**The Latest Scholarship News for Florida Special Needs Kids**

Good news for Florida residents! Your child may be eligible for the [Gardiner Scholarship.](http://www.edchoice.org/school-choice/programs/gardiner-scholarship-program/) Also known as the [PLSA](http://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/k-12-scholarship-programs/plsa/plsa-faqs.stml), Personal Learning Scholarship Account, this NEW financial program is designed to better meet the individual educational and therapeutic needs of Florida children with disabilities, ages 3-22 (or 12th grade.)

If your child qualifies for the PLSA, you can purchase approved services or products such as speech therapy from certified providers such as [Gr8 Speech.](http://gr8speech.com/)

To be eligible for this scholarship, you must meet the following criteria:

1. **Residency:** For Florida residents only
2. **Age:** Applicants must be 3 or 4 years old on or before September 1 of the year in which the student applies for program participation, or eligible to enroll in kindergarten through 12th grade in a Florida public school or 22, whichever comes first.
3. **IEP:** Applicant must have an [IEP](https://www.understood.org/en/school-learning/special-services/ieps/understanding-individualized-education-programs)
4. **Diagnosis of Disability:** Applicant must have a diagnosis of disability from a physician licensed under chapter 458 or chapter 459 or a Florida state-licensed psychologist
5. **Disabilities:** A number of diagnoses are covered including: autism spectrum disorder, Down syndrome, muscular dystrophy, Williams syndrome, cerebral palsy and specific intellectual disabilities.
6. **School:** Applicant must be enrolled in a private school or participating in a home school program

The PLSA is not a set amount but rather is determined by a number of factors including where you live in Florida, level of need and grade, though the average for the 2015-16 school year is approximately $10,000.

Your child may be eligible for FREE speech therapy services, and as a licensed provider, we hope to provide those services to you.  For more information or to apply, click [here.](http://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/k-12-scholarship-programs/sfo/)