

Executive Director—Michael Kooi

Special Points of Interest:

- As a reminder, the Scholarship Program Conference Call for November has been rescheduled for Wednesday, November 12, 2008.
- The deadline to file intent and be eligible to receive a third quarter scholarship payment is December 3, 2008. If an eligible new student is enrolled by January 2, 2009, he or she will receive 50% of the annual scholarship amount.

The Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice is pleased to announce Michael Kooi as our new Executive Director. Mike is the former executive director of the Florida Consortium of Public Charter Schools. Prior to the Consortium, Mike worked for the Florida House of Representatives as a Staff Director and as Policy Chief for the Schools and Learning Council.

Mike has been a longtime supporter and defender of private school choice programs in Florida. He has been instrumental in effecting legislative policy supporting the continued implementation of K-12 scholarship programs and has provided legal and technical assistance in the implementation and defense of various K-12 scholarship programs.

Mike earned his bachelor's degree from Dordt College in Sioux Center, Iowa, and received his Juris Doctorate from the University of Florida College of Law.

We are excited to have Mr. Kooi's wealth of knowledge and experience leading the state's efforts in increasing the quantity and improving the quality of educational options for Florida's students.



A message from Mike Kooi:

"I am excited about the opportunity that Commissioner Smith has provided to me to carry on my work on education reform in the area of school choice. I consider it a privilege to be involved in the maintenance and growth of the school choice movement in Florida and look forward to continuing this work in my new role as Executive Director of the Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice."

Inside this issue:

Ethics in Education Act	2
Private School Annual Survey	2
McKay Coalition Presentation	2
Change in Location Requirements	3
Technical Assistance Meetings	3
Compliance Renewal	3
Contact Information	4
2008-2009 Program Deadlines	4

McKay Parent Newsletter

The second issue of the McKay Parent Newsletter is included in this payment packet. Please distribute the newsletter to parents of scholarship students when they come in to your school to sign the scholarship check. This edition of the newsletter contains useful information about maintaining the student's scholarship and an article about student fee schedules.



Ethics in Education Act

In order to ensure that participating private schools have complied with the new requirements established by the Ethics in Education Act for the current school year, the department recently distributed a Compliance Verification Form.

Please take the necessary steps to comply with the requirements and submit the verification form by **December 1, 2008**, if you have not already.

Detailed information about the Ethics in Education Act is available on the School Choice Web site when logged in as a private school. In addition, the department has been collecting a list of the most commonly asked questions and will post a Question & Answer document in the Technical Assistance section of the quick navigation bar as soon as it is available.

Please note that the Act requires participating private schools to post notices related to reporting

educator misconduct and child abuse in a prominent place at the school. Sample notices are available on the Office of Professional Practices Services Web site at:

<http://www.fldoe.org/edstandards/poster.asp>.

These notices may be printed and used as is, or modified to suit the needs of the school as



2008-09 Private School Annual Survey



Don't forget to mail the signed and notarized hard-copy!

We would like to thank all the participating private schools that have already submitted a 2008-09 Private School Annual Survey.

Private schools must submit the Annual Survey for the 2008-09 school year by **November 30, 2008**, in order to have the school's information included in the mid-year Private School Report that will be released by the department in December 2008.

The submission of the survey is a requirement for scholarship compliance renewal; therefore, if you have not yet submitted the form, please do so as soon as possible. It is also important to ensure a hard-copy of the form is signed, notarized, and mailed to the department for your school's file.

If you have submitted the survey and need to make changes to the information provided, you can submit the changes by printing a copy of the survey and mailing it to the department, or by sending the corrections via e-mail to your Regional Manager.

McKay Coalition Presentation

The department gave a presentation at the McKay Coalition Meetings held in Tampa and Miami last month. The presentation focused on the new participation requirements enacted by the Ethics in Education Act. A copy of the presentation has been posted in the Technical Assistance section of the quick navigation bar when logged in as a private school.

Change in Location Requirements

With a new school year underway, we would like to ensure participating private schools are aware of the requirements for maintaining compliance with scholarship program laws in the event that the school location changes.

