



Exceptional Student Education Services

Florida Organization for Instructional Leaders (FOIL) 2025

May 2025



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
fldoe.org

www.FLDOE.org



Florida Department of Education's (FDOE's) Mission and Vision

- The mission of Florida's Early Learning-20 education system shall be to increase the proficiency of **all students** within one seamless, efficient system, by allowing them the opportunity to expand their knowledge and skills through learning opportunities and research valued by students, parents and communities.
- Florida will have an efficient, world-class education system that engages and prepares **all students** to be globally competitive for college and careers.

[Section \(s.\) 1008.31, Florida Statutes \(F.S.\)](#), and [FDOE's Strategic Plan \(2021\)](#)



FDOE's Goals

1. Highest Student Achievement
2. Seamless Articulation and Maximum Access
3. Skilled Workforce and Economic Development
4. Quality Efficient Services

[S. 1008.31, F.S.](#), and [FDOE's Strategic Plan \(2021\)](#)



Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEES)

- Dispute Resolution and Monitoring (DRM)
- Instructional Support Services (ISS)
- Program Accountability, Assessment and Data Systems (PAADS)
- Student Support Services
- Hope Florida



Definitions

- **IDEA** – Individual Disabilities Education Act
- **SWD** – Students with Disabilities
- **ESE** – Exceptional Student Education
- **LEA** – Local Educational Agency (District)
- **IEP** – Individual Educational Plan
- **FAPE** – Free Appropriate Public Education
- **SDI** – Specially Designed Instruction
- **AP-AAAS** – Access Points-Alternate Academic Achievement Standards
- **OSEP** – Office of Special Education Programs
- **PPPSS** – Parentally-Placed Private School Students



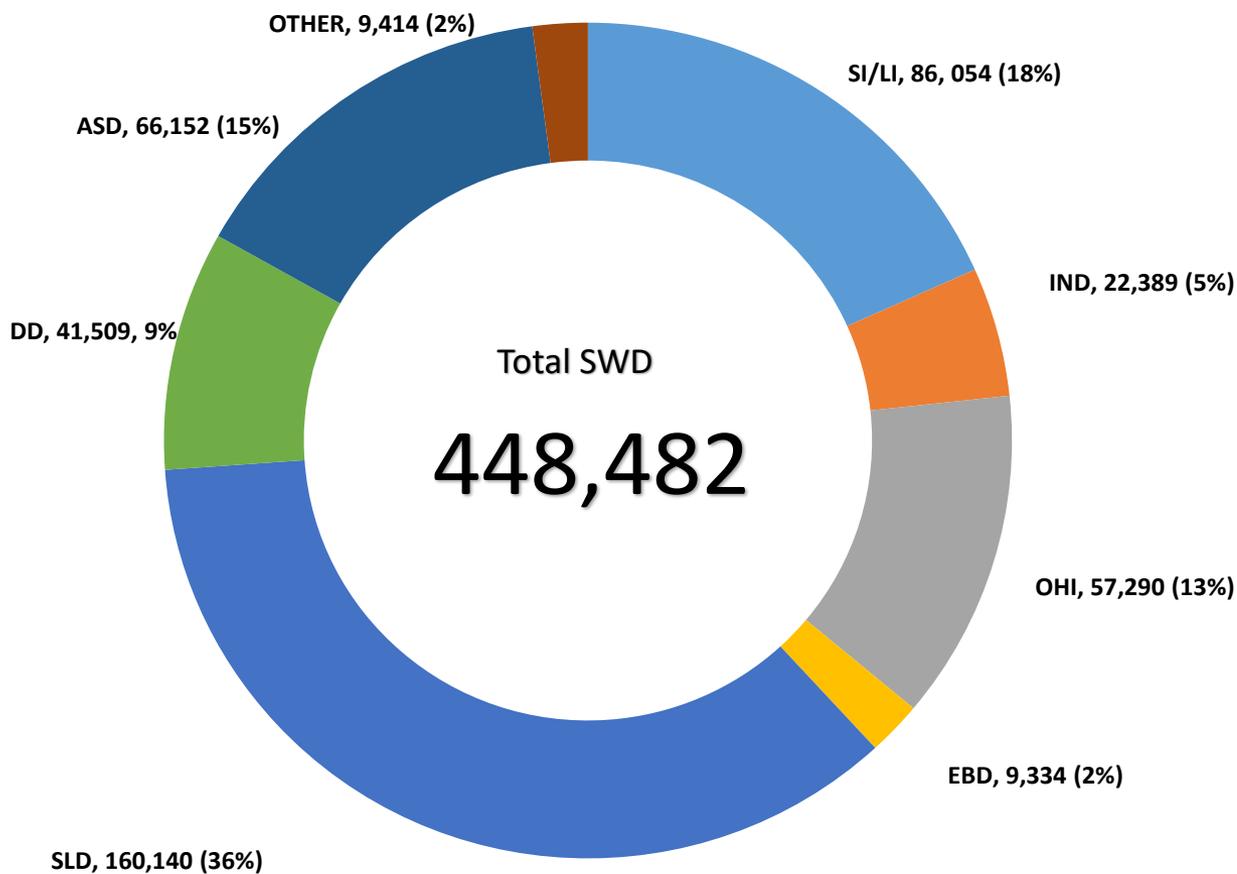
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) SWD Definition

