals familiar with the student.** It should reflect the special services the child needs.

The Matrix of Services is the document used to determine the cost factor for selected exceptional education students based on the decisions made by the IEP team. In the matrix, there are **Five Domains:** Curriculum and Learning Environment • Social or Emotional Behavior • Independent Functioning • Health Care • Communication

The total number of points, determined by adding together the scores for each domain and applicable special considerations points, results in a rating of Support Level 1 (251), Support Level 2 (252), Support Level 3 (253), Support Level 4 (254) or Support Level 5 (255). o be provided to the student as documented by the IEP team.

Matrix of Services LEVELS

251-253

254

255

Level 1	Level 1 indicates that the student requires no services or assistance beyond those that are normally available to all students
Level 2	Level 2 indicates the student is receiving assistance on a periodic basis or receives minor supports, assistance or services
Level 3	Level 3 indicates the student is receiving accommodations to the learning environment that are more complex or is receiving services on a more frequent schedule.
Level 4	Level 4 indicates that for the majority of learning activities, the student is receiving specialized approaches, assistance or equipment, or is receiving more extensive modifications to the learning environment
Level 5	Level 5 indicates that the student is receiving continuous and intense (one on one or very small group) assistance, multiple services or substantial modifications for the majority of learning activities

FAMILY EMPOWERMENT (FORMERLY GARDINER) SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Basic scholarship amounts for 2021-22

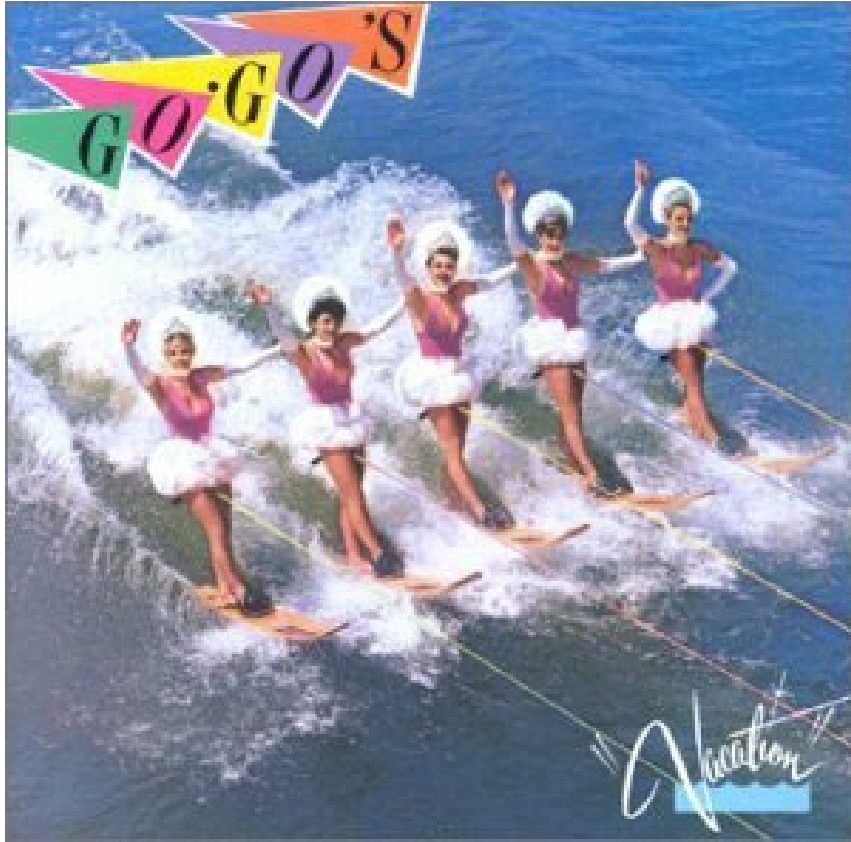
Students with Level 1, 2 or 3 matrix of services OR those with diagnosis by a physician or psychologist will be awarded at the Matrix Level 251-253 indicated below.

For a student who received a Gardiner Scholarship in the 2020-2021 school year, the amount of the award will be the greater of the amount calculated below or the amount the student received for the 2020-2021 school year.

Matrix Level 251-253 for County	3 & 4 Years Grades K-3	Grades 4-8	Grades 9-12	Matrix Level 254	Matrix Level 255
Alachua	8,904.00	8,365.00	8,407.00	18,116.00	25,359.00
Baker	9,597.00	9,061.00	9,104.00	18,470.00	25,663.00
Bay	9,288.00	8,754.00	8,797.00	18,073.00	25,241.00
Bradford	9,624.00	9,091.00	9,134.00	18,594.00	25,750.00
Brevard	9,222.00	8,677.00	8,721.00	18,306.00	25,618.00
Broward	9,674.00	9,113.00	9,157.00	18,705.00	26,233.00

Matrix Level 251-253 for County	3 & 4 Years Grades K-3	Grades 4-8	Grades 9-12	Matrix Level 254	Matrix Level 255
Lake	9,430.00	8,890.00	8,932.00	18,130.00	25,387.00
Lee	10,341.00	9,778.00	9,822.00	19,000.00	26,559.00
Leon	10,173.00	9,638.00	9,680.00	18,007.00	25,194.00
Levy	9,536.00	9,011.00	9,053.00	18,421.00	25,477.00
Liberty	10,306.00	9,791.00	9,832.00	18,641.00	25,556.00
Madison	10,127.00	9,617.00	9,658.00	17,938.00	24,782.00

Compelling WHY - Customization



Apple iTunes

Research Highlights

The longer parents utilize education savings accounts, the more comfortable they become using scholarship funds on curriculum, tutoring and educational services, a new research paper finds. Rural families in particular are more likely to use their ESA funds to customize their children's education.





Even out here, education choice for Eli

- Even in this remote town near the Everglades, there are more educational resources than meet the eye. It just takes the right tool to assemble them. The Conner family did that with the Gardiner Scholarship, Florida's education savings account for students with special needs. It gave them flexibility to devise an education regimen – therapy, home school, private school – that was just right for Eli.
- The scholarship, Stephanie Conner said, “changed everything.”
- Eli, who communicates mostly through sign language, has been diagnosed with cerebral palsy and other developmental delays. A few years ago, he was scared and struggling in a traditional school. A few weeks ago, he couldn't do the tightrope.
 - Now he can.
- And now, thanks to a cutting-edge education choice scholarship, his family is confident they will see his growth continue to accelerate.

Special needs scholarship helps student stand on his own

- For nearly three years, starting before his third birthday, Malachi lived in an orphanage in Adama, in central Ethiopia. Born with spina bifida, a birth defect that causes leg weakness and limits mobility, he had to crawl across the orphanage's concrete floors.
- His adopted parents, Mitchell & Kamden Kuhn applied for the Gardiner Scholarship and enrolled him in Ruskin Christian School. Kamden Kuhn said the nearby public school was good, but she didn't want her son pulled out of class time for therapy. She wanted Malachi to have the same amount of class time as the other students. The Kuhns used funds left over after paying his tuition to purchase after-school physical, occupational and behavioral therapy.
- “He made so much progress in the first nine months,” Kuhn recalled. He quickly started to learn to speak English and to stand upright with the aid of a walker. Now stronger than ever, he uses a forearm cane to walk.





Questions?
Interested
in Visiting?
Contact Us

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