

Help is Here!

GARDINER SCHOLARSHIP
PROVIDER HANDBOOK



Step Up for Students

GARDINER SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

2020-21 PROVIDER HANDBOOK

General Inquiries: Gardiner@sufs.org
 Questions regarding Reimbursement Requests: Gardinerpayments@sufs.org

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Overview

Thank you for your interest in this unique educational option.

Step Up for Students (SUFS) is a private, nonprofit and an approved Scholarship Funding Organization (SFO). Step Up for Students also administers the Florida Tax Credit (FTC) scholarship and partners with the Florida Department of Education to administer the Family Empowerment Scholarship which provide K-12 private school scholarships for students from low-income families, the Reading Scholarship Accounts program which provides a segment of public-school students access to reading and reading literacy assistance and the Hope Scholarship which provides K-12 private school scholarships to students who have been the victims of bullying.

The Gardiner Scholarship program is a unique program for children with special needs. The scholarship allows parents to personalize the education of their children by directing money toward a combination of programs and approved providers. In 2014, Florida became the second state in the nation, after Arizona, to create an education savings account program for children with special needs. In 2016, the Florida legislature renamed the program in honor of then Florida Senate President Andy Gardiner and his family. Gardiner and his wife, Camille, have championed the cause of children with unique abilities for many years. The Gardiners have two daughters and a son, Andrew, who has Down syndrome.

The sections following this introduction will guide you as you provide for students receiving Gardiner Scholarship funding.

Qualifying for the Gardiner Scholarship Program

The Gardiner Scholarship is available to students ages 3 to 22 with the following diagnoses: **Autism spectrum disorder, Muscular dystrophy, Cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, Phelan McDermid syndrome, Prader-Willi syndrome, Spina bifida, Williams syndrome, Intellectual disability (severe cognitive impairment), rare diseases as defined by the National Organization for Rare Disorders, anaphylaxis, deaf, visually impaired, dual sensory impaired, traumatic brain injured, hospital or homebound as defined by the rules of the State Board of Education and evidenced by reports from local school districts, or three, four or five year-olds who are deemed high-risk due to developmental delays.**

The term "hospital or homebound" includes a student who has a medically diagnosed physical or psychiatric condition or illness, as defined by the state board in rule, and who is confined to the home or hospital for more than six months. For a detailed definition of these diagnoses, please see the appendix at the end of this document.

Private schools working with families to complete their eligibility application process please note: The application process *must* be completed by the parent/guardian. Providing access to a computer, copier or

fax machine is a great way to assist but taking possession of confidential documents to submit them on behalf of the parent is *strongly discouraged*.

Providers MAY NOT ask for or require a parent to provide the username and/or password to their Gardiner account. Providers should never access to the student's Gardiner Scholarship application or account for *any* reason. Doing so may result in loss of provider participation and/or scholarship eligibility and funding for the student.

For more detailed information regarding program eligibility, please refer to the [Gardiner Parent Handbook](#).

Funding for the Gardiner Scholarship Program

Funding for the Gardiner Scholarship program comes from the State of Florida.

- **Renewal students**
 - The funding calculation defaults to a matrix that assigns the student to 90% of the 253 level, unless the student entered the program with a matrix level of services of 254 or 255 that was on file with the Florida Department of Education or the student's parent has asked the school district for a revised matrix.
- **New students**
 - If the student does not have a matrix level of services, funding defaults to 90% of the 253 level.
 - If the student has a matrix level of services on file with the Florida Department of Education of a 254 or 255, due to public school enrollment, they will be funded at 90% of that matrix level, and they will not need to utilize the matrix review process established in the Gardiner law in order to receive the additional funding.
 - Most students with an IEP will not have a matrix level of services.
 - If you have an IEP, you are not required to request a matrix level. **Please note that doing so could adjust your matrix level and corresponding amount of scholarship funding down to a lower level.**

When a student has been found eligible, the Department of Education reviews the student's records to ensure they are not enrolled in one of the other state scholarship programs or in a Florida public school program. A student cannot be funded through the Gardiner Scholarship program if they are using other state scholarships or are enrolled in a Florida public school or public-school program. Once final eligibility is verified, funding is sent to the SFO to be held in escrow for the use of the student for his/her educational needs. Unused funds may roll forward form one year to the next but use of the funds is strictly at the discretion and approval of the student's parent or guardian.

