2019 - 2020 SEEK Scholarship Handbook

Effective July 1, 2019

All SEEK Scholarship policies and procedures are subject to change.
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INTRODUCTION

SEEK Scholarship

*Seeking Excellence and Education through Knowledge*, commonly referred to as SEEK, is a scholarship program dedicated to improving the quality of Palm Beach County’s early childhood education environments through staff development. SEEK Scholarship is funded by the Children’s Services Council of Palm Beach County and administered by Palm Beach State College (PBSC) through the Institute of Excellence in Early Care and Education (IEECE).

There are a variety of SEEK scholarships available for professional development activities. Eligibility for each type of scholarship is dependent on the type of site a practitioner is employed, which is outlined in this handbook.

Information regarding SEEK Scholarship recipients is maintained in the secure Palm Beach County Early Childhood Registry (Registry) system and may be shared with professional development system partners. This information is accessed to determine funding needs and track professional development. If a practitioner’s information is submitted to the IEECE outside of the Registry system, that information is also maintained in secure files.

Additional information regarding the SEEK Scholarship can be found on the IEECE’s website under the (www.palmbeachstate.edu/ieece) “Financial Support” tab.

Strong Minds Network

The *Strong Minds Network* is a voluntary system that emphasizes achievement of child outcomes through more effective teacher-child interactions. The system provides resources to support child care providers, practitioners and families to ensure children receive high-quality care and effective teaching, and ultimately, are ready for kindergarten. The vision is that children will have quality early educational experiences that will increase their chances of achieving school success and becoming productive members of society.

Additional information regarding the Strong Minds Network can be found at www.cscpbc.org.

Non-Strong Minds Network

A practitioner employed in an early childhood program that does not participate in the *Strong Minds Network* (Non-Network) but receives some form of public funding may be eligible for limited scholarship awards.
The Palm Beach County Early Childhood Registry

The Palm Beach County Early Childhood Registry (Registry) is a data system that maintains information on its members, which include documenting their professional development in the field of early childhood education, such as credentials, college coursework, in-service/career pathway training, education and employment information. The Registry is also the platform used to apply for and monitor the SEEK Scholarship. The SEEK Scholarship program relies on information contained in an individual’s Registry record to determine eligibility.

**Active Registry membership is a requirement for access to the SEEK Scholarship program.**

Once a practitioner becomes a Registry member, they are required to update their record with all changes to their name, address, phone number, email address, employment information, and professional development activities. It is the practitioner’s responsibility to submit all professional development documentation to the Registry.

To become a member of the Registry, learn how to update your personal and professional development information, apply for the SEEK Scholarship and search the training calendar for current approved professional development events, visit the Registry website at www.pbcregistry.org.

If you have additional questions about information contained in your Registry record, contact the Children’s Forum at 561-374-7650 or www.flchild.com.

If you have questions about your SEEK Scholarship Application, contact Palm Beach State College’s Institute of Excellence in Early Care and Education (IEECE) at 561-868-3695 or IEECE@palmbeachstate.edu.
ELIGIBILITY, GENERAL RULES AND EXCLUSIONS

Eligibility for SEEK Scholarship

Eligibility* for a SEEK Scholarship award is based on the following:

1. Employment in any early childhood program in Palm Beach County that receives some form of public funding, including but not limited to school readiness, VPK and Head Start.

2. Eligible programs and employees include:
   - Family child care home or large family child care home, including the provider and one designated substitute and one designated employee (designated employee for large family child care home only)
   - Child care center, including all professional staff, such as director, assistant director, education coordinator/curriculum specialist, lead teacher, associate teacher, and floater. (Substitutes and non-instructional staff are not eligible)
   - Palm Beach County’s School District program, including instructional staff only (Substitutes are not eligible)

3. Working with children ages birth-5 years of age for 20 hours or more per week**

4. Active membership in the Palm Beach County Early Childhood Registry (Registry) with current name, address, phone number, email address and employment information. Registry membership status can be verified by logging in to the Registry at www.pbcregistry.org and reviewing the Registry record for accuracy

5. Must be in good standing with SEEK Scholarship (no suspension or terminated status) at the time of SEEK Scholarship deadline, if applicable

NOTE: Early childhood classrooms within the School District of Palm Beach County are classified as Strong Minds or Non-Network. Eligibility is dependent on the type of classroom the practitioner works in.

