



Gardiner Scholarship

2017-2018 End of Year Report

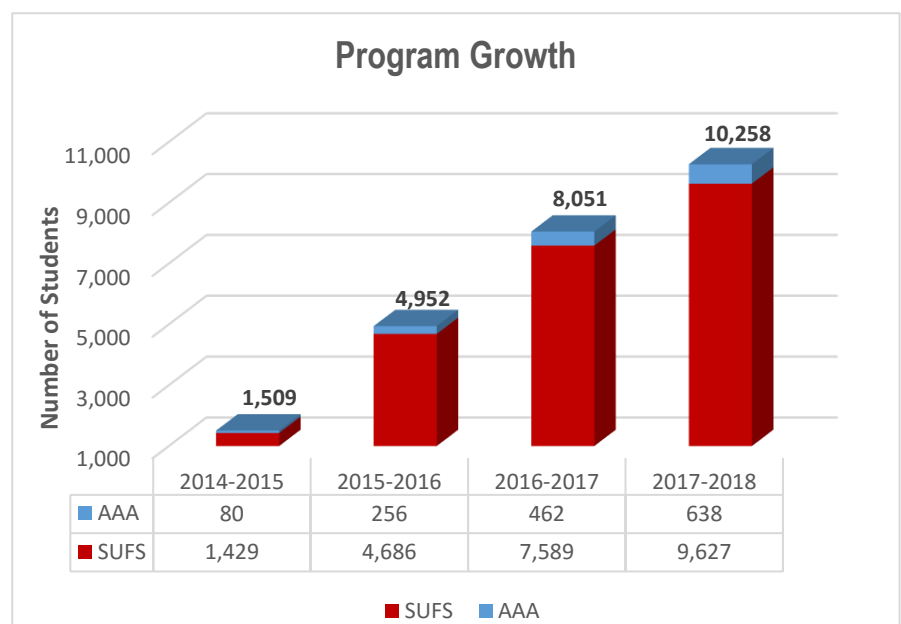


Report Summary

- In 2017-2018, there were 10,258 students participating in the Gardiner Scholarship program. Of these students, 9,627 students received their scholarship through Step Up For Students.
- Sixty-three percent of students were diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- More Gardiner students lived in Miami-Dade County than in any other county (13.3%) followed by Orange county (7.9%).
- Most students were enrolled in elementary grades Kindergarten through 5th grade (43.1%).
- The average Gardiner scholarship award was \$10,276, compared to \$10,144 in 2016-17.
- On average, Gardiner students submitted 17 reimbursements and spent 76% of his/her award.
- In terms of student purchases, instructional materials category experienced more growth than any other category, increasing from 38% of students in 2016-2017 to 42% of students in 2017-2018 spending a portion of their award in this category.
- Only 7.3% of students did not use any of their scholarship during the year, compared to 7.6% in 2016-2017.
- Almost 59 percent of students used a portion of their funds for enrollment tuition and fees.
- Twenty percent of students used their scholarship for specialized services, like speech therapy.
- A smaller proportion of money was spent on tutoring this year than in previous years.
- More families used their scholarship for a variety of different educational expenses than last year.

Introduction

The Gardiner Scholarship program is a Florida School Choice program designed to help parents individualize educational options for their children with specific special needs. The program has served students for 4 complete school years and is currently administered by two state-approved, non-profit scholarship funding organizations (SFO), Step Up For Students and AAA Scholarship Foundation. This report provides summary



information for students participating in the Gardiner Scholarship program through Step Up For Students (SUFS) during 2017-2018 school year. For the purpose of this report, only expenditures with a service date between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018 and payment date prior to August 30, 2018 were included.

