



## District Bulletin | November-December 2019

### 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 2019-20 school year will be compared by the Department against the October 2018 and February 2019 FTE survey data. A student does not have to be reported for funding in the October 2017 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 Scholarship (FTC) student, Gardiner Scholarship student, or a Family Empowerment Scholarship (FES) 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, 1002.385 and 1002.394, Florida Statutes.

The private school must have at least one FTC Scholarship student, Gardiner Scholarship student, or FES 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 2020-21 school year will be accepted between January and March of 2020. FAQs for both district personnel and private schools are available at:

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

### District Verification Form/ EPS List

By November 1, McKay schools received their second quarterly scholarship payment. With each quarterly payment, the School Choice office provides a Reconciliation Report to ensure that each enrolled student is paid appropriately, and that payments are not issued to students who are not entitled to receive a payment. The Reconciliation Report lists McKay students for whom a payment has not been issued, along with the reason the payment was not issued. For students listed EPS (enrolled in public school) in error, a McKay District Verification Form signed by the school, the parent, and the district, must be submitted to our office.

### 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 contact the district directly for this request, and must make their SFO aware of the request. 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



*left: Khyla Sabio, right: Karla Hernandez*

This month, we would like to highlight our two new call center staff members, Khyla Sabio and Karla Hernandez. Both Khyla and Karla will be helping our call center answer over 20,000 phone calls per year regarding School Choice issues from private schools, districts, and parents. Both of these ladies are Spanish-speaking representatives who pride themselves in providing the best customer service to all callers.

Khyla Sabio (left) was born to Honduran parents in Miami, Florida. She is currently a junior studying Political Science at Florida A&M University. Khyla loves participating in volunteer work and has volunteered as a mentor and tutor for students at Rickards High School in Tallahassee for the past three years. She is now a hired tutor for the school and enjoys helping students very much. Her love for education led her to her position here at the Department; she says, "I am extremely excited about working here, and I hope to grow here as well. That's my main goal."

Karla Hernandez (right) is a native of Tallahassee, Florida, and is a junior at The Florida State University. She is currently studying Psychology with a minor in Biology, and is of Mexican descent. After college, Karla plans to attend grad school for Occupational Therapy. Working for the call center, Karla says "I really enjoy speaking with all different types of people." Aside from her work here at the School Choice office, Karla works part-time for the City of Tallahassee Parks and Recreation at a local tennis facility.

## 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.

## Additional Resources:

[Regional Managers](#)

[McKay Calendar](#)

[McKay Deadlines](#)

*Happy Holidays!*

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