Funding is prorated based on the date the student is found eligible by the SFO.

- Eligible on or before September 1 = 100%
- Eligible on or before November 1 = 75%
- Eligible on or before February 1 = 50%
- Eligible on or before April 1 = 25%

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A student is ineligible for a scholarship if the student's account has been inactive (no spending activity) for two (2) consecutive fiscal years (July 1-June 30). However, once an eligible expenditure is made, the student is eligible for a scholarship based on available funds. Accounts with no spending activity for three (3) consecutive fiscal years will be closed and all remaining funds will be returned to the State of Florida.

Approved Usages for Gardiner Scholarship Funding

Program funds must be used to meet the *individual educational needs* of the eligible student. A parent, student, or provider of any services may not bill an insurance company, Medicaid, or any other agency for the same services that are paid for using Gardiner Scholarship funds.

The following items and services are approved uses for the Gardiner Scholarship funds.

For additional information regarding these approved uses, please refer to the [Parent Handbook](#).

Providers MAY NOT ask for or require a parent to provide the username and/or password to their Gardiner account. Providers should never access to the student's Gardiner Scholarship application or account for *any* reason. Doing so may result in loss of provider participation and/or scholarship eligibility and funding for the student.

Instructional Materials

Instructional material includes, but is not limited to:

- Device - Digital
- Device - Digital periphery
- Device - Assistive technology
- Device - Training associated with use
- Device – Maintenance Agreement (not warranties)
- Digital material
- Stand-alone online class
- Internet resources
- Sensory material
- PE supplies
- Books
- Musical instrument
- Material or digital programs required for home education programs
- Sports lessons
- Programs through museums
- Other instructional material (requires a pre-authorization)

Curriculum

Curriculum is defined as a complete course of study for a particular content area or grade level, including any required supplemental materials and associated online instruction.

Specialized Services

Specialized services are those provided by approved providers or by a hospital in Florida selected by the parent.

An approved provider is one licensed by the state of Florida Department of Health to perform the service, approved as a provider by the Agency for Persons with Disabilities, or approved as a Specialized Instructional Services (SIS) Provider by the Office of Early Learning. These services include, but are not limited to:

- Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services
- Services provided by a Florida licensed Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP)
- Services provided by a Florida licensed occupational therapist
- Services provided by a Florida licensed physical therapist
- Services provided by listening and spoken language specialists
- Other specialized services (requires a pre-authorization)

Eligible Private School Tuition/Fees

Tuition and fees that are those required for enrollment.

An “eligible private school” is defined in s. 1002.385 as “a private school, as defined in s. [1002.01](#), which is located in this state, which offers an education to students in any grade from kindergarten to grade 12, and which meets the requirements of:

- Sections [1002.42](#) and [1002.421](#); and
- A scholarship program under s. [1002.39](#) (John M. McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Programs) or s. [1002.395](#) (Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program), as applicable, if the private school participates in a scholarship program under s. [1002.39](#) or s. [1002.395](#).

Tuition and fees *required for enrollment* at an eligible private school are covered by the Gardiner Scholarship.

- Not all private schools are eligible to participate. Schools must meet the criteria described above and *elect* to participate in the Gardiner Scholarship program with the Florida Department of Education.

Home Education Program Tuition/Fees

Tuition and fees associated with programs, courses, or classes offered to home education students through an eligible, private school (see definition above) and are a part of the sequentially progressive instruction of the student per the definition of a home education program or an approved program listed below.

A “home education program” means the sequentially progressive instruction of a student directed by his or her parent to satisfy the attendance requirement of ss. [1002.41](#), [1003.01\(13\)](#), and [1003.21\(1\)](#), F.S.

