



## District Bulletin | October~November 2020

### **First Lady Casey DeSantis Announces 1,000 Devices for Children in Foster Care in Florida**

First Lady DeSantis announced on October 27, 2020, that the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) and the Florida Department of Families and Children (DCF) are partnering up to provide foster children in Florida nearly 1,000 devices such as laptops and notebooks, to aide their educational stability and reach their full potential. Commissioner of Education Richard Corcoran believes, “Foster care students have faced unique levels of disruption to their learning and home environments during Florida’s response and recovery, including spikes in the need to relocate and food insecurities, and consistent mobile access to educational supports can give them some certainty in this otherwise historically challenging period for foster care students.” State and federal funds from FDOE will provide assistance to these vulnerable students. Based on data reported by the Florida Coalition for Children, these devices will be provided to the following counties: Bay, Brevard, Broward, Clay, Collier, Hendry, Hernando, Highlands, Holmes, Lake, Lee, Marion, Miami-Dade, Orange, Osceola, Palm Beach, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk and Seminole. To learn how you can help foster care families and students, contact your local community help-based agencies, or visit [www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/foster-care/](http://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/foster-care/).

### **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/>.



## McKay 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.

## District Verification Form/EPS List

By November 1, McKay schools should have 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

## 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 on 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/>.



## District Contact Information

As we take on the 2020-2021 school year, please take a moment to check the district contact list information listed for your district on the School Choice website. You may edit or update the information by logging on to your district page. Should you need additional assistance, please contact our office.

### Additional Resources:

[Regional Managers](#)

[McKay Calendar](#)

[McKay Deadlines](#)

[District Time Table](#)