



## McKay Scholarship Parent Bulletin | October 2019

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### Your Questions Answered

The following are a list of frequently asked questions we have heard from McKay scholarship parents. If you have questions about your child's scholarship, email us at [schoolchoice@fldoe.org](mailto:schoolchoice@fldoe.org).

**Q. I have been informed that my child's school will be closing its doors before the end of the year. What do I need to do to keep the McKay scholarship?**

**A.** If your school is closing, your child may be transferred to another McKay school. If the original school withdraws your child via our website, the new school can enroll him or her. If you or the new school have questions about the transfer process, feel free to contact us at the number below. The timing of your transfer can affect scholarship payments. If a student transfers, the first school the student attends for a total of ten school days during a payment period is entitled to receive the check for that quarter, and the parent is required to sign it. Often, private schools will come to an agreement to share the scholarship funds when a student transfers, but there is no requirement to do this, and any arrangements must be worked out between the two schools.

**Q. I am interested in how my son would score on state assessments. If I take him to a public school to have him participate in testing, will that invalidate his scholarship?**

**A.** Every McKay student is entitled to participate in state testing. You will need to make arrangements well ahead of time with the district so they can include him on their testing list and have test materials for him at the testing site. Participating in state assessments is not regarded as a return to public school.

**Q. The school received my child's check, but it has my spouse's name on it. Because of our work schedules, I take the kids to school. Can I sign the check?**

**A.** No, only the person whose name is on the check should sign it. If it is more convenient for you to sign the checks, ask the school to submit a Guardian Issue Form to our office so that future checks are issued in your name. You'll also need to complete a notarized Parent Affidavit in your name.

**Q. My daughter would like to study a foreign language, but our private school does not offer that course. Can she take Spanish online without losing her scholarship?**

**A.** McKay Scholarship students may complete up to two state-funded virtual school courses each school year without jeopardizing scholarship eligibility. Courses can be taken from [FLVS-Flex](#), or from a district part-time virtual program. Contact the virtual provider for more information and available course options.

## McKay Scholarship Funding Amounts

The funding amounts for the various matrix levels are set annually by the legislature during the budget process, and may vary from year to year. The updated amounts for the upcoming school year is generally available around mid-July, and can be accessed through the parent login with your unique user id and password for students enrolled in a participating private school. Keep in mind that students that qualified with an IEP and are matriculating from 3rd to 4th grade or from 8th to 9th grade usually see a reduction in their funding for the new school year, as do traditional public school students.

## Money Matters: What is a Fee Schedule?

As a McKay parent, you are probably aware by now of your child's funding amount and quarterly payments. But where does that money go? How does it get spent? For answers to those questions, you will want to have a look at your child's **Student Fee Schedule**. The Student Fee Schedule is the list of services that your school creates for your particular child when they enroll him or her. You can view it by logging on, using the password sent to you at the time your child enrolled. (Go to [www.floridaschoolchoice.org](http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org) and select Parent Login from the Secured Login section. If you do not have your password, please contact us for help.)

What might be on your child's Student Fee Schedule? It will, of course, list tuition. But it may also include a number of other academic items or services that relate to your child's education. Non-academic items such as meals or day care cannot be included on the Student Fee Schedule. The Student Fee Schedule lists the total charges for your child for the school year. If this amount is less than your scholarship, the payment checks will be issued for the lesser amount. If the total comes to more than your scholarship, you will be responsible for coming to an arrangement with the school to deal with the difference. If you have any questions about your child's fee schedule, arrange to discuss them with your school administrator.

## Parent Affidavit

Parents of participating students are required to have an approved [Parent Affidavit Form](#) on file with the Department in order to receive scholarship payments. The form, which is available through our website, must be signed and notarized to affirm the validity of your signature. If you have not yet completed an affidavit, check with your private school to find out if they have a notary available to assist you with this task. Parent affidavits can be emailed to [parentaffidavit@fldoe.org](mailto:parentaffidavit@fldoe.org) or faxed to 850-245-0875.

## McKay Payments – Restrictive Endorsement

When a private school receives McKay Scholarship checks, the school is required to stamp the back of each check "For Deposit Only" along with the name of the school and their bank account number. **Scholarship checks should not leave the possession of the private school, and students should not take scholarship checks home for your endorsement (signature).** The private school should notify you that the checks have arrived and ask you to come in to the school to restrictively endorse (sign) the checks.

It is essential that the parent whose name is on the scholarship check be the individual that endorses the check when received by the private school. Under law, power of attorney cannot be given from the parent to the private school. You should make sure that the back of the scholarship check states that the money is to be deposited into the private school's account. If not, you should write the statement "For deposit only into the account of (name of private school)" before signing the check. You should also verify before signing that the information on the front of the check is correct.

## Scholarship Program Deadlines

Scholarship payments are guided by statutory requirements. If you know a family who is thinking of entering their child in the McKay scholarship program for the first time, you may want to remind them that their intent must be filed by December 3, and the student must be enrolled by January 2, in order to receive the February 1 scholarship payment. The [McKay Scholarship Deadlines Chart](#) is available on our website.

## Going Through Changes? Update Your Info!

If you have changes in your contact information, let us know right away so we can keep you informed on issues involving your child. You can keep your address, email, and phone number up-to-date through the Parent Login on our main webpage; Once logged in, you'll see: "Click here to Change your Contact Information;" Simply enter any changes and click "Save Changes;"

## McKay Upcoming Deadlines

### October 2

Deadline for private schools to enroll new students for the November 1<sup>st</sup> McKay payment.

### October 3-9

McKay Attendance Verification deadline for private schools to complete for the 2<sup>nd</sup> payment period.

### December 3

Date by which a new student (coming from public school) must file an application of intent in order to be eligible for the February 1<sup>st</sup> payment.

## Other Resources



Family Network on Disabilities (FND) was founded in 1985 by a group of parents. It is a grassroots organization for persons with disabilities and their families that is family-centered and family-driven. FND is working in communities around Florida helping organize events, delivering free workshops, and providing one on one assistance to families who have children with special needs. To see what they have planned in your area, you can [register](#) on their website at [fndusa.org](http://fndusa.org).

## Florida Center for Students with **UNIQUE ABILITIES**

The Florida Center for Students with Unique Abilities was created by the Florida Legislature to provide financial support so students with intellectual disabilities have opportunities for on-campus college experiences and employment opportunities through degree, certificate, or non-degree programs. Support provided by the Center includes scholarship funding for students and grant funding to support postsecondary institutions as they develop new opportunities. For more information, go to [fcsua.org](http://fcsua.org).

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