

# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



## STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

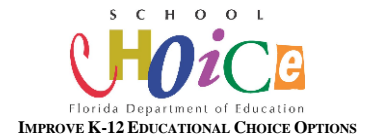
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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Select Public School District Superintendents

**FROM:** Mike Kooi, Executive Director

**DATE:** July 11, 2011

**SUBJECT:** Opportunity Scholarship Program – Parental Notifications

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During the 2011 session, the Florida legislature passed two pieces of legislation amending s. 1002.38, Florida Statutes (F.S.), related to the Opportunity Scholarship Program (OSP).

- House Bill 1255 directs that for the purpose of OSP, school grades will be based on the statewide assessments conducted pursuant to s. 1008.22, F.S.
- House Bill 1331 defines an eligible school as one that receives a performance grade category “D” or “F” in the prior year and is in one of the two lowest-performing categories under the Department of Education’s Differentiated Accountability plan.
- House Bill 1331 also expands parental options for public school choice under OSP to include any higher-performing public school in the state that has space available. A higher-performing public school is one that received a performance grade of “C” or better. An eligible transfer high school must have a minimum of 435 points or higher.

Following the release of the 2010-11 school grades, the Department of Education has determined that one or more public schools in your school district are in one of the two lowest-performing categories under the Department of Education’s Differentiated Accountability Plan and have been designated as performance grade category “D” or “F.” The list of affected schools is attached. The high schools on your list would have received a “D” or “F” according to the statutory language above.

**MICHAEL D. KOOL, ESQ.**  
*Executive Director*  
*Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice*

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The OSP statute requires the public school district to timely notify parents of their Opportunity Scholarship options as soon as the eligibility designation is made. Specifically, your school district must provide the parents of students who attended the “D” or “F” school in 2010-2011 or who are assigned to attend in 2011-2012, the option to enroll the students in a higher performing public school in your district (with transportation) or in any other district in the state (without transportation). However, your school district is not required to notify parents of students currently exercising a public school choice option to attend a magnet or career academy program at the “D” or “F” school, but have not been assigned to that school.

We have attached a sample parent notification letter that may be used as a template. The notifications should be distributed **no later than July 25, 2011**. Each affected school district will be required to complete a Notification Verification Form after the notifications have been sent and parents have been given an opportunity to respond; therefore, **it is important to document and monitor the total number of transfer requests and placements**.

In order to ensure efficient and successful compliance with this requirement, please provide contact information (contact name, phone number, and e-mail) for the office, bureau, or department that will be responsible for distributing parent notifications. Please send this information to Rachel Somers in the Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice **no later than July 25, 2011**. She may be reached via e-mail at [rachel.somers@fldoe.org](mailto:rachel.somers@fldoe.org), or by phone at (850) 245-0866.

Thank you for assisting us with the important task of communicating to parents about the educational options for Florida’s students.

cc: Chancellor Michael Grego

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Attachments