



## McKay Scholarship Parent Bulletin | Summer 2020



### GREETINGS FROM OUR NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR!

*Greetings!* My name is Dr. Dré Graham and I am incredibly excited about the opportunity to serve the students of the state of Florida as a member of the IEPC team! I look forward to our collaborative efforts to positively impact the next generation of world changers. My road to the Department was through the vessel of public education. I am a proud product of Hillsborough County

Public Schools, graduating from the C. Leon King High School International Baccalaureate Program. After earning my Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Music Education from the University of Florida, I went back to KHS and took over for my high school band director, where I have served as the Director of Instrumental Studies for the past 10 years. While there, I earned my second Master's Degree (Educational Leadership) and my Ph.D. (Music Education). Most recently, I served as the 2020 Florida Teacher of the Year and Christa McAuliffe Ambassador for Education. My desire has always been to promote equity in education and provide ALL students with an opportunity to succeed. I anxiously await the future victories the Office for Independent Education and Parental Choice will experience by way of providing open doors for ALL the students in the great state of Florida!

- **Dakeyan C. Graham, Ph.D.**

Executive Director  
Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice  
2020 Florida Teacher of the Year



## COVID-19 (Coronavirus) - Florida Preparedness Updates

The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) is working closely with the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to monitor COVID-19 and is actively working to ensure that the most up-to-date guidance is quickly and accurately disseminated. FDOE understands that concerns about health and safety are paramount for all education communities. For continued updates, please visit the Department's [COVID-19 Response website](#) for information such as: resources for families and teachers, best practices for distance learning, and important documents & webinars.

## Help Choosing a Private School

The McKay private option gives parents the opportunity to choose a private school that is best suited to meet their child's educational needs. It is important to keep in mind that private (non-public) educational programs are not regulated, controlled, approved, or accredited by the Florida Department of Education; therefore, we only have limited information on the curriculum, services, or programs offered by these private schools.

### How to search for private schools

A private school directory is located at [www.floridaschoolchoice.org](http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org) in the K-12 Private Schools section. Although we are unable to recommend a private school that will be best suited to meet your child's needs, there are parent resources provided on the [School Choice website](#). Additionally, a list of questions that may be useful to ask a prospective private school is also available [here](#).

## Private School Enrollment Deadline

If your child is approved for the McKay Scholarship, please keep in mind that **August 2 is the deadline for your private school to enroll your child in the online portal in order for the 1st payment to be released by September 1.** You can view all the McKay deadlines on the [School Choice website](#).



## 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 when you login with your unique user ID and password or confirmation number if you **filed an intent after February 2, 2020**. Please keep in mind that students who 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.

### What does the McKay Scholarship Cover?

The services that you can see on your child's Student Fee Schedule are selected from the private school's School Fee Schedule, which includes services and fees offered by the school to all students. Think of the School Fee Schedule as a restaurant menu. Your child's Student Fee Schedule would be the meal check listing your selections from that menu. 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. You may see various listed fees, special programs, tutoring, therapy, or summer school. Schools may also charge for supplies, materials, transportation, uniforms, insurance, field trips, or other items or activities related to the child's education. Non-academic items such as meals or extracurricular activities or before/after school 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.



## 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.

## Additional Resources

### My Career Shines

[My Career Shines](#) is an age-appropriate online planning tool designed to help all Florida middle and high school students assess their interests, explore careers, plan for education and prepare for work. To learn more about this new education and career planning system, please visit [MyCareerShines Learning Center](#).

### Florida Students Achieve

[Florida Students Achieve](#) is a website that provides a central location where parents and families can access the information they need to make the best education decisions for their students. The site contains links to both traditional public school options as well as other school choice options.

## McKay Upcoming Deadlines

### July 3

Application of intent filing deadline for the September 1 McKay payment.

### August 2

Private school enrollment deadline for the September 1 McKay payment.

### September 2

Application of intent filing deadline for new students to be eligible for the November 1 McKay payment.