

prenda

**Florida**  
**State**  
**Scholarships**

**Overview**

How to Use State Funding to Pay for  
a Child's Microschool Experience

# Florida State Scholarship Options

Florida has been a leader in school choice for decades, and has many options available to parents who are looking for educational options for their children. These options include seven scholarship programs.

## **Prenda is an approved home education program for two of these scholarship programs:**

- The Personalized Education Program (PEP), and
- The Family Empowerment Scholarship for Unique Abilities (FES-UA, formerly the McKay Scholarship)

While Prenda is an approved vendor for both programs, the application process, scholarship requirements, and program details differ greatly, so we have provided thorough guides for both programs.

As a general rule, if your student **does not** have an active IEP or official diagnosis that would qualify them for an IEP, they should apply for the PEP Scholarship. **[You can find details about the PEP Scholarship starting on page 3 of this document.](#)**

If your student **does** have an active IEP or official diagnosis, they should apply for the FES-UA Scholarship. **[You can find details about the FES-UA Scholarship starting on page 10 of this document.](#)**

We are here to help support you and your child's microschool experience. If you have any questions, you can always reach out to us at: **<https://www.prenda.com/contact>**.



# Personalized Education Program



## What is the Personalized Education Program?

The Personalized Education Program (PEP) is one of several available state scholarships in Florida. It is funded by corporate tax credits and provides parents with direct access to education funds for their child, enabling them to choose the learning environment and resources that best suit their child's needs. PEP funds are managed by a scholarship funding organization (SFO). Prenda works with Step Up for Students (SUFS), an authorized SFO to provide the Prenda experience to students in Florida.

PEP funds can be used to pay for a student's microschool experience, including paying the student's quarterly Prenda invoices.

## What is Prenda's relationship with PEP?

Prenda is an approved home education instructional program through SUFS.

Prenda makes it easy for guides to set up and operate a microschool that can accept PEP funds. Prenda assists guides with many financial administrative tasks, such as not needing to become a vendor with SUFS and generating parent invoices on their behalf. This enables guides to start a microschool quickly and receive compensation for it easily.

# Does signing a student up with Prenda guarantee that they will get PEP funding?

No. Applying for and securing PEP funding happens through Step Up for Students (SUFS) and is a separate process from enrolling with Prenda. Signing a student up for Prenda does not guarantee a student's ability to secure PEP funds. As an approved provider, Prenda has no direct influence on a family's ability to receive a PEP scholarship.

## Who is eligible for the PEP scholarship?

The PEP scholarship is available to **all Florida students in grades kindergarten through twelve**. Kindergarteners must be 5 years old by September 1st of the school year they wish to enroll in.

### First priority is given to:

- Families with a household income of 185% of poverty or below as outlined in the [federal poverty guidelines](#)
- Renewing students of the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship and/or Family Empowerment Scholarship
- Children in foster care or out-of-home care


### Second priority:

Families with a household income of 400% of poverty or below.

Parents do not need to be in one of the prioritization categories to be awarded the scholarship. Parents who want their students to receive priority funding because of household income must submit their income tax return to apply for a PEP scholarship.

Although the program is open to all students, parents must complete the application, approval, and funding process with SUFS to qualify for PEP funds for their child. **Typically, this process takes around 4-8 weeks.**

Students with PEP funding cannot be enrolled in a public school, nor do they need to file a notice of intent to educate from home.



# What is the PEP Scholarship application process?

The PEP scholarship application will **open on February 1, 2025** for the 2025–2026 school year and **remain open through April 30, 2025**.

There are 100,000 PEP scholarships available in the 2025–2026 school year, and the number of available scholarships increases by 40,000 annually until the 2027–2028 school year when the cap is removed.

## Step 1: Apply

The legal parent or guardian of the student applies for a PEP Scholarship on the SUFS website [HERE](#). The adult applying must submit a separate application for each child and provide parent and student **social security numbers**, the student's **birth certificate**, **proof of residency** documents, and **proof of income** documentation if applying in one of the prioritization categories. [Learn more about acceptable PEP application documents](#).

SUFS has provided several helpful resources for parents applying for the PEP Scholarship:

- [New Families: Application Process Presentation](#)
- [New Families: Application Video](#)
- [Adding a student](#)

## Step 2: Wait and resubmit any documents

PEP applications can take up to 60 days to process and the final determination is sent via email. If SUFS reaches out about any incomplete documents, the family must resubmit them right away.