*Eligibility requirements are verified by IEECE staff and from information contained in the practitioner’s Registry record.

**The designated substitute at a family child care home is exempt from the minimum work hour requirement. All other SEEK Scholarship eligibility criteria must be met.
Important SEEK Scholarship Policies

SEEK Scholarship applications and necessary supporting documentation, such as class schedule and/or registration form, must be submitted online via the “Financial Support” tab of the Palm Beach County Early Childhood Registry (Registry) at www.pbcregistry.org.

The Financial Support tab appears after a practitioner has logged into their Registry account. Hard copies of SEEK Scholarship applications will NOT be accepted via fax or email. Practitioners who are unable to upload supporting documentation to the SEEK Scholarship module of the Registry can submit supporting documentation via fax to (561) 868-7042 or email IEECE@palmbeachstate.edu.

Accreditation must be from one of the following institutions: Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, New England Association of Schools and Colleges Higher Education, New England Association of Schools and Colleges Technical and Career Institutions, North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

- Practitioners can check the status of their SEEK Scholarship applications through the SEEK Scholarship module of the Registry data system.

- SEEK Scholarship reserves the right to review and award and/or refuse any request for funding.

- SEEK Scholarship awards are based on availability of funding and will be processed in the order in which they are received.

- Attendance and successful completion (a grade of A, B, C, P or S) of all professional development events and courses for which a SEEK scholarship is awarded is required to maintain eligibility for future awards. Any circumstance that results in the student’s inability to attend any course/training session must be discussed with the instructor/trainer. The impact of an absence on a student’s grade is at the discretion of the instructor/trainer.
Practitioners are responsible for submitting professional development documentation (transcripts and training certificates) to the Registry following completion of courses/training.

If a practitioner is receiving tuition assistance from federal grants or other financial assistance programs, those funds must be utilized first. SEEK Scholarship is considered the funding of last resort.

Practitioners receiving financial aid for college credit coursework are still eligible to apply for other SEEK Scholarship funded professional development events (non-credit college courses and community-based trainings).

SEEK Scholarship communications are sent via email. Hard copies of documents and letters are not sent. All award letters and communications regarding scholarship awards will be sent to the practitioner’s email address listed in the Registry. For this reason, it is important that each practitioner ensures that the email address listed in the Registry account is accurate.

Many SEEK Scholarships have specific application deadline dates. Applications submitted after the posted deadline date may not be processed, resulting in denial. All relevant deadlines are noted in this handbook, and specific dates are posted on the IEECE website.

Falsification of information entered or documents submitted into the Registry (including during the SEEK application process) is grounds for permanent termination from SEEK Scholarship eligibility.
SEEK Scholarship Exclusions

SEEK Scholarship does not provide funding for the following:

- Non-resident tuition. Any costs above SEEK Scholarship approved tuition rates will be the responsibility of the practitioner
- Department of Children and Families (DCF) child care training
- Department of Children and Families (DCF) competency exam testing fee(s)
- First Aid/CPR training
- National Child Development Associate (CDA) application fee, assessment fee or any material associated with obtaining the credential. SEEK Scholarship will only fund Registry-approved trainings that can be used toward the national CDA, as outlined in the relevant chapters of this handbook
- ECPC/FCCPC/NCDA renewal fee or any material associated with renewing the credential. SEEK Scholarship will only fund Registry-approved trainings that can be used toward the renewal of the national CDA, as outlined in the relevant chapters of this handbook
- School-age courses/trainings
- Conferences
- Costs associated with online textbook membership fees, including but not limited to “Live Text”
- Scholarship for Non-Strong Minds practitioners for a bachelor’s or graduate degree (unless accepted in the BAS ECE cohort program at Palm Beach State College)
THE SEEK SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

SEEK Scholarship Application

Practitioners must apply for the SEEK Scholarship via the Palm Beach County Early Childhood Registry (Registry) website (www.pbcregistry.org), through the “Financial Support” tab, which appears after member login, or through the Training Calendar for Community Based Trainings and HEO Courses. The practitioner’s eligibility and professional development history is verified by information in the practitioner’s Registry record.

