



***Family Empowerment Scholarship**

On May 11, 2021, Governor DeSantis signed House Bill 7045 into law, resulting in several changes to the state funded scholarship programs, including an extensive expansion of the Family Empowerment Scholarship Program. House Bill 7045 expanded the Family Empowerment Scholarship Program to include two branches of eligibility, the Family Empowerment Scholarship for Educational Options and the Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Disabilities.

Family Empowerment Scholarship for Educational Options

This branch of the scholarship eligibility is based on family income. The administration of this prong of the program will continue to remain the same with a few exceptions. Additionally, program eligibility has expanded and the prior year in public requirement was removed. While families are still required to apply through the scholarship funding organizations, the scholarship funding organization is responsible for determining eligibility and awarding as well as **distributing funding to eligible students.**

Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities

Beginning with the 2021-22 school year, the Gardiner Scholarship Program has been rolled into the Family Empowerment Scholarship and will be referred to as the Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA). As was done with the Gardiner Scholarship Program, students who are found eligible under this branch are able to use their funds as an education savings account. This means funding can be used beyond just tuition and fees at a private school. Families are required to apply **and renew** through the scholarship funding organizations. The scholarship funding organization is responsible for determining eligibility, awarding and distributing funding to eligible students and approving eligible expenditures.

How do I apply?

If you are interested in applying for either the Family Empowerment Scholarship for Educational Options or the Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities, please contact one of the two scholarship funding organizations that administers these programs:

[A.A.A. Scholarship Foundation- FL, LLC](#)

Phone/Fax: 888-707-2465

info@aaascholarships.org

[Step Up For Students](#)

877-735-7837

info@stepupforstudents.org

*Source: [Family Empowerment Scholarship \(fdoe.org\)](#) December 1, 2021

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