- Approved Home Education Programs:
 - [CEDAR](#)
 - Classical Conversations
 - The Healthy Utilization of Brains ([The HUB](#))

- [Class Source](#)
- Providence Extension Program ([PEP](#))
- Trinity Education Academy of Christian Homeschoolers ([T.E.A.C.H.](#))
- [Equip Education](#)
- Lighthouse Christian Homeschool Academy
- [North Bay Christian Academy \(5318\)](#) (Contact - Christie Dittmer)
- [HEED](#) (Contact - Sue Puchferran)
- [HEED Adventures](#) (Contact – Sue Puchferran)
- [Inspire Studios](#) (Contact – Jason Rhodes)
 - [Programs for students with unique abilities](#)
 - [Home Education Programs](#)
- [Tampa Covenant Homeschoolers](#) (Contact – Mary Lynch)
- [Libertas Academic Collaborative](#) (Contact – Cathy Campbell)

To visit the Department of Education’s website for additional information about home education programs, click this link: [Home Education Programs](#)

NOTE: All other live instruction, in person or via remote access online, must meet the requirements for part-time tutoring services to be reimbursed by Gardiner Scholarship funds.

Eligible Postsecondary Institution or Program

This includes the following institutions or programs offered by:

- A Florida College System institution listed at [Florida Colleges](#)
- A state university listed at [State University System of Florida - Universities](#)
- A school district technical center listed at [Career and Technical Education](#)
- A school district adult general education center list at [Adult Education](#)
- An independent college or university that is eligible to participate in the FRAG program.
 - The William L Boyd, IV Florida Resident Access Grant (FRAG) provides tuition assistance for resident students attending non-profit colleges and universities in the state of Florida. Qualified applicants must be residents of Florida for at least 12 consecutive months prior to starting school. Residency cannot be established by an out of state student whose primary purpose for living in the state is attending college.
- An accredited nonpublic postsecondary educational institution, licensed to operate in the state, listed at [Eligible Service Providers](#). Choose “List of accredited nonpublic postsecondary educational institutions.”

Full-Time Private Tutoring

A full-time private tutoring program authorized under [s. 1002.43, Florida Statutes](#)

- The tutor must hold a current, valid Florida teaching certificate for the subject or grade level
- The tutor must complete and submit the Step Up for Students’ full-time tutor participation agreement and a W9
- For grades K-3, full time tutoring is considered 720 hours per school year
- For grades 4-12, full time tutoring is considered 900 hours (equivalent to 180 teaching days)

Per Step Up policy, full-time private tutors may not have more than five (5) students at one time.

Part-Time Tutoring Services

Part-time tutoring includes tuition and fees for part-time tutoring services provided by a person who holds one of the following certifications:

- A current, valid Florida educator's certificate pursuant to s. 1012.56, Florida Statutes; OR
- A person who holds an adjunct teaching certificate given by a Florida school district pursuant to s. 1012.57, Florida Statutes.; OR
- A bachelor's or graduate degree in the subject area in which instruction is given OR

If the part-time tutor does not have one of the credentials outlined above, they may be a person who has demonstrated a mastery of subject area knowledge pursuant to s. 1012.56(5), Florida Statutes.

- Mastery could be achieved through one or more of the following:
 - An official Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) score report indicating a passing score on a Florida subject area exam, not more than 10 years old OR
 - A passing score report that is not more than 10 years old, above the intermediate level, on both the oral and written exams for a foreign language OR
 - Foreign language subject area (excluding French, German, or Spanish) administered by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) OR
 - A form provided by a Florida school district and signed by the school district, indicating there is no standardized exam in the subject area, but the person has attained the essential subject matter competencies and subject area specialization requirements OR
 - A valid certificate issued by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) OR
 - A valid certificate issued by the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE) OR
 - A valid Statement of Status of Eligibility (SOE) issued by Educator Certification that indicates the educator is ELIGIBLE for a Professional Certificate OR
 - For a subject requiring a master's or higher degree (i.e. Educational Leadership, Guidance Counseling, Reading, or School Psychologist) a score report indicating a passing score on a Florida subject area exam (not more than 10 years old) AND a valid Statement of Status of Eligibility (SOE) issued by Educator Certification that indicates the educator is ELIGIBLE for a Temporary or Professional Certificate OR
 - A valid Statement of Status of Eligibility (SOE) issued by Educator Certification that indicates the educator is ELIGIBLE for a Temporary Certificate but does not list a passing score on the subject area exam under the Professional Certificate requirements.

