



McKay Scholarship Parent Bulletin | Spring 2018

Going through Changes? Updating your info is easy!

If you have changes in your contact information, do 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 at www.floridaschoolchoice.org. Once logged in, you'll see: "Click here to Change your Contact Information." Simply enter any changes and click "Save Changes." If you want to change or correct your name or Social Security Number, though, you'll need to get a Guardian Issue Form from your child's private school. This is the same form that's used to change the person who will be signing the scholarship payment checks. Don't delay in reporting any changes to this critical information, or you may just miss a quarterly payment!

Summer Programs and McKay

With spring break upon us, summer and the end of the school year aren't far behind. Here are the answers to some questions parents frequently ask about summer programs and the McKay Scholarship.

Q. My daughter wants to take Chinese, which is not offered at her private school. Can she take a course online over the summer?

IEP Re-evaluation

If your child had an Individual Education Plan (IEP) developed in public school and has been in the McKay Scholarship Program for a while, you may have received an offer for a re-evaluation from your school district. Federal law requires school districts to offer re-evaluation to all Exceptional Student Education (ESE) students at least every three years. This applies to ESE students in private schools as well, including McKay Scholarship students. The district has to document that they have made the offer, but the parent has the option of agreeing or refusing to have a child re-evaluated.

Once a student is no longer in public school, their IEP is not active. Having your student re-evaluated will not result in a change to your child's matrix, funding, or McKay Scholarship status. However, a re-evaluation can provide you with a picture of your child's current learning needs. As with the original IEP, a private school is not required to adhere to the

A. Yes. A student may complete up to two courses from FLVS or a part-time district virtual program without jeopardizing McKay scholarship eligibility.

Q. Can I enter my child in summer school provided by the local public school district to keep up her skills?

A. No. Enrollment in any academic public school summer class is considered a return to public school and would make your child ineligible for the McKay Scholarship.

Q. My son is ready for driving lessons. Can he take a drivers' ed course at the local high school if we pay the fee ourselves?

A. We recommend parents interested in drivers' ed or other non-academic courses conducted at a public school make sure that the program is not funded through the Florida Educational Finance Program (FