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## Welcome

Everyone at the Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice would like to wish you all a very Happy New Year. Please read over the friendly reminders pertaining to the scholarship programs as we continue with our 2012-2013 school year. We would also like to take this chance to remind our scholarship schools about a [workshop which will be held at the Department of Education in Tallahassee, February 8, 2013](#). It will cover basic scholarship compliance and eligibility information. Check your email for more information and feel free to contact our office with any questions or concerns. We hope you enjoyed your time off for the holiday season.

## Intent to Participate for the 2012-13 School Year

Time is running out for students wishing to enter the McKay Scholarship Program for the current school year.

[Filing for the 2012-13 School Year](#)—The last day to file intent for the 2012-13 school year is January 31, 2013. Any new scholarship students who file intent on or before this date must be enrolled by March 2, 2013, to be eligible to receive a fourth quarter scholarship payment on April 1, 2013.

[Filing for the 2013-14 School Year](#)—**Intents filed after January 31, 2013, will be for the 2013-14 school year.** These students must be enrolled in a participating private school by August 2, 2013, in order to be eligible for a first quarter scholarship payment on September 1, 2013.

[Enrollment in the current school year with a 2013-14 Intent](#)—Although an upcoming 2013-14 student is not eligible for payment during the current school year, a parent with a valid intent for 2013-14 may choose to enroll an eligible student in a participating private school for the remainder of the 2012-13 school year at his or her own expense. Of course, parents also have the option of keeping the student in public school for the rest of the current school year.

[Eligibility](#)—We would like to remind private school administrators assisting parents with filing, that all intents to participate in the McKay Scholarship Program **must be filed prior to the student withdrawing from public school.** Additionally, the student must have met prior year public school attendance requirements by being included for funding in the October and February FTE counts, and must have an active IEP or a 504 Plan that is valid for more than 6 months.

Toll-Free: (800) 447-1636

Fax: (850) 245-0875

E-mail:

[schoolchoice@fldoe.org](mailto:schoolchoice@fldoe.org)

On the Web at:

[floridaschoolchoice.org](http://floridaschoolchoice.org)

**Current McKay Students**—Please note that a new intent does not have to be filed for a student already participating in the McKay program in a private school. However, all students currently enrolled for the 2012-13 school year, regardless of whether or not they received payment, **must be re-enrolled** by August 2, 2013, to be eligible for a first payment next school year.

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### Compliance Deadline — March 1st

Private schools wishing to continue participating in the **McKay and Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Programs** for the 2013-14 school year must submit their Compliance documentation annually **by March 1, 2013**. The 2013-14 Scholarship Compliance Form, Application and Renewal Packets are available on the School Choice website. To renew participation, the Compliance Form must be: 1. submitted online, 2. printed, signed, notarized, and 3. postmarked by March 1, 2013. Any outstanding compliance issues must be resolved **on or before May 1, 2013**, in order to continue to participate in the scholarship programs for the upcoming year. Please contact your regional manager with any questions.

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### Florida Tax Credit Private School Participants:

Pursuant to House Bill 859, passed during the 2012 Legislative Session, any participating scholarship school with at least one Florida Tax Credit student enrolled may have the opportunity to apply and participate in administering FCAT 2.0 and Florida End-of-Course Assessments to all students at your private school. The links for the application to participate and Frequently Asked Questions are now available via your secured log-in. The application window will be January 2-March 1, 2013, with school eligibility determinations finalized in August 2013.

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### New Child Abuse Law In Effect October 1st

Penalties for those who suspect a child is being abused but fail to report it have been increased from a misdemeanor to a felony. Financial penalties also have increased. If you suspect or know of any child who is being harmed, call the **Florida Abuse Hotline at 1-800-962-2873**. If you see a child in immediate danger, call 911.

Florida law now requires any individual who suspects that a child has been abused by any person to report that to the Florida Abuse Hotline. Any allegations a child was abused or neglected by a caregiver will be investigated by the Department of Children and Families, while allegations of child abuse by someone other than a caregiver will be accepted at the Hotline and immediately electronically transferred to the appropriate local law enforcement agency where the child lives.

More Information: <http://myflfamilies.com/service-programs/abuse-hotline>

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## Update Contact Information

A new year often brings changes such as new staff or a new location. Incorrect contact information or typos may prevent you from receiving important scholarship program communications. Please log in to the School Choice website and click “View School Info” to ensure your school’s **address, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address** are up to date. If corrections are necessary, please contact your Regional Manager as soon as possible.

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## Mark Your Calendar

**December 3**—Date by which a new student must file intent in order to be eligible for the February 1 payment.

**January 2**—Date by which new students with a valid intent must be enrolled to receive the February 1 payment.

**January 3-10**—Attendance Verification week for the third payment period.

**January 31**—Last day to file an intent to participate for the 2012-13 school year.

**February 1**—First day for new students to file an intent for the 2013-14 school year.

**March 1**—Scholarship Compliance Forms due for 2013-14 participation.

**March 2**—Date by which a new student must be enrolled to receive the fourth quarterly payment.

**March 4-11**—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.

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