



Scholarship Compliance Renewal

Special Points of Interest:

- Attendance Verification for the April 2009 scholarship payment must be submitted between **March 2-13, 2009**.
- Renewing private schools must resolve any outstanding compliance issues by **May 1, 2009**, to remain eligible to participate for the 2009-10 school year.
- The 2009 Florida Legislature will be in Session from March 3-May 1, 2009, and several bills related to the scholarship programs have been proposed.

We are pleased to announce that almost 95% of renewing schools submitted a signed and notarized Scholarship Compliance Form by the March 1st deadline!

Although this is great news, there is still work to be done for many participating private schools. Following the timely submission of the Scholarship Compliance Form, **renewing schools must resolve any outstanding compliance issues**, including the submission of inspection reports and fiscal soundness documentation (if applicable), **prior to May 1, 2009**.

Upon demonstration of compliance for the 2009-10 school year, the Department will

send the private school a letter confirming compliance along with a McKay Scholarship Program deadline chart for the upcoming school year.

The deadline chart for the 2009-10 school year is also on the back of this newsletter. As you may notice, **the intent and enrollment deadline dates do not change** from year to year. These deadlines are established in law and cannot be changed, extended, or waived by the Department of Education.

If you have any questions related to your school's compliance status, please contact your Regional Manager.

Teacher Certification Database

As of July 1, 2008, participating private schools are required to screen new instructional personnel and school administrators through the screening tools developed by the Department of Education.

We are pleased to inform you that direct access to the Teacher Certification Database, one of the Department's screening tools, is now available through the School Choice Web site. The database provides information related to an educator's current certification status and employment history data. Private schools previously submitted a web form with information about the candidate to be screened and the screening results were returned to the private school via e-mail. Now private school users can simply click the [Employment Screening Request](#) link on the quick navigation bar when logged in as a private school and they will be redirected to the Educator Certification Web site.

More information about this and other employee screening requirements is available in the [Ethics in Education Act Technical Assistance](#) document.

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McKay Scholarship Payment Updates

The fourth quarter McKay Scholarship payments for the 2008-09 school year will soon be distributed. It is very important for participating private schools to review these payments immediately, as well as other payment records from throughout the school year. Any discrepancies must be submitted to the Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice by **April 24, 2009**, for corrections to be reflected in the final payment of the school year that is scheduled for May.

A green sheet with additional instructions will be included in the April payment packet. If you have any questions, please contact our Payment Specialist, Scott Lingo at scott.lingo@fldoe.org.

In addition, an amendment to the McKay Scholarship Program Rule has been proposed and will be considered at the March 17, 2009, State Board of Education meeting. If adopted, the amendment will require all claims from a private school for missed scholarship payments to be made by June 1 of the fiscal year in which the scholarship payment was originally due.

More information about the amendment can be found on the Department's rule monitoring Web site at: <https://app1.fldoe.org/rules/default.aspx>.

Attendance Verification



All private schools participating in the McKay Scholarship Program **must complete attendance verification for each scholarship student by March 13, 2009**, in order to receive a fourth quarter scholarship payment. Failure to complete the attendance verification requirement will result in the postponement of scholarship payments.

If you have not done so already, please log in as a private school administrator with your school code and password and scroll down the main page to the attendance verification section. If you need assistance or are experiencing technical difficulties, please contact our Information Hotline at (800) 447-1636.

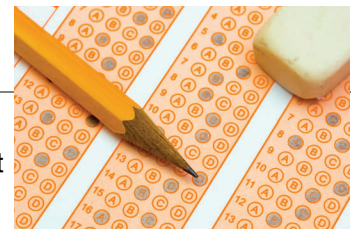
CTC Norm-Referenced Testing

S. 220.187(8)(c)2., F.S. requires private schools participating in the Corporate Tax Credit (CTC) Scholarship Program to annually administer or make provisions for CTC students to take one of the nationally norm-referenced tests identified by the Department of Education.

The statute also requires that a copy of the test scores be provided to the parent and a second copy must be provided to Professor David Figlio of the University of Florida (the independent research organization selected by the Department).

Failure to comply with this requirement or administer an approved test may jeopardize your school's eligibility to continue participating in the CTC Scholarship Program.

For a complete list of approved norm-referenced assessments, please review the detailed [Norm-Referenced Testing Technical Assistance Paper](#) on the School Choice Web site.



