Giving Thanks

As we approach the Thanksgiving season, I would like to recognize that life and circumstances are not always easy, but if we take the time, and put forth the effort, we can usually find many things to be grateful for. Take a moment and reflect on the many things we can be thankful for, or at the very least, what I am thankful for.

I do not appreciate day light savings time, but I did enjoy an extra hour of sleep. I do not like to clean up after my pets, but I love to snuggle and play with them. I do not like being separated from my family, but I am so glad for video calls and technology that helps us keep in contact. I am most grateful for the people in my life; family, parents, kids, and now grandbabies; friends that help you laugh or who help you through a challenging time; the work family or team united for students; and the families we support. If you think about it, there are people and situations in all our lives that we can be grateful for. For instance, over the last year, has anyone gone above and beyond for your child with special needs. If so, now is the time to take action and thank them with an Excellence in Action (EIA) Nomination. This very special event was created to allow you to recognize individuals who have made a difference in the life of a child with special needs who receives Hillsborough County Public Schools (HCPS) Exceptional Student Education (ESE) services. See page 2 of this newsletter for more information.

Debbie Valdes
FDLRS Parent Services
Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS) Parent Services is now accepting nominations for the 23rd Annual Excellence in Action Awards which will be presented in May 2022.

The Excellence in Action Awards (EIA) were established for parents to recognize individuals who have made a difference in the life of their child with special needs who receives Hillsborough County Public Schools (HCPS) Exceptional Student Education (ESE) services. Over the last 22 years, family members, including students, have been inspired to submit hundreds of nominations for administrators, teachers, support staff, transportation staff, therapists, community members, and volunteers who have touched their lives.

EIA nomination submissions will be accepted from family members or students only and should specify how the nominee has made a difference in the life of their child with special needs. EIA nominations will be verified and separated into categories. The winner of each category will be determined by committee solely on the content of the submission.

**NOMINATION PROCESS:**
Excellence in Action (EIA) Awards *(to be submitted by parents or students only)*:
Please submit a nomination for an individual who has made a difference in the life of your child with special needs. This individual can be from your child’s school or from the community. This includes all teachers, support staff, therapists, administrators, volunteers, district staff, transportation staff, crossing guards, tutors, mentors, sports coaches & recreation leaders, etc.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION:**
If you would like to submit a paper nomination, have a question regarding the nomination process or need assistance, please contact Debbie Valdes, FDLRS Parent Services, telephone (813) 837-7732 or email fdlrsparentservices@hcps.net.

⇒ Video and paper nominations are due by 8am, Monday, February 14, 2022.
⇒ Online nominations are due by 8am, Monday, February 21, 2022.

Please provide accurate contact information so that you and your nominee receive future notifications about the awards.

If completing the online form, we recommend typing the reason for your nomination in a separate document which can be copied and pasted into this online form. Maximum 250 words.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/EIA22

*Winner recognition made possible by a grant from:*
DECEMBER

FDLRS Parent Information Sessions

December 2, 2021 - 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM
“Sense”sational Reading Strategies, Multisensory Instruction
Join us as we share some basic multisensory approaches of learning and how families can utilize these strategies at home to help your child be a successful reader.

December 9, 2021 - 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM
Understanding the Individual Educational Plan (IEP)
Gain a deeper understanding of the IEP process including the path towards the consideration for Exceptional Student Education (ESE) services and the importance of parent/guardian and student involvement during the process.

December 13, 2021 - 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM
Overview of the Facilitated Individual Educational Plan (FIEP) Meeting
This session will provide parents and caregivers the opportunity to have a first hand look at the structure of the Facilitated Individual Educational Plan (FIEP) meeting, what to expect, and the importance of your role in the process.

Registration Link

Hillsborough County Resources

Yellow Dot: The Yellow Dot program gives you a voice when you are seriously injured following a traffic crash. The Yellow Dot sticker displayed on your vehicle window alerts first responders to valuable health care information located in your glove compartment (medications, pre-existing medical conditions, special needs, and other important medical information). Hillsborough County - Yellow Dot

Safe Encounter: Register yourself or family members who suffer from Alzheimer’s disease, blindness, autism, Down syndrome, deafness, and other medical and developmental disabilities that affect the way individuals interact and respond to law enforcement officers. Hillsborough Safe Encounter Registration, File a Registration Online | HCSO, Tampa FL (teamhcso.com)

City of Tampa Voluntary Special Needs Registry: The Tampa Police Department and Tampa Fire Rescue have joined together to better help families who may have a family member with a medical condition or special need. A special sticker has been created for families to place near their front door or on their car to help first responders recognize if someone has a medical need when they are responding to a call. City of Tampa Voluntary Special Needs Registry | City of Tampa.
Creating a Plan for the Future

Information About Opportunities and Services Available After High School for all Students with Disabilities

The Creating a Plan for the Future Provider Fair will be offered virtually again this year. This event gives families the opportunity to view provider information and attend breakout sessions covering important information to assist students with preparing for their future.

