

Florida Scholarship Programs District Newsletter

Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice

Volume 4, Issue 5

May-June 2010

2010 Legislative Changes

The 2010 Florida Legislature session has ended. Two bills related to scholarship programs, HB 1505 related to McKay and SB 2126 related to the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship, passed both chambers. If approved by the Governor, these bills would go into effect July 1, 2010.

HB 1505, entitled **Education Programs for Children with Disabilities**, amends s. 1002.39, F.S. and makes changes to the Voluntary Pre-K Education (VPK) Program. Regarding the McKay Scholarship, Section 1 of HB 1505:

- Removes language that a parent must be “dissatisfied” with their child’s progress in order to request a McKay Scholarship,
- Expands the population of eligible students to include children who:
 - Have been enrolled and reported by a school district for funding during the October and February FEFP surveys in any one of the five years prior to the 2010-2011 fiscal year, have a current IEP developed by the district no later than June 30, 2011, and receive a first-time McKay Scholarship for the 2011-2012 school year.
 - Received specialized instructional services under the VPK Program during the previous school year and have a current IEP without having to spend the prior year in attendance at a public school
- Authorizes the Commissioner of Education to deny, suspend, or revoke a private school’s participation in the scholarship program if it is determined the owner or operator is operating or has operated an educational institution in this state or another state or jurisdiction in a manner contrary to the health, safety, or welfare of the public.

Additional sections of HB 1505 address changes to the VPK Program.

SB 2126, entitled **Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program**, amends the program by increasing the tax credit cap amount and revising the scholarship amount. For the 2010-11 fiscal year, the amount of a scholarship awarded to a student is limited to 60 per cent of the unweighted FTE funding amount. Additionally, the bill requires eligible private schools that receive more than \$250,000 in scholarship funds to annually contract with an independent certified public accountant to perform certain procedures and produce a report of the results. The bill also expands the program to include credits against severance taxes on oil and gas production, self-accrued sales tax liabilities or direct pay permit holders, and alcoholic beverage taxes on beer, wine, and spirits.

The Department has prepared a [Scholarship Program and Private School Bill Summary](#) which describes each of these bills. For more information or to contact your legislators, please visit [OnlineSunshine](#), the official site of the Florida Legislature.



Special points of interest:

- Parents must file intent to participate in the McKay Scholarship by **July 3** in order to receive the first quarterly payment.
- Participating schools must register and enroll McKay students by **August 2** in order to receive the first quarterly payment.
- Districts should ensure that McKay students matriculating from elementary to middle, or from middle to high school are not automatically re-enrolled in the district.



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Take Note

Pre-K Issues

Eligibility—The McKay Scholarship may be awarded to eligible students beginning in their kindergarten year; however, a student may file intent and establish eligibility for the program in pre-kindergarten. For more information, please review the [Prekindergarten Matrix Assignment Memorandum](#).

Transitional IEP—For Pre-K students who have not yet had a transition meeting, the district may now

assign the designation, **Pre-K Student (IEP Pending Transition Meeting)**, from the Matrix drop-down box. Once the new matrix becomes available, the district may enter the new information. In this case, it is not necessary to submit a Matrix Correction Form. Pre-K students should have received an IEP resulting from a transition meeting by the end of the school year.

FTE Data for 2009-10

Data for the 2009-2010 FEFP October and February surveys has been uploaded to the system and is now accessible for verification of McKay eligibility.

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 2010-11 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.

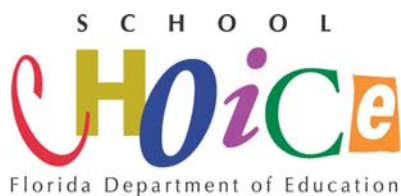
For questions regarding payments, please contact the School Choice Payment Specialist, Scott Lingo, by e-mail at scott.lingo@fldoe.org.

MCKAY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM IMPORTANT DEADLINES 2010-2011				
<u>District Verification File</u>				<u>District FTE File</u>
Payment Period	Available Date	Submission Deadline	Final Update	Available Date
September	August 3rd	August 6th	August 10th	September 30th
November	October 4th	October 7th	October 11th	November 20th
February	January 3rd	January 6th	January 10th	February 19th
April	March 3rd	March 9th	March 11th	May 7th

District Verification File: McKay pre-payment file which is exported to districts to verify that students are not enrolled in the 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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"Improving K-12 Educational Choice Options"

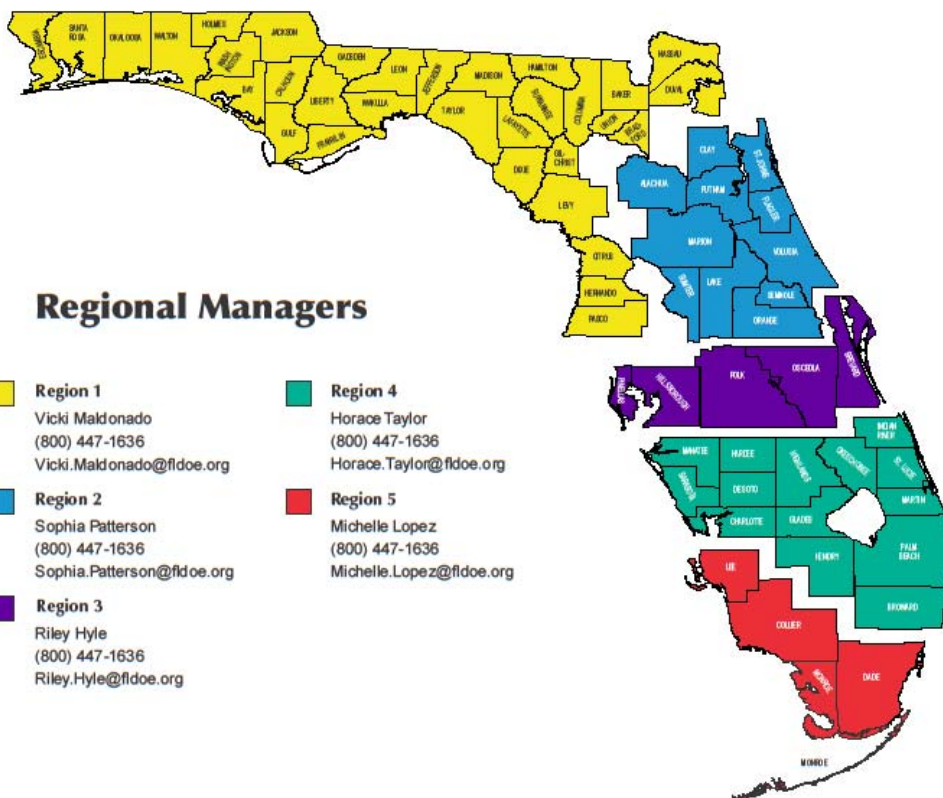
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If you need assistance. . . Please contact the Regional Manager for your district, or Scholarship Programs Manager, Pam London, at (850) 245-0761.



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