Program Eligibility Requirements

Gardiner Scholarship eligibility is based on residency, age, and disability. To be eligible to receive the scholarship for the 2017-2018 year, a student must have been:

- A Florida resident
- Eligible to enroll from 3 yrs. old through 12th grade or 22 yrs. old, whichever comes first.
- The subject of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) written in accordance with rules of the State Board of Education or has received a disability diagnosis as defined from a physician who is licensed under Florida Statutes chapter 458 or chapter 459, or a psychologist who is licensed in Florida
- Diagnosed with one of the following disabilities: 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 3-5 year-olds who are deemed high-risk due to developmental delays and not older than 5 on Sept. 1 may be eligible for the year they apply .

2017-2018 Enrollment Summary

New	29%
Renewal	71%
Grade Level	
3-4 Years Old	15%
Elem. Grades (K-5)	43%
Middle Grades (6-8)	22%
High Grades (9-12)	20%
Current School Type	
Private School	69.8%
Home School	29.8%
Prior School Type (New Students)	
Home School	18%
Public School	34%
Private School	38%

- The date that eligibility is confirmed influences the scholarship amount awarded. A full (100%) scholarship will be given to those who qualify by September 1st, while 75% will be given if eligibility is confirmed by November 1st. For those who qualify later in the school year, 50% of the scholarship will be given to those whose eligibility is confirmed by February 1st, and 25% will be given for those who qualify by April 1st.

Student Enrollment

In 2017-2018, there were 9,627 students who participated in the Gardiner Scholarship program through Step Up For Students, compared to 7,589 students in the 2016-2017 school year. Students ranged from 3 years old to 12th grade and comprised several different races, grade levels, prior

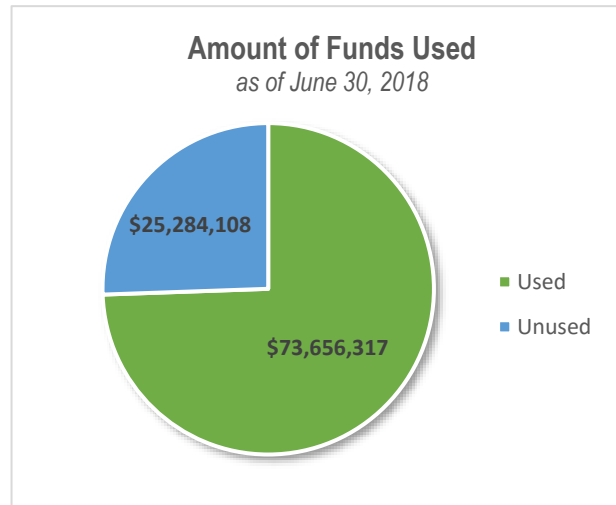
school types, and disabilities. Students were likewise found to be primarily enrolled in private school, while approximately 30% of Gardiner students were home schooled. ¹

School Enrollment

There were 1,634 approved private schools participating in the Gardiner Scholarship program in 2017-18. Of these schools, 65% received payments for tuition or other educational services for 5,630 students.

Scholarship Awards

The average scholarship awarded for 2017-2018 was \$10,276.00. However, the actual amount of a child's award is based on his/her grade, county of residence, and the date eligibility is confirmed. For Step Up for Students, a total of \$98,940,425.54 was awarded to 9,627 students. As of June 30, 2018, SUFS families spent \$73,656,317 on qualifying educational expenses. On average, SUFS families submitted an average 17 reimbursements per child and spent \$7,651.02 of each child's scholarship award. Unspent funds in student accounts roll over from year to year and are refunded to the state if the student has not enrolled in any eligible post-secondary institution for three consecutive years following high school graduation.



Findings Regarding Scholarship Expenditures

- Nearly 75% of scholarship funds awarded in 2017-18 were expended by June 30, 2018.
- Sixty-five percent of funds were spent on enrollment tuition and fees.

