



## FDLRS MISSION

The mission of the Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS) is to support and enhance exceptional student education programs by providing evidence-based, high-quality professional learning opportunities; integrating assistive and instructional technology; promoting family engagement; and ensuring access to early intervention services.

## Disability History & Awareness

In 1975, Congress enacted the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, known today as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

In 2008, Florida Statutes, Section 1003.4205, entitled Disability History and Awareness Instruction, was signed into law, and requires school districts to designate the first two weeks of October as Disability History and Awareness Weeks. During these two weeks, school districts promote instruction for students in all public schools to expand student knowledge, understanding, and awareness of individuals with disabilities, disability history, and the disability rights movement.

We are proud to participate in promoting awareness of disability history and the contributions of individuals with disabilities and encourage our families to share in raising awareness.

Visit [Disability History & Awareness - FDLRS Hillsborough](#) or [Disability History & Awareness \(fldoe.org\)](#) for additional information and resources

## A word from Dr. Antoine Hickman, Executive Director

On behalf of the Department of Exceptional Student Education & Student Services, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for allowing us to meet the needs of our most valuable resources –our students. As a career-long special educator, I have seen both the triumphs and struggles of small, urban, and very large school districts. I have quickly seen in my first few months of working here in Hillsborough County Public Schools (HCPS) the power of community and the impact that parents, teachers, administrators, and support staff have in ensuring our children experience more triumphs.

During the first two weeks in October, we in HCPS are proud to participate in promoting disability history, awareness, and the contributions individuals with disabilities have made in our schools and communities. Disability History and Awareness Weeks will also allow us to recognize and celebrate those who have played a key role in advocating, influencing, and promoting the rights of individuals with disabilities across our nation. I am proud to be an active participant in this important initiative.





# Parent & Family Information Sessions

FDLRS Parent & Family Services offers a variety of information sessions that are relevant and of high interest to our families. We want to empower our families to be active participants in their child's education by providing learning opportunities that strive to open doors of communication within the school and district.

## Upcoming Sessions

October 18, 2022 - 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

### **Accessing Digital Books**

Your child, as a student of the Hillsborough County Public School system has access to many free digital book resources. This presentation will provide an overview of district resources such as myON and Axis 360, as well as other free public library resources.

October 25, 2022 - 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

### **Accommodations: Involving your Child in the Decision-Making Process**

Join us as we discuss how our child can provide invaluable insight when selecting and using accommodations during instruction and on assessments.

November 8, 2022 - 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

### **Promoting Positive Behaviors**

This training will provide care-givers general information related to behavior. The training will focus on defining behaviors, why they occur, provide behavior strategies, and highlight parent supports.

December 2, 2022 - 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

### **"Sense"ational Reading Strategies**

Research has shown that engaging the senses is essential for students that struggle with reading. 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.

[\*\*Registration Link\*\*](#)

Visit our [Webinars & Workshops - FDLRS Hillsborough](#) page for more information. Or watch one of the many prerecorded sessions at [Recorded Webinars - FDLRS](#)

If you would like to schedule a session at your school or group, contact [Debbie Valdes](#) at (813) 837-7777, ext.7733 or email [debbie.valdes@hcps.net](mailto:debbie.valdes@hcps.net).

You can also complete our Interest Survey [FDLRS Parent & Family Information Sessions \(office.com\)](#) for consideration in future parent and family information sessions.



# Excellence in Action Awards



Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS) Parent & Family Services is now accepting nominations for the 24th Annual Excellence in Action Awards which will be presented in May 2023.

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 23 years, family members and 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) 837-7777 ext.7732 or email [fdlrparentservices@hcps.net](mailto:fdlrparentservices@hcps.net).

⇒ Video and paper nominations are due by 8am, February 6, 2023

⇒ Online nominations are due by 8am, February 13, 2023.

