

Polk Education Association
Professional Development Course Catalog
2026-2027 School Year



**Polk Education Association
Professional Development Course Catalog**

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About Polk Education Association

The Polk Education Association is your union representing Teachers, Paraeducators and ESP/Secretaries working in the Polk School District. We bargain your contracts and guarantee your contractual rights.

Elected Officers:

Stephanie Yocum, President
Kat Nickell, Executive Vice President
Patrick Bentley, Secretary/Treasurer
Robyn Silva, VP of Teachers
Stephanie Eady, VP of Paraeducators

Staff:

Service Unit Representatives
Branden Lane, East Area Schools
Nadia Hernandez, West Area Schools

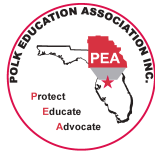
Associate Staff:

Lisa Francoeur, Membership Secretary
Nieves Ramos, Clerk/Receptionist

PEA Professional Development Committee

While PEA has provided free professional development for members for a number of years, the official Professional Development Committee was created in the 2019 school year. Current chair, Kat Nickell, along with trainers and other committee members are working diligently on expanding the course offerings and opportunities available to members. The committee's goal is to become the preferred option for professional development among Polk county educators and staff and a recognized name in the state-wide educator's union.

PEA is committed to providing educator-created, educator-led, research-based, high-quality professional development that meets the needs, wants, and demands of our members. Our professional development is consistently applicable to the classroom/school setting and goes beyond compliance to truly engage and inspire our members and potential members as they learn the skills and absorb the knowledge for continuous career development.



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Course Offerings

PEA ESE/Students with Disabilities (1.0 & 2.0)

online/face-to-face: 18 hours (20 in-service points)

The PEA ESE 20 Hr. Course is a 6 module course designed to provide basic information about supporting students identified as needing ESE services. It satisfies the requirement for 20 hours of SWD-specific points for teacher recertification. Participants must attend all sessions and complete all assignments in order to earn points for the course. Our original course has been updated and we now offer a new (2.0) class for those who have taken our course previously (18 hours synchronous learning, 2 hours independent study/assignments on Google Classroom)

FEA/PEA 40-Hour Reading Requirement (DL) Course

online/face-to-face: 30 hours (40 inservice points)

This 40 hour Reading/ESE course was created to fulfill the new Florida statute requirement for teacher recertification under rule 6A-4.0051. This course prepares educators to offer explicit, systematic, and sequential multisensory instruction in reading, while also learning about the science behind and interventions required for students with reading challenges including ELLs, dyslexia, and a variety of disabilities. (30 hr synchronous learning; 10 hours independent study)

Classroom Management Bootcamp--Foundations of Effective Teaching

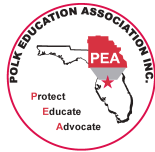
face-to-face: 6 hours (10 inservice points)

This course is designed to provide educators with the understanding of what research-based strategies effective teachers implement at the start of the school year. Participants will be able to take the strategies learned and apply them to their own classrooms. This course is targeted to first, second, and third-year teachers, but is open to all interested members. (6 hours synchronous, 4 hours independent study)

Building Relationships in Your Classroom

face-to-face: 6 hours (12 in-service points)

This course is designed to equip educators with the skills and knowledge to foster classroom community. This is accomplished through cultivating relationships with students, teaching students to build relationships with one another, facilitating student agency, and promoting collaboration in the classroom. (6 hours synchronous, 6 hours independent study)



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General Knowledge Exam Prep: Math

online/face-to-face: 6 hours (6 general in-service points)

This course offers a basic overview of the knowledge and skills addressed in the on the General Knowledge exam, specifically the math section. (synchronous learning)

General Knowledge Exam Prep: ELA

online/face-to-face: 6 hours (6 general in-service points)

This course offers a basic overview of the knowledge and skills addressed on the General Knowledge exam specifically the ELA (reading and writing) section. (synchronous learning)

PEA ParaPro Test Prep

online/face-to-face: 6 hours (6 general in-service points)

