



History of the Development of the PDA Modules

Florida's Professional Development Alternatives (PDA) project, which began 2002-2003, was initially developed in response to the following:

- The National Challenge of No Child Left Behind legislation
- The statewide critical shortage of ESE teachers and the need to increase the number of certified teachers
- The need to provide quality professional development alternatives correlated to new ESE competencies
- The need to reduce development and implementation costs through collaboration
- The need to encourage the utilization of distance learning as a cost saver for districts.

Collaborating Partners

The PDA Project was originally funded through a U.S. Department of Education Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant under Title II of the Higher Education Act. This project was designed through a collaborative effort of the Division of Professional Educators, Bureau of Educator Certification, and the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS). The collaborating partners who developed the PDA Initiative were: Bureau of Educator Certification, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS), North East Florida Educational Consortium (NEFEC), Florida Center for Interactive Media (FCIM), Steering Committee Members, Writers from FDLRS, Districts, FIN, FDLRS Administration Project, FDLRS Network Associate Centers, Universities, Agencies, and other ESE, educational and technology professionals. The Florida Department of Education Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS) continues to provide support funding for local delivery of the PDA modules. Modules are coordinated by the Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS) Administration Project and the nineteen FDLRS network associate centers, a FDOE/BEESS project, in collaboration with the Florida Center for Interactive Media.

Development of the PDA Project

To develop the PDA project as a statewide resource, a program administrator was hired and a steering committee was established to provide leadership, guidance and oversight to the process. PDA initially consisted of seven online facilitated modules that were aligned with Florida's Exceptional Student Education (ESE) K-12 Certification Competencies and were designed to support educators in increasing their knowledge and skills for teaching students with identified disabilities, as well as other students who are experiencing challenges with behavior and/or academics. These modules also assisted educators with successful completion of the ESE K-12 certification exam and some of these modules were designed to satisfy out-of-field credit for teachers who had not yet passed the ESE K-12 certification exam but were working in exceptional education teaching positions.

Seven individual writing/development teams were identified to create the specific content of each of the seven program modules. These writing teams used the State developed ESE Competencies, Council for Exceptional Children Core and Specialized Competencies, previously identified standards from Florida's Alternative Training Initiative (ATI), and the standards established by the steering committee to develop seven draft modules, which were submitted for content review, initial and final editing, before being subsequently approved by the DOE.

The first module, "Foundations of ESE," was successfully field tested and based on this module, all modules were prepared for online delivery to participants statewide. A communications mechanism for local PDA Coordinators/Facilitators and Technical Support personnel was established, and in October 2003, a statewide conference was held to introduce the new PDA



online training program, orient local coordinators and facilitators to the program and to explain the procedures for use by individuals and districts. The first PDA modules were available to Florida educators in late October 2003.

In the spring of 2004 the PDA project was subsumed under the auspices of the newly formed statewide FDLRS HRD Coordinating Unit. A Coordinator of ESE Special Projects was hired in April 2004 to assist with support and management of the PDA Project and other HRD Coordinating Unit assignments as needed.

In May of 2004 the first statewide conference was held to update local coordinators, facilitators and technical support personnel and to provide training in navigation of the Desire to Learn (D2L) system, a system utilized to deliver the modules on line. A PDA Facilitator's Guide was developed to provide assistance with implementation of the PDA modules on a local level and to assist with navigation of the D2L system. The conference also provided orientation opportunities for new coordinators and facilitators. Conference participants provided feedback and suggestions for streamlining and refining PDA processes and modules.

In June 2006, an eighth module, Differentiating Reading Instruction: Making It Explicit, was made available. At that time, the module was approved by Just Read, Florida to satisfy competencies 4 and 5 of the Florida Reading Endorsement. In 2012, the module was aligned with the updated reading endorsement competencies and is now approved to satisfy competency 4 of the Florida Reading Endorsement.