The practitioner is responsible for ensuring their Registry record is accurate and current prior to submitting a SEEK Scholarship application.

SEEK Scholarship applications must be submitted by the applicable deadline date. Registration/class schedule information for credit and non-credit college coursework, community-based training, or other required documentation must also be submitted, based on the award.

Detailed instructions for submitting SEEK Scholarship applications via the Registry can be found on the IEECE website (www.palmbeachstate.edu/IEECE, “Financial Support”, “Application Process”).

For each application submitted, the practitioner will receive an email regarding the status of the SEEK Scholarship award. All letters will be sent via email to the email address listed in the Registry. In most cases, practitioners should receive emails concerning awards for courses at least one week prior to the course start date.

Only IEECE staff may submit SEEK Scholarship application on behalf of a practitioner. No other 3rd party can submit a SEEK application on behalf of a practitioner. When IEECE staff apply on behalf of a practitioner, the practitioner is still responsible for following all SEEK Scholarship policies and participant responsibilities.
SEEK SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS AND PROCESSES

General Education Development (GED) Test Fee

The SEEK Scholarship may be available to reimburse the cost of the GED test fee based upon successful completion.

1. Practitioner submits documentation of successful completion of the GED test to the Registry, either by uploading the document to their Registry record (www.pbcregistry.org) or sending it by email at www.flchild.com or fax to 1-888-485-1106.

2. Once the GED completion is noted in a practitioner’s Registry record, the practitioner must submit a scholarship application via the “Financial Support” tab of the Registry (select “GED Test Reimbursement” as the scholarship type). Proof of payment and a W9 form should be submitted via fax to 561-868-7042 or email IEECE@palmbeachstate.edu.

3. The practitioner will receive notification about the status of the request via email. If approved, the reimbursement payment will be sent to the address supplied on the Vendor Application/W9 form within six to eight weeks.

Early Childhood Professional Certificate (ECPC) & The Florida Child Care Professional Certificate (FCCPC)

Palm Beach State College

The SEEK Scholarship may be available for the ECPC/FCCPC coursework and required book(s). A practitioner must first meet the requirements necessary to register for the course. For more information on the course’s pre-registration requirements, contact the Institute for Early Care and Afterschool programs at 561-868-4040 or visit their webpage www.palmbeachstate.edu/programs/childcare.

1. An eligible practitioner submits a scholarship application via the “Financial Support” tab of the Registry (select “Palm Beach State College Coursework” as the Scholarship Type).

2. A copy of the course registration/class schedule must be uploaded into the SEEK Scholarship module.

3. The application and required supporting documents must be submitted by the established SEEK Scholarship application deadline date for the fall, spring, and/or summer term(s) at Palm Beach State College.
4. Do not pay for the course(s) or book(s) at the time of registration; if a SEEK Scholarship is awarded, payment will be sent directly to PBSC.

5. An award letter will be emailed to the practitioner for required books/materials. In most cases, practitioners should receive the email one week prior to the course start date. The practitioner must print the award letter and bring it to the PBSC bookstore for the purchase of books. (NOTE: Books may not be immediately available. Before going to the bookstore, the practitioner should verify with the bookstore that the book has arrived or is in stock.)

6. Please visit www.palmbeachstate.edu/IEECE and click on “Financial Support” for information regarding the SEEK Scholarship application deadline for the current term. If the posted SEEK deadline has passed, practitioners should contact their Career Advisor to learn of the financial supports that may be available for future ECPC/FCCPC courses.

**Other State of Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF)-Approved Birth-Five ECPC or FCCPC Programs**

SEEK Scholarship may be available to reimburse the practitioner for tuition and required books/materials associated with a State of Florida DCF-approved Birth-Five FCCPC or ECPC program.

A scholarship application must be submitted via the “Financial Support” tab of the Registry (select “Preapproval for Courses leading to an Early Childhood or Child Development degree at non-participating universities” scholarship type) at least (14) days prior to the start of class. The reimbursement amount will be based on the current Palm Beach State College ECPC/FCCPC tuition rate. Any costs incurred above the current tuition rate will be the responsibility of the practitioner.

