

Pre-K Matrix Assignment

Special points of interest:

- Our **District Newsletters** are now issued on a bi-monthly schedule. The next newsletter will be the July/August issue.
- **Deadline Reminder:** Parents must file their Intent to Participate by July 3rd and must have the child enrolled in a McKay school by August 2nd in order to be eligible for the September payment.



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Several school districts have requested assistance with assigning the appropriate matrix level to pre-kindergarten students applying for a McKay Scholarship. Last May, the Department issued a memorandum to public school district McKay contacts. It has also been posted in the General Information section on the School Choice Web site when logged in as a school district.



The memorandum outlines the statutorily defined funding calculation method and recommends the following procedure:

To be consistent with the funding levels currently calculated for the McKay Scholarship, school districts should convene an IEP team to review the pre-kindergarten child's current evaluations and academic progress and to develop a proposed IEP that identifies the services the student would receive upon transitioning to a public kindergarten program. A matrix of services must then be completed to reflect the services on the proposed IEP. This will be used to determine the student's scholarship amount for the McKay Scholarship.

Please review the memorandum and contact us if you have any questions.

Legislative Update

Recent legislation has brought several changes to the Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship, which is now titled the **Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program**. Student eligibility has changed to include students on Department of Children and Families' direct certification list, as well as those eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

In addition, Scholarship Funding Organizations (SFOs) may now request that school districts inform all households within the district receiving free or reduced-price lunch of their eligibility to apply for the tax credit scholarship. The notification form will be provided by the SFO, and the district must include the form, if requested by the SFO, in any normal correspondence with eligible households. An SFO may also request a special communication to be issued to eligible households, but the SFO must reimburse the district for postage. The notice is limited to once a year.

For more information, please contact the School Choice Office.



Take Note

McKay Parent Information



Starting with the 2009-10 school year, each parent of a newly enrolled McKay student will receive an 8-page **McKay Scholarships Parent Guide**, covering parent responsibilities, funding and payments, maintaining the scholarship, transferring and other issues. Districts may view the Parent Guide online on the Parent Resources page.

Summer School Registration

McKay parents are sometimes unaware that enrolling their student in Extended School Year, Drivers Education or other summer programs funded through FEFP will result in **forfeiture of the McKay Scholarship**. Please encourage registrars throughout the district to determine whether private school students wishing to enroll in district summer programs are in McKay, and if so, to inform the parent of the McKay forfeiture rules.

District PPT Review

Districts are reminded that a PowerPoint presentation of McKay eligibility issues, **McKay Review for Districts and New Personnel**, is available on the Web site district page for review and training purposes.

Summer Preparation for the 2009-10 School Year

With the end of the school year approaching, we would like to remind school districts about the effect of automatic enrollment and withdrawal systems on McKay Scholarship students. Two problems may occur with these systems:

Matriculating students—When the student transitions from elementary to middle or middle to high school, some school districts have a system in place that automatically enrolls a student into his or her assigned public school. This creates a difficult situation for McKay Scholarship students that have been participating in the program, but are reported as enrolled in public school in the fall, resulting in cancellation of scholarship payments. Correction requires the time consuming process of completing a **District Verification Form** for each affected student. Therefore, we ask that you take a moment in preparation for the 2009-10 school year to ensure that matriculating students participating in the McKay Scholarship Program will not be automatically re-enrolled in public school. And remember, the district can update a student's status at any time if the student does choose to return to public school.

Students filing intent over the summer—Some school districts have a system in place that automatically withdraws all public school students at the end the school year until they return to school in the fall. This creates an unfavorable situation for students applying for the McKay Scholarship Program during the summer months. The district representative completing the matrix assignment for the student may assume the student is not eligible because it appears in the system that the student was not a public school student at the time intent was filed. Please note that for purposes of McKay Scholarship Program eligibility, *a public school student who completes the school year is considered a public school student over the summer unless the parent physically withdraws the student from public school*. Therefore, please be mindful of public school withdrawal dates when determining the eligibility of students that file intent during the summer if your school district has an automated system in place.

District Verification Deadlines

District enrollment verification of students to be funded through the McKay Scholarship is an important accountability safeguard built into the program to ensure funding is appropriately distributed. The chart below displays the verification dates for the 2009-10 school year. For each payment period, the McKay student file will be available to districts via the Northwest Regional Data Center (NWRDC) site on the date listed for district review and verification, and must be submitted by the deadline in red. Once payments have been issued, the NWRDC will post the list of paid students.