Typically, families are approved **within 4–8 weeks**; however, some families have reported taking more than 3 months to get approved. All families are strongly encouraged to apply well before the April 30th deadline and reach out to [SUFS](#) often to get updates on their application status.

**Please Note:** Prenda does not monitor students' PEP application statuses.



### Step 3: Wait for funds in EMA

EMA is the financial management portal used by Step Up to manage a student's PEP funds. After the scholarship has been funded, funds typically take 2–3 weeks to show up in a student's EMA account. Actual deposit times may vary. Parents will use EMA to pay their child's Prenda invoices.

## What if my student has an IEP, 504, or other diagnosis?

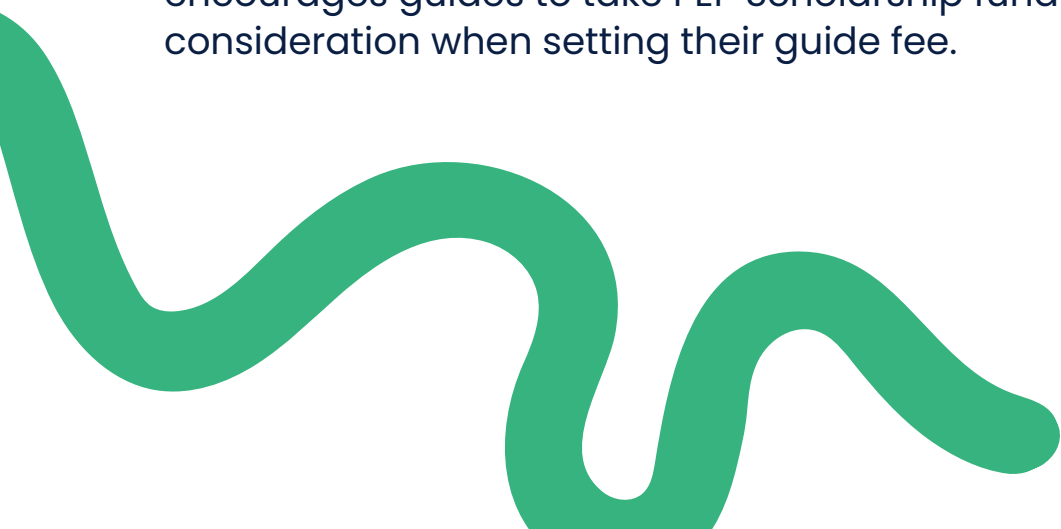
Students who have an IEP, 504, or official diagnosis are eligible to apply for **Florida's Family Empowerment Scholarship – Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA)**. This scholarship provides additional funding to students who meet the required criteria. Prenda is also an approved vendor for the FES-UA Scholarship.

## How much funding will students receive?

PEP Scholarships are projected to be approximately \$7,800 per student for the 2025–2026 school year.

## What if PEP funds do not cover the total fee on a child's Prenda invoice?

Most families can pay their entire Prenda invoice with state funds. However, if the invoiced amount is higher than the amount of PEP Scholarship funding a student receives, the student's family is responsible for paying the difference out of pocket. Prenda encourages guides to take PEP Scholarship funding amounts into consideration when setting their guide fee.



# When does funding begin?

SUFS distributes funds quarterly, and funding **begins in the quarter that the PEP scholarship is awarded.**

Scholarship funds for PEP students will be deposited into the student's scholarship account on or around the following dates:

Quarter 1: August 15 – September 15

Quarter 2: November 15 – December 1

Quarter 3: January 15 – February 1

Quarter 4: April 15 – May 1

Quarterly funds are not prorated. This means a student will receive the full quarterly funding allotment no matter when in the quarter their contract is signed.

*The only exception to prorating funds applies to students who are transferring into the PEP scholarship from one of the other available scholarships and who have already been funded in the other scholarship. For students in that situation, PEP awards will be prorated based on funding used in the previous program.*

**Tip:** If a full school year of PEP funding is desired, it is extremely important that the student's family begins the application process early and completes the application prior to the April 30th deadline.