Florida Department of Education Approved Online Course Providers

- [Accelerate Education \(Grades K-5\) /approved courses listed here](#)
- Apex Learning (Grades 9-12) / approved courses listed [here](#)
- [Connections Education of Florida, LLC](#) (Grades K-12 for 2018-19 to 2021-22)
- [Edgenuity](#) (Grades 6-12 for 2018-19 to 2021-22)
- Edison Learning (Grades 9-12) / approved courses listed [here](#)

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- Edmentum (Grades 6-12) / approved courses listed [here](#)
- Founders Education LLC (Grades 9-12) / approved courses listed [here](#)
- [K12 Florida](#) (Grades K-12 for 2018-19 to 2021-22)
- [Mater Virtual Academy](#) (Grades 6-12 for 2020-21 to 2022-23)
- [My Virtual Academy \(Grades 9-12\) / approved courses listed here](#)
- National Highway Safety Administration (Grades 9-12) / approved courses listed [here](#)
- [Somerset Virtual Academy](#) (Grades 6-12 for 2018-19 to 2020-21)

Florida Department of Education Approved Virtual Instruction Program (VIP) Providers

- [Connections Education of Florida, LLC](#) (Grades K-12 for 2018-19 to 2021-22)
- [Edgenuity](#) (Grades 6-12 for 2018-19 to 2021-22)
- [Edmentum](#) (Grades 6-12 for 2020-21 to 2022-23)
- [K12 Florida](#) (Grades K-12 for 2018-19 to 2021-22)
- [Mater Virtual Academy](#) (Grades 6-12 for 2020-21 to 2022-23)
- [Somerset Virtual Academy](#) (Grades 6-12 for 2018-19 to 2020-21)

Florida Virtual School (FLVS)

Students utilizing Florida Virtual School must be enrolled as a *private-paying student*. Florida Virtual School will submit reimbursement requests to Step Up for Students, which must be approved by the parent prior to payment being released.

Please note: If a student is enrolled in Florida Virtual School and funded as a public-school student, the student may lose eligibility and funding for the Gardiner Scholarship program.

Standardized Testing Fees

- Nationally standardized, [Norm-Referenced Assessments](#)
- Advanced Placement (AP) examinations
- Industry certification examinations
- Assessments related to postsecondary education
- Other assessments

Stanley G. Tate Florida Prepaid College Program

- 1-Year University Plan
- 4-Year University Plan
- 2-Year College Plan
- 4-Year College Plan
- 2+2 Florida Plan
- Dormitory Plan

Florida 529 College Savings Program

Contracted Public School Services

Services provided by a Florida public school or school district, including classes.

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- A Gardiner Scholarship recipient may take courses or receive services from a public school (including the Florida Virtual School), if the student contracts for classes/services on a *private pay basis*.
- The parent can pay for services and request reimbursement, or the school district can choose to be paid directly as a provider.
- There is no requirement for public schools or school districts to contract for services with a Gardiner Scholarship participant or to set up an account for payment as a provider. Participation is optional for the public schools and/or districts.
- If the district reports the student for any FTE funding or other state funding, the student will be ineligible for the Gardiner Scholarship and jeopardize his/her scholarship.

Fees Associated with Specialized Summer Education Programs

The term “specialized” is intended to mean a program developed specifically for students with special needs or a program with specialized content (for example, a STEM summer program). A program that is open to all students would require documentation from a provider of specialized services indicating how that specific program meets the *educational needs* of that student OR a description of the program to indicate that it is a specialized type of program. A note from a physician or an approved provider of specialized services may also be provided to document that a program is specialized.

Fees Associated with Specialized After-School Education Programs

Please see the definition of “specialized” above.

Transitional Services Provided by Job Coaches

Students age 14 through 22 may submit reimbursements for transition services by job coaches.

The job coach must meet one of the following criteria:

- Hired by the private school as a job coach
- Hired by the public-school system as a job coach
- Meet the criteria/training of the Agency for Persons with Disabilities for job coaches
- Meet the criteria/training of the Association of Rehabilitation Facilities
- Have an Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE) certification
- Have an Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE) certification
- Have an Institution for Community Inclusion certification
- Employment Specialist Vendor for Vocational Rehabilitation

Types of Transition Services that may be provided by the job coach:

- Conducting career and interest assessments
- Self-determination / Self-advocacy training
- Employability / Soft skill education
- Job development
- Job training
- Interview skill development and support – assistance with
- Onsite job coaching
- Follow-along support to maintain employment
- Monitoring and re-training for changes on the job site

- Benefits planning and financial literacy services (ex. Working with the student to understand the impact of work on SSI benefits and income.)
- Advocacy services (ex. Working on benefit issues, social security, facilitating transportation services)
- Career Exploration
- Career Counseling

Annual Educational Evaluation Fees

These fees are limited to the annual evaluations of educational progress by a state-certified teacher which may be chosen by those students in home education programs.

