



## Scholarship Compliance Renewal

Private schools participating in the state scholarship programs must renew their participation annually by submitting verification of their compliance with program requirements. In years past, our office mailed instruction letters for private schools to renew participation in the scholarship programs, but starting this year, the information will instead be emailed to schools. **Please login to the School Choice website and ensure that both the school Director and the school Contact emails are correct.** Expect the renewal emails around the beginning of November. Additional information on the Application and Renewal process is available on the School Choice website when logged in as a private school.

The **2019-20 Scholarship Compliance Form (SCF)** is now available on the School Choice website. Due to additional accountability measures enacted by the state legislature earlier this year, the SCF has been updated, so please take the time to carefully read it regarding the new provisions. The SCF must be submitted online and also printed, signed, notarized and postmarked no later than **March 1, 2019**. Any outstanding issues must be resolved on or before May 1st in order for the school to remain eligible to participate in the state scholarship programs for the next school year.

## Compliance Notes:

### *Employee Screening*

Before employing instructional personnel or school administrators in any position that allows direct contact with students, participating private schools must conduct an employment history check on potential hires by contacting previous employers and retaining documentation of the results in the employee's personnel file.

## Upcoming McKay Deadlines

### December 3

Date by which a new student must file intent in order to be eligible for the February 1<sup>st</sup> payment.

### January 2

Date by which new students with a valid intent must be enrolled to receive the February 1<sup>st</sup> payment.

### January 4-10

Attendance Verification week for the third payment period.

### January 31

Last day to file an intent to participate for the 2018-19 school year.

### February 1

First day for new students to file an intent for the 2019-20 school year.

### 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.

## More Information

[Regional Managers](#)

[McKay Calendar](#)

[McKay Deadlines](#)

[Application & Renewal Instructions](#)

[McKay Student Technical Assistance](#)

Potential employees must also be screened using the two employee screening tools available through the Department of Education: the Teacher Certification Database and the Professional Practices Database of Disciplinary Action. Follow the path *Compliance Training>School Employee Requirements>Employment Screening* when logged into our website for more information on the screening requirement and for links to the two databases.

## Fiscal Soundness

To demonstrate fiscal soundness and accountability for scholarship programs, private schools that have been in existence less than three years are required to obtain a Letter of Credit, from a bank or other financial institution, or a Surety Bond, from an insurance company in an amount equal to 25% of the school's annual scholarship funding.

If your school falls under this requirement, and your enrollment has exceeded your original estimate, you may need to amend your bond or letter to secure a higher amount. Contact your Regional Manager to discuss the amount of surety required for your school.

## McKay Student List Withdrawal Procedures

Now that a new school year is well under way, please take a moment to ensure your McKay Student List is accurate. If a McKay student is no longer enrolled or attending your school, the student should be immediately **withdrawn** from your McKay Student List on the School Choice website. To withdraw a student, select the **Withdraw** tab on the student's general information page. Then enter the student's withdrawal date (last date of attendance), the name of the person completing the withdrawal, and a brief explanation of the reason for withdrawal.

*The withdrawal date must be **on or after** the student's first date of attendance. Therefore, if a student was enrolled but never attended, the student's first date of attendance should be entered as the withdrawal date. The first date of attendance is provided on the withdrawal tab as a reference.*

Private schools are responsible for the return of all scholarship funds that were received in error, including students who were not in attendance; therefore, timely submission of withdrawal information will save your school the inconvenience of returning incorrectly issued scholarship payments.

[Compliance Resources](#)  
[McKay Parent Affidavit](#)  
[Update Notification Form](#)

## Compliance Resources

To assist private schools with the processes involved in becoming and remaining compliant with scholarship requirements, documentation and tutorial videos are available at [www.floridaschoolchoice.org](http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org). After logging in, look under the Compliance Forms & Resources section of the left hand menu.

Additionally, for those participating in the McKay scholarship program, check out the McKay Forms & Resources section in the left hand menu. The link is titled "McKay Student Technical Assistance," and leads to helpful information on topics concerning the McKay Scholarship program.

## Compliance Notes:

### Radon Inspection

Florida law requires private schools in most counties to test and report radon levels in their facilities at two points: the first test upon occupancy, and a second five years after the initial testing.

Schools may either hire an independent business to conduct testing, or purchase a kit from a local home improvement store and conduct the test as directed. Whichever option is chosen, the results must be recorded on form DH 1777 and submitted to the local Department of Health.

Include the test results along with the form in your compliance package to our office. Make sure that the address of your facility in Section 1 of the form matches the address you have reported to us, and that Section 5 is completed. Check with your local Department of Health or the [DOH](#)

***Please note that even if the parent of a McKay student has unpaid fees or incomplete documentation, the private school may not refuse to withdraw the student for these unresolved obligations.***

## FTC Norm-Reference 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. The approved assessments and specific instructions are available on the School Choice website at:

<http://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/k-12-scholarship-programs/ftc/annual-assessment-requirement.stml>.

Participating private schools must make arrangements to administer one of the approved listed tests during the 2018-19 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 information on the page linked above, or contact your Regional Manager.

## Return of McKay Funds

When a scholarship student attends multiple private schools or a private school and the public school in the same payment period, the right to retain the scholarship payment is given to the first private school the student attends for ten (10) or more school days during that payment period, as long as all other requirements are met.

**To ensure proper administration of scholarship funds, all claims by private schools for missed scholarship payments must be made by June 1 of the fiscal year in which the scholarship payment was originally due. (State Board Rule 6A-6.0970)**

[website](#) for more information on radon testing requirements in your county.

## National Blue Ribbon Schools

The deadline is fast approaching to register to apply for the U.S. Department of Education's [2019 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program](#). The program honors and recognizes great American elementary, middle, and high schools, both public and private, and has done so since 1982. A National Blue Ribbon Schools flag waving overhead has become a trademark of excellence, a symbol of quality recognized by everyone from parents to policy-makers in thousands of communities.

The Council for American Private Education (CAPE) nominates private schools, including parochial and independent schools. CAPE may nominate up to 50 private schools. Current application requirements are available on [CAPE's website](#).

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