This course offers a basic overview of the skills and knowledge required to pass the ParaPro exam including reading, math, and writing. The course also walks participants through the test specifications and testing strategies to help them succeed on the exam. (synchronous learning)

PEA Para Academy

face-to-face: 6 hours (6 general in-service points)

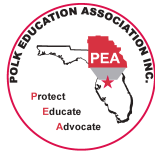
This course provides current and potential paraprofessionals with information about your contract, building a professional binder, your evaluation system, the Greenhouse Project, professional development opportunities, and more! (synchronous learning)

Teacher Toolbox Series:

TTS: Starting Strong: Day 1 Strategies for a Great Year

face-to-face: 2 hours (4 general in-service points)

Based on AFT's renowned "Foundations of Effective Teaching" course, this class will provide tips, tools, activities, and best practices to help teachers meet students where they are at, start building relationships, and create a classroom community from day 1 (and throughout the first week)! Strategies include: Classroom Set-Up, Greeting Students, Icebreakers, Rules and Procedures, Building Relationships (2 hour synchronous learning, 2 hours independent study)



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TTS: Writing an Effective Referral

face-to-face: 2 hours (4 general in-service points)

This quick, 2 hour course is designed to give teachers the strategies and knowledge to know when to write a referral, and what to include in order to ensure the most effective outcomes, including information on legislative changes that impact your rights as a teacher surrounding discipline reporting and follow-up. (2 hour synchronous learning, 2 hours independent study)

TTS: IEPs and 504 Basics

online: 2 hours (4 general in-service points)

Specific to Polk teachers and our reporting systems, learn how to read, follow, implement accommodations, and create (if your position includes this) an IEP and/or 504 plan to best serve our ESE/SWD students. (2 hour synchronous learning, 2 hours independent study)

TTS: ESOL in Your Classroom

online: 2 hours (4 general in-service points)

In this quick, 2 hour course, teachers will learn strategies for the classroom to best serve our ESOL population as well as information on following accommodations, requirements by law, documentation, etc. (2 hour synchronous learning, 2 hours independent study)

TTS: Grading: Objective, Equitable, and Manageable

online: 2 hours (4 general in-service points)

This quick, 2 hour course offers teachers strategies for creating a standards-based grading and reporting system that allows for objectivity and equitability while also offering time management strategies to allow quick grade input and turnaround. (2 hour synchronous learning, 2 hours independent study)

TTS: Collaborative Learning Strategies: Students Helping Students

face-to-face: 2 hours (4 general in-service points)

In this quick, 2 hour course, teachers will learn the importance of collaborative learning, walk through the use of a variety of collaborative structures, get advice on best-practices for collaborative learning, and leave with resources they can take back to their classrooms and use the next day! (2 hour synchronous learning, 2 hours independent study)



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TTS: Avoiding Burnout: Helping Ourselves So We Can Help Students

online/face-to-face: 2 hours (4 general in-service points)

In this quick, 2 hour course, teachers will learn the importance of self-care, boundary setting, and looking after those around us, both colleagues and students, to ensure they are taking care of themselves, as well. (2 hour synchronous learning, 2 hours independent study)

TTS: Peer Coaching & Support

face-to-face: 2 hours (4 general in-service points)

In this quick, 2 hour course, teachers will learn research-based best practices to support fellow educators through coaching and team building. Participants will develop their leadership skills and provide guidance to their colleagues for dynamic and transformative relationships. (2 hour synchronous learning, 2 hours independent study)

TTS: AI for Your Classroom

online: 2 hours (4 general in-service points)

In this quick, 2 hour course, teachers will learn basic information regarding instructional uses of AI, the guardrails we must put in place for responsible use, ethical considerations surrounding the use of AI, and have a chance to explore several AI educator platforms.. (2 hour synchronous learning, 2 hours independent study)

TTS: Microsoft Basics

face-to-face: 2 hours (4 general in-service points)

In this quick, 2 hour course, teachers will learn the basics of common Microsoft applications used in our schools including Outlook, Teams, OneDrive, PowerPoint, Excel, and Forms! Educators will learn the basics of each these programs to communicate with colleagues, students, and parents, how these programs can be used in the classroom, and how best to streamline your workload and maximize your efficiency! (2 hour synchronous learning, 2 hours independent study)



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Other Programs Available

Support Sessions/“For YOU Fridays” & “Support Saturdays”

Support for new teachers, SAO creation, and more based on discussion and needs surveys, PEA is offering drop-in sessions where members can get free help on any aspect of their work (lesson planning, evaluation system, classroom management, Schoology, etc.). Members can show up at any point during the block to meet with other teachers and staff who can help, guide, or support on a variety of topics.

