

DEPARTMENT OF
EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION
www.fldoe.org/ese

FDLRS Gulfcoast
Serving Hernando, Pasco, Pinellas



www.fdlrsgulfcoast.org

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This brochure was adapted from "*Possibilities: A Parent's Guide to Exceptional Student Education*" developed by FDLRS Alpha and The School District of Palm Beach County.

Parent Guide

to Exceptional Student Education



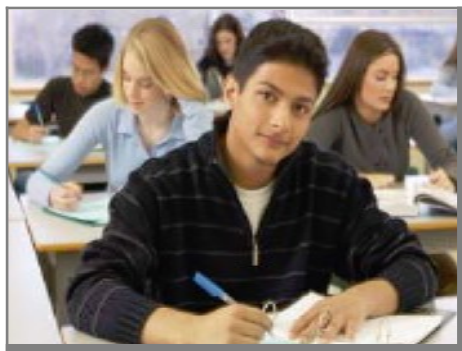
Parents....

**have a voice at the state level! Take the ESE Parent Survey,
available each year from February 1 to May 31**

www.esesurvey.com

This guide was created to help parents and guardians of children with special needs to learn about Exceptional Student Education (ESE) in Pinellas County Schools and to try to answer many common questions.

What is ESE?



Exceptional Student Education (ESE) is the name given in Florida to educational programs and services for students with special learning needs (including those who have disabilities and those who are gifted).

When a child is having difficulty in school, several kinds of help or interventions, are tried before a referral for evaluation is made. If the interventions are not successful, then the school and the parent will meet to discuss the option of evaluation. **The evaluation will only happen with parent consent.**

In order to be eligible for ESE programs and services, a student must meet all the requirements listed in Florida State Board of Education Rules for a specific disability.

HELPFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS AND CONTACTS

Pinellas County School District
 Superintendent, Dr. Michael A. Grego
 Main Office
 (727) 588-6000
www.pcsb.org

Exceptional Student Education
 Executive Director, Lynne Mowatt
 ESE Department
 (727) 588-6032
www.pcsb.org/ese

ESE Student Transfer Team	(727) 588-5128
ESOL	(727) 588-6068
FDLRS	(727) 793-2723
Florida Inclusion Network (FIN)	(727) 793-2723
GED Information/Testing	(727) 588-6321
Gifted Education	(727) 588-6088
Home Education	(727) 588-6209
Hospital/Homebound	(727) 669-1221
Medicaid	(727) 588-6506
Parental Advocacy	(727) 588-6537
Parent Svcs.-Staff Development	(727) 588-6062
Psychological Services	(727) 588-6054
School Health Services	(727) 588-6320
SEDNET	(727) 669-1221x2024
Special Olympics	(727) 669-1221x2008
Student Assignment	(727) 588-6210
Student Services	(727) 588-6307
Transportation Call Center	(727) 587-2020

YOUR DISTRICT ESE OFFICE

If you have a question or concern that can't be addressed at the school level regarding your child or the school's ESE program the next step is to contact your District ESE Office. The District office assists schools regarding procedures for identifying, evaluating, and placing students who have a disability.

District ESE Specialists are here to help you!

Pre K/Kindergarten	(727) 588-6027
Elementary School	(727) 588-6505
Middle School	(727) 588-6482
High School/Extended Transition	(727) 588-5125
Behavior	(727) 588-5120
Compliance	(727) 588-5123
Dispute Resolution and Policy	(727) 588-6077
Specialized Services	(727) 793-2732

Secretary	x2000
Speech-Language Pathologists	x2069
Occupational/Physical Therapists	x2070
Visually Impaired Program	x2068
Deaf/Hard of Hearing Program	x2026
Sign Language Interpreters	x2033

AREA SUPERINTENDENT OFFICES

Area 1 Superintendent	(727) 588-5023
Area 2 Superintendent	(727) 588-5024
Area 3 Superintendent	(727) 588-5020
Area 4 Superintendent	(727) 588-5022

Area offices and school alignment can be found at:
www.pcsb.org/Page/6037

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the first step in getting help for my child?

