



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
fldoe.org

**OFFICE OF INDEPENDENT EDUCATION
AND PARENTAL CHOICE**

Scholarship Bulletin | May 2020

GREETINGS FROM OUR NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR!



Greetings!

My name is Dr. Dré Graham and I am incredibly excited about the opportunity to serve the students of the state of Florida as a member of the IEPC team! I look forward to our collaborative efforts to positively impact the next generation of world changers. My road to the Department was through the vessel of public education. I am a proud product of Hillsborough County Public Schools, graduating from the C. Leon King High School International Baccalaureate Program. After earning my Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Music Education from the University of Florida, I went back to KHS and took over for my high school band director, where I have served as the Director of Instrumental Studies for the past 10 years. While there, I earned my second Master's Degree (Educational Leadership) and my Ph.D. (Music Education). Most recently, I served as the 2020 Florida Teacher of the

Year and Christa McAuliffe Ambassador for Education. My desire has always been to promote equity in education and provide ALL students with an opportunity to succeed. I anxiously await the future victories the Office for Independent Education and Parental Choice will experience by way of providing open doors for ALL the students in the great state of Florida!

- Dakeyan C. Graham, Ph.D.

Executive Director
Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice
2020 Florida Teacher of the Year

FLDOE Private School Directory

As a service to the public, the Department maintains a [directory of K-12 private schools](#) in Florida based on the information schools submit via the annual survey. As the summer break approaches, it may be a good time to review the information contained in the directory for your school and to submit a corrected survey if appropriate. Keep in mind that for participating private schools, approved documents regarding changes to location and director/owner name must be submitted first to your [Regional Manager](#).

Private School Guidance: COVID-19 FAQ's

In response to the continually changing circumstances surrounding COVID-19, please see our current list of frequently asked questions below:

- **Q: What does it mean to be closed through June 3rd?**

A: While education is ongoing through distance learning, all public K-12 school campuses in Florida were strongly recommended to remain closed through June 3, 2020, the remainder of the academic school year, based on the most recent guidance from the CDC. Private K-12 schools in Florida are strongly encouraged to follow suit. Schools should operate virtually or through other non-classroom-based (distance learning) means. This may include:

- Educational packets provided to parents with teacher assistance provided as needed.
- Online learning platforms.
- Hybrid of packets and online resources.

- **Q: How will the implementation of online instruction impact statutory requirements in s. 1002.421(1)(i), F.S. for "direct student contact" in scholarship participating schools?**

A: The Commissioner of Education has issued an order waiving the requirement for direct student contact, as required in s. 1002.421(1)(i), F.S. Virtual learning will count toward attendance requirements for private schools. Schools will need to have a mechanism to monitor and record attendance during this period.

- **Q: Will private schools participating in the Florida Tax Credit, Family Empowerment, Gardiner, and Hope Scholarship Programs still be required to administer Statewide Assessments or NRT Assessments pursuant to s. 1002.385, 1002.394, 1002.395 and 1002.40, F.S.?**

A: No. The Commissioner of Education has issued an order waiving the requirement for private schools participating in the Florida Tax Credit, Family Empowerment, Gardiner, and Hope Scholarship Programs to administer Statewide Assessments or NRT Assessments. This applies to the 2019-20 school year only.

- **Q: How is the FDOE ensuring continuity of learning in private schools participating in state scholarship programs?**

A: In lieu of requirements outlined in s. 1002.421, F.S., related to attendance verification and regular and direct contact with students, the IEPC office asks you to submit to your Regional Manager a statement outlining how educational content is being delivered and monitored, as well as, how attendance is being monitored and recorded as part of your compliance renewal for the 2020-21 school year. Adherence to this requirement is due no later than June 1, 2020.

Information to include:

- a) What kind of distance learning is being offered?
- b) For all grades?
- c) How is attendance being monitored?
- d) How are they providing needed services for ESE students (if applicable)?

- **Q: Will scholarship payments continue for the remainder of the school year?**

A: Yes. There will be no interruption in the delivery of scholarship checks.

- **Q: Can FDOE waive the requirement that parents still need to sign scholarship checks?**

A: No for the March 2020 scholarship warrants, yes thereafter through June supplemental warrants. Scholarship warrants which have been issued to date, are made payable to the parent and must be endorsed by both the parent and school in accordance with the established policy and process. Because both state and federal law place liability for improper paying of checks squarely on financial institutions--see, e.g., *Louisville & N.R. Co. v. Citizens' & Peoples' Nat. Bank of Pensacola*, 77 So. 104 (Fla. 1917) or *United States v. Carr*, 706 F.2d 1108, 1112 (11th Cir. 1983) --the decision to honor a warrant without a parental endorsement constitutes a risk which can be assumed only by the financial institution. However, for a temporary period of time, supplemental scholarship warrants from April through June will be made payable directly to the school. These warrants will not require a parent's signature for redemption.

- **Q: Are students receiving scholarships limited to the two-course cap for virtual instruction?**

A: Yes, with an important exception. Students may enroll in additional virtual courses if the following conditions are met:

- a) The courses are offered by a state-approved virtual provider; and
- b) The state-approved virtual provider is providing the courses free of charge.
- c) If the student enrolling in a free virtual course lacks access to a learning management system (LMS), the virtual provider may charge a nominal fee solely for the purpose of utilizing an LMS to access the free course content.