Educators Lending Library

PEA offers a variety of educational books (classroom management, teaching strategies, exam prep, etc.) which are free to check out for members. Check Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, or come see what books are available (and feel free to suggest titles you would like to see).

Retirement Seminars

PEA is pleased to partner with Security Benefit to offer sessions that detail social security and the Florida Retirement System for those educators thinking about, planning for, or looking forward to retirement!

District Collaboration

Throughout the school year, PEA partners with PCPS to host, contribute, or participate in district events for new teachers, Paraprofessionals, ESPs, and individual schools to bring our educator-created, educator-led professional development into schools and offices throughout Polk.



Polk Education Association
Professional Development Course Catalog
2026-2027 PD Calendar of Events

Register for our courses any time on our website calendar: <https://www.polkea.com/calendar>

(please pay close attention to the date, time, and location of each course)

Day:	Date:	Time:	Class:	Location:	Link to Register:
Monday	July 13th	10 am - 4 pm	Building Relationships in Your Classroom	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-building-relationships-in-your-classroom-8
Tuesday	August 4th	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	Teacher Toolbox Series: Starting Strong: Day 1 Strategies for a Great Year	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-teacher-toolbox-series-starting-strong-day-1-strategies-for-a-great-year-3
Saturday	August 8th	10 am - 4 pm	Classroom Management Bootcamp	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-back-to-school-classroom-management-bootcamp-2
Tuesdays/ Wednesdays	Aug 18th, 19th, 25th, 26th, Sept 1st, 2nd	5:30 pm - 8:30 pm	ESE/SWD (1.0) 20-Hour Course #60	ZOOM	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-ese-swd-20hr-section-60-1-0-version-multiple-dates-must-attend-all-6-online-sessions
Tuesday	August 18th	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	Teacher Toolbox Series: IEP & 504 Basics	ZOOM	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-teacher-toolbox-series-iep-504-basics-online-3
Saturday	August 22nd	10 am - 4 pm	ParaPro Exam Prep	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-parapro-exam-review-course-in-person-4
Tuesday	August 25th	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	Teacher Toolbox Series: Grading: Objective, Equitable, and Manageable	ZOOM	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-teacher-toolbox-series-grading-objective-equitable-and-manageable-online-3
Friday	August 28th	2:30 pm - 7:30 pm	For YOU Friday: SAO Support Session	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-for-you-friday-sao-support-session-writing-an-sao-3
Saturday	August 29th	11 am - 5 pm	Support Saturday: SAO Support Session	ZOOM	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-support-saturdays-sao-support-session-online-writing-an-sao
Tuesday	September 1st	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	Teacher Toolbox Series: Writing an Effective Referral	ZOOM	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-teacher-toolbox-series-writing-an-effective-referral-online-3
Friday	September 4th	2:30 pm - 7:30 pm	For YOU Friday: SAO Support Session	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-for-you-friday-sao-support-session-writing-an-sao-4