If you are concerned about problems your child may be having in reading, math, writing or behavior, your first and primary contact is your child's teacher.

What is a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)?

The words used in the federal law (IDEA) to describe the right of a student with a disability to special services that will meet his or her individual learning needs, at no cost to his or her parents.

What kind of help can I expect?

The services your child receives may include special teaching methods, special materials, or technology devices. They could include therapy, special transportation or other supports.

What is an IEP?

An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a written plan that describes the individual learning needs of a student with disabilities and the services, supports, accommodations and/or modifications that will be provided to that student.

What is the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)?

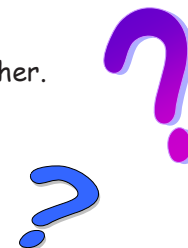
The school setting (placement) that allows a child with a disability to be educated to the greatest extent possible with children who do not have disabilities.

Who do I contact to request a meeting?

Contact your child's school and ask to speak with the ESE (Exceptional Student Education) Contact person.

What if I think my child is gifted?

Your initial contact person is your child's teacher.



Exceptional Student Education ACRONYMS

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act	
ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder	
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	
APD	Agency for Persons with Disabilities	
ASA	Autism Society of America	IDEA
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorders	
ASHA	American Speech/Language Hearing Association	
AT	Assistive Technology	
BEESS	Bureau of Exceptional Education & Student Services	
C.A.R.D.	Center for Autism and Related Disabilities	
CBI	Community Based Instruction	IEP
CEC	Council for Exceptional Children	
CEC	Compliance Educational Diagnostician	
CHADD	Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorders	
CMS	Children's Medical Services	LRE
CST	Child Study Team	
DCF	Department of Children and Families	
DD	Developmentally Delayed	
DHH	Deaf or Hard of Hearing	
DOE	Department of Education	ESE
DOH	Department of Health	
DSI	Dual-Sensory Impairment	
DSM V	Diagnostic & Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders	
EBD	Emotional or Behavioral Disability	
EIP	Early Intervention Program	
EP	Education Plan	FAPE
ESE	Exceptional Student Education	
ESY	Extended School Year	
ET	Extended Transition	
FAAST	Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology	
FAPE	Free and Appropriate Public Education	
FBA	Functional Behavior Assessment	
FCC	Family Care Council	
FDDC	Florida Developmental Disabilities Council	
FDLRS	Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources System	
FERPA	Family Educational Rights Privacy Act	
FIN	Florida Inclusion Network	

GLOSSARY OF ESE TERMS (cont)

Speech Impaired (SI) and Language Impaired (LI): Related to a student's ability to talk, write, listen or read. This includes understanding others and making himself or herself understood.

State Board of Education Rules: The rules developed to implement Florida's laws related to education.

Transfer of Rights: The shift of rights from the parents of a student with a disability to the student when the student reaches the "age of majority."

Transition IEP Meeting: Used for students age 14 or older. The transition IEP helps prepare students for life after school. A major purpose of the meeting is to help plan a young person's move into adult life.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI): An acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force resulting in a disability that adversely affects educational performance.

Visual Impairment (VI): A student who has a loss of some or all of the ability to see.

Vocational Services: Relating to skills needed for a trade or technical career. Examples of vocational skills are typing and carpentry.

Definitions adapted from *An Introduction to Exceptional Student Education*; Copyright 2012; State of Florida Department of Education. Available through the Clearinghouse Information Center of the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS).

GLOSSARY OF ESE TERMS (cont)

Orthopedic Impairment (OI): Severe skeletal, muscular, or neuromuscular impairment.

Other Health Impaired (OHI): Having limited strength, vitality, or alertness with respect to the educational environment that is due to chronic or acute health problems.

