



## Weekly Memo

### Action Items

#### Florida Inclusion Network (FIN) Peers as Partners in Learning (PPL) Roundtable Sessions

FIN is excited to share the 2023-2024 flyer for the PPL Roundtable sessions. The PPL sessions are offered for middle and high school courses (#1400025 and #1400340) that allow students to serve as peer support for students with disabilities. The flyer may be disseminated to other interested participants at both the district and school levels. The first session will be on **September 27, 2023**. To register, go to [Peers as Partners in Learning Roundtable Sessions-2023-2024](#). The roundtable sessions will address topics such as getting the year started, implementing the curriculum, marketing the program and pairing students. All sessions will include the accompanying sections of the PPL Program Guide and will allow time for existing programs to share their methods, successes and lessons learned, and to address questions from participants. For questions, contact Kelly Claude at [kclaude@contactfin.com](mailto:kclaude@contactfin.com) or JaSheena Ekhtor at [jekhtor@contactfin.com](mailto:jekhtor@contactfin.com). To view the flyer, see the attached document.

- Filename: 2023-24 Roundtable Flyer

#### Para-to-Teacher Support Program

Does your district or school have paraprofessionals who would make great special education teachers? The Para-to-Teacher Support Program is holding a virtual question-and-answer session on **September 28, 2023**, at 6 p.m. ET (5 p.m. CT). Program Director, Dr. Keri Fogle will discuss funding opportunities for paraprofessionals who already hold at least an associate degree, the equivalent number of college credit hours, or a bachelor's degree in a noneducation field. The Para-to-Teacher Support Program is a state-funded grant program that has supported more than 200 paraprofessionals in earning their degrees to become special education teachers throughout Florida. For further information, requirements, and colleges and universities where paraprofessionals can receive financial support while earning their initial certification in special education, go to the [Para-to-Teacher Support Program website](#). To request the Zoom link for the virtual session, contact the program at [paratoteach@uwf.edu](mailto:paratoteach@uwf.edu).

#### Update of District Primary Accountability Coordinator and Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) Accountability Coordinator Information

The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) has issued a memorandum regarding the [update of district primary accountability coordinator and DJJ accountability coordinator information](#); attachment A, [2023-24 Primary Accountability Coordinator Update](#); and attachment B, [2023-24 Primary DJJ Accountability Coordinator Update](#). Confirmation or updates to this information must be submitted by **September 29, 2023**, per the instructions in the memo.

### **2023 Purple Star School of Distinction Designation**

The FDOE has issued a memorandum regarding the [2023 Purple Star School of Distinction Designation](#). Applications must be submitted by **September 30, 2023**, per the instructions in the memo.

### **Approval of Health Materials per House Bill (HB) 1069**

The FDOE has issued a memorandum regarding [approval of health materials per HB 1069](#). Materials must be submitted by **September 30, 2023**, per the instructions in the memo.

### **U.S. Presidential Scholars Program Nominations**

The FDOE has issued a memorandum regarding [U.S. Presidential Scholars Program nominations](#). Nominations must be submitted by **October 6, 2023**, per the instructions in the memo.

### **2023-2024 Florida U.S. Senate Youth Program (USSYP) Application**

The FDOE has issued a memorandum regarding [2023-2024 Florida USSYP application](#). Applications must be submitted by **October 6, 2023**, per the instructions in the memo.

### **2024 Art in the Capitol Competition**

The FDOE has issued a memorandum regarding [2024 Art in the Capitol Competition](#). Districts must submit the winning artwork to their legislator by **November 10, 2023**, per the instructions in the memo. For additional dates, see the memo.

### **Florida Instructional Materials Center for the Visually Impaired (FIMC-VI) and the Florida and Virgin Islands (FAVI) Deaf-Blind Collaborative Professional Learning Opportunities**

The Impact of Deaf-Blindness on Learning and Development: FAVI and FIMC-VI have collaborated to create a self-paced, independent learning opportunity using materials developed by the National Center on Deaf-Blindness. These are professional learning modules for practitioners wanting to improve their knowledge of deaf-blindness and gain essential practical skills for working with students who are deaf-blind. The intended audience is teachers providing exceptional student education for students identified as having a visual impairment or who are deaf or hard of hearing, and those students with multiple disabilities, related service providers and administrators. Participants may earn 14 inservice credit hours if approved by the associated school district.