- **Q: Where can information be found about Advanced Placement (AP) exams?**

A: The College Board has developed a website dedicated to providing students, educators, and families with information related to AP in light of COVID-19. Please refer to this website for the latest updates on modified AP exams, instructional support and exam prep: https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/about-ap/news-changes/coronavirus-update?SFMC_cid=EM288604-&rid=67096081

- **Q: Does the state have direction, guidance, or specific resources to support instruction for English Language Learners (ELLs) through distance learning?**

A: There are numerous free sites with bilingual materials that students and parents can use to encourage literacy skills in English and other languages. These sites include:

<http://bilinguis.com/>
<http://lingolibros.com/free-books>
<https://www.readconmigo.org/>
<https://www.colorincolorado.org/>
<http://www.fldoe.org/em-response/resources-families.shtml#ell>

For a further clarification and additional resources, see the following webinar from FDOE that also contains resources and answers a number of questions: <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/19861/urlt/COVID-Super-SALA.pdf>.

- **Q: Are there resources available to help schools access cleaning, disinfectant, and hygiene supplies?**

A: Yes. After exhausting current resources and/or funding or if there is a shortage of supplies, private schools should contact their County Emergency Operations Centers (EOC) with a detailed list of supplies needed. Local requests roll-up to the State EOC where they look at all the requests as a whole and direct responses locally. You can locate your County EOC at <https://www.floridadisaster.org/counties/>.

- **Q: Are there resources available to help school districts, educators, and families ensure continuity of learning during this time?**

A: Yes, FDOE has created two resource pages at its COVID-19 response website <http://www.fldoe.org/em-response> :

- [Free Resources for Families & Teachers](#)
- [Best Practices for Distance Learning](#)

Guide to McKay and FES Enrollment for 2020-21

Open enrollment for the 2020-21 school year has begun! Your school's fee schedule must be submitted online prior to enrolling any McKay or FES scholarship student. Login to the School Choice website as a private school administrator to copy your fee schedule over to the 2020-21 online portal and update your fee amounts. The fee schedule link is located at the bottom of the private school welcome page. **Private schools will be able to update school fee item dollar amounts until August 2.** If there are any new fee items to add to a current fee schedule, then a private school must submit a request of the updated fee schedule to your Regional Manager. **Please be informed if there are no new fee items you wish to add to your school's fee schedule, then you do not need to issue a copy of your fee schedule to the School Choice Office.**

The McKay and FES Student List displays information for each type of student associated with your school:

- **Last Year Students**—This is a list of McKay Scholarship students who were enrolled in your school at the end of the 2019-20 school year. You may choose to **Re-Enroll** a student on this list for the 2020-21 school year, or **Withdraw** a student who is not returning. Re-enrollment includes confirming the student's grade level, parent contact information, entering a student fee schedule, and a first date of attendance by **August 2nd** in order for a student to be eligible to receive a first quarter scholarship payment on September 1st.
 - Grade Correction** - Any student (grades KG – 11th) that will be repeating a grade, a **Scholarship Issue Form and documentation** verifying or supporting that decision must be provided to our office.
 - 12th Grade Re-enrollment** - Please be aware that in order to retain a 12th grade student at your school you must submit a **Scholarship Issue Form along with a signed statement from the parent** attesting to the fact that the student is re-enrolling in order to obtain a diploma or high school equivalency certification. Students turning 22 during the school year are able to complete the school year as a scholarship student.
- **Transfer Students from Other Participating Private Schools**—This function, which will be **available in June**, allows a participating private school to transfer a scholarship student from another participating private school. Transferring students only **Registers** them in the new school. They are not fully enrolled until a fee schedule and first date of attendance are entered to complete the enrollment.
- **Registered Student List** —Any student on this list is new to the scholarship program or has been transferred from another school. ***Because they are not yet enrolled, they are not eligible for payment.*** To enroll registered students, click on the student's name and select the **Enroll** tab.
- **Enrolled Student List** —Any student on this list has a student fee schedule and a first date of attendance entered for the 2020-21 school year. **Only enrolled students with an eligible status will receive a scholarship payment.**
- **Parent Affidavit (McKay ONLY)** - A [Parent Affidavit Form](#) must be filed with our office for each McKay student. Parents affidavits can be emailed to ParentAffidavit@fldoe.org.

- **Verify Parent Information** - Be careful when entering the correct parent Social Security Number (SSN) for new students and reenrolling current students. **SSN discrepancies may cause a delay in payment.**
- **FES Sibling to Sibling Enrollment** – If you plan to enroll a sibling of a current FES student, you will be able to do so at a later date this month (the department will notify schools when the student list is available).
- **New FES Students (coming from public school)** – Enrollment for these students will begin around mid-June!

Withdrawn McKay and FES Students

If a scholarship student is not returning to your school next year, or if the student is graduating, then that student should be withdrawn from your McKay or FES Student List.

Any student listed as WITHDRAWN on your Student List means that the student was enrolled in your school for the 2019-20 school year and later withdrawn. When entering the withdrawal date for a student that has already been re-enrolled for the 2020-21 school year, the system will not allow a private school to enter a withdrawal date **prior to the first date of attendance**, and **withdrawn students cannot be re-enrolled by the same private school without a proper Scholarship Issue Form submitted.**

If you have any questions, please contact your assigned Regional Manager.

Upcoming Deadlines

July 3

McKay 2020-21 application of intent filing deadline for the September 1 McKay payment.

August 2

McKay and FES 2020-21 Enrollment deadline for the September 1 payment.

September 2

McKay 2020-21 application of Intent filing deadline for the November 1 McKay payment.

September 15

Agreed Upon Procedures Reports submission deadline.

More Information

[Regional Managers](#)

[Application & Renewal Instructions](#)

[McKay Student Technical Assistance](#)

[Compliance Resources](#)

[McKay Parent Affidavit](#)

[Update Notification Form](#)

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