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://forms.office.com/r/Vsuy8PZKNF>



Florida Diagnostic & Learning  
RESOURCES SYSTEM

## Hillsborough Community Events



YES! of America United in partnership with Hillsborough County is kicking off its 14<sup>th</sup> Annual F.A.I.R. (Family Abilities Information Rally) on November 5, 2022, from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM at All People's Park and Life Center, 6105 E. Sligh Avenue, Tampa.

This event will host over 100 providers, entertainment, and activities for the whole family.

For more information about YES! Activities and events, contact YES! by email: [yesofamericaunited@gmail.com](mailto:yesofamericaunited@gmail.com).



### F.R.I.E.N.D.S.

(Families, Respect, Inspire, Educate, Networking, Down syndrome, Special needs)

will be celebrating their 6th Annual Buddy Walk on **October 22, 2022**, from 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM at Al Lopez Park, 4810 N Himes, Tampa.

For more information about F.R.I.E.N.D.S. activities and events, contact Ann Foyt, by email [info@friendssupport.org](mailto:info@friendssupport.org).

## FDLRS Hillsborough is Moving

We are excited to be moving our offices to the Brandon area where we will be more centrally located to serve all our families and schools.

We are still responding to your inquiries during the moving process and can still be reached by phone at **813-837-7777**.

## Special Ed Connection

Are you interested in finding practical guidance, strategies, and helpful tools for your child with special needs? The Florida Department of Education is proud to provide access to the Special Ed Connection® no cost to families of students with disabilities. For more information and to gain access to this free resource visit, [Special Ed Connection - FDLRS Hillsborough](#).



## Hillsborough County Safety Resources

**Yellow Dot:** The Yellow Dot sticker displayed on your vehicle window alerts first responders to valuable health care information located in your glove compartment when involved in a traffic crash (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 \(teamhcsso.com\)](#).

**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](#).

## Superintendent's Advisory Council for the Education of Students with Disabilities

The primary focus of the Superintendent's Advisory Council for the Education of Students with Disabilities is to identify and recommend systemic strategies to improve outcomes for all students who have disabilities within Hillsborough County Public Schools (HCPS). For more information on how you can be involved, visit [Exceptional Student Education \(Special Education\) / Superintendent's Advisory Council for the Education of Students with Disabilities \(hillsboroughschools.org\)](#).

# FDLRS Parent & Family Services

Parent & Family 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.

## Contact FDLRS

### Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources System

813-837-7777

[fdlrparentservices@hcps.net](mailto:fdlrparentservices@hcps.net)

<https://hillsborough.fdlrs.org/>

FDLRS is funded by the Florida Department of Education, Division of Public Schools, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, through federal assistance under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Part B and State General Revenue funds.

## Parent & Family Services Team

[Debbie Valdes](#), FDLRS Program Manager, (813) 837-7733

[Corinne Smith](#), FDLRS Communications Liaison, (813) 837-7872

[Jennifer Belinc-DeGregorio](#), ESE Parent Liaison, (813) 815-3410

[Sandra BuShea](#), ESE Parent Liaison, (813) 360-1159

[Lexie Harvey](#), ESE Parent Liaison, (813) 738-2535

[Lina Moreno](#), ESE Parent Liaison, (813) 773-6804

[Barbara Otis](#), ESE Parent Liaison, (813) 825-3988

[Christine Poe](#), ESE Parent Liaison, (813) 279-1851

[Jessica Toulme](#), ESE Parent Liaison, (813) 252-0153

[LaNaye Wilson](#), ESE Parent Liaison, (352) 585-9993

### Parent & Family Services Information

(813) 837-7777

Ext. 7732 (English) • Ext. 7728 (Spanish)

[fdlrparentservices@hcps.net](mailto:fdlrparentservices@hcps.net)

#### *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.

#### Hillsborough County Public School Notices

[Notices / Overview \(hillsboroughschools.org\)](#)



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#### Exceptional Student Education & Student Services

Dr. Antoine Hickman, Executive Director

#### Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources System

Michael Levine, Supervisor