



Florida Scholarship Programs District Newsletter

March-April 2015

Volume 9, Issue 5

In This Issue

[McKay Scholarship Intents](#)

[District Systems and McKay](#)

[McKay Eligibility for Pre-K](#)

[District Notification
Requirements](#)

[McKay Information for Parents](#)

Helpful Links

[Regional Managers Map](#)

Contact Us

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McKay Scholarship Intents

Almost 8,500 intents have been filed for the 2015-16 school year, and we are happy to report that school districts have been entering matrices just as fast as the intents are filed.

As a reminder, [s. 1002.39\(5\)\(b\)](#), Florida Statutes, (F.S.), requires the school district to complete a matrix of services for every student who files intent and to notify the Department of the student's matrix level within 30 days after receiving notification of a request to participate in the scholarship program.

Thank you for your continued assistance in verifying student eligibility for the McKay Scholarship Program. If you have any questions, please contact your Regional Manager.

District Systems and McKay Eligibility

With the end of the school year approaching, we would like to extend a reminder to school districts about the effect of automatic enrollment and withdrawal systems on McKay Scholarship students.

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schoolchoice@fldoe.org

On the Web

at: www.floridaschoolchoice.org



Automatic Enrollment

Some school districts have a system in place that automatically enrolls a student into his or her assigned public school when the student transitions from elementary to middle or middle to high school. Unfortunately, this creates a difficult situation when a McKay Scholarship student that has been participating in the program (sometimes for several school years) is reported as enrolled in public school in the fall, and his or her payment is cancelled.



Therefore, in preparation for the 2015-16 school year, we ask that you take steps to ensure that matriculating students participating in the McKay Scholarship Program will not be automatically re-enrolled in public school.

Automatic Summer Withdrawal

In addition, 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 may create problems for students applying for the McKay Scholarship Program during the summer months. Please note that for purposes of McKay Scholarship Program eligibility, a student who completes the school year continues to be 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.

McKay Eligibility for Pre-K

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 prekindergarten in one of two ways, pursuant to section 1002.39(2), F.S. A student must either

- have been enrolled and reported for funding during the preceding October and February FEFP surveys and have been eligible for services under [s. 1003.21\(1\)\(e\), F.S.](#) (i.e., as a pre-k student with disabilities); or
- have received specialized instructional services under the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program pursuant to [s. 1002.66, F.S.](#) during the previous school year.

In addition, the student must have an Individual Education Plan or 504 Accommodation Plan.

If intent is filed for a rising Kindergarten student prior to their Pre-K transition meeting, the district may identify the student status in the system as “Eligibility pending transition meeting.” When the transition meeting is complete, the system will allow the district to assign the correct matrix number or eligibility status.



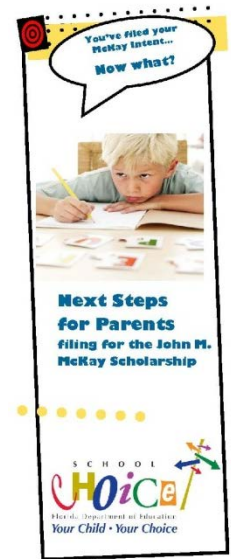
District Notification Requirements

Earlier this year, the Department issued a memorandum related to the requirement for public school districts to notify parents of students with disabilities about McKay Scholarship Program options. Parental notifications must be sent by April 1st of each school year and within 10 days of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) meeting. Also attached to the memo (and posted on the School Choice website) is a Notification Verification Form that must be completed to confirm that your school district has complied with the notification requirement. If the form has not yet been submitted for your district, please fax it to our office by **April 8, 2015**, to document the number of notifications sent and methods of distribution.

McKay Information for Parents

After a parent files intent to participate in the McKay program, a letter is sent to the parent that includes the student's intent confirmation number and intent date. A brochure entitled *Next Steps for Parents Filing for the John M. McKay Scholarship* is also enclosed. The brochure includes instructions for choosing a participating private school or requesting public school McKay options from the district.

We hope this aids parents in understanding their options as well as their responsibilities related to the program. School districts should be familiar with this brochure in case a parent references it when contacting you. The [brochure](#) is available on the School Choice website.



Questions? Please contact your Regional Manager.