A child with a disability means a child evaluated as having an intellectual disability, a hearing impairment (including deafness), a speech or language impairment, a visual impairment (including blindness), a serious emotional disturbance (referred to in this part as “emotional disturbance”), an orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, an other health impairment, a specific learning disability, deaf-blindness, or multiple disabilities, and who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services.

[Title 34, sections \(§§\) 300.304 through 300.311, Code of Federal Regulations \(C.F.R.\)](#)



Florida's SWD



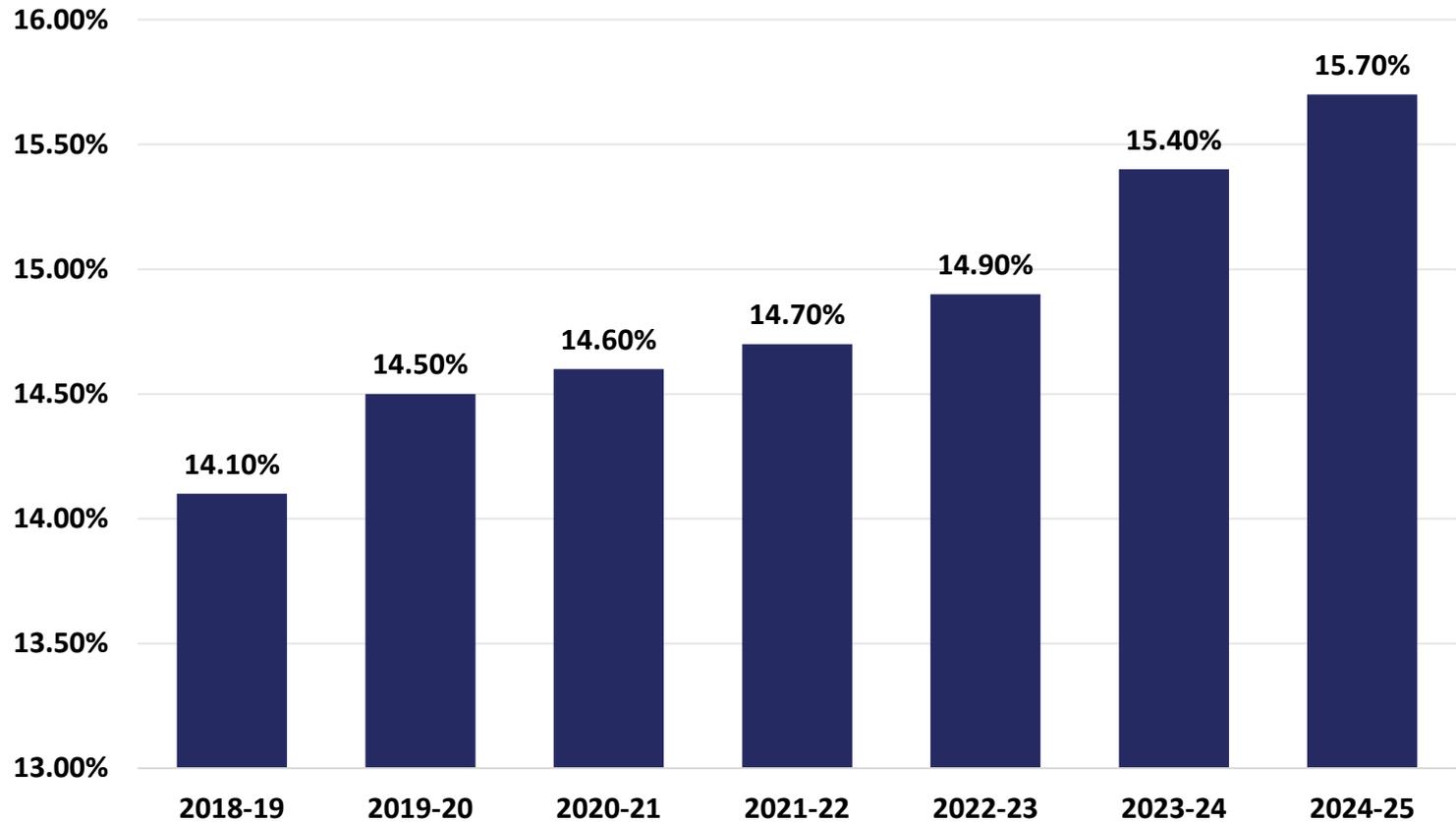
Source: Final Survey 2, 2024-25

Areas of Eligibility:

- ASD – Autism Spectrum Disorder
- SLD – Specific Learning Disability
- OHI – Other Health Impairment
- IND – Intellectual Disability
- DD – Developmentally Delayed
- SI – Speech Impaired
- LI – Language Impaired
- EBD – Emotional/Behavioral Disability
- Other – Defined Below**
- H/H - Hospitalized or Homebound
- DSI - Dual Sensory Impaired
- TBI - Traumatic Brain Injury
- EC - Established Conditions (0-2)
- OI - Orthopedic Impairment
- D/HH - Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing
- VI - Visual Impairment



Florida's SWD as Percent of Total Students



Source: Final Survey 2, 2024-25



SPP/APR Results Indicators

- **Indicator 1: Graduation rate**
- **Indicator 2: Dropout rate**
- **Indicator 3: Assessment**
- Indicator 4: Suspension/Expulsion*
- **Indicator 5: Educational environments (school age)**
- **Indicator 6: Educational environments (preschool)**
- **Indicator 7: Preschool outcomes**
- **Indicator 8: Parent involvement**
- Indicator 9: Disproportionate representation
- **Indicator 10: Disproportionate representation (by particular disability categories)**
- Indicator 11: Child find
