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Florida Department of  
Education

## Compliance Renewal Due –*March 1 deadline approaching!*

Participating private schools have approximately one month left to submit a Scholarship Compliance Form in order to renew participation in the state McKay and Florida Tax Credit Scholarship programs.

- **Step 1:** The forms must be **submitted** online, **and** a signed and a notarized hard copy must be mailed to our office **postmarked** no later than **March 1, 2013**.
- **Step 2:** For renewing private schools that submit their compliance forms by the deadline, any outstanding compliance issues must be **resolved and** any additional compliance documentation must be **received by our office** no later than **May 1, 2013**.

*Schools missing either of these deadlines will not be eligible to participate in the scholarship programs for the 2013-2014 school year.*

Your regional manager will assist you with any questions. Schools are advised to contact them as early as possible, as the increasing volume of calls and e-mails may delay their response as deadlines approach.

## McKay Payment Discrepancies

The third quarter McKay Scholarship payments for the 2012-13 school year are currently being distributed. Please review these payments immediately, as well as other payment records from throughout the school year, for any discrepancies.

Discrepancies must be submitted to the Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice using the correct documentation by **Monday, March 4, 2013** for corrections to be reflected in the final payment of the school year that is scheduled for April 1.

If you have any questions, please contact your regional manager.

## Minimum Attendance for Payment

325 W. Gaines Street, Suite 1044  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400

Toll-Free: (800) 447-1636  
Fax: (850) 245-0875  
E-mail:  
schoolchoice@fldoe.org

On the Web at:  
floridaschoolchoice.org



In order for a McKay student to be eligible for a quarterly payment, the student must have **attended for at least ten school days** during that payment period. Rule 6A-6.0970(5)(d) and (e), F.A.C., requires private schools participating in the McKay Scholarship Program to return to the Department any scholarship funds issued for a student that did not attend the private school for ten or more school days during the payment period.

If your school receives a payment for a student who did not attend for at least 10 school days within the payment period, **the warrant must be immediately returned** to the following address:

Florida Department of Education  
OIEPC, Attn: David Girtman  
325 W. Gaines Street, **Suite 1044**  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400

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## Reminder: Regular and Direct Contact

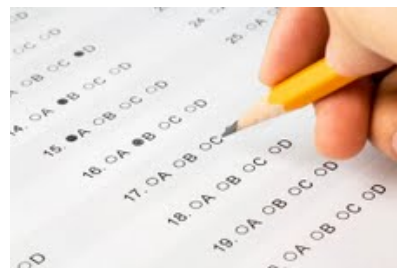
Private schools that participate in the McKay and Florida Tax Credit Scholarships are required to maintain a physical location in Florida where scholarship students regularly attend classes and have **regular and direct contact** with private school teachers. “Regular and direct contact” is defined as:

*A program of instruction that provides for a minimum of 170 actual school instruction days with the required instructional hours (determined by grade level per [State Board Rule 6A-1.09512](#)) under direct instruction of the private school teacher at the school’s physical location with occasional off-site activities under the supervision of the private school teacher.*

For compulsory attendance purposes, net instructional hours per grade level are: (a) Kindergarten: 540 hours, (b) Grades 1-3: 720 hours, (c) Grades 4-12: 900 hours.

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## FTC Norm-referenced Testing



Private schools participating in the Florida Tax Credit (FTC) Scholarship Program are reminded of the requirement to administer, or make provisions for FTC students in grades 3-10 to take one of the nationally norm-referenced tests identified by the Department of Education. The approved assessments and specific instructions are available on the School Choice website

at [www.floridaschoolchoice.org/Information/CTC/norm\\_referenced\\_assessment.asp](http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org/Information/CTC/norm_referenced_assessment.asp).

Participating private schools must make arrangements to administer one of the approved listed tests during the 2012-13 school year, unless the private school has requested and received approval to use an alternate assessment. If you have any

questions related to this requirement, please review the Technical Assistance Paper posted on the School Choice website, or contact your Regional Manager.

Pursuant to House Bill 859, passed during the 2012 Legislative Session, any participating scholarship school with at least one Florida Tax Credit student enrolled may have the opportunity to apply and participate in administering FCAT 2.0 and Florida End-of-Course Assessments to all students at your private school, for the **2013-14 school year**. The links for the application to participate and Frequently Asked Questions are now available via your secured log-in. The application window will be January 2-March 1, 2013, with school eligibility determinations finalized in August 2013.

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### *In the Spotlight*—Commissioner Tony Bennett



On December 12<sup>th</sup> 2012 the Florida State Board of Education voted to select Dr. Tony Bennett as the next Commissioner of Education.

Dr. Bennett said, “I am honored and excited by the opportunity here. I look forward to getting out, visiting schools, and meeting with and listening to students, parents, teachers, and leaders in districts across the state as we work together to ensure that every student in Florida has the kind of world-class education that allows them to flourish.”

Dr. Bennett was elected Superintendent of Indiana’s public schools in 2009, promising to increase student performance, reward great teachers, increase options for parents, and strengthen school autonomy. He was instrumental in increasing the state’s graduation rate beyond 85 percent, implementing the Indiana Growth Model detailing the amount of progress each student has made, and A-F school grades similar to Florida’s grading system.

Dr. Bennett was named 2011 Education Reform Idol by the Fordham Institute and 2010 Government Leader of the Year by the Indiana Chamber of Commerce. Dr. Bennett holds both a bachelor’s and master’s degree in secondary education and a doctorate in education. He began his career in education as a high school biology teacher, while coaching several sports including basketball, baseball and track and field.

Dr. Bennett replaced Chancellor of Public Schools Pam Stewart who served as the department’s interim commissioner for the past three months.

Governor Scott said, “We are excited that the State Board of Education chose Tony Bennett as Florida’s new Commissioner of Education. Tony has a great record of achievement in Indiana and I am confident he will be a tireless advocate for Florida’s students.”

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## Mark Your Calendar

**February 1**—First day for new students to file an intent for the 2013-14 school year.

**March 1**—Scholarship Compliance Forms due for 2013-14 participation.

**March 2**—Date by which a new student must be enrolled to receive the fourth quarterly payment.

**March 4-11**—McKay Attendance Verification week for the final payment period.

**May 1**—Date by which all Compliance issues must be resolved.

**June 1**—Date by which requests for missing payments must be submitted.

**July 3**—Intent filing deadline for the September 1 payment.

**August 2**— Enrollment deadline for the September 1 payment.

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