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Day:	Date:	Time:	Class:	Location:	Link to Register:
Saturday	September 5th	10 am - 4 pm	Para Academy	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-para-academy-1
Tuesday	September 8th	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	Teacher Toolbox Series: AI in Your Classroom	ZOOM	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-teacher-toolbox-series-ai-in-your-classroom
Saturday	September 12th	10 am - 4 pm	General Knowledge Exam Prep (ELA)	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-general-knowledge-exam-gke-prep-course-ela-portion-only-4
Saturday	September 19th	10 am - 4 pm	General Knowledge Exam Prep (Math)	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-general-knowledge-exam-gke-prep-course-math-portion-only-4
Tuesday	September 22nd	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	Teacher Toolbox Series: ESOL Strategies for Your Classroom	ZOOM	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-teacher-toolbox-series-esol-in-your-classroom-online-3
Saturday	September 26th	10 am - 4 pm	Teacher Toolbox Series: Outlook, Teams, and OneDrive	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-teacher-toolbox-series-microsoft-basics
Tuesday	September 29th	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	Teacher Toolbox Series: Collaborative Learning Strategies: Students Helping Students	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-teacher-toolbox-series-collaborative-learning-strategies-students-helping-students-5
Saturday	October 3rd	10 am - 4 pm	Building Relationships in Your Classroom	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-building-relationships-in-your-classroom-9
Mon-Wed	October 5th, 6th, 7th	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	General Knowledge Exam Prep (ELA)	ZOOM	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-general-knowledge-exam-gke-prep-course-online-ela-portion-via-zoom-3-sessions-2
Saturdays	Oct 10th, Oct 17th, & Oct 24th	10 am - 4 pm	ESE/SWD (2.0) 20-Hour Course #61	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/ese-swd-20hr-section-61-version-2-0-multiple-dates-must-attend-all-3-days
Mon-Wed	October 19th, 20th, 21st	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	ParaPro Exam Prep	ZOOM	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-parapro-exam-review-course-online-via-zoom-3-sessions-3
Tuesday	October 13th	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	Teacher Toolbox Series: Peer Coaching & Support	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-teacher-toolbox-series-peer-coaching-workshop



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Day:	Date:	Time:	Class:	Location:	Link to Register:
Mon/Tue/ Wed/Sat/Sat/ Mon/Tue/ Wed	November 2nd, 3rd, 4th 7th, 14th, 16th, 17th, 18th	Weeknights 5 pm - 8 pm Saturdays 10 am - 4 pm	Reading 40-Hour Requirement Course	HYBRID PEA Office (Bartow)/ Zoom	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-fea-reading-40-hour-requirement-course-hybrid-course-8-sessions-november-2026
Mon/Tue/ Wed/Sat/Sat/ Mon/Tue/ Wed	November 2nd, 3rd, 4th 7th, 14th, 16th, 17th, 18th	Weeknights 5 pm - 8 pm Saturdays 10 am - 4 pm	Reading 40-Hour Requirement Course	ZOOM Only	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-fea-reading-40-hour-requirement-course-online-only-november-2026
Tuesday	December 8th	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	Teacher Toolbox Series: Avoiding Burnout	ZOOM	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-teacher-toolbox-series-avoiding-burnout-4
Saturday	December 12th	10 am - 12 pm	Teacher Toolbox Series: Writing an Effective Referral	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-teacher-toolbox-series-writing-an-effective-referral-2
Tuesday	January 5th	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	Teacher Toolbox Series: IEP & 504 Basics	ZOOM	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-teacher-toolbox-series-iep-504-basics-online-4
Friday	January 8th	2:30 - 7:30 pm	For YOU Friday:SAO Support Session (Midyear Review/2nd Semester)	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-for-you-friday-sao-support-session-mid-year-review-creating-a-second-semester-sao-3
Saturday	January 9th	11 am - 5 pm	Support Saturday:SAO Support Session (Midyear Review/2nd Semester)	ZOOM	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-support-saturday-online-sao-support-session-mid-year-review-creating-a-second-semester-sao
Saturday	January 9th	11 am - 5 pm	Building Relationships in Your Classroom	ZOOM	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-building-relationships-in-your-classroom-online
Mon-Wed	January 11th, 12th, 13th	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	ParaPro Exam Review	ZOOM	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-parapro-exam-review-course-online-via-zoom-3-sessions-4
Saturdays	Jan 23rd, 30th, & Feb 6th	10 am - 4 pm	ESE/SWD (1.0) 20-Hour Course #62	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/ese-swd-20hr-section-62-version-1-0-multiple-dates-must-attend-all-3-days