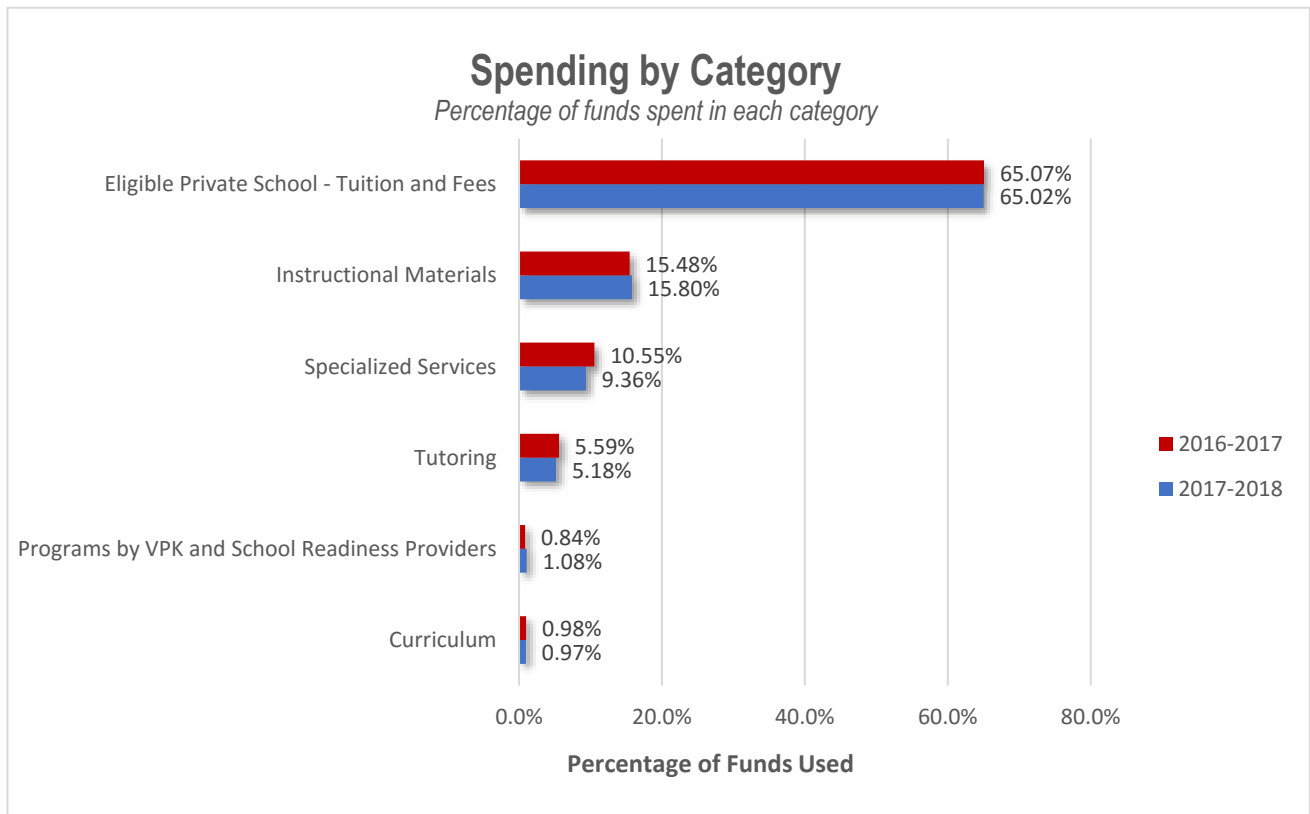
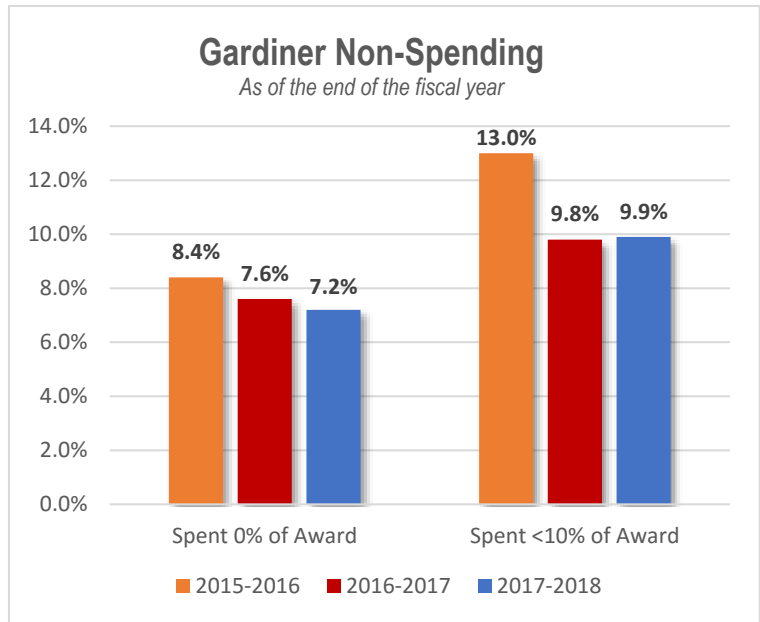
Top Spending Categories (2017-2018)²