Physical Therapy (PT): Treatment for a student that helps to maintain, improve, restore or develop the student's movements and coordination so that he or she can benefit from ESE services.

Placement: The type of setting in which the child is to receive special services.

Positive Behavior Intervention Plan (PBIP): A plan that helps a student decrease his or her problem behaviors. The PBIP includes strategies the student will be taught that will allow the student to stop the problem behaviors or replace them with other behaviors. The PBIP also includes the method for determining the student's progress in decreasing the problem behavior.

Present Levels of Educational Performance: Statements in an IEP that describe what a student can do or they know now.

Procedural Safeguards: Federal special education law under IDEA that outlines the protections for families of students with disabilities.

Related Services: Special help given to a student with a disability in addition to classroom teaching. Examples of related services are special transportation, physical and occupational therapy and the services of readers for the blind.

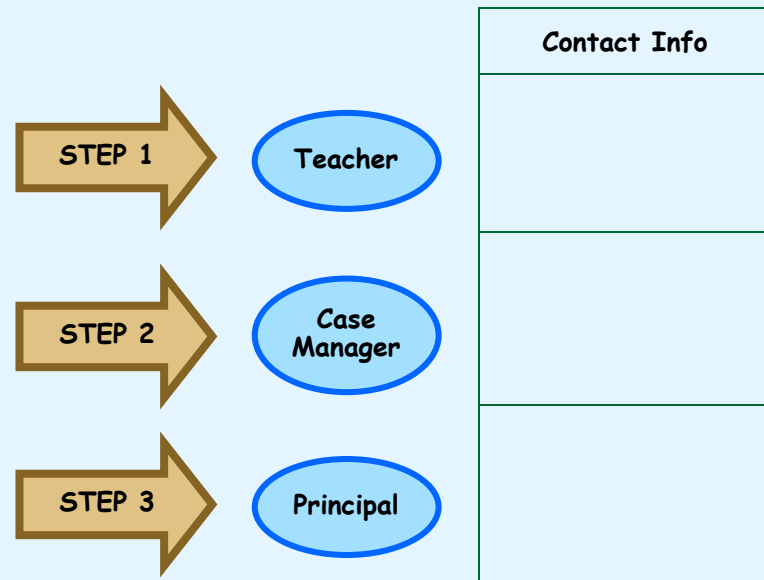
Screening: A way of testing a group of students to find out if any of them need an individual evaluation.

Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD): A student who has average or above average ability, but is still unable to learn things as easily as most other students do.

Exceptional Student Education Additional ACRONYMS

FND	Family Network on Disabilities	
FSA	Florida Standards Assessment	
FSAA	Florida Standards Alternative Assessments	
HH	Hospital Homebound	
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act	IDEA
IEP	Individual Educational Plan	IEP
IFSP	Individualized Family Support Plan	
InD	Intellectual Disabilities	
IPE	Individual Plan of Employment	
IVE	Intensive Varying Exceptionalities	
LEA	Local Education Agency	
LES	Local Early Steps	
LI	Language Impairment	
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment	LRE
MMI	Mild, Moderate, Intensive	
MTSS/RTI	Multi Tier System of Support/Response to Intervention	
NORD	National Organization for Rare Disorders	
OCR	Office of Civil Rights	
OHI	Other Health Impaired	
OI	Orthopedic Impairment	
OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs	
PBIP	Positive Behavior Intervention Plan	
PVE	Profound Varying Exceptionalities	
SEA	State Education Agency	
SEDNET	Severely Emotionally Disturbed Network	
SI	Speech Impairment	
SLD	Specific Learning Disabilities	
SLP	Speech Language Pathologist	
SP	Service Plan	ESE
SSI	Supplemental Security Income	
SVE	Supported Varying Exceptionalities	
TATS	Technical Assistance & Training System	
TBI	Traumatic Brain Injury	
TIIEP	Transition Individual Education Plan	
UCP	United Cerebral Palsy	
VI	Visual Impairment	
VPK	Voluntary Prekindergarten	FAPE

WHO TO TURN TO ... at the school level



TEACHER:

Your first and primary contact is your child's teacher. You may send a note with your child or leave a message for the teacher to set up a conference to discuss your concerns.