Braille Learning Community: A professional learning community for those serving students in Florida who wish to learn braille or improve their braille skills. This site includes a variety of literary and math braille resources to support and extend participants' knowledge of braille codes, including both Unified English Braille (UEB) Math and Science and UEB with Nemeth. Participants will have access to a discussion board for posting related questions and a board for sharing braille files. Veteran and certified braille transcribers are welcome to join to help others become more proficient. FIMC-VI staff members and a learning community of peers will support those completing literary and math UEB modules at [UEB Online](#). Participants may earn up to 50 inservice credit hours if approved by the associated school district.

Interested participants must complete the forms at [FIMC-VI Canvas Resource Site and Course Sign-Up](#). Courses will close on **June 14, 2024**, at 11:59 p.m. ET. For questions, contact Tiffany Conrad at [tconrad@fimcvi.org](mailto:tconrad@fimcvi.org).

### **Florida Low Vision Initiative (FLVI) Open Enrollment**

FLVI, an FDOE discretionary project, provides students with low vision in prekindergarten through eighth grade with free comprehensive low-vision care and prescribed portable optical aids to improve visual access and increase independence in and out of the classroom setting.

Participating teachers of students with visual impairments will receive ongoing support from the FLVI staff and low-vision specialist to address the student's individual visual access needs. For more information, go to the [Florida Low Vision Initiative LiveBinders](#). For program questions, contact Kim Roberts at [kmroberts@fsu.edu](mailto:kmroberts@fsu.edu).

### **Preparation of Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments (TVIs) and Orientation and Mobility (O&M) Specialists at Florida State University (FSU)**

FSU's Visual Disabilities Program offers training designed for general and special educators, paraprofessionals, and alternatively certified TVIs who want to refine or learn the specialized skills necessary to effectively teach children with visual impairments. Training is available in person and also through an online, part-time format. Financial support may be available for eligible students. For more information, go to [FSU's College of Education Visual Disabilities](#). For questions, contact Eileen Bischof at [bischof@fsu.edu](mailto:bischof@fsu.edu).

### **Learning Ally Would Like to Share Some News**

Check out the latest information in the [Learning Ally Florida Team September Newsletter](#).

- Learning Ally's Mission!
- Featured Florida B.E.S.T. Sample Titles for the month of September.
- How can your district access Learning Ally?

For more information, contact your Florida state contract managers, Dr. Martaluz Pozo at [mpoz@learningally.org](mailto:mpoz@learningally.org) or Simone Smith at [ssmith@learningally.org](mailto:ssmith@learningally.org).

### **2023-2024 Youth Mental Health Awareness Training (YMHAT) Florida-Specific Updates**

The FDOE has issued a memorandum regarding [2023-2024 YMHAT Florida-specific updates](#).

### **School Legislative Implications to Student Progression and Advisement**

The FDOE has issued a memorandum regarding the [school legislative implications to student progression and advisement](#).

### **Revisions to Rule 6A-1.099811, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), School Improvement State System of Support for Deficient and Failing Schools**

The FDOE has issued a memorandum regarding [revisions to Rule 6A-1.099811, F.A.C., School Improvement State System of Support for Deficient and Failing Schools](#).

**Chelsea Strickland**  
**Senior Educational Program Director**



For more information, contact  
850-245-0475



## Peers as Partners in Learning Roundtable Sessions 2023-2024

Join the Florida Inclusion Network (FIN) for a series of statewide roundtable discussions and conversations about implementing and sustaining the Peers as Partners in Learning program at the middle and high school levels.

Register once at <https://forms.office.com/r/LDVrPQmLNK>.

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### **Session 1** - Getting the Year Started

Wednesday, September 27, 2023 | 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. (EST)

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### **Session 2** - Managing Curriculum

Tuesday, November 28, 2023 | 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. (EST)

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### **Session 3** - Marketing the Program

Thursday, February 15, 2024 | 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. (EST)

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### **Session 4** - Matching Student Pairs

Wednesday, May 1, 2024 | 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. (EST)

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Contact FIN at [LSI-FINAdmin@fsu.edu](mailto:LSI-FINAdmin@fsu.edu) or call 850-645-7593 with questions.

The Florida Inclusion Network is funded by the Florida Department of Education, Division of K-12 Public Schools, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS), through federal assistance under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part B.