

# FLORIDA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS NEWSLETTER

Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice

Volume 6, Issue 7

February 2012



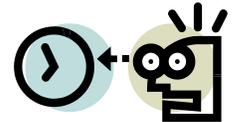
## Special Points of Interest:

- Last day to file intent for the current school year is February 1, 2012.
- Students filing intent on or after February 1 will be considered for the 2012-2013 school year.

## Compliance Renewal Due *March 1 deadline approaching!*

Participating private schools have approximately one month left to submit a Scholarship Compliance Form in order to renew participation in the state McKay and Florida Tax Credit Scholarship programs.

**Step 1:** The forms must be **submitted** online, and a signed and a notarized hard copy must be mailed to our office **postmarked** no later than **March 1, 2012**.



**Step 2:** For renewing private schools that submit their compliance forms by the deadline, any outstanding compliance issues must be **resolved** and any additional compliance documentation must be **received by our office** no later than **May 1, 2012**.

*Schools missing either of these deadlines will not be eligible to participate in the scholarship programs for the 2012-2013 school year.*

Your regional manager will assist you with any questions. Schools are advised to contact them as early as possible, as the increasing volume of calls and e-mails may delay their response as deadlines approach.

### Inside:

FTC Testing	2
Mark Your Calendar	2
Regular and Direct Contact	2
In the News	3
Spotlight	3
Deadlines & Contact Information	4

## Minimum Attendance for Payment

In order for a McKay student to be eligible for a quarterly payment, the student must have **attended for at least ten school days** during that payment period. [Rule 6A-6.0970\(5\)\(d\) and \(e\), F.A.C.](#), requires private schools participating in the McKay Scholarship Program to return to the Department any scholarship funds issued for a student that did not attend the private school for ten or more school days during the payment period.

If your school receives a payment for a student who did not attend for at least 10 school days within the payment period, **the warrant must be immediately returned** to the following address:

Florida Department of Education  
OIEPC, Attn: David Girtman  
325 W. Gaines Street, **Suite 1044**  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400



## The School Choice Office is moving!!!

Our new mailing address:

Florida Department of Education  
Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice  
325 W. Gaines Street, **Suite 1044**  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400

Office staff may continue to be contacted at their current phone numbers and e-mail addresses.



## Mark Your Calendar

**February 1**—Last day to file an intent to participate for the 2011-12 school year.

**February 2**—First day for new students to file an intent for the 2012-13 school year.

**March 1**—Date by which Scholarship Compliance Form must be postmarked, after being submitted online, printed, signed and notarized.

**March 2**—Date by which students filing intent by January 31 must be enrolled to receive the April 1 payment.

**March 5-14**—Attendance Verification week for the final payment period.

**May 1**—Date by which all Compliance issues must be resolved.

**June 1**—Date by which requests for missing payments must be submitted.

**July 3**—Intent filing deadline for the September 1 payment.

**August 2**—Enrollment deadline for the September 1 payment.

**September 2**—Intent filing deadline to be eligible for the November 1 payment.

Please contact your Regional Manager with questions regarding these deadlines.

## Regular and Direct Contact

Private schools that participate in the McKay and Florida Tax Credit Scholarships are required to maintain a physical location in Florida where scholarship students regularly attend classes and have **regular and direct contact** with private school teachers. “Regular and direct contact” is defined as:

*A program of instruction that provides for a minimum of 170 actual school instruction days with the required instructional hours (determined by grade level per [State Board Rule 6A-1.09512](#)) under direct instruction of the private school teacher at the school’s physical location with occasional off-site activities under the supervision of the private school teacher.*

For compulsory attendance purposes, net instructional hours per grade level are: (a) Kindergarten: 540 hours, (b) Grades 1-3: 720 hours, (c) Grades 4-12: 900 hours.

If the school does not comply with these requirements, it will not be allowed to participate in the state School Choice Scholarship programs.

## Reminder - FTC Norm-referenced Testing

This is a reminder to private schools participating in the Florida Tax Credit (FTC) Scholarship Program to administer or make provisions for FTC students in grades 3-10 to take one of the nationally norm-referenced tests identified by the Department of Education. The approved assessments and specific instructions are available on the School Choice Website at [www.floridaschoolchoice.org/Information/CTC/norm\\_referenced\\_assessment.asp](http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org/Information/CTC/norm_referenced_assessment.asp).

Participating private schools must make arrangements to administer one of the approved listed tests during the 2011-12 school year, unless the private school has requested and received approval to use an alternate assessment. If you have any questions related to this requirement, please review the [Technical Assistance Paper](#) posted on the School Choice Website, or contact your Regional Manager.



## In the News

### VSA FLORIDA, 9<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL EXEMPLARY PARTICIPANT RECOGNITION PROGRAM

VSA Florida, the State Organization on Arts and Disability, is seeking nominations from educators of students with disabilities who have shown exemplary work in the Arts or dramatic personal growth or leadership through participation in the Arts. The deadline for nominations is **February 1, 2012**. The winners will be notified by February 24, 2012. For more information contact Wendy Finklea, Education Coordinator at wfinklea@usf.edu or at (813) 974-0715.

