

# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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Florida Department of Education  
*Your Child • Your Choice*  
IMPROVE K-12 EDUCATIONAL CHOICE OPTIONS

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** District School Superintendents

**FROM:** Adam Miller, Interim Executive Director  
**Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice**  
Pam Stewart, Chancellor of Public Schools  
**Division of Public Schools**

**DATE:** July 29, 2013

**SUBJECT:** Opportunity Scholarship Program-Elementary and Middle School Grades-  
Parental Notifications

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School eligibility as related to the Opportunity Scholarship Program (OSP) includes those schools earning a grade of “F” or three consecutive “Ds” pursuant to s. 1008.34, F.S. Current statute requires districts to offer the parents of students within these schools the option to enroll their student(s) in a higher performing public school (receiving a performance grade of “C” or better) in their district **with** transportation or in any other district in the state **without** transportation.

Pursuant to the release of the 2012-13 elementary and middle school grades, the Department of Education has determined those schools that have been designated as having received a performance grade category “F” or three consecutive “Ds”. The list of affected elementary/middle schools can be found at [www.floridaschoolchoice.org/Information/OSP/](http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org/Information/OSP/).

The OSP statute and corresponding Rule 6A-6.0950, F.A.C. require school district to timely notify parents of their Opportunity Scholarship options as soon as the eligibility designation is made. As provided by statute as well as the new rule referenced herein, parents of students currently assigned to a school on the list must be notified of the transfer options within **15 days** of notification by the Department of Education.

**ADAM MILLER**  
*Interim Executive Director*  
*Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice*

Specifically, school districts must provide the parents of students who attended the school(s) on the list for the 2012-2013 school year or are assigned to attend such schools in 2013-2014, the option to enroll their children in a higher performing public school in the district (with transportation) or in any other district in the state (without transportation). However, school districts are not required to notify parents of students who attend the OSP eligible school through a public school choice option, such as a magnet or career academy program as those students have not been "assigned" to that school.

Additionally, if a district's OSP eligible school is considered an ESE Center School, please ensure that parents have been made aware of the McKay Scholarship private school option, in addition to the OSP transfer option.

We have attached sample parent notification letter(s) in English, Haitian-Creole and Spanish that may be used as templates. The notifications should be made to families no later than August 13, 2013. Each affected school district will be required to complete a *Notification Verification Form* after the notifications have been sent and parents have been given an opportunity to respond; therefore, **it is important to document and monitor the total number of transfer requests and placements.** Additionally, Rule 6A-6.0950 F.A.C., states that failure of the district to meet the deadline requirements in this rule will result in a withholding of FEFP funds as follows:

- (a) The Department will withhold FEFP funds based on the total FTE of the eligible school from the next available FEFP distribution to the district.
- (b) Subsequent distributions of the FEFP will continue to be withheld, until the district has fulfilled the requirements of subsections (3) and (4) of this rule.

In order to ensure compliance with this requirement, please submit the completed *Notification Verification Form* no later than September 12, 2013, to the Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice via fax to 850-245-9134. For question or concerns please contact Laura Harrison by e-mail or by phone at [laura.harrison@fldoe.org](mailto:laura.harrison@fldoe.org) or 850-245-0502.

Thank you for assisting us with the important task of ensuring families are aware of their educational options.

cc: Pam Stewart  
Monica Verra-Tirado  
Charlie Hood  
Mark Eggers

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Attachments