	Total Amount Spent	% of Total
Eligible Private Schools - Tuition and Fees	\$47,890,053.00	65.02%
Instructional Materials	\$11,636,001.00	15.80%
Specialized Services	\$6,895,003.10	9.36%
Tutoring	\$3,812,416.10	5.18%
Programs by VPK and School Readiness Providers	\$793,194.51	1.08%
Curriculum	\$716,772.12	0.97%

¹Private and home school rates are based on students who were at least 6 years old by February 1, 2018, which is the mandatory age for school attendance. These rates are approximate and based on information obtained from Gardiner families and from private school payments. Thirty-one students were not assigned a current school type due to a lack of information.

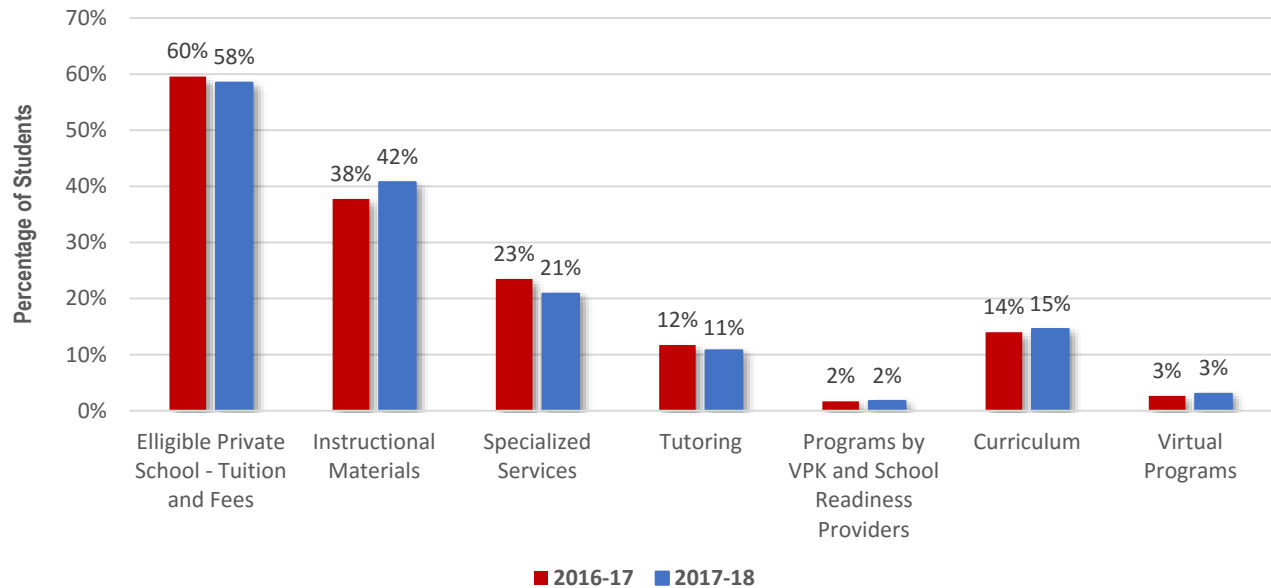
² Categories that include approximately 1% or more of total funds spent are included in the table. For all spending categories and total scholarship expenditures, see the appendix.