Since 2006, PDA online professional learning modules, both facilitated and independent study, continue to be added on a regular basis. The FDLRS Administration Project, a project of FDOE/BEESS, continues to coordinate the PDA modules in collaboration with the Florida Center for Interactive Media. All nineteen FDLRS centers have a PDA coordinator to provide PDA services and supports to participants. PDA lead writers update the content of all modules annually and check for refinements monthly. PDA facilitators continue to receive statewide training and updates. The PDA online modules provide comprehensive, high quality and accessible professional learning opportunities. The modules are designed to assist educators in becoming more proficient in responding to the various instructional and behavioral needs of each individual learner in order to maximize achievement of all students. The PDA modules, which support Florida's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) are not static; they are an ever-growing option to provide online professional learning opportunities to Florida educators.

Original Module Writing Teams

All teams - Mary Ann Ahearn, Administrator, ESE Special Programs, FDLRS HRD/Administration Coordinating Unit

Foundations - Susan Parker O'Rear, Denise Rusnak, Michelle Gregoire, Sue Kupchunas, Mary Ann Ahearn

Assessment and Evaluation - Denise Rusnak, Melissa Adams, Martha Beech, Sue Kupchunas, Lida Yocum

Instructional Practices - Marion Fesmire, Samantha Jaksec, Kimberlee Oakes, Linda Partipilo, Eileen Pracek, Susan Parker O'Rear, Mary Ann Ahearn

Language and Communication Development - Mary Louise Bachman, Sylvia Diehl, JoAnn Doyle, Victoria Lammers, Susan McKeown

Interpersonal Interactions and Participation - Sheila Gritz, Advisor – Kris Webb

Positive Behavior Support - Karen Childs, Heather George, Denise Binder, Stephanie Martinez, Don Kincaid, Sue Kupchunas, Mary Ann Ahearn



Transition - Drew Andrews, Sheila Gritz, Joyce Lubbers, Patrick Mulvihill

Differentiating Reading Instruction for Students: Making It Explicit - Susan Parker O'Rear, Marilyn Hefferan; Content Review - Linda Wiltz, Terri Korn, Debbie Houston, Just Read, Florida!; Content Support - Project Central D'Ann Rawlinson, Project Central staff, Project Central BALANCE State Steering Committee, DOE Clearinghouse Precision Teaching Project

Introduction to Differentiating Instruction: Responding to All Learners - Susan O'Rear, FDLRS Admin/HRD project, Content Support: FDLRS and FIN Differentiated Instruction Workgroup

Differentiating Mathematics Instruction - David Allsopp, University of South Florida; Donna Crocker, FDLRS Action; Kitt Kelleher, Broward District; Schools; Renee Steinmetz, FDLRS NEFEC, Karen Geisel, FDLRS Action; Sue Kupchunas, Consultant; Susan O'Rear, FDLRS Admin/HRD project

Differentiating Science Instruction - Sara Aronin, Science Consultant; Holly Bowman, Science Teacher, Apopka Middle School; Patti Brustad, FDLRS Suncoast; Charlotte Cannizzaro, Science Consultant; June Main, Jacksonville University; Sue Kupchunas, Consultant; Susan O'Rear, FDLRS Admin/HRD project

Formative Assessment Process for Differentiating Instruction - Susan Parker O'Rear, FDLRS; Vicki Barnitt, Florida Inclusion Network (FIN); Rose Calco, Florida Inclusion Network (FIN); Sheri Fiskum, FDLRS

Technology for Student Success: An Introduction - David Davis, FDLRS Technology; Judy Peacock, FDLRS Westgate Technology; Susan Saunders, FDLRS Miccosukee Technology; Marcia Sterner, FDLRS Technology; Pam Levan, Escambia County Schools Occupational Therapy Program

Technology for Student Success: Assistive Technology - David Davis-Coordinator, Judy Peacock-Region 1 Technology Coordinator, Janet Good-Region 3 Technology Coordinator, Technology & Learning Connections for Assistive Technology and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Team, MTSS Project, University of South Florida; Alicia Wolfe, Vision Teacher, Pinellas County Schools; Marcia Sterner, Technology Specialist, Orange County Schools Assistive Technology; Kay Ezzell, FDLRS/RMTC-D/HH Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind; Joanne Brustad, FDLRS/REACH Technology Specialist

Technical Support Team

Technical support is provided by the Florida Center for Interactive Media (FCIM). More information regarding FCIM can be found at <http://www.fcim.org>.