**Families enrolled with Prenda in Q1 who do not have a funded scholarship by September 30th will be responsible for paying their Q1 invoice out of pocket.**



# How often does Prenda invoice families and how often are Prenda guides paid?

Prenda invoices students quarterly to match the quarterly distribution of PEP funds to families.

Prenda pays guides quarterly *after* each student's invoice is paid in full.

Families are expected and encouraged to pay their quarterly Prenda invoices through the EMA portal as soon as they have received their quarterly PEP Scholarship funds so that their child's guide may be paid without delay.

## Questions

Please reach out to us at <https://www.prenda.com/contact>.

We'd love to support you every step of the way in using PEP funds for your Prenda microschool experience!

## PEP Resources

- [PEP Overview](#)
- [2025-2026 PEP Information Mailing List](#)
- [PEP FAQs](#)
- [2024-2025 PEP Parent Handbook](#)
- Step Up for Students Contact Information
  - [Main Contact Page](#)
  - Hotline: 1-877-735-7837



# Top Tips for PEP Success

## 1. Don't Miss The Deadline

- Begin the application process as early as possible, and make sure to complete the process before the April 30th deadline.
- Early applications ensure that your student receives funding.

## 2. Complete Documentation Carefully

- Submit complete and accurate documents with the initial PEP application to avoid delays.
- Include front and back color images of the birth certificate, and ensure the adult's name is clearly listed on proof of residency and any income verification documentation.

## 3. Await Approval

- Promptly respond to any requests for additional documents to prevent unnecessary delays in the processing timeline.
- Submit a [contact request](#) and call Step Up for Students at 1-877-735-7837 once documents have been resubmitted to expedite the approval process.

## 4. Understand Quarterly Funding Schedule

- Familiarize yourself with the quarterly funding schedule (Q1-Q4).
- Complete the application within the application window to ensure you receive funding.

## 5. Utilize EMA Efficiently

- Learn how to navigate and use EMA for managing PEP funds.
- Pay Prenda invoices promptly through EMA once PEP funding is received.

## 6. Communicate with Prenda

- Maintain open communication with Prenda to address any concerns or questions about the PEP funding process.

# Family Empowerment Scholarship for Unique Abilities



## What is the Family Empowerment Scholarship for Unique Abilities?

The Family Empowerment Scholarship for Unique Abilities (FES-UA) is one of several available state scholarships in Florida. It provides parents with access to their child's education funds, enabling them to choose the learning environment and resources that best suit their child's needs. FES-UA funds are managed by a scholarship funding organization (SFO). Prenda works with Step Up for Students (SUFS), an authorized SFO to provide the Prenda experience to students in Florida.

FES-UA funds can be used to pay for a student's microschool experience, including paying the student's quarterly Prenda invoices.

## What is Prenda's relationship with FES-UA?

Prenda is an approved home education instructional program through SUFS.

Prenda makes it easy for guides to set up and operate a microschool that can accept FES-UA funds. Prenda assists guides with many financial administrative tasks, such as not needing to become a vendor with SUFS and generating parent invoices on their behalf. This enables guides to start a microschool quickly and receive compensation for it easily.

# Does signing a student up with Prenda guarantee they will get FES-UA funding?

No. Applying for and securing FES-UA funding happens through Step Up for Students (SUFS) and is a separate process from enrolling with Prenda. Signing a student up for Prenda does not guarantee a student's ability to secure FES-UA funds. As an approved provider, Prenda has no direct influence on a family's ability to receive an FES-UA scholarship.

## Who is eligible for the FES-UA scholarship?

The FES-UA scholarship is available to **all Florida students ages 3 through grade 12 or age 22, whichever comes first**, who have a specific diagnosis:

- 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
  - Intellectual disability
  - Language impairment
  - Muscular dystrophy
  - Orthopedic impairment
  - Other health impairment
  - Phelan-McDermid syndrome
  - Prader-Willi syndrome
  - Rare diseases
  - Specific learning disability
  - Speech impairment
  - Spina bifida
  - Traumatic brain injury
  - Visual impairment, including blindness
  - Williams syndrome
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# What is the FES-UA Scholarship application process?

The FES-UA scholarship application is now open and will remain open until the awarded scholarship cap has been reached. There are approximately 60,000 FES-UA scholarships available in the 2025-2026 school year. Once all available scholarships are awarded, a waitlist application is made available to families for the remainder of the current school year.

