



District Bulletin | October - November 2018

## District Downloadable Excel File

When logged into our website, you may access the District Downloadable Excel file. This file will help districts accurately report FTE by providing up-to-date payment information for McKay Scholarship students.

In reporting FTE for McKay students, if you find that a student on the list is physically in attendance at a public school during the time of the survey, he or she should be reported as a public school student. Please enter the appropriate matrix codes on our website when they have returned to public school.

## 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 2019-20 school year will be accepted between January and March of 2019. FAQs for both district personnel and private schools are available at <http://www.fldoe.org/accountability/assessments/k-12-student-assessment/private-schools/>.

## 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.

## Clearing McKay EPS Students for Payment

As the second quarterly McKay Scholarship payments are soon to arrive at private schools, you may be contacted about students who did not receive a payment due to being marked as Enrolled In Public School (EPS) based on your district's response to the McKay Pre-Payment Verification File (F70561). If a student has been marked EPS incorrectly, it's easy to correct the record.

Once you log into our website, click the link called McKay EPS Student List. On this page you can click "Remove EPS Flag" next to the student's name to clear the EPS designation (or "Restore EPS Flag if you clear a student by accident). **You will only need to submit a District Verification Form to our office if you're**

## Parentally Placed Students

Students receiving any of the State's K-12 scholarships to attend a private school fall into the category of parentally-placed private school students. The Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services has a technical assistance paper on the topic on the FDOE website at <http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-6084/dps-2011-23.pdf>. School districts where not for profit private schools are located have an obligation to ensure that students with disabilities in those schools have an opportunity to participate in programs assisted by or carried out under Part B of IDEA. The specific type of services to be provided are determined during the school district's consultation with schools and parents. These students should be served under a Services Plan. These services should be available for both Gardiner and McKay students.

Additionally, for students using the Gardiner Scholarship – the statute that created the program also allows districts to enter into a contract with Gardiner families to provide services that could be paid to the district using scholarship funds and would be **beyond** those equitable services provided to any parentally-placed private school student. Districts, however, are not required to enter into contracts with Gardiner Scholarship families. *For* further information on ESE services, please contact the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services at 850.245.0475.

## 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/>.

## trying to clear the EPS flag from a previous pay period.

In addition to removing the EPS flag, please update the student information in your district records if the student has withdrawn from public school. This will ensure the student is not erroneously marked as EPS in the future. If you have questions about the list, please email [Claire.Padgett@fldoe.org](mailto:Claire.Padgett@fldoe.org).

## 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 2018-19 school year will be compared by the Department against the October 2017 and February 2018 FTE survey data.

A student does not have to be reported for funding in the October 2018 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.

## McKay Public School Choice

Districts may accept McKay public school students throughout the school year, provided the selected school has an appropriate program for the student according to his or her IEP of 504 plan. The same applies for eligible McKay Scholarship students requesting a transfer to a public school in an adjacent district. Please be reminded **that there is no statutory deadline** for the Public School McKay Scholarship Option.

Students currently in a McKay private school may exercise the McKay public school option. Parents are required to notify the district that the student is returning to the public school under the McKay Public School Option, and the district will discuss with the parent what choices are available. In the future, if the parent wishes for the student to return to a private school under McKay, the student will need to file a new intent and meet all eligibility requirements including having an IEP or 504 Plan and meeting the prior year attendance requirement.

The department collects data related to the school choice options selected by students, including the number of students who transfer to another public school through the McKay Scholarship Program. **Public school McKay participation is reported in the Educational Choice Data Element in the Automated Student Information System as code M.** Please help us ensure that the number of students being reported as McKay public school students is accurate. Our office receives multiple requests for this information and greatly appreciates your assistance in providing the highest quality data.

### More Information

[District Verification Deadlines](#)

[Regional Managers](#)

[McKay Calendar](#)

[McKay Deadlines](#)

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