**Tuesday, November 30, 2021**
- 9:00 AM - 9:45 AM   Vocational Rehabilitation: General Overview
- 10:00 AM - 10:45 AM  Adult Day Training Programs
- 11:00 AM - 11:45 AM  Hillsborough Community College
- 12:00 PM - 12:45 PM  HCPS Programs for Adults with Disabilities
- 1:00 PM - 1:45 PM    Agency for Persons with Disabilities
- 2:00 PM - 2:45 PM    Supplemental Security Income

**Wednesday, December 1, 2021**
- 10:00 AM - 10:45 AM  UMatter: Inclusive Post-Secondary Program at USF St. Pete
- 11:00 AM - 11:45 AM  Special Needs Trusts
- 2:00 PM - 2:45 PM    Self-Reliance

**Thursday, December 2, 2021**
- 10:00 AM - 10:45 AM  Adult Day Training Programs
- 1:00 PM - 1:45 PM    Guardianship & Guardian Advocacy
- 2:00 PM - 2:45 PM    Hillsborough Tech Colleges (HTC) Post Secondary Programs

**Event Details:** [https://hillsborough.fdlrs.org/parent-services/creating-a-plan-for-the-future](https://hillsborough.fdlrs.org/parent-services/creating-a-plan-for-the-future)

[https://capfall21.eventbrite.com](https://capfall21.eventbrite.com)
Parent Services is supported by Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS) and Hillsborough County Public Schools (HCPS).

Our goal is to guide and empower families to become collaborative, effective advocates for their child with special needs by providing information, help and support to promote academic and social success in school and within the community. Each Exceptional Student Education (ESE) parent liaison works closely with regional district schools and staff and is a parent of a child who has received ESE services.

**FDLRS Parent Services**
Debbie Valdes, FDLRS Program Manager, (813) 837-7733
debbie.valdes@hcps.net
Corinne Smith, FDLRS Communications Liaison, (813) 837-7872
corinne.smith@hcps.net

**Parent Services Information**
(813) 837-7732 (English)
(813) 837-7728 (Spanish)
fdlrsparentservices@hcps.net

**Parent Liaisons, Exceptional Student Education**
Jennifer Belinc-DeGregorio, jennifer.belinc-degregorio@hcps.net
Sandra BuShea, sandra.bushea@hcps.net
Lexie Harvey, lexis.harvey@hcps.net
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Christine Poe, christine.poe@hcps.net
LaNaye Wilson, lanaye.wilson@hcps.net

Let us know your thoughts on this edition of our newsletter. Take the Survey

https://twitter.com/@FDLRS_Hills
https://facebook.com/FDLRSParentServicesHillsborough
https://hillsborough.fdlrs.org/
Vision
Preparing Students for Life

Mission
To provide an education and the supports that enable each student to excel as a successful and responsible citizen.

FDLRS Parent Services News & Information is designed to be an informational source for parents of Hillsborough County Public Schools (HCPS) Exceptional Student Education (ESE). All submittals are subject to District supervisory approval. Hillsborough County Public Schools does not necessarily endorse all information.

Continuous Notification of Nondiscrimination

Pursuant to Title VI, Title IX, Section 504/Title II and other civil rights regulations, the School District of Hillsborough County does not discriminate nor tolerate harassment on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, marital status, genetic information or pregnancy in its educational programs, services or activities, or in its hiring or employment practices; and it will take immediate action to eliminate such harassment, prevent its recurrence, and address its effects. The district also provides equal access to its facilities to the Boy Scouts and other patriotic youth groups, as required by the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act.

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies: Dr. Pansy Houghton, Executive Officer, Compliance. 813-272-4000; pansy.houghton@hcps.net; 901 E. Kennedy Blvd., Tampa, Florida 33602. Office for Civil Rights Compliance

Website Accessibility Statement

The School District of Hillsborough County is committed to providing websites that are accessible to all of our stakeholders. If you use assistive technology (such as a screen reader, eye-tracking device, voice recognition software, etc.) and are experiencing difficulty accessing information on this site, the following person has been designated to handle inquiries or complaints related to the functionality or inaccessibility of online content: Dr. Pansy Houghton, Executive Officer, Compliance. 813-272-4000; pansy.houghton@hcps.net; 901 E. Kennedy Blvd., Tampa, Florida 33602.

As required by Section 668.6076, Florida Statutes, you are hereby notified that: Under Florida law, e-mail addresses are public records. If you do not want your e-mail address released in response to a public records request, do not send electronic mail to this entity. Instead, contact this office by phone or in writing. History.—s. 1, ch. 2006-232.

Our mailing address is:
Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources System / Parent Services
4210 West Bay Villa Avenue
Tampa, FL 33611