

BEESS Portal to Professional Development Alternatives

BEESS Portal to Professional Development Alternatives (PDA) Courses 2018-2019 Frequently Asked Questions for Facilitated Courses

The BEESS Portal to Professional Development Alternatives (PDA) is a partnership between the Florida Department of Education Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS) and the Bureau of Educator Certification. Available to Florida educators since 2003, the courses are funded by the Florida Department of Education Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS). Courses are coordinated by the Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS) Administration Project and the nineteen FDLRS Network Associate Centers, a FLDOE/BEESS project, in collaboration with the Florida Center for Interactive Media.

Index of Facilitated Courses

60 inservice credits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment & Evaluation • Foundations of Exceptional Education • Instructional Practices • Transition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language Development & Communication Skills • PBS: Understanding Student Behavior • Differentiating Reading Instruction (<i>Awards credit for Competency 4 of the FL Reading Endorsement</i>)
30 inservice credits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiating Mathematics Instruction • Differentiating Science Instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SIM-EPD Concept Mastery Routine • SIM-EPD Unit Organizer Routine
20 inservice credits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Differentiating Instruction • Engaging Learners through Informative Assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology for Student Success: An Introduction • Technology for Student Success: Assistive Technology
5-10 inservice credits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matrix of Services • Technology for Student Success: Tools to Support Reading Comprehension • Surrogate Parent 	

1. What is PDA?

Professional Development Alternatives (PDA) online courses 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 site is funded by the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, and is coordinated by the Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS) and the Personnel Development Support Project (FDOE/BEESS discretionary projects.)

2. What are the characteristics of the PDA Courses?

The BEESS Portal offers both facilitated courses and independent study courses. Both types of courses share the following characteristics:

- ✓ Available statewide.
- ✓ Free to Florida educators.
- ✓ Resources and content are reviewed monthly and updated annually by expert writers.
- ✓ High-quality online content and a variety of learning activities for self-paced study.
- ✓ Classroom-related assessment tasks.

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- ✓ Consistent, user-friendly format and organization.
- ✓ Technology support.
- ✓ Support Florida's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS).

3. What are the requirements of a PDA course?

The requirements of facilitated PDA Courses vary depending on the course, however, with all facilitated Courses you will:

- ✓ Participate in orientation and additional face-to-face or virtual group meetings with your PDA Facilitator and colleagues,
- ✓ Study course content and access current external links to information available through the internet, and
- ✓ Complete assessment tasks that may include quizzes, discussion board prompts, and/or written assignments.

4. Where can I learn more about the content of the PDA Courses?

Facilitated course descriptions are available at the PDA website www.fl-pda.org. On the left side of the page, select: View Course Descriptions.

5. Who can participate in the PDA online professional development Courses?

The PDA facilitated courses have been developed for educators currently employed in education in the state of Florida, however, if you are not currently employed in education in Florida and you are seeking inservice credits for recertification, you may take PDA courses if certain criteria are met. Please read numbers fifteen through eighteen of this document for more information about inservice credit.

6. If I am outside of the United States, may I participate in a PDA course?

Educators who are living outside the United States are permitted to participate in any of the PDA facilitated courses if they are able to access it through www.fl-pda.org, however, there is no technical support system in place for users outside of the country who cannot access the site.

7. I have never taken an online course. How will I know what to do?

For facilitated PDA courses, you will participate in a face-to-face or in a virtual orientation prior to starting the course. Your FDLRS PDA Coordinator and/or Facilitator will provide you with information prior to orientation.

During orientation for facilitated courses, you will:

- ✓ Meet your FDLRS PDA Facilitator,
- ✓ Learn more about PDA and Desire2Learn, the PDA learning management system,
- ✓ Receive your username, password and course syllabus, and
- ✓ Take time to get comfortable navigating your course.

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8. Do I have to take all of the PDA courses and do I have to take the courses in a particular order?

You may determine which of the facilitated PDA courses meet your professional development needs. You may take as many as you like, but it is recommended that you only take one at a time in order to focus on the content and assessment tasks required of that course. The courses do not have prerequisite requirements. You may take them in any order that aligns with your needs.

9. Can I participate in a PDA course if I am not currently working with students?

If you enroll in a facilitated course and are not currently working directly with students, talk with your facilitator at orientation. Your facilitator may be able to suggest options. It is possible that you might be able to team with a classroom teacher in your Florida school or district. You can possibly work with that classroom teacher to implement what you are learning in the course and evaluate its impact on student performance.