Tuition and Fees Associated with Programs Offered by Approved Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program Providers

Gardiner Scholarship students can take advantage of the educational services provided by approved VPK providers. However, the student may not be enrolled through the VPK mechanism. Rather the student would be registered for the program and/or the full day as *private-pay* students, not receiving public funding for the VPK program. Tuition and fees must be for the 2020-21 program year, must be for the educational needs of the student, and may cover a full-day program. School lunch and other fees that are not mandatory or are not educational are not covered by the Gardiner Scholarship Program.

A Gardiner Scholarship student may be in a class mixed with students who are funded through other state programs such as VPK, VPKSIS, or Head Start. However, please note, the Gardiner Scholarship student cannot be counted or reported to the Early Learning Coalition to receive public funding for the VPK program. If the Gardiner Scholarship student is funded through the VPK program, the scholarship may be lost, and the parent may be responsible for repaying funds to the student's Gardiner Scholarship account.

Tuition and Fees Associated with Programs Offered by Approved School Readiness Providers

A student may continue to receive federal funding for a school readiness program if they are between the ages of 3 and 12. However, if a student is receiving simultaneous services funded through the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP), such as a VPK program, the student is considered to be enrolled in public school, and the student will lose eligibility to participate in the Gardiner Scholarship Program and any remaining funds in the account will be returned to the State of Florida.

Under this category, the Gardiner Scholarship student **may** participate in the VPK program by enrolling as a private pay student (see above).

Horse Therapy

Fees for services provided at a center that is a member of the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International.

Music and Art Therapy

Fees for services provided by a therapist who is certified by the Certification Board for Music Therapists or credentialed by the Art Therapy Credentials Board, Inc.

Tuition or Fees for Nationally or Internationally recognized Training Programs for Children with Neurological Disorders or Brain Damage

What is Required of Providers?

For a reimbursement request to be paid, the provider must meet specific criteria based on the service they are providing for the Gardiner Scholarship recipient. Following is a guide to the type of validation that is required for payment to be made.

Providers MAY NOT ask for or require a parent to provide the username and/or password to their Gardiner account. Providers should never access to the student's Gardiner Scholarship application or account for *any* reason. Doing so may result in loss of provider participation and/or scholarship eligibility and funding for the student.

Specialized Services

For those providers falling into one of the specialized service areas, this will be validated through one of the following; the Florida Department of Health License Verification website (active license only), the Agency for Persons with Disabilities Provider search site, or the Office of Early Learning Specialized Instructional Services (SIS) provider search site. Providers must be Florida licensed in the area pertaining to the services provided. The links to these sites can be found on the Florida Department of Education's website, or by clicking this link: [Eligible Service Providers](#).

Eligible Private Schools

Private schools who are interested in serving Gardiner Scholarship students must be registered with the Florida Department of Education and must have completed the Department's requirements for participation in the Gardiner Scholarship program. For more information regarding how to become an eligible private school, please contact the Florida Department of Education's toll-free hotline at 800-447-1636, the [Regional Managers](#) or click this link, [Requirements for Participating in State Scholarship Programs](#).

Eligible private schools wishing to have an account with Step Up for Student will be required to provide banking information to allow for direct deposit (ACH transfers).

Tuition and fees for Gardiner Scholarship students may be submitted by the eligible private school to Step Up for Students quarterly using the following schedule:

Date	Amount billed
July 1	25% of annual tuition and 100% of fees mandatory for enrollment
October 1	25% of annual tuition

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January 1	25% of annual tuition
April 1	25% of annual tuition

Part-time Tutoring Services

Part-time tutors interested in providing services to Gardiner Scholarship students must

- hold a current, valid Florida educator’s certificate, pursuant to Florida Statute 1012.56,
- hold an adjunct teaching certificate from a Florida school district pursuant to Florida Statute 1012.57,
- A bachelor’s or graduate degree *in the subject area for which tutoring is being provided*,

If the part-time tutor does not have one of the credentials outlined above, they may be a person who has demonstrated a mastery of subject area knowledge pursuant to s.1012.56(5), Florida Statutes.