2009 Legislative Session

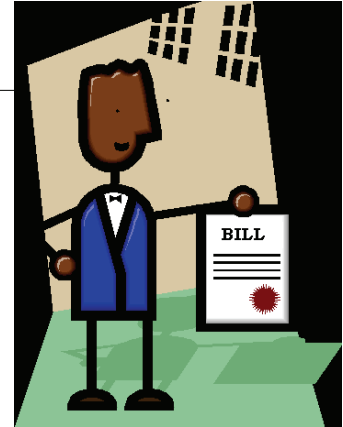
The 2009 Florida Legislature is in session from March 3—May 1, 2009. There are many bills proposed in both the House and the Senate that, if passed by both chambers and approved by the Governor, could affect Florida private schools in general and those participating in the state scholarship programs.

We have prepared an extensive bill summary that includes proposed bills related to private schools generally and the state scholarship programs. The summary includes each bill number, sponsor, title, and a brief description. This summary is available on the School Choice Web site at:

www.floridaschoolchoice.org/PDF/Scholarship_Private_School_Bill_Summary.pdf.

For those interested in monitoring the status of a bill, you can view the progress through the state legislature Web sites. On the left hand side of both the Senate Web site (<http://www.flisenate.gov/>) and the House of Representatives Web site (<http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/>) there are search functions. By entering either a number or related text into the search function, you will find a link to the text of the bill, staff analysis, and information relating to the bill history. You can also click on the bill number for a direct link to the bill's detail page.

For more information about the legislative session or to contact your legislators, please visit Online Sunshine, the official site of the Florida Legislature, at <http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Welcome/index.cfm>.



Scholarship Program Updates

We would like to notify participating private schools of the recent changes that have taken place in the Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice. Tera Teders, the newsletter's editor, has moved to the Charter School area of the office and will no longer be working with the Scholarship Programs. Julia Somers-Arthur, previously the Customer Service Supervisor, has moved into a position as the School Choice Training Coordinator. Julia will now be publishing the newsletter and developing additional school choice training materials. Taking Julia's place as the Customer Service Supervisor is Pam London. Pam will supervise the representatives staffing our School Choice information hotline as well as process Matrix Correction Forms and assist school districts with student issues.



Finally, we have a new Regional Manager on the Scholarship team. Wendy Sikora (pictured left) joined us last week and has started her training course. She will be working with the participating private schools in North Florida and the panhandle (Region 1).

Wendy recently moved to Tallahassee with her husband and two children from the Tampa—St. Petersburg area. She has previous work experience in marketing and teaching and we are very excited to have her on board!

An updated Regional Manager Map with Wendy's contact information is available on the School Choice Web site at:

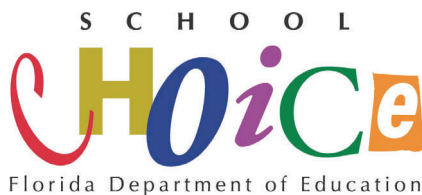
http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org/PDF/Regional_Managers.pdf.

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"Improving K-12 Educational Choice Options"

ON THE WEB AT:

WWW.FLORIDASCHOOLCHOICE.ORG

Current and previous newsletters are available in PDF format on the School Choice Web site when logged in as a private school administrator. Click on the "Newsletters" link on the Quick Navigation bar on the left hand side of the screen.

MCKAY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM IMPORTANT DEADLINES*

2009-2010 Payment Period	Payment Date	Parental Intent Deadline	Private School Enrollment Deadline	Attendance Verification Available Online	Attendance Verification Deadline
July 1 – Sept 30	September 1	July 3	August 2	N/A	N/A
Oct 1 – Dec 31	November 1	September 2	October 2	October 5	October 9
Jan 1 – Feb 28	February 1	December 3	January 2	January 4	January 8
Mar 1 – June 30	April 1	January 31	March 2	March 3	March 16

*Private schools participating in the Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship Program must meet the deadlines set by the Scholarship Funding Organizations to receive payment.

Please note that the deadlines for filing a parental intent and private school enrollment are statutory deadlines; therefore, the department cannot make exceptions if these deadlines are missed.

Failure to complete attendance verification will result in a postponement of scholarship payments until the next scheduled payment period.