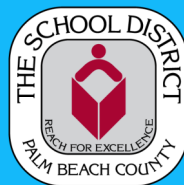


# Possibilities

A Parent's Guide to  
Exceptional Student Education



The School District of  
Palm Beach County



This guide was created to help parents and guardians of children with special needs learn about Exceptional Student Education (ESE) in Palm Beach County and 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.



**District Office of Exceptional Student Education**  
**561-434-8626**

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 Regional ESE Office for additional support.



<b>Central Region ESE Office</b>	<b>561-868-5301</b>
<b>Glades Region ESE Office</b>	<b>561-996-4902</b>
<b>North Region ESE Office</b>	<b>561-494-1533</b>
<b>South Region ESE Office</b>	<b>561-731-2879</b>

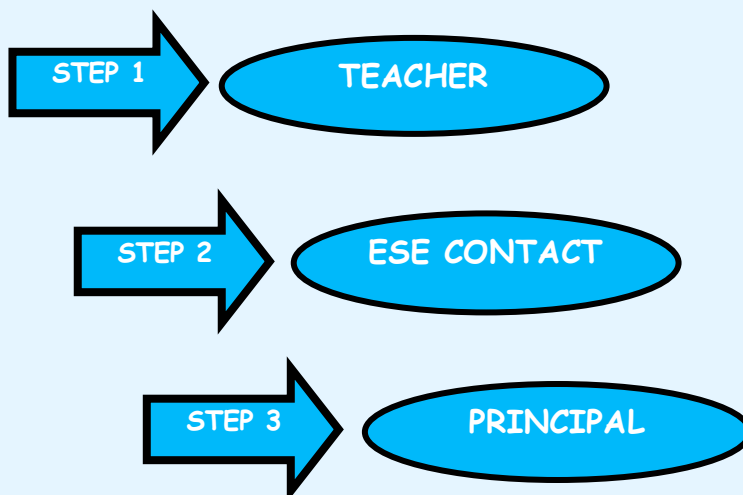
[www.palmbeachschools.org/school\\_board#regional-offices-tab](http://www.palmbeachschools.org/school_board#regional-offices-tab)

To determine which region your school is located in please use the following link:

<https://arcweb.palmbeach.k12.fl.us/addresslookup/>

## WHO TO TURN TO ...

Who do I speak with 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 CONTACT:**

The ESE Contact at your child's school 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.

## WHO TO TURN TO ...

Who do I speak with, beyond the school level, if I feel that my child's needs have not been met?

REGIONAL ESE  
COORDINATOR

STEP 4

PARENT  
SERVICES

STEP 5

DISTRICT ESE  
COMPLIANCE

STEP 6

### **REGIONAL ESE COORDINATOR:**

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

### **PARENT SERVICES/PALS:**

Parent Services/PALS personnel are available to answer questions, attend school meetings and assist parents.

### **DISTRICT ESE COMPLIANCE:**

The District ESE Compliance person can assist with questions regarding IEP's, IDEA and Section 504.

## 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.

**Assistive Technology (AT):** Any item, piece of equipment, or product system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of a child with a disability.

**Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD/ADHD):** A problem of not being able to focus, being overactive, not being able to control behavior, or a combination of these.

**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.

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

**Child Study Team (CST):** A problem solving team that helps teachers meet the learning needs of their students. The team may refer a student for an evaluation to determine eligibility for services.

**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.

## GLOSSARY OF ESE TERMS

**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 through 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.

**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.

**Eligibility Criteria:** The requirements a child must meet to be eligible for a program.

**English Language Learner (ELL):** English for speakers of other languages.

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

**Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA):** Federal education law and commitment to equal opportunity for all students.

**Exceptional Student Education (ESE):** The ESE Department coordinates programs for students with disabilities and gifted.

**Exceptionality:** A disability or special learning need.

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):** Parent rights regarding confidential student records.

## GLOSSARY OF ESE TERMS

**Florida Standards:** State mandated academic expectations for each grade level.

**Florida Standards Alternative Assessment (FSAA):** Assessments that measure student progress towards the Access Point Standards.

**Free 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.

**Homebound 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.

**Individual Education 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 Improvement Act (IDEA/IDEIA):** 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.

**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.



## GLOSSARY OF ESE TERMS

**Local Education Agency (LEA):** A representative who has the authority to commit district resources to meet the student needs.

**Mediation/Due Process:** 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. The meeting is run by an administrative law judge.

**Modification:** A change in the requirements of a course or the standards a student must meet or a change in what the student is taught or tested on. Students working on Florida Standards should not receive modifications.

**Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS):** A multi-tiered system that involves data collection to allocate resources at the school level based on student need.

**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.

**Other Health Impaired (OHI):** Limited alertness that is due to a chronic or acute health problem that affects the educational environment.

**Parent Participation Notification (PPN):** A form provided by the school to notify parents of an impending meeting.

**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.

**Present Levels of Educational Performance:** Statements in an IEP that describe what a student can do.

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

## GLOSSARY OF ESE TERMS

**Response to Intervention (RtI):** Practice of providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make changes in instruction or goals, and applying child response data to important educational decisions.

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

**School Based Team (SBT):** A team based approach in facilitating coordination of services and interventions at the school level.

**Speech and Language (SLI):** Services relating to a student's ability to talk, write, listen or read. This includes understanding others and making himself or herself understood.

**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," 18 years of age.

**Transition IEP/Meeting:** The IEP 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):** Acquired injury to the brain caused by an external, physical force resulting in total or partial functional disability or psycho-social impairment.

**Visually Impaired (VI):** Students who are blind, have no vision, or low vision.



## The School District of Palm Beach County

### Mission Statement

The School District of Palm Beach County is committed to providing a world-class education with excellence and equity to empower each student to reach his or her highest potential with the most effective staff to foster the knowledge, skills, and ethics required for responsible citizenship and productive careers.

As you review this booklet, you may have more questions. The staff at your child's school can best answer your questions. You can also find more information and free publications at the website of the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS).

[www.fl DOE.org/ese](http://www.fl DOE.org/ese)



## DEPARTMENT OF EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION



[www.palmbeachschools.org/ese](http://www.palmbeachschools.org/ese)



Florida Diagnostic and Learning resources System is funded by the State of Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, through federal assistance under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B; IDEA Part B Preschool; and State General Revenue funds.

[www.fdlrsalpha.org](http://www.fdlrsalpha.org)