ESE CASE MANAGER:

The ESE Case Manager can schedule a meeting to discuss options for your child.

PRINCIPAL:

If your child continues to have difficulties after receiving services or you do not feel your child's needs have been met, contact the principal's office to arrange a meeting.

GLOSSARY OF ESE TERMS (cont)

Individual Educational Plan (IEP): A written plan describing the individual learning needs of a student with disabilities and the services, supports, accommodations and/or modifications that will be provided to the student.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): The most important United States law regarding the education of students with disabilities.

Intellectual Disabilities (InD): Significantly below average general intellectual and adaptive functioning manifested during the developmental period (birth to 18 years) with significant delays in academic skills.

Interventions: Strategies used to help a student make progress in learning or behavior.

Job Coaching: Help for a student with disabilities in which a specially trained adult goes to the workplace with the student and to help the student learn all the tasks that are part of that job.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE): The school setting (placement) that allows a child with a disability to be educated to the greatest extent possible with children who do not have disabilities.

Mediation: A process in which parents and school personnel try to settle disagreements with the help of a person who has been trained to resolve conflicts.

Modification: A change in the requirements of a course or the standards a student must meet; a change in what the student is taught or tested on.

Occupational Therapy (OT): Treatment for a student with a disability that helps the student to maintain, improve, restore, or develop skills needed for daily living.

Orientation and Mobility: Instructing individuals who are blind or visually impaired with safe and effective travel through their environment.

GLOSSARY OF ESE TERMS (cont)

Exceptionality: A disability or special learning need.

Florida Standards Alternate Assessment (FSAA): Measures student academic performance on the Access Points in Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.

Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE): The words used in the federal law (IDEA) to describe the right of a student with a disability to special services that will meet his or her individual learning needs, at no cost to his or her parents.

Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA): The process of gathering data about problem behaviors of students with disabilities.

Functional Vocational Evaluation: An ongoing process that identifies a student's work-related skills, interests and need for training.

GED Diploma: A high school diploma earned by a student who is at least 18 years old and who passes the Tests of General Educational Development.

General Curriculum: The academic content that most students are studying in Florida. The general curriculum or Common Core State Standards describe what students are expected to know and be able to do at various points in their education.

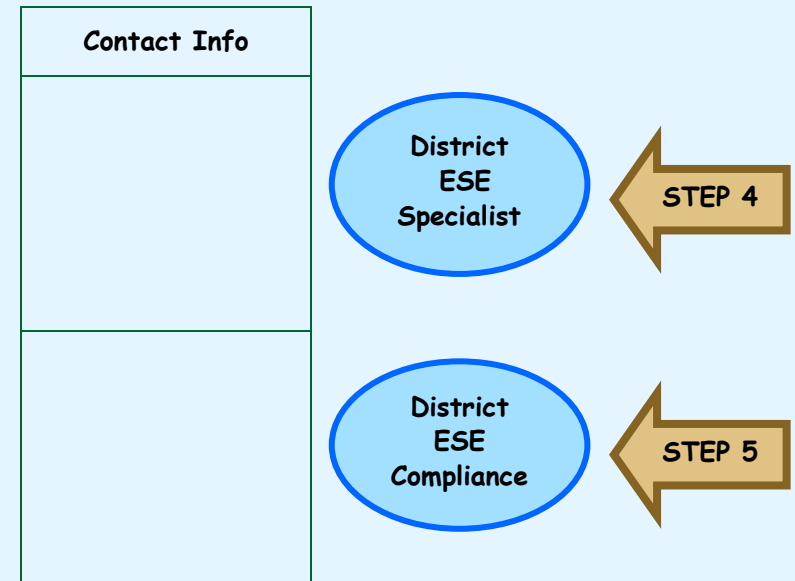
Gifted: Students who exhibit high cognitive abilities and need special learning experiences that allow them to make progress that reflects those abilities. It is possible for a gifted student to have a disability as well.

