



District Bulletin | November - December 2016

McKay Scholarship Prior Year Attendance

Florida law requires a student to have spent the prior school year in attendance at a Florida public school in order to be eligible for a McKay Scholarship. "Prior school year in attendance" is defined as being reported for funding in the preceding October and February Florida Education Finance Program Surveys. Therefore, any intent filed during the 2016-17 school year will be compared by the Department against the October 2015 and February 2016 FTE survey data.

A student does not have to be reported for funding in the October 2016 funding survey to be eligible for the current school year. There may be instances when a student misses the current-year October survey count; however, the student's eligibility is determined based on the prior school year's FTE surveys and the student's status as a public school student with an IEP or 504 Plan. It is the school district's responsibility to ensure the student has an IEP or 504 Plan that is valid for more than 6 months, and to enter the appropriate status within 30 days. If you have any questions, please contact your Regional Manager.

Private Schools and State Assessments

Any participating private school with at least one enrolled Florida Tax Credit (FTC) Scholarship student or Gardiner Scholarship student may apply to the department to administer the Florida Statewide Assessments (e.g., Florida Standards Assessments, Florida EOC Assessments, Statewide Science Assessment) to all students at the private school, per Sections 1002.395 and 1002.385, Florida Statutes.

The private school must have at least one FTC Scholarship student or Gardiner Scholarship student enrolled at the time of application and during the eligible school year, and the school must abide by all state and district testing policies and procedures in order to participate. Private schools will be held to the same expectations as public schools in these areas. Applications for participation in the 2017-18 school year will be accepted between January and March of 2017. FAQs for both district personnel and private schools are available

District Contact Information

Please take a moment to check the contact information for your district on the [School Choice website](#). You may edit or update the information by logging on to the District page. If you need assistance, please contact your regional manager.

More Information

[District Verification Deadlines](#)
[Regional Managers](#)
[McKay Calendar](#)
[McKay Deadlines](#)

McKay Intent List

Parents may continue to file intent for the current school year through January 31, so be sure to check your intent list on a regular basis. Our system does a preliminary check on whether or not the student met FTE requirements. Within 30 days of the intent being filed, district staff should notify the Department whether or not the student met FTE requirements, was a public school student when intent was filed, and has an Individual Education Plan or a 504 Plan that is effective for more than 6 months.

McKay EPS Students

at <http://www.fldoe.org/accountability/assessments/k-12-student-assessment/private-schools/>.

Gardiner Student Matrix

Pursuant to section 1002.385, F.S., funding for a student's Gardiner Scholarship account is initially calculated with a matrix of 253. At the parent's request, district personnel must complete a revised matrix of services for a Gardiner student. Parents must make their scholarship funding organization (SFO) aware of their request, and they must also contact the district directly. Once the parent contacts the district, the matrix must be completed within thirty days of the request.

In addition to completing the matrix, districts must notify our office of a student's matrix level by logging into our website and entering the matrix using the Gardiner Student List link in the left menu. If the parent has notified their SFO that they are making a request for a matrix review, editing the matrix for the student will be enabled. If you have questions about entering a matrix for a Gardiner student, please contact your Regional Manager. More information on the Gardiner Scholarship Program is available on our website at <http://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/k-12-scholarship-programs/gardiner/>.

School Choice Call Center



From left to right: Aide Cruz, Aurielle Skipper, Lilian Hayes, Daymi Alonso, and Bettye Gilliam.

This month, we draw attention to our call center staff. These five part-time workers handle about 30,000 calls per year regarding various School Choice issues from private schools, districts, and parents. The vast majority of the calls are from parents with questions about the McKay Scholarship. Striving to make sure each caller receives exceptional customer service, they pride themselves on helping callers navigate the School Choice website and providing answers to various McKay Scholarship questions. Lilian Hayes, the dedicated Spanish-line

Last year we introduced the McKay Student EPS List on our website so district users can clear a student who was accidentally marked as Enrolled in Public School as a result of the district's F70561 file. The EPS List page is intended to be a replacement for the old process of completing a District Verification Form and faxing it to the McKay office.

Private schools may be unaware that your office has cleared a student's EPS flag and will continue to send District Verification Forms for your signature. When a school submits a DVF for a student you have already cleared, there is no need to complete and send us the form. You will only need to submit a District Verification Form to our office if you're trying to clear the EPS flag from a previous pay period.

representative, has been providing answers for over 10 years. Please feel free to provide our toll-free hotline number to any parent with questions about scholarship programs.

Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice
Turlington Building, Suite 1044 | 325 W. Gaines Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400
Toll-Free Information Hotline: 1-800-447-1636
Fax: 850-245-0875