- Indicator 12: Early childhood transition
- Indicator 13: Secondary transition
- **Indicator 14: Post-school outcomes**
- **Indicator 15: Resolution sessions**
- **Indicator 16: Mediation**
- **Indicator 17: State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)**



SPP/APR Compliance Indicators

- Indicator 1: Graduation rate
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- Indicator 15: Resolution sessions
- Indicator 16: Mediation
- Indicator 17: SSIP
- Indicator 18: General Supervision



Child Find Responsibilities

All children with disabilities residing in the State, including children with disabilities who are homeless children or are wards of the State, and children with disabilities attending private schools, regardless of the severity of their disability and who need special education and related services are identified, located and evaluated.

[34 C.F.R. § 300.311](#)



Child Find Responsibilities: General Education Procedures

Initial Evaluation – Criteria 1

1. When a school-based team determines that the kindergarten through grade 12 student's response to intervention data indicate that intensive interventions implemented in accordance with subsection (1) of this rule, are effective but require a level of intensity and resources to sustain growth or performance that is beyond that which is accessible through general education resources.

[Rule 6A-6.0331\(3\)\(a\), Florida Administrative Code \(F.A.C.\)](#)



Child Find Responsibilities: General Education Procedures, Continued

Initial Evaluation – Criteria 2

2. When a school-based team determines that the kindergarten through grade 12 student's response to interventions implemented in accordance with subsection (1) of this rule indicates that the student does not make adequate growth given effective core instruction and intensive, individualized, evidence-based interventions.