Hospital Homebound (HH): A student in this program must be taught at home or in a hospital for an extended period of time due to a severe illness, injury or health problem.

Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE): An evaluation requested by a student's parents and carried out by someone who does not work for the school district.

Independent Functioning: A student's skills in meeting his or her own needs, such as feeding, dressing and toileting; traveling safely; and using time management and organizational strategies.

WHO TO TURN TO ... beyond the school level



DISTRICT ESE SPECIALIST:

Contact the District ESE Office when you feel your child's needs and your concerns have not been met at the school level.

DISTRICT ESE COMPLIANCE:

The District ESE Compliance person can assist with questions regarding IEP's and IDEA.

GLOSSARY OF ESE TERMS

Access Points: Academic Expectations written specifically for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

Accommodation: A different way of doing something that takes into account a person's disability. Accommodations are changes in how a student is taught or tested. Accommodations do not change the requirements of a course or the standards the student must meet. (Compare with "modification".)

Assessment: A way of collecting information about what a student knows and can do and what a student still needs to learn. Assessment may include testing, observing the student, and looking at a student's portfolio or work samples.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): Characterized by an uneven Developmental profile and a pattern of qualitative impairments in social interaction, communication and the presence of restricted repetitive, and/or stereo-typed patterns of behavior, interest and activities.

Child Study Team (CST): A group of people who help teachers meet the learning needs of their students. The team may refer a student for an "evaluation."

Consent: Parents' agreement to let the school take an action that affects their child's education. Consent is usually shown by the parent signing a form.

Continuum of Services: The range of possible placements for students with disabilities. It includes services provided in a general education classroom, some in a special class, services provided in a special school, or other placements.

Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing (DHH): A student who has a loss of some or all of the ability to hear.

Developmentally Delayed (DD): This program is for children ages birth to five years of age only. A child with a developmental delay is developing more slowly than his or her peers either mentally, emotionally, or physically.

Diploma Options: Various types of standard diplomas earned based on successful completion of state defined criteria - standard diploma and standard diploma via access points.

GLOSSARY OF ESE TERMS (cont)

Disability: A condition that makes it hard for a student to learn or do things in the same ways as most other students. A disability may be short-term or permanent.

Dismissal: A decision made at an IEP or an EP meeting to dismiss a student from ESE services because the student no longer needs those services. The IEP team reviews evaluations and other information about the student before making this decision. Parents will receive written notice before services are stopped.

Dual-Sensory Impaired (DSI): A student who is deaf-blind and has such severe problems with both seeing and hearing that the student cannot learn well in either a program for the deaf or hard-of-hearing or in a program for the visually impaired.

Due Process Hearing: A formal meeting held to settle disagreements between parents and school districts about the evaluation, eligibility, placement, services, or IEP of a child with a disability. The meeting is run by an administrative law judge.

Education Plan (EP): A written plan describing the individual learning needs of a gifted student and the modifications that will be provided to the student.

Eligibility Criteria: The requirements a child must meet to be eligible for each exceptionality category (program). The eligibility criteria are listed in Florida's State Board of Education Rules.

Eligibility Staffing: A meeting at which the parents and a group of school staff members decide if a student is eligible for ESE services.

Eligible: Refers to a student who meets the requirements for and is in need of ESE programs and services.

Emotional or Behavioral Disability (EBD): Persistent and consistent behavior that adversely affect educational performance. Not attributable to age, culture, gender or ethnicity.

Evaluation: A way of collecting information about a student's learning needs, strengths and interests. It is used to help decide whether a student has a disability and is eligible for ESE programs and services.