For questions regarding payments, please contact the School Choice Payment Specialist, Scott Lingo, by e-mail at scott.lingo@fldoe.org.

MCKAY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM IMPORTANT DEADLINES			
2009-2010	District Verification File		District FTE File
Payment Period	Available Date	Submission Deadline	Available Date
September	August 3rd	August 10th	September 30th
November	October 5th	October 12th	November 20th
February	January 4th	January 11th	February 19th
April	March 3rd	March 11th	May 7th

District Verification File: McKay pre-payment file which is exported to districts to verify students are not enrolled in public school system. This file contains all students the DOE *intends* on paying.

District FTE File: McKay post-payment file which identifies the students *who were* paid for the specified payment period and who will need to be reported to generate FTE funding.

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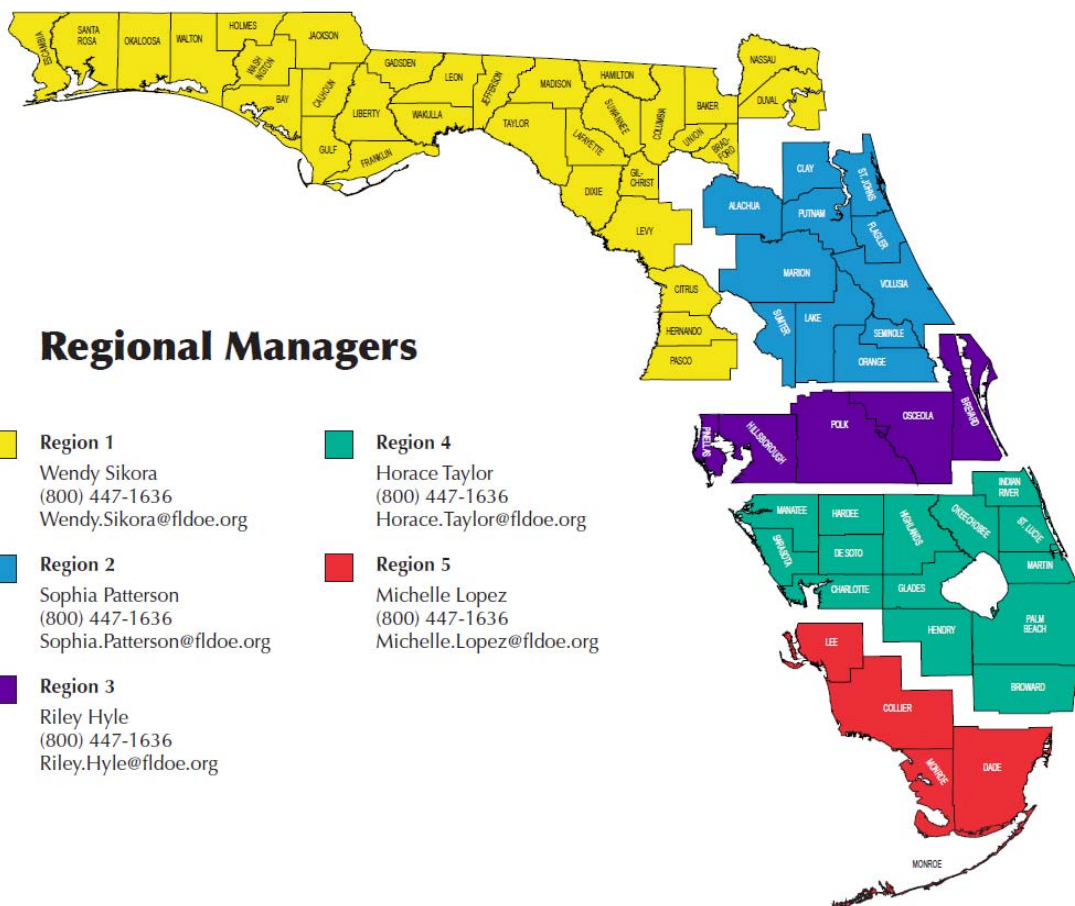


Florida Department of Education

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If you need assistance. . . Please contact the Regional Manager for your district, or our Customer Service Supervisor, Pam London, at (850) 245-0761.



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Interested in back issues? Current and previous newsletters are available in PDF format on the School Choice Web site when logged in as a district administrator. Click on the "Newsletters" link in the General Information section.