Original PDA Steering Committee

- Mary Ann Ahearn, Program Administrator, ESE Special Programs
- Lezlie Cline, Program Specialist, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
- Linda Egan, Senior Administrator, FDLRS/Action
- Judy Etemadi, Assistant Director, Florida Education Standards Commission
- Mike Ferguson, Director, Florida Center for Interactive Media
- Tanice Knopp, Assistant Professor, University of South Florida
- Doris Nabi, Senior Education Policy Consultant for K-12 Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
- Diane Patchen, ESE Director, Nassau County Schools
- Denise Rusnak, Curriculum Supervisor, ESE, Broward County Schools
- Lee Sherry, Director, Florida CSPD Project
- Kris Webb, Professor, University of North Florida
- Karen Wilde, Senior Educational Program Director, Educator Certification
- Faye Yongue, Program Coordinator, FDLRS/PAEC



- Kay Young, Director, Florida Learning Alliance

Original Steering Committee Advisors

- Shan Goff, K-12 Chancellor, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
- Beverly Gregory, Bureau Chief, Educator Certification
- Janet Adams, Program Specialist, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
- Bethany Bowman, Administrative Assistant III, Educator Certification
- Arlene Duncan, Program Director, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
- Karen Morris, Program Specialist, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
- Iris Palazes, Program Services Supervisor, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
- Michele Polland, Bureau Chief, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
- Evy Friend, Administrator, ESE Program Development and Services, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

Original FDLRS HRD Coordinating Unit Advisory Committee

- Mary Ann Ahearn, Program Administrator, ESE Special Projects, FDLRS HRD Coordinating Unit
- Lezlie Cline, Program Director, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
- Pam Connolly, Director, FDLRS/Spring
- Judy Etemadi, Assistant Director, Florida Education Standards Commission
- Mike Ferguson, Director, Florida Center for Interactive Media
- Stephen Griffin, Manager of Technical Production, Florida Center for Interactive Media
- Sheila Gritz, Senior Training Specialist, Transition Center, University of Florida
- Sue Kupchunas, Program Coordinator, ESE Special Projects, FDLRS HRD Coordinating Unit
- Gwen Lipscomb, Manager, FDLRS/Reach
- Eileen McDaniel, Program Specialist, Bureau of Educator Certification
- Karen Morris, Program Specialist, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
- Doris Nabi, Deputy Officer, Office of Early Learning
- Diane Patchen, ESE Director, Nassau County Schools
- Susan Parker O'Rear, FDLRS HRD Specialist, FDLRS/Action
- Denise Rusnak, Curriculum Supervisor, ESE, Broward County Schools
- Lee Sherry, Director, Florida CSPD Project
- Lucia Townsend, FDLRS HRD Specialist, FDLRS/Crown
- Faye Yongue, Program Coordinator, FDLRS/PAEC
- Kay Young, Director, Florida Learning Alliance

Original PDA Module Contact Writers

- Pam Connolly - Assessment and Evaluation
- Sue Kupchunas- Foundations
- Susan O'Rear - Differentiating Reading Instruction: Making It Explicit
- Donna Crocker - Differentiating Mathematics Instruction
- Patty Brustad - Differentiating Science Instruction
- Sheila Gritz - Interpersonal Interactions
- Susan O'Rear - Instructional Practices
- Lisa Bell - Language Development and Communication
- Sandi Redman - Positive Behavior Support
- Sheila Gritz - Transition
- Susan O'Rear - Introduction to Differentiated Instruction
- Mary Ann Ahearn - Administrator, ESE Special Projects