*The procedure for reimbursement can be found at - SEEK Scholarship Reimbursement*

**Credit Coursework leading to the State of Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) Director’s Credential**

**Palm Beach State College**

The SEEK Scholarship may be available for college credit coursework and required books/materials leading to any level of the Florida Director Credential. The SEEK Scholarship will not pay for education exemption tests for the director’s credential.
1. An eligible practitioner submits a scholarship application via the “Financial Support” tab of the Registry (select “Palm Beach State College Coursework” as the scholarship type).

2. A copy of the course registration/class schedule must be uploaded into the SEEK Scholarship module.

3. The application and required supporting documents must be submitted by the established SEEK Scholarship application deadline date for the fall, spring, and/or summer term(s) at Palm Beach State College.

4. Do not pay for the course(s) or book(s) at the time of registration; if a SEEK Scholarship is awarded, payment will be sent directly to PBSC.

5. An award letter will be emailed to the practitioner for required books/materials. In most cases, practitioners should receive the email one week prior to the course start date.

6. The practitioner must print the award letter and bring it to the PBSC bookstore when purchasing the books. (NOTE: Books may not be immediately available. Before going to the bookstore, the practitioner should verify with the bookstore that the book has arrived or is in stock.)

7. Please visit www.palmbeachstate.edu/IEECE and click on “Financial Support” for information regarding the SEEK Scholarship application deadline for the current term.

**Other Accredited Institutions***

The SEEK Scholarship may be available to reimburse the practitioner for tuition and required books/materials associated with the State of Florida’s Department of Children and Families-approved college credit coursework leading to any level of the director’s credential. The SEEK Scholarship will not pay for education exemption tests for the director’s credential.

A scholarship application must be submitted via the “Financial Support” tab of the Registry (select “Preapproval for Courses leading to an Early Childhood or Child Development degree at non-participating universities” scholarship type) at least 14 days prior to the start of class. The reimbursement amount will be based on the current Palm Beach State College tuition rate. Any costs incurred above the current tuition rate will be the responsibility of the practitioner.

*The procedure for reimbursement can be found at - SEEK Scholarship Reimbursement*

Non-Credit Early Childhood Education Courses

Palm Beach State College
An eligible practitioner submits a scholarship application via the “Financial Support” tab of the Registry (select “Palm Beach State College Coursework” as the scholarship type). A copy of the course registration/class schedule must be uploaded into the SEEK Scholarship module. The application and required supporting documents must be submitted by the established SEEK Scholarship deadline date. Do not pay for the course(s) or book(s) at the time of registration; if a SEEK Scholarship is awarded, payment will be sent directly to PBSC. An award letter will be emailed to the practitioner approximately one week prior to the course start date.

1. For non-credit/HEO courses, any required books/materials will be provided by the instructor during the course.

2. For other non-credit courses with required books/materials, the practitioner must bring the award letter to the PBSC bookstore to obtain the books. (NOTE: Books may not be immediately available. Before going to the bookstore, the practitioner should verify with the bookstore that the book has arrived or is in stock.)

Please visit www.palmbeachstate.edu/IEECE and click on “Financial Support” for information regarding the SEEK Scholarship application deadline dates.

Community-Based Training Agencies
The SEEK Scholarship may be available for IEECE-approved trainings posted in the Registry.

1. An eligible practitioner submits a scholarship application via the “Financial Support” tab of the Registry (select “Community Based Training/Registry Approved Career Pathway Training” as the scholarship type).

2. A copy of the course/training registration must be uploaded into the SEEK Scholarship module.

3. The application and required supporting documents must be submitted by the established SEEK Scholarship deadline date.

4. Do not pay for the course(s) at the time of registration; if a SEEK scholarship is awarded, payment will be sent directly to the training agency.
5. Please visit www.palmbeachstate.edu/IEECE and click on “Financial Support” for information regarding the SEEK Scholarship application deadline dates.

Associate’s Degree in Early Childhood Education

Palm Beach State College

The SEEK Scholarship may be available for the following when seeking an associate’s degree in early childhood education at Palm Beach State College:

1. Application and registration fees

2. Testing fees - a voucher for test fees will be provided and must be brought to the testing center
   - PERT (Postsecondary Education Readiness Test)
   - TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education)
   - LOEP (Level of English Proficiency)

3. College Preparatory/Developmental Education courses

4. ESOL courses

5. Required textbooks and materials

6. Credit coursework
   - An eligible practitioner must have completed at least 12 credits in early childhood education-specific coursework (indicated on Registry record) and have a primary program objective code (POC) that aligns with the AS degree in early childhood education to receive the SEEK Scholarship for general education coursework. Math and/or English credit courses that satisfy the general education requirements for a degree are exempt from this restriction, and the SEEK Scholarship is available for these courses at any time.
   - To be eligible for approval of three or more courses at one time, a practitioner must have:
     i. A grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or better
     ii. A primary program objective code (POC) that aligns with the AS degree in early childhood education
iii. Successfully completed all SEEK Scholarship funded events over the last year

iv. Successfully completed at least 18 credits with a ‘C’ or better, indicated on Registry record

7. An eligible practitioner submits a completed scholarship application via the “Financial Support” tab of the Registry. (For courses, which includes application/registration fees, select “Palm Beach State College Coursework” scholarship type. For tests, select “Palm Beach State College Test” as scholarship type.)

8. A copy of the course registration/class schedule must be uploaded into the SEEK Scholarship module.

9. The application and required supporting documents must be submitted by the SEEK Scholarship application deadline date for the fall, spring, and/or summer term(s) at the college. Do not pay for the course(s) or book(s) at the time of registration; if a SEEK Scholarship is awarded, payment will be sent directly to PBSC.

10. An award letter will be emailed to the practitioner for required books/materials. In most cases, practitioners should receive the email one week prior to the course start date.

11. The practitioner must print the award letter and bring it to the PBSC bookstore when purchasing the books. (NOTE: Books may not be immediately available. Before going to the bookstore, the practitioner should verify with the bookstore that the book has arrived or is in stock.)

12. Please visit www.palmbeachstate.edu/IEECE and click on “Financial Support” for information regarding the SEEK Scholarship application deadline for the current term.

Other Accredited Institutions*
The SEEK Scholarship may be available to reimburse the practitioner the cost of tuition and required books/materials for a variety of credit courses that lead to an associate’s degree in early childhood education or child development, taken at a regionally accredited institution.

A scholarship application must be submitted via the “Financial Support” tab of the Registry (select “Preapproval for Courses leading to an Early Childhood or Child Development degree at non-participating universities” scholarship type) at least 14 days prior to the start of class. The reimbursement amount will be based on the current Palm Beach State College tuition rate. Any costs incurred above the current tuition rate will be the responsibility of the practitioner.

The procedure for reimbursement can be found at - SEEK Scholarship Reimbursement
Basketball’s Degree in Early Childhood Education

Florida Atlantic University (FAU)
The SEEK Scholarship may be available for the Bachelor of Early Childhood Education (BECE) program within the College of Education at FAU. A Strong Minds Network practitioner must be admitted as a degree-seeking student to qualify for the SEEK Scholarship for all coursework associated with the BECE degree and required textbooks and materials at the FAU bookstore. The SEEK Scholarship does not pay for FAU application fees, parking fees, Owl Card fees or orientation fees.

To be eligible for approval of three or more courses at one time, a practitioner must have:

- a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or better
- successfully completed all SEEK Scholarship funded events over the last year

1. An eligible Strong Minds Network practitioner submits a scholarship application via the “Financial Support” tab of the Registry (select “Florida Atlantic University Coursework” as the scholarship type).

2. A copy of the course registration/class schedule must be uploaded into the SEEK Scholarship module.

3. The application and required supporting documents must be submitted by the established SEEK Scholarship application deadline date for FAU.

4. Do not pay for the course(s), transfer deposit fee or books at the time of registration; if a SEEK Scholarship is awarded, payment will be sent directly to FAU.

5. An award letter will be emailed to the practitioner for required books/materials. In most cases, practitioners should receive the email one week prior to the course start date.

6. The practitioner must print the award letter and bring it to the FAU bookstore when purchasing the books. (NOTE: Books may not be immediately available. Before going to the
bookstore, the practitioner should verify with the bookstore that the book has arrived or is in stock.)

**Florida International University (FIU)**
The SEEK Scholarship may be available for the online Bachelor of Early Childhood Education (BECE) program within the College of Education at FIU. A Strong Minds Network practitioner must be admitted as a degree-seeking student to qualify for the SEEK Scholarship for all coursework associated with the BECE degree, and required textbooks and materials at the FIU bookstore. The SEEK Scholarship does not pay for FIU application fees, parking fees, student card fees or orientation fees.

To be eligible for approval of three or more courses at one time, a practitioner must have:

- a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or better
- successfully completed all SEEK Scholarship funded events over the last year

1. An eligible Strong Minds Network practitioner submits a scholarship application via the “Financial Support” tab of the Registry (select “Florida International University Coursework” as the scholarship type).

2. A copy of the course registration/class schedule must be uploaded into the SEEK Scholarship module.

3. The application and required supporting documents must be submitted by the established SEEK Scholarship application deadline date for FIU.

4. Do not pay for the course(s) or books at the time of registration; if a SEEK Scholarship is awarded, payment will be sent directly to FIU. SEEK Scholarship administrators have arranged for the FIU Barnes and Noble bookstore to ship required books and materials directly to the student. SEEK will send payment for the books and materials directly to the bookstore.

**Other Accredited Institutions**
The SEEK Scholarship may be available to reimburse the practitioner the cost of tuition and required books/materials for credit courses that lead to a bachelor’s degree in early childhood education or child development taken at a regionally accredited institution.

A scholarship application must be submitted via the “Financial Support” tab of the Registry (select “Preapproval for Courses leading to an Early Childhood or Child Development degree at non-participating universities” scholarship type) at least 14 days prior to the start of class. The reimbursement amount will be based on the current FAU bachelor’s degree tuition rate. Any costs incurred above the current tuition rate will be the responsibility of the practitioner.
The procedure for reimbursement can be found at - SEEK Scholarship Reimbursement

Graduate Level Early Childhood Coursework

Florida Atlantic University (FAU)
A student enrolled as a master’s degree seeking student may be eligible to receive the SEEK Scholarship for up to 18 credits in early childhood education-specific master’s degree classes, and required books and materials at the FAU bookstore. The SEEK Scholarship does not pay for application fees, parking fees, Owl Card fees or orientation fees at FAU.

1. An eligible Strong Minds Network practitioner submits a scholarship application via the “Financial Support” tab of the Registry (select “Florida Atlantic University Coursework” as the scholarship type).

2. A copy of course registration/class schedule must be uploaded into the SEEK Scholarship module.

3. The application and required supporting documents must be submitted by the established SEEK Scholarship application deadline date for FAU.

4. Do not pay for the course(s) or book(s) at the time of registration; if a SEEK Scholarship is awarded, payment will be sent directly to FAU.

5. An award letter will be emailed to the practitioner for required books/materials. In most cases, practitioners should receive the email one week prior to the course start date. The practitioner must print the award letter and bring it to the FAU bookstore when purchasing the books. (NOTE: Books may not be immediately available. Before going to the bookstore, the practitioner should verify with the bookstore that the book has arrived or is in stock.)

Other Accredited Institutions*
The SEEK Scholarship may be available to reimburse the practitioner the cost of tuition and required books/materials for up to 18 credits in early childhood education/child development-specific master’s degree classes taken at a regionally accredited institution. A scholarship application must be submitted via the “Financial Support” tab of the Registry (select “Preapproval for Courses leading to an Early Childhood or Child Development degree at non-participating universities” scholarship type) at least 14 days prior to the start of class. The
The reimbursement amount will be based on the current FAU graduate degree tuition rate. Any costs incurred above the current tuition rate will be the responsibility of the practitioner.

**The procedure for reimbursement can be found at - SEEK Scholarship Reimbursement**


**Translation and Evaluation of Foreign Degrees/Courses**

The SEEK Scholarship may be available for the translation and/or evaluation of foreign college courses/degrees for equivalent courses and degrees in the United States. The service is provided by Josef Silny & Associates, Inc.

The SEEK Scholarship will pay for translations, evaluations, and two copies of the report, up to a maximum amount of five hundred dollars ($500.00). One copy of the report is sent to the practitioner; the other copy is sent to the Palm Beach State College admissions office. Payment for any additional services, fees and copies will be the responsibility of the practitioner.

To be considered, a practitioner must:

- Be an active member of the Registry
- Have at least six months of continuous employment at the same site
- Have proof of completion of the required State of Florida’s Department of Children and Families state mandated training on the practitioner’s Registry record.

Scholarships for translation and/or evaluation services are available on a year-round basis.

1. An eligible practitioner submits a scholarship application via the “Financial Support” tab of the Registry (select “Foreign Degree Translation/Evaluation” as the Scholarship Type).

2. If approved, an award letter will be emailed to the practitioner noting that an application for Josef Silny & Associates, Inc. and a voucher for services will be mailed to the practitioner. Vouchers for this service expire 30 calendar days from the approval date. It is the responsibility of the applicant to complete the Josef Silny & Associates, Inc. application and send it along with the voucher, a copy of the award letter, along with the documents to be translated to Josef Silny & Associates, Inc. before the expiration date. If the voucher expires, the practitioner will have to submit a new scholarship application.

3. When the translated documents and/or evaluation report are received, the practitioner should submit the documents to the Palm Beach County Early Childhood Registry within 30 days to avoid suspension.
SEEK SCHOLARSHIP REIMBURSEMENT

Reimbursements

Reimbursement may be available for a professional development event that SEEK Scholarship cannot provide direct payment, such as coursework taken at a regionally accredited institution.

The reimbursement request must be submitted 14 days prior to the start of the event.

1. An eligible practitioner submits a scholarship application via the “Financial Support” tab of the Registry at least 14 days prior to the start of class (select “Pre-approval for Courses leading to an early childhood or child development degree at non-participating universities” scholarship type). Information regarding the professional development event that the reimbursement is being requested must be uploaded into the SEEK Scholarship module. The practitioner will receive email notification as to the status of the pre-approval request. If pre-approval is granted, the practitioner must pay all costs up front, and the SEEK Scholarship will reimburse approved costs based on the appropriate rate.

2. When the practitioner completes the event, the practitioner must first submit documentation of successful completion to the Palm Beach County Early Childhood Registry. Successful completion is defined as:
   a. receiving a grade of A, B, C, P, or S for coursework OR
   b. receiving a certificate of completion from the training agency

3. Once the event appears in a practitioner’s Registry record, the practitioner must submit proof of personal payment and a W9 Form via fax to 561-868-7042 or email IEECE@palmbeachstate.edu. This documentation is required within four weeks of completion of the event. Payments made by other grant/scholarship funding, such as PELL, TEACH or financial aid, will not be reimbursed. Payments made by loans are accepted as a form of personal payment and will be reimbursed.

4. The practitioner will receive a second email noting the amount of reimbursement awarded by the SEEK Scholarship. The reimbursement will be processed, and payment will be sent to the address supplied on the Vendor Application/W9 form within six to eight weeks.
SEEK SCHOLARSHIP
SUSPENSION/TERMINATION/REINSTATEMENT POLICIES

Suspension & Termination Policies

If a SEEK Scholarship award was provided to cover costs associated with any type of college credit or non-credit college coursework (including community-based training), the practitioner must attend and successfully complete that coursework/training to maintain eligibility for additional SEEK Scholarships. Successful completion is determined by the course instructor and is confirmed by IEECE staff upon course/training completion.

Any practitioner (Strong Minds Network or Non-Network) that does not successfully complete a course/event that was funded by SEEK Scholarship will be suspended from SEEK Scholarship and must follow the policy below for reinstatement. Practitioners will have two opportunities to become reinstated. If the practitioner is unsuccessful in a funded event a third time, their benefits will be terminated for a period of one year from the termination date. Suspension and termination effective dates will be included in the notice of suspension/termination. When terminated, a practitioner can apply for reinstatement at any time during their termination year, but they will not be reinstated nor eligible for the SEEK Scholarship until one year from their termination date.

Reinstatement Policy

Practitioners who are suspended/terminated due to the unsuccessful completion of a SEEK funded course/event may request reinstatement upon achievement of the following since the date of suspension/termination:

- Practitioner must pay for and successfully complete an approved SEEK Scholarship eligible event(s) that equals or exceeds the dollar amount of the unsuccessfully completed event(s) related to the suspension.

