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New employee screening

In accordance with Section 1002.421, Florida Statute, before employing instructional personnel or school administrators in any position that requires direct contact with scholarship students, a private school must conduct employment history checks of the personnel's or administrators' previous employers, screen the personnel or administrators through use of the educator screening tools available through our website (Teacher Certification Database and the Professional Practices Database of Disciplinary Action), and document the findings.



Be sure that any new employees have undergone this screening, and that a record of the results is kept in a secure location. This employment screening process is to be conducted in addition to the Level II background screening obtained from FDLE through the VECHS program.

Contact your regional manager if you have questions about either process.

Restrictive Endorsement Requirements and Guidelines

With the start of classes and the arrival of the first scholarship

On the Web
at: www.floridaschoolchoice.org

payments for the 2014-15 school year, we would like to review the restrictive endorsement requirements for McKay Scholarship payments.

Florida law requires the Department to make McKay Scholarship payments by individual warrant (check) payable to the student's parent or guardian. The warrants must be mailed by the Department to the private school of the parent's choice. Section 1002.39(9)(f), Florida Statutes, then requires the parent of a scholarship student to restrictively endorse the warrant to the private school for deposit into the account of the private school.

The Department is also required to review a sample of endorsed scholarship warrants after each payment period to confirm compliance with the restrictive endorsement requirements.

The following are a few guidelines to assist you in correctly complying with these requirements:

- When a private school receives the McKay scholarship checks, the school should immediately stamp the back of each check with the words "For Deposit Only" and include the school's name, and the name of the school's bank or account number.
- The private school should immediately notify parents that the checks have arrived and ask the parents to come to the school to restrictively endorse (sign) the warrant.
- It is strongly recommended that the scholarship checks not leave the possession of the private school, and students should not take scholarship checks home for a parent endorsement (signature).
- It is essential that the parent whose name is on the scholarship check be the individual that endorses the check. Under law, the parent cannot give power of attorney to the private school.

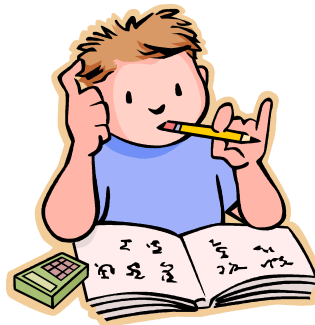


FTC Norm-Referenced Testing

Private schools participating in the Florida Tax Credit (FTC) Scholarship Program are reminded of the requirement 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. Approved assessments and specific instructions are available on our website

at: 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 2014-15 school year, or the private school may request the use of an alternate assessment. Requests must be submitted to the Department in writing by September 15, 2014. If you have any questions related to this

requirement, please review the Technical Assistance Paper posted on our website, or contact your Regional Manager.

FTC Reporting

Private schools participating in the Florida Tax Credit (FTC) Scholarship Program are reminded that they must report 2013-14 student standardized test scores for students in grades 3-10 to the parent and to the independent research organizations elected by the Department of Education. Please send copies of score sheets with name, testing date, and national percentile ranking by August 15, 2014, to:

David Figlio

School Reporting Compliance Center

Department of Economics

Specific instructions are available on the School Choice Website.

McKay and FLVS

Florida statute specifies that scholarship students may take up to two courses from FLVS without jeopardizing scholarship eligibility. However, changes to the methodology for reporting and funding FLVS students may affect some students' McKay scholarship amounts. Beginning in November 2014, McKay scholarship payments will be reduced for students enrolled in or successfully completing FLVS courses. Please refer to the [memo](#) distributed to private schools last year for more information about the change to scholarship calculation.

New Scholarship Program

The Personal Learning Scholarship Account Program (PLSA) was established in the 2014 legislative session (SB 850) to provide parents the option to better meet the individual needs of their eligible children. Scholarship accounts are administered by eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organizations (SFOs). Parents of eligible children may use the accounts to purchase approved goods or services, as well as provide for prepaid college plans.



A student is eligible for a PLSA from a nonprofit SFO through this program, if:

- A. the student is a resident of Florida;
- B. the student is eligible to enroll in kindergarten through grade twelve in a public school in Florida;
- C. Has a disability as defined by Section 1002.385(2)(d), Florida Statutes; and,
- D. Is the subject of an IEP written in accordance with rules of the State Board of Education, or has received a diagnosis of an eligible disability from a licensed physician or psychologist.

More information on PLSA and eligible SFOs is available on our website at www.floridaschoolchoice.org/Information/PLSA.

Mark Your Calendar



August 2—Enrollment deadline for the McKay September 1st payment.

August 15—Date by which FTC standardized testing results must be submitted.

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

October 2—Enrollment deadline for the November 1st payment

October 3-10 – McKay Attendance Verification week for the 2nd payment period.

Questions? Please contact your Regional Manager.