- The percentage of total expenditures in the top spending categories remained virtually unchanged from the 2016-17 school year; however, there were differences in the proportion of students who spent funds in each category.
- Forty-two percent of students who used their Gardiner scholarship spent a portion of their award on instructional materials, up from 38 percent of students in 2016-17.
- Families who spent money on tutoring spent an average of \$3,672 on tutoring services during the year.
- Non-spending has decreased steadily since the beginning of the program. In 2017-18, there were 701 students (7.2 percent) who had not used their scholarship award by the end of the fiscal year. Over half of non-spenders were new students and approximately 40 percent were ages 3 through 5.



Student Spending

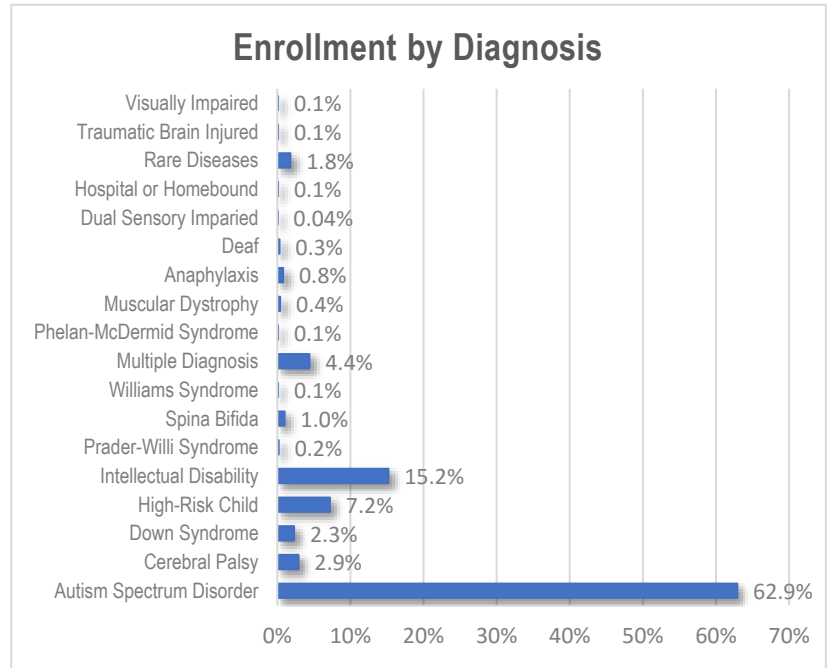
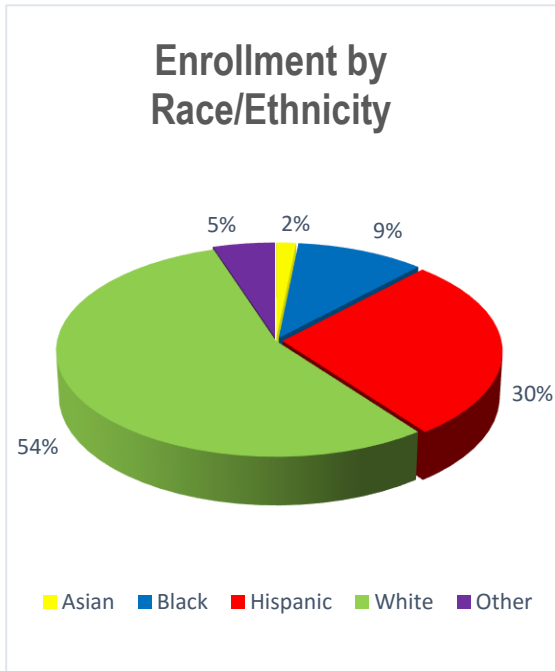
Percentage of students who spent a portion of their award in each category