[Rule 6A-6.0331\(3\)\(a\), F.A.C.](#)



Child Find Responsibilities: General Education Procedures, Continued

Initial Evaluation – Criteria 3 and 4

3. When a child aged three to kindergarten entry age receives a developmental screening through the LEA or the Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resource System (FDLRS) and based on the results of the screening it is suspected that the child may be a child with a disability in need of special education and related services; or
4. When a parent requests an evaluation and there is documentation or evidence that the kindergarten through grade 12 student or child aged three to kindergarten entry age who is enrolled in a school district-operated preschool program may be a student with a disability and needs special education and related services.

[Rule 6A-6.0331\(3\)\(a\), F.A.C.](#)



Child Find Responsibilities: General Education Procedures, Continued

Initial Evaluation

- b) Within thirty (30) days of a determination that a circumstance described in subparagraphs (3)(a)1., (3)(a)2. or (3)(a)3., of this rule, exists for a student in grades kindergarten through grade 12 or a child aged three (3) to kindergarten entry age, the school district must request consent from the parent to conduct an evaluation, unless the parent and the school agree otherwise in writing.

[Rule 6A-6.0331\(3\)\(b\), F.A.C.](#)



Child Find Evaluation Timeline

For the purposes of this rule, the following calendar days shall not be counted toward the sixty (60)-calendar day requirement:

- All school holidays, Thanksgiving, winter and spring breaks.
- Summer vacation.
- Absences for more than eight (8) school days shall not be counted toward the sixty (60)-calendar day requirement.

[Rule 6A-6.0331\(3\)\(g\), F.A.C.](#)



Child Find Evaluation Timeline, Continued

- The sixty (60)-day timeframe for evaluation does not apply to a school district if:
 1. The parent and school district, by mutual written agreement, extend the sixty (60)-calendar day requirement by no more than thirty (30)-calendar days. The written agreement must be secured before the forty-fifth (45th) calendar day, but after the formal testing has begun and it was determined that other evaluators are needed to complete the required full and individual evaluation.

[Rule 6A-6.0331\(3\)\(h\), F.A.C.](#)



Indicator 11 Timeline

- The sixty (60)-day timeframe for evaluation does not apply to a school district if:
 2. The parent of the student repeatedly fails or refuses to produce the student for the evaluation; or
 3. A student enrolls in a school served by the school district after the timeframe has begun, and prior to a determination by the student's previous school district as to whether the student is a student with a disability.

[Rule 6A-6.0331\(3\)\(h\), F.A.C.](#)



Child Find for Parentally Placed Private School Students and Home Education Students

- The LEA in which the private school is located is responsible for conducting child find per 34 C.F.R. § 300.131.
- The LEA of the child's residence would be responsible for making free appropriate public education (FAPE) available.
- If the private school operates as a for-profit school, or the student is enrolled in a home education program, then the LEA of the student's residence is responsible for child find activities.

[FDOE TAP Parentally Placed Private School Students](#)



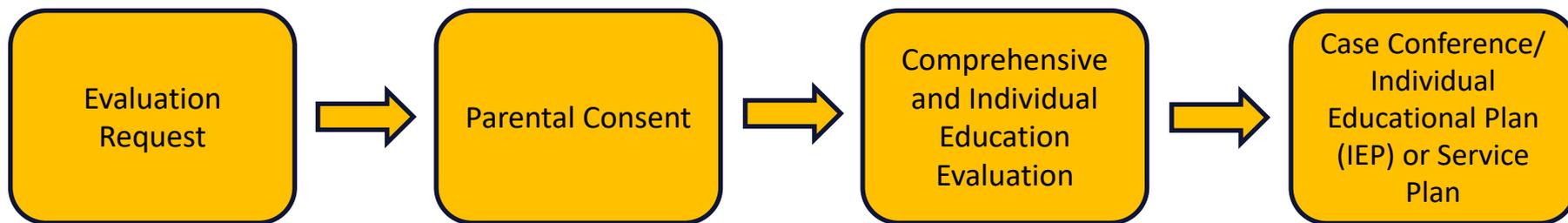
Child Find for Parentally Placed Students in Not-for-Profit Private Schools

- The IDEA does not require an LEA to use Response to Intervention (RTI) for a parentally placed child attending a private school located in its jurisdiction.
- Further, it would be inconsistent with the IDEA evaluation provisions in 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.301 through 300.311 for an LEA to delay the initial evaluation because a private school has not implemented a RTI process with a child suspected of having a learning disability and has not reported the results of that process to the LEA.