### SAVE THE DATE: NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AUTISM

The Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) will host the conference *Promising Pathways the Road to Best Practice in Autism* to be held on **April 14, 2012** at the Alico Arena. Registration will open mid-January. For directions and other information please visit [www.fgcu.edu/events/promisingpathways](http://www.fgcu.edu/events/promisingpathways).

### THE FLORIDA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL, INC. REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The FDDC has released RFP #2012-CD-9400 in order to increase the use of Universal Design for Learning through technology in order to give students with cognitive and physical disabilities greater access to information in general education classes. To view the RFP go to <http://www.fddc.org/funding/universal-design-for-learning-through-technology>. The deadline for submitting written questions and letters of intent for this RFP is **February 10, 2012 by 4:00 p.m.** (EST).

### CHECK IT OUT! NEW MIDDLE SCHOOL SCIENCE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT VIDEO

The Math and Science Model Lessons is a series of web-based model lessons that feature school-based teams engaged in the planning/problem-solving process and teachers in action providing high-quality standards-based instruction. The middle school science video is now available at <http://msml.florida-rti.org>.

## Spotlight on . . .

## Scholarship Programs Manager, Cathy Russell



**Cathy Russell, Scholarship Programs Manager**

The School Choice Office welcomes our new Scholarship Programs Manager, Cathy Russell. Cathy comes to the position with four years in the Choice office, serving in the home education, virtual and charter programs before moving into scholarships as a program analyst three years ago. Prior to coming to the Department of Education, she worked at Tallahassee Community College as Writing Center Coordinator.

Cathy's interest in school choice is of long standing, having home educated her three children for over ten years. Now all grown and in college, Cathy's children represent the value of educational choices. Cathy moved to Tallahassee from north-eastern Pennsylvania, where she enjoyed a more rural lifestyle.

With master's degrees in humanities and education, Cathy is ready to take on the challenges of the Scholarship Program.

There is always a lot to learn, but she says, "I appreciate the opportunity to work with IEPC staff and private school administrators to improve school choice options for parents."

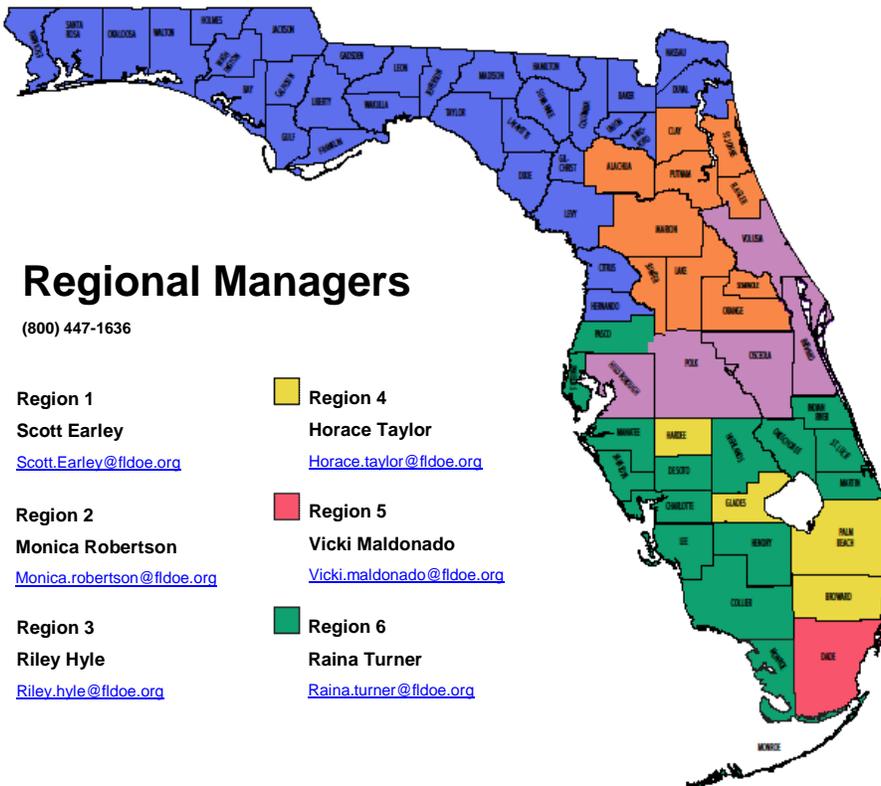


## Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice

<b>McKay Scholarship Program</b>					
<b>2011 - 2012 IMPORTANT DEADLINES</b>					
July 1 – Sept 30		July 3			
Oct 1 – Dec 31		September 2			
Jan 1 – Feb 28		December 3			
Mar 1 – June 30		February 1			

**Please note:**

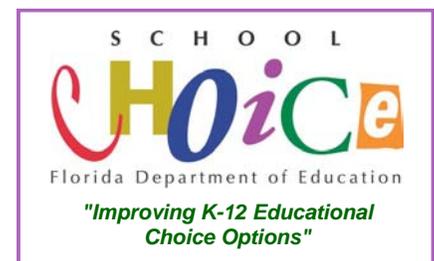
- Private schools participating in the **Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program** must meet the deadlines set by their Scholarship Funding Organizations to receive payment.
- The deadlines for filing a parental intent and private school enrollment are statutory deadlines. Therefore, the Department cannot make exceptions if these deadlines are missed.



### Regional Managers

(800) 447-1636

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|---|---|
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*Current and previous newsletters are available on the School Choice Website.*