



McKay and Virtual School Courses

McKay Scholarship students are allowed to take up to two courses per year in a virtual school program (which includes your district's franchise of FLVS as well as district Virtual Instruction Programs) without penalty or loss of scholarship eligibility. Please note that a student's enrollment in these courses in your district does not constitute a return to public school. When completing your F70561 (pre-payment) file each quarter, please ensure you're not using an entry date for those students who are enrolled part time in district virtual programs. Using an entry date will cause student payments to be delayed and increase the number of phone calls you receive from parents and private schools.

McKay Scholarship Intents

Almost 14,000 intents have been filed for the 2016-17 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.

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.

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 Information for Parents

After a parent files intent to participate in the McKay program, a letter or e-mail message 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

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 2016-17 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.

familiar with this brochure in case a parent references it when contacting you. The [brochure](#) is available on the School Choice website.

Spotlight: Shawn Williams



The Florida School Choice Office would like to introduce the newest regional manager to the team, Rashawn (Shawn) Williams. She was born and raised in Daytona Beach, and has earned a Bachelor of Science from Florida A & M University and a Master in Career and Technical Education from the University of Central Florida. A mother of two, Shawn also volunteers her time as a youth advisor and head coach of a youth cheerleading squad at her local church. Shawn works with parents and private schools in Region 2, which covers the central Florida area.

"Looking forward to a great school year!" - Shawn Williams