[FDOE TAP Parentally Placed Private School Students](#)



Evaluation Process



The LEA has thirty (30) days to respond to a parent request for an evaluation.

Written consent must be obtained before the evaluation begins.

Conducted by multi-disciplinary team. Must be completed within sixty (60) days of parental consent.

Eligibility will be determined. If eligible, an IEP is developed, unless the parent rejects FAPE. If FAPE is rejected and the student is designated to receive equitable services, then the team creates a Service Plan instead.



Proportionate Share

Each LEA must set aside a proportionate share of its total IDEA, Part B grant to provide services to children parentally placed in private schools.

- This is a total, not a per-pupil, allocation.
- Expenditures need not be proportional to the individual student or school; they are allocated for all students within the geographic boundaries of the LEA.

[FDOE TAP Parentally Placed Private School Students](#)



Child Count

- The child count is used for IDEA proportionate share calculations.
- Students included in child count:
 - All parentally placed private school students with disabilities, ***regardless of whether they are receiving services.***
 - Preschool students with disabilities who are enrolled in a preschool that is attached to an elementary school, ***regardless of whether they are receiving services.***

[34 C.F.R. § 300.133](#)



Calculating Proportionate Share

- Includes all identified children attending schools in the district or living in the district if homeschooled (between October 1 and December 1).
- Reflects the share of non-public students out of the total identified student population.
- The percentage share of non-public children is multiplied by the total grant.
- IDEA restricts the use of Part B proportionate share to certain allowable costs.

[FDOE TAP Parentally Placed Private School Students](#)



Areas of Eligibility for Exceptional Student Education in Florida

- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Deaf or Hard of Hearing (D/HH)
- Developmentally Delayed (DD)
- Dual-Sensory Impairment (DSI)
- Emotional/Behavioral Disability (E/BD)
- Established Conditions (EC) Ages Birth-2
- Gifted
- Hospital Homebound (HH)
- Intellectual Disability (InD)
- Language Impairment (LI)
- Orthopedic Impairment (OI)
- Other Health Impairment (OHI)
- Speech Impairment (SI)
- Visual Impairment (VI)
- Specific Learning Disability (SLD)
- Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
- Visual Impairment (VI)

[34 C.F.R. § 300.8](#)



Specific Learning Disability (SLD)

Rule 6A-6.03018, F.A.C.

- Defined as a disorder in one or more of the basic learning processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest in significant difficulties affecting the ability to listen, speak, read, write, spell or do mathematics.
- As part of the evaluation procedures, the LEA must promptly request parental or legal guardian consent to conduct an evaluation to determine if the student needs specially designed instruction.



SLD Eligibility, Continued

When provided with learning experiences and instruction appropriate for the student's chronological age or grade level standards, the student's performance is below what is expected in one or more of the following areas:

- Oral expression;
- Listening comprehension;
- Written expression;
- Basic reading skills;
- Reading fluency skills;
- Reading comprehension;
- Mathematics calculation; or
- Mathematics problem solving.



SLD Eligibility, Continued

Whether the student has an SLD as evidenced by RTI/Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) data confirming the following:

- 1. *Performance discrepancy:*** The student's academic performance is significantly discrepant for the age and grade level expectations.
- 2. *Rate of progress:*** When provided with targeted instruction/intervention with increased intensity and duration, the student's rate of progress is insufficient or requires sustained and substantial effort to close the achievement gap.
- 3. *Educational need:*** The student continues to need interventions that significantly differ in intensity and duration from what can be provided through the general education curriculum.



Emotional/Behavioral Disability (EBD)

Rule 6A-6.03016, F.A.C.

- A student with an EBD has persistent (not sufficiently responsive to implemented evidence-based interventions) and consistent emotional or behavioral responses that adversely affect performance in the educational environment. A functional behavioral assessment must be conducted.
- A social developmental history compiled from a structured interview with the parent or guardian.
- A psychological evaluation identifying factors contributing to the development of an EBD.