- Mastery could be achieved through one or more of the following:
 - An official FTCE score report indicating a passing score on a Florida subject area exam, not more than 10 years old OR
 - A passing score report that is not more than 10 years old, above the intermediate level, on both the oral and written exams for a foreign language subject area (excluding French, German or Spanish) administered by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) OR
 - A form provided by a Florida school district and signed by the school district, indicating there is no standardized exam in the subject area, but the person has attained the essential subject matter competencies and subject area specialization requirements OR
 - A valid certificate issued by the national Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) OR
 - A valid certificate issued by the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE) OR
 - A valid Statement of Status of Eligibility (SOE) issued by Educator Certification that indicates the educator is ELIGIBLE for a Professional Certificate OR
 - For a subject requiring a master’s or higher degree (ie. Educational Leadership, Guidance Counseling, Reading, or School Psychologist) a score report indicating a passing score on a Florida subject area exam (not more than 10 years old) AND a valid Statement of Status of Eligibility (SOE) issued by Educator Certification that indicates the educator is ELIGIBLE for a Temporary or Professional Certificate OR
 - A valid Statement of Status of Eligibility (SOE) issued by Educator Certification that indicates the educator is ELIGIBLE for a Temporary Certificate but does not list a passing score on the subject area exam under the Professional Certificate requirements

Full-time Private Tutoring

A full-time private tutoring program authorized under [s. 1002.43, Florida Statutes](#)

- The tutor must hold a current, valid Florida teaching certificate for the subject or grade level
- The tutor must complete and submit the Step Up for Students’ full-time tutor participation agreement and a W9
- For grades K-3, full time tutoring is considered 720 hours per school year
- For grades 4-12, full time tutoring is considered 900 hours (equivalent to 180 teaching days)

Per Step Up policy full-time private tutors may not have more than five (5) students at one time.

Setting Up an Account

To provide an additional level of service to the families served by the Gardiner Scholarship, Step Up for Students has developed a method of direct reimbursement for approved providers of specialized services, eligible private schools, approved tutors, public school or public-school districts and approved VPK and School Readiness providers. Setting up an account will allow you, the provider, to submit a request directly to Step Up For Students for payment for services rendered. After approval from the parent, the payment request will be reviewed by the Step Up for Students staff to ensure the request, and any required documentation, includes the required information necessary for payment. If found eligible, payment is made by ACH directly to the provider's account. Submissions found eligible for payment are submitted to the bank on a weekly schedule.

Providers MAY NOT ask for or require a parent to provide the username and/or password to their Gardiner account. Providers should never access to the student's Gardiner Scholarship application or account for *any* reason. Doing so may result in loss of provider participation and/or scholarship eligibility and funding for the student.

What are the steps to set-up an account?

1. Create a provider account via the Step Up For Students website
2. Complete and submit the online Provider Account [Provider Account Request](#)
3. Submit the required documentation

Step Up For Students has developed a video to walk you through the creation of your Gardiner Provider account.

[Click here to view the video.](#)

Below is a list of the type of documents you will be required to submit to set-up your account based on the specific services you will be providing.

- Full-time tutors
 - Tutor Participation Agreement
 - Completed W9
- Part-time tutors
 - Copy of a valid, current, Florida educator's certificate, pursuant to Florida Statute 1012.56 OR
 - Copy of adjunct teaching certificate from a Florida school district pursuant to Florida Statute 1012.57 OR
 - Copy of one of the documents outlined above to demonstrate mastery of subject area knowledge

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- Completed W9
 - Specialized service providers
 - Completed W9
 - Approved VPK provide or Approved School provider
 - Completed W9
 - Copy of the tuition and fee schedule for the current school year. This should include any fees for additional services for students with special needs, if applicable. The published rate should be used as the standard amount charged.
 - Public school or school district
 - Completed W9
 - Horse Therapy
 - Completed W9
 - Demonstration of membership in Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International
 - Music and Art Therapy
 - Completed W9
 - Demonstration of certification by the Certification Board for Music Therapists
 - Copy of credentials issued by the Art Therapy Credentials Board, Inc.
4. After completing the online form and submitting the required documentation, Step Up for Students will review the packet. If approved for an account, a notification will be sent which will include a username and temporary password for accessing the account.
 5. Accounts are accessed via our website or by clicking here: [Provider Account Login](#)

For additional questions or clarification, please reach out to the Gardiner Scholarship provider relations team at gardinerpayments@sufs.org.