10. Are PDA Courses offered year around?

Facilitated PDA Courses are offered on an ongoing basis both at a local level and with statewide registration from July 1 – May 15. PDA facilitated Courses end by May 15 and your FDLRS PDA Coordinators will report inservice credits to the school districts in their service region to meet the June 30 recertification deadline, if applicable.

11. May I earn partial credit for PDA Courses?

You must complete all of the individual course requirements to earn inservice credits. No partial credit is awarded for any of the PDA Courses.

12. How do I register for a PDA course?

Facilitated courses are offered with statewide registration and are also offered by the local FDLRS centers.

- ✓ **Facilitated Courses Offered Locally:** Contact your local FDLRS PDA Coordinator for course availability, scheduling, registration, and local district inservice credit information. Coordinator contact information is available at www.fl-pda.org, scroll down to “Contacts” and select “PDA Coordinators.”
- ✓ **Facilitated Courses Offered Statewide:** Go to www.fl-pda.org and select the Statewide Registration banner in the upper left corner.

13. How long do I have to complete a PDA course? How many hours will I spend on a course?

Typically, the number of inservice credits indicates the approximate number of hours you will spend working on your PDA course. Since participant background knowledge, study habits, and experience varies, it is difficult to determine the length of time an individual requires to thoroughly study the content and complete assessment tasks.

Facilitated courses are scheduled with a beginning and ending date and you will be provided with a course

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syllabus to assist with time management.

14. What happens if I have to drop a PDA course after I have enrolled? What happens if I fall behind with course requirements?

During a facilitated course, you are required to follow the course syllabus requirements and due dates and you are expected to be current with all requirements at the mid-point of the course. If you are not current at the mid-point, your PDA Facilitator or Coordinator may suggest that you reregister for the course at a different time.

If you are not able to meet the expectations, you should contact your PDA Facilitator immediately. If your enrollment is cancelled, a record of your completed work will be on file for approximately one year. When you reenroll, you will not have to redo work that has been completed and passed.

15. How do I know how many inservice credits I need to recertify?

All questions regarding your individual certification or recertification should be directed to your local personnel/certification department or to the Florida Department of Education Certification office <http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/certification/index.shtml>. It is critical that you get the individual information that you need related to your certification situation. FDLRS PDA Coordinators can answer questions regarding credit for FDLRS professional development. FDLRS staff are not certification specialists.

16. How can I get inservice credits recorded with the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE)?

- ✓ **For current, active educators:** FDLRS does not report inservice credits directly to FLDOE. Inservice credits are reported to FLDOE by a school district or private school agency with an approved Master Inservice Plan (MIP) or its equivalent. Your local FDLRS PDA coordinator will report course completers to the appropriate school districts in their service region. Verification of completion will be sent to private school agencies upon request. Districts or private school agencies also have the option of requiring additional follow-up activities in order to award inservice credits.
- ✓ **For educators not currently working in the field of education:** FDLRS does not report inservice credits directly to FLDOE. Inservice Credits are reported to FLDOE by a school district or private school agency with an approved Master Inservice Plan (MIP) or its equivalent. It is your responsibility, prior to starting the course, to verify that your former school district or private school agency is able to submit inservice credits to FLDOE for you. If the district or agency is unable to do this, you may need to take university credit to recertify.

17. Do ALL PDA courses satisfy the content requirement for teaching students with disabilities (Renewal Credit in Teaching Students with Disabilities 1012.585, F.S.)?

Many of the PDA facilitated courses support the recertification requirement of 20 hours in teaching students with disabilities (Renewal Credit in Teaching Students with Disabilities 1012.585, F.S.), however, each school district or

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private school agency determines which Courses satisfy the content requirement for their employees.

Participants should check with their district or local FDLRS PDA Coordinator to inquire about each PDA course.

18. Where do I access additional information regarding the recertification requirements of Renewal Credit in Teaching Students with Disabilities 1012.585, F.S.?

Technical Assistance Paper: Renewal Credit in Teaching Students with Disabilities

<http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-6975/dps-2014-12a.pdf>

Any additional questions can be directed to the PDA Management Team at PDAQuestions@gmail.com, or contact your local PDA Coordinator, <http://fl-pda.org/coordinators/>.



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