



District Bulletin | March-April 2017

2017 Legislative Session

The 2017 session of the Florida Legislature is now underway. Some of the bills that have been filed may impact state scholarship programs. Watch for updates on the outcome of session in future newsletters from our office.

Gardiner Scholarship Matrix Request

Pursuant to section 1002.385, F.S., funding for a student's Gardiner Scholarship account is initially calculated with a matrix of 253. However, scholarship parents may request a review of their student's IEP, and district personnel must complete a revised matrix of services for those students. Parents who want a matrix update 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-scholarshipprograms/gardiner/>.

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

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](#)

Scholarship Resources



Launched by the Department of Education last fall, [Florida Students Achieve](#) is a website that provides a central location where parents and families can access the information they need to make the best education decisions for their students. The site contains links to both traditional public school options as well as other school choice options.

To access specific information on scholarship programs, families may also

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.

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.

visit our website at

www.floridaschoolchoice.org. Each area contains links specifically for parents, so it's a good resource to direct families toward when they have questions. Also please feel free to share our toll-free number with parents (800.447.1636). We have staff available who are trained to assist with scholarship program concerns.

McKay Eligibility Notification Requirement

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. To certify compliance with this requirement, please visit <http://fluidsurveys.com/s/mckay2017-2018/> to complete and submit the Notification Verification Form to our office prior to Monday, April 17, 2017.

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