Submitting Requests for Direct Payment for Specialized Services, Tutoring, Contracted Public School or School District Services

Step Up For Students has developed a video to walk you through the steps for submitting requests for direct payment for the services listed above. [Click here to view the video.](#)

1. Go to stepupforstudents.org and choose "LOGIN"
2. Go to "Gardiner (PLSA) School & Provider Login" and click "Login"
3. Enter your user ID and password
4. Choose "Reimbursement Requests"
5. Choose "Submit a Reimbursement Request"
6. Complete the form
 - a. Choose "Specialized Services," "Full-Time Private Tutoring Program," or "Part-Time Private Tutoring Services," or "Contracted Public School Services," or "Programs Offered by VPK Program Providers or School Readiness Providers" as the reimbursement category
 - b. If you have more than one item to submit, they may be submitted on one form but entering one and click "Save This Item," then enter the next, etc.
 - c. If there is no tax, leave the line blank

- d. Read and acknowledge the Certification Statement and click “Submit”
 7. If, after clicking “Submit” an error is found on the form, you may be required to complete the form again.
 8. Once the request has been accepted, the system will provide you the screen to upload the required supporting documentation.
 - a. If faxing, please use the fax coversheet provided for *that* reimbursement, as it will attach automatically to the correct file.
 9. After the request has been submitted, the parent will receive a notification that a request is pending approval. Until the parent approves the request, no further action will be taken by Step Up for Students.
 - a. You will be able to follow the status of submitted requests by choosing “View Reimbursement Activity.”
 10. Once the request has been approved by the parent, it will be submitted to the processing queue for review.
 11. If approved for payment, a payment request will be sent to the bank on the Wednesday following the date of approval. Allow 2-3 business days for the ACH deposit to post to your account.
- Submitting requests for reimbursements for therapy provided for one student by different therapists requires separate requests. Multiple providers cannot be submitted on one request.

Supporting documentation should be on business letterhead and include the following:

- First and Last name of the Gardiner Scholarship student
- First and last name of the service provider
- Service provided
- Date of service

Submitting Requests for Direct Payment / Eligible, Private Schools and Home Education Tuition and Fees

Step Up For Students has developed a video to walk you through the steps for submitting requests for direct payment for tuition and fees to an eligible private school. [Click here to view the video.](#)

1. Go to stepupforstudents.org and choose “APPLY/LOGIN”
2. Go to “Gardiner (PLSA) School & Provider Login” and click “Login”
3. Enter your user ID and password
4. Choose “Reimbursement Requests”
5. Choose “Submit a Reimbursement Request”
6. Enter the student’s Gardiner ID
7. Enter the Invoice Number
8. Enter the Invoice Date
9. Choose “Eligible Private School” as the reimbursement category
10. Enter the “Annual Tuition and Fees Required for Enrollment”
11. Enter the “Tuition and Fees Required for Enrollment Invoice Period”
12. Choose the correct “School Quarter”
13. Read and acknowledge the Certification Statement and click “Submit”

- a. If, after clicking “Submit” an error is found on the form, you may be required to complete the form again.
 - b. Once the request has been accepted, the system will navigate to the upload documents screen.
14. After the request has been submitted, the parent will receive a notification that a request is pending approval. Until the parent approves the request, no further action will be taken by Step Up for Students.
- a. You will be able to follow the status of submitted requests by choosing “View Reimbursement Activity”
15. Once the request has been approved by the parent, it will be submitted to the processing queue for review.
16. If approved for payment, a payment request will be sent to the bank on the Wednesday following the date of approval. Allow 2-3 business days for the ACH deposit to post to your account.

Other Payment Options

The parent of the Gardiner Scholarship student may also submit a reimbursement / payment request to Step Up for Students indicating the payment should be made directly to the provider of specialized services. In these instances, no action is required from the provider, but the provider must have an established account with Step Up for Students.

Links to Step Up for Students Documents

Documents, developed by Step Up for Students, which may be required for account set-up or payment may be found on our website at www.stepupforstudents.org or by clicking corresponding link below.

- [2020-21 Full-time Private Tutoring Participation Agreement W-9](#)