## Step 1: Apply

The legal parent or guardian of the student applies for an FES-UA Scholarship on the SUFS website [HERE](#). The adult applying must submit a separate application for each child and provide parent and student **social security numbers**, the student's **birth certificate**, **proof of residency** documents, and diagnosis documentation. [\*\*Learn more about acceptable FES-UA application documents.\*\*](#)

SUFS has provided several helpful resources for parents applying for the FES-UA Scholarship:

- [\*\*New Families: Application Process Presentation\*\*](#)
- [\*\*New Families: Application Video\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Adding a student\*\*](#)

## Step 2: Wait and resubmit any documents

FES-UA applications can take up to 60 days to process and the final determination is sent via email. If SUFS reaches out about any incomplete documents, the family must resubmit them right away.

Typically, families are approved **within 4-8 weeks**; however, some families have reported taking more than 3 months to get approved. All families are strongly encouraged to apply early and reach out to [\*\*SUFS\*\*](#) often to get updates on their application status.

**Please Note:** Prenda does not monitor students' FES-UA application statuses.



### Step 3: Wait for funds in EMA

EMA is the financial management portal used by Step Up to manage a student's FES-UA funds. After the scholarship has been funded, funds typically take 2–3 weeks to show up in a student's EMA account. Actual deposit times may vary. Parents will use EMA to pay their child's Prenda invoices.

### Step 4: Register as a home education student

Students who receive the FES-UA scholarship are required to register with their districts as a home education student. You can contact your local school district to complete this step.

## How much funding will students receive?

FES-UA scholarship amounts vary by grade, county, and severity of need. The average scholarship is about \$8,000. [Learn more about FES-UA award amounts.](#)

## What if FES-UA funds do not cover the total fee on a child's Prenda invoice?

Most families can pay their entire Prenda invoice with state funds. However, if the invoiced amount is higher than the amount of FES-UA Scholarship funding a student receives, the student's family is responsible for paying the difference out of pocket. Prenda encourages guides to take FES-UA Scholarship funding amounts into consideration when setting their guide fee.

## When does funding begin?

SUFS distributes funds quarterly, and funding **begins in the quarter that the FES-UA scholarship is awarded.**

Scholarship funds for FES-UA students will be deposited into the student's scholarship account on or around the following dates:

- Quarter 1: August 15 – September 15
- Quarter 2: November 15 – December 1
- Quarter 3: January 15 – February 1
- Quarter 4: April 15 – May 1

# Questions

Please reach out to us at <https://www.prenda.com/contact>.

We'd love to support you every step of the way in using FES-UA funds for your Prenda microschool experience!

## FES-UA Resources

- [FES-UA Overview](#)
- [2025-2026 FES-UA Information Mailing List](#)
- [FES-UA FAQ's](#)
- [2024-2025 FES-UA Parent Handbook](#)
- [Step Up for Students Contact Information](#)
  - [Main Contact Page](#)
  - [Hotline: 1-877-735-7837](#)



# Top Tips for FES-UA Success



## 1. Start Early

- Begin the application process as early as possible.
- Early applications provide ample time for processing, reducing the risk of delays in approval.

## 2. Complete Documentation Carefully

- Submit complete and accurate documents with the initial FES-UA application to avoid delays.
- Include front and back color images of the birth certificate, and ensure the adult's name is clearly listed on proof of residency and any income verification documentation.

## 3. Await Approval

- Promptly respond to any requests for additional documents to prevent unnecessary delays in the processing timeline.
- Submit a [contact request](#) and call Step Up for Students at 1-877-735-7837 once documents have been resubmitted to expedite the approval process.

## 4. Understand Quarterly Funding Schedule

- Familiarize yourself with the quarterly funding schedule (Q1-Q4).
- Complete the application and transfer form within the first quarter of the school year to ensure a full school year of FES-UA funding and to avoid out-of-pocket payments for Q1 invoices.

## 5. Utilize EMA Efficiently

- Learn how to navigate and use EMA for managing FES-UA funds.
- Pay Prenda invoices promptly through EMA once FES-UA funding is received.

## 6. Communicate with Prenda

- Maintain open communication with Prenda to address any concerns or questions about the FES-UA funding process.