A private school that changes location must notify the Department of Education within 15 days after a change. However, it is important to note the distinction between notifying the department of your move and maintaining compliance with scholarship program participation requirements.

By signing and notarizing the Scholarship Compliance Form, a private school is certifying that it is currently in compliance with all scholarship program rules and reporting requirements **and will remain in compliance** throughout the school year. Therefore, when a private school changes locations and **before** scholarship students

begin attending classes at any private school's physical location where regular and direct contact occurs, the location must comply with the applicable state and local health, safety, and welfare, laws, codes, and rules as required by section 1002.421(2)(g), Florida Statutes.

Failure to maintain compliance may result in the ineligibility of the private school to participate in the scholarship programs in accordance with section 1002.421(5), Florida Statutes.

A Technical Assistance Paper entitled **Physical Location of Private Schools** provides detailed information about this requirement and is available on the quick navigation bar when logged in as a private school.

We appreciate your assistance in ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of scholarship students.

Technical Assistance Meetings

The Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice has again teamed with Florida P.R.I.D.E. to bring you a set of fall Technical Assistance Meetings in South and West Florida. The meetings will focus on scholarship program participation requirements for private schools, specifically the new requirements established by the Ethics in Education Act. All participating private schools are welcome to attend.

In addition, Florida P.R.I.D.E. has graciously offered to provide food and refreshments at the

meetings; therefore, if you plan to attend, please contact Florida P.R.I.D.E. at (866) 739-1195, ext. 222, to make a reservation.

MEETING DATES AND LOCATIONS

Wednesday, November 12 — Ocala
 Thursday, November 13 — Tampa
 Monday, November 17 — Miami
 Tuesday, November 18 — Ft. Lauderdale

Meeting registration will begin at 5:30 p.m. and presentations will start promptly at 6:00 p.m.

Scholarship Compliance Renewal

Scholarship Program Compliance Renewal will begin this month for private schools that wish to continue participating in the state scholarship programs for the 2009-10 school year. The department recently began distributing instruction packets for the renewal process, and the 2009-10 Scholarship Compliance Form will be available on the School Choice Web site by December 1st.

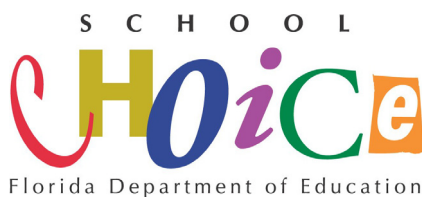
The Scholarship Compliance Form must be postmarked to the department by **March 1, 2009**, in order to remain eligible to participate next school year.

Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice

Michael Kooi, Esq.
Executive Director

Florida Department of Education
325 W. Gaines Street, Suite 522
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400

Toll-Free: (800) 447-1636
Fax: (850) 245-0875
Email: schoolchoice@fldoe.org



"Increasing the Quantity and Improving the Quality of Education Options"

ON THE WEB AT:

WWW.FLORIDASCHOOLCHOICE.ORG

Current and previous newsletters are available in PDF format on the School Choice website when logged in as a private school administrator. Click on the "Newsletters" link on the Quick Navigation bar on the left hand side of the screen.

MCKAY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM 2008-09 IMPORTANT DEADLINES*

2008-2009 Payment Period	Payment Date	Parental Intent Deadline	Private School Enrollment Deadline	Attendance Verification Available Online	Attendance Verification Deadline
July 1 – Sept 30	September 1	July 3	August 2	N/A	N/A
Oct 1 – Dec 31	November 1	September 2	October 2	October 6	October 10
Jan 1 – Feb 28	February 1	December 3	January 2	January 5	January 9
Mar 1 – June 30	April 1	January 31	March 2	March 2	March 13

*Private schools participating in the Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship Program must meet the deadlines set by the Scholarship Funding Organizations to receive payment.

Please note that 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.

Failure to complete attendance verification will result in a postponement of scholarship payments until the next scheduled payment period.