- Payments made by other grant/scholarship funding, such as PELL, TEACH or financial aid, will not be considered as payment for reinstatement. Payments made by loans are accepted as a form of personal payment.

*Successful completion is defined by a grade of A, B, C, P or S.

Unsuccessful completion is defined as receiving a grade of D, F, U, or W
OR

- Practitioner must pay for and successfully complete an approved SEEK Scholarship eligible course/training equivalent to or more than the same number of completion/credit hours of the unsuccessfully completed event(s) related to the suspension. The suspension event(s) and the reinstatement event(s) must be equivalent in nature. (For example, to be reinstated following the unsuccessful completion of a 3-credit class, the practitioner must take another 3-credit class; to be reinstated following the unsuccessful completion of a 12-hour training, the practitioner must successfully complete a minimum of 12 training hours.)

- Practitioner must submit verification of successful completion to the Registry, and the documentation must appear in the practitioner record prior to making the request for reinstatement.

- Practitioner must apply for reinstatement via the “Financial Support” tab of the Registry (select “Apply for Reinstatement” from the SEEK tab of the Registry). The practitioner must upload supporting documentation to include proof of personal payment into the SEEK Scholarship module.

- A career advisor will verify that the successful completion is recorded in the practitioner’s Registry record. The SEEK Scholarship department will make the final determination of approval or denial of the reinstatement.
Examples of Reinstatement Options

**Example #1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unsuccessful Event</th>
<th>Amount SEEK Paid</th>
<th># of Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECE credit course</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>3 credit hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To meet reinstatement requirements, this practitioner could:

A. Pay for and successfully complete any type of approved SEEK eligible event(s) (credit, non-credit, or training courses) costing at least $300

OR

B. Pay for and successfully complete a SEEK eligible 3 credit course (the cost of the course does not have to equal $300)

**Example #2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unsuccessful Event</th>
<th>Amount SEEK Paid</th>
<th># of Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-credit training</td>
<td>$80</td>
<td>12 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-credit training</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>16 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>$180</td>
<td>28 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To meet reinstatement requirements, this practitioner could:

A. Pay for and successfully complete any type of approved SEEK eligible event(s) (credit, non-credit, or training courses) costing at least $180

OR

B. Pay for and successfully complete 28 hours of SEEK eligible non-credit trainings/courses (the cost of the training/course does not have to equal $180)
GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

Grievances and Appeals

The SEEK Scholarship provides informal and formal grievance processes open to all individuals facing a dispute regarding policies and procedures of the program.

Informal Resolutions:
SEEK Scholarship staff encourage applicants to pursue informal resolutions. As such, they are available personally to discuss the appeal and to review all pertinent documentation to work toward resolving the problem, informally. Response to applicants will be provided within 10 business days of receipt of the request for informal discussion for resolution.

SEEK Scholarship phone: (561) 868-3828
SEEK Scholarship email: scuderiz@palmbeachstate.edu

Formal Resolutions:
If a resolution cannot be met after the informal path has been exhausted, an applicant may submit a formal petition to SEEK Scholarship in writing.

Any applicant seeking a formal resolution is required to submit the request in writing to the SEEK Scholarship Appeal committee within 10 business days following the receipt of a denial or an incident has occurred. The request must include a letter of appeal and documentation detailing concerns. All written appeals must be submitted via certified mail to:

Palm Beach State College-Institute of Excellence in Early Care and Education
SEEK Scholarship Appeal Committee
812 Fern Street, West Palm Beach, FL 33401

Throughout the review, which can take place face-to-face or electronically, the Appeal Committee may request, in writing, additional information from the applicant to make a decision on the appeal. This additional documentation is to be received within 5 business days of the request. If the additional documentation is not received within that time period, the appeal will automatically be denied. The SEEK Scholarship Appeal committee will meet within 20 business days of receipt of all required materials to review the appeal and make a decision. SEEK Scholarship staff will notify the applicant, in writing, within 20 business days of review. Possible outcomes are:

• Grant the appeal
• Grant the appeal with specific requirements
• Deny the appeal
For more information about the financial supports offered, please visit www.palmbeachstate.edu/IEECE/financial-support.