[Rule 6A-6.03016, F.A.C.](#)



EBD Eligibility, Continued

4. Criteria for eligibility.

A student with EBD must demonstrate an inability to maintain adequate performance in the educational environment that cannot be explained by physical, sensory, socio-cultural, developmental, medical or health (with the exception of mental health) factors; and must demonstrate one or more of the characteristics described in paragraphs (4)(a) or (4)(b) of this rule.

[Rule 6A-6.03016, F.A.C.](#)



EBD Eligibility, Continued

4. Criteria for eligibility.

(a) Internal factors characterized by:

1. Feelings of sadness, or frequent crying, or restlessness, or loss of interest in friends and/or schoolwork, or mood swings, or erratic behavior; or
2. The presence of symptoms such as fears, phobias or excessive worrying and anxiety regarding personal or school problems; or
3. Behaviors that result from thoughts and feelings that are inconsistent with actual events or circumstances, or difficulty maintaining normal thought processes, or excessive levels of withdrawal from persons or events.

[Rule 6A-6.03016, F.A.C.](#)



EBD Eligibility, Continued

4. Criteria for eligibility

(b) External factors characterized by:

1. An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers, teachers and other adults in the school setting; or
2. Behaviors that are chronic and disruptive such as noncompliance, verbal and/or physical aggression, and/or poorly developed social skills that are manifestations of feelings, symptoms or behaviors as specified in subparagraphs (4)(a)1.-3. of this rule.

[Rule 6A-6.03016, F.A.C.](#)



ESE Parent Survey Information

- The window opened in February 2025 and will close on June 30, 2025.
- [Public Facing Dashboard](#)
- Web-based and paper-based.
 - [2024-25 ESE Parent Survey](#).
 - Download at [paper-based 2024-25 ESE Parent Survey](#) (PDF) and return it via mail, fax or email (instructions are in the survey).



BEES Portal to Professional Learning Alternatives

BEES Portal to Professional Learning Alternatives

The BEES Portal to Professional Learning Alternatives offers a variety of online courses for Florida educators that will increase their ability to respond to the needs of students with disabilities.

Facilitated Courses	Independent Courses
 <p style="background-color: orange; color: white; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Statewide Courses Now Available!</p>	
<p>Ongoing communication with expert local facilitator, group meetings with colleagues, and classroom-related learning activities and assessments.</p> <p>To begin search course availability then contact your local PLA Coordinator to enroll. If you are already enrolled, select Sign in to access a course.</p>	<p>Self-paced learning, content-related activities and assessments, user-friendly format, and responsive design.</p> <p>Select Sign in to self register or to access courses if you are already enrolled.</p>
<div style="background-color: #2c4e64; color: white; padding: 5px; width: 100px; margin: 0 auto;">Sign in</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; width: 100px; margin: 5px auto;">Course Catalog</div> <p style="text-align: center;">Facilitated Courses FAQ</p>	<div style="background-color: #2c4e64; color: white; padding: 5px; width: 100px; margin: 0 auto;">Sign in</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; width: 100px; margin: 5px auto;">Course Catalog</div> <p style="text-align: center;">Independent Courses FAQ</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Personnel Development Website</p>

Your local FDLRS [PLA Coordinator](#) will submit a quarterly report of completers to the appropriate school districts/organizations. For questions about this process please contact your local [PLA Coordinator](#).

View ESE endorsement opportunities

View additional online professional development opportunities

<https://fl-pla.org/#/home>



IDEA-Funded State Projects

- Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources System (FDLRS): <https://www.fdlrs.org/parent-services>
- Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD): <http://www.florida-card.org/map.htm>
- Resource Materials and Technology Center for the Deaf/Hard of Hearing (RMTC-D/HH): <https://www.rmtcdhh.org/families>
- Multiagency Network for Students with Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities (SEDNET): <https://sednetfl.info/>





IDEA-Funded State Projects, Continued

- Learning Ally:
<https://learningally.org/Solutions-for-School/school-grants/Florida>
- Florida Instructional Materials Center for the Visually Impaired (FIMC-VI):
<https://www.fimcvi.org/fimc-viresources/student-and-family-resources>
- ACCESS Project: <https://accesstofls.org/>



FIMC-VI
Florida Instructional Materials Center for
the Visually Impaired





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