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Day:	Date:	Time:	Class:	Location:	Link to Register:
Tuesday	February 2nd	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	Teacher Toolbox Series: Grading: Objective, Equitable, and Manageable	ZOOM	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-teacher-toolbox-series-grading-objective-equitable-and-manageable-online-4
Tuesday	Feb 9th	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	Teacher Toolbox Series: Peer Coaching & Support	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-teacher-toolbox-series-peer-coaching-workshop-2
Tuesday	February 16th	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	Teacher Toolbox Series: ESOL Strategies for Your Classroom	ZOOM	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-teacher-toolbox-series-esol-in-your-classroom-online-4
Saturday	February 20th	10 am - 4 pm	ParaPro Exam Review	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-parapro-exam-review-course-in-person-5
Tuesday	February 23rd	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	Teacher Toolbox Series: Writing an Effective Referral	ZOOM	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-teacher-toolbox-series-writing-an-effective-referral-online-4
Saturday	February 27th	10 am - 4 pm	Teacher Toolbox Series: Outlook, Teams, and OneDrive	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-teacher-toolbox-series-microsoft-basics-2
Tuesday	March 9th	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	Teacher Toolbox Series: Collaborative Learning Strategies: Students Helping Students	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-teacher-toolbox-series-collaborative-learning-strategies-students-helping-students-6
Tuesday	March 23rd	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	Teacher Toolbox Series: AI in Your Classroom	ZOOM	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-teacher-toolbox-series-ai-in-your-classroom-2
Mon/Tue/ Wed/Sat/Sat/ Mon/Tue/ Wed	March 29th, 30th, 31st, April 3rd, April 10th, April 12th, 13th, 14th	Weeknights 5 pm - 8 pm Saturdays 10 am - 4 pm	Reading 40-Hour Requirement Course	HYBRID PEA Office (Bartow)/ Zoom	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-fea-reading-40-hour-requirement-course-hybrid-course-8-sessions-march-2027
Mon/Tue/ Wed/Sat/Sat/ Mon/Tue/ Wed	March 29th, 30th, 31st, April 3rd, April 10th, April 12th, 13th, 14th	Weeknights 5 pm - 8 pm Saturdays 10 am - 4 pm	Reading 40-Hour Requirement Course	ZOOM only	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-fea-reading-40-hour-requirement-course-online-only-march-2027
Tuesday	April 13th	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	Teacher Toolbox Series: Avoiding Burnout	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-teacher-toolbox-series-avoiding-burnout-5



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Day:	Date:	Time:	Class:	Location:	Link to Register:
Saturday	April 17th	10 am - 4 pm	General Knowledge Exam Prep (ELA)	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-general-knowledge-exam-gke-prep-course-ela-portion-only-5
Sunday	April 18th	10 am - 4 pm	General Knowledge Exam Prep (Math)	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-general-knowledge-exam-gke-prep-course-math-portion-only-5
Tuesdays/ Wednesdays	Apr 20th, 21st, 27th, 28th, May 4th, 5th	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	ESE/SWD (2.0) 20-Hour Course #63	ZOOM	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-ese-swd-20hr-section-63-2-0-version-multiple-dates-must-attend-all-6-online-sessions
Friday	April 23rd	2:30 - 7:30 pm	For YOU Friday: SAO Support Session (Finalizing Your SAO)	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-for-you-friday-sao-support-session-finalizing-your-sao-3
Saturday	April 24th	11 am - 5 pm	Support Saturday: SAO Support Session (Finalizing Your SAO)	ZOOM	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-support-saturdays-sao-support-session-online-finalizing-your-sao
Tue-Thur	June 1st, 2nd, 3rd	10 am - 4 pm	ESE/SWD (1.0) 20-Hour Course #64	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/ese-swd-20hr-section-64-version-1-0-multiple-dates-must-attend-all-3-days
Mon-Fri	June 7th-11th	10 am - 4 pm	PEA Reading 40-Hour Requirement Course	PEA Office (Bartow)	https://www.polkea.com/event-details-registration/pea-fea-reading-40-hour-requirement-course-8-face-to-face-course-june-2027