Number of Students and Average Amount Spent by Category

	Number of Students	Average Amount Spent Per Student
Curriculum	1,401	\$511.61
Eligible Private School	5,630	\$8,506.23
Instructional materials	3,921	\$2,967.61
Specialized Services	2,008	\$3,433.77
Standardized Testing Fees	110	\$167.66
Stanley G. Tate FL Prepaid College Fees	114	\$2,886.28
Annual Education Evaluation Fees	199	\$55.03
Tutoring	1,038	\$3,672.85
Virtual Programs (including FLVS)	290	\$1,356.96
Eligible Postsecondary Institution or Program	46	\$1,434.25
Programs with VPK or School Readiness Providers	166	\$3,844.07
Specialized Summer Education Program Fees	197	\$801.48
Home Education Tuition/Fees	132	\$1,040.64
Certified Music and Art Therapy	116	\$1,023.77
Certified Horse Therapy Centers	98	\$567.12
Specialized After-School Education Program Fees	54	\$675.77
Florida 528 College Savings Plan	64	\$8,888.39

Appendix Tables & Graphs



Spending by Category

Category	Dollars Spent	Percent of Dollars Spent
Instructional materials	\$11,636,001	15.80%
Curriculum	\$716,772	0.97%
Specialized Services	\$6,895,003	9.36%
Enrollment tuition and fees	\$47,890,053	65.02%
Contracted Public School Services	\$0	0.00%
Standardized Testing Fees	\$18,443	0.03%
Stanley G. Tate FL Prepaid College Fees	\$329,036	0.45%
Tutoring	\$3,812,416	5.18%
Virtual Programs (including FLVS)	\$408,309	0.55%
Eligible Post-secondary Institution or Program	\$65,975	0.09%
Home Education Tuition/Fees	\$137,364	0.19%
Programs by VPK or School Readiness Providers	\$793,195	1.08%
Specialized After-School Education Program Fees	\$36,492	0.05%
Specialized Summer Education Program Fees	\$157,891	0.21%
Transition Services Provided by Job Coaches	\$5,225	0.01%
Florida 529 College Savings Plan	\$568,857	0.77%
Certified Horse Therapy Centers	\$55,578	0.08%
Certified Music & Art Therapy	\$118,757	0.16%
Annual Educational Evaluation Fees (Home Ed)	\$10,950	0.01%
Total	\$73,656,317	

Enrollment by County (Top 25)

	Number	Percent
Dade	1,279	13.3%
Orange	760	7.9%
Broward	562	5.9%
Palm Beach	501	5.2%
Hillsborough	489	5.1%
Brevard	469	4.9%
Pinellas	451	4.7%
Duval	450	4.7%
Polk	437	4.5%
Seminole	371	3.8%
Pasco	337	3.5%
Volusia	337	3.5%
Lake	295	3.1%
Osceola	290	3.0%
Leon	243	2.5%
Hernando	231	2.4%
Manatee	179	1.9%
Lee	159	1.7%
Alachua	157	1.6%
St. Lucie	144	1.5%
Marion	136	1.4%
Escambia	114	1.2%
Okaloosa	115	1.2%
Sarasota	101	1.1%
St. Johns	100	1.0%

Enrollment by Grade

	Number	Percent
3 year old	590	6.1%
4 year old	840	8.7%
Kindergarten	905	9.4%
First	688	7.1%
Second	609	6.3%
Third	617	6.4%
Fourth	668	6.9%
Fifth	661	6.9%
Sixth	748	7.8%
Seventh	745	7.7%
Eighth	670	7.0%
Ninth	608	6.3%
Tenth	519	5.4%
Eleventh	414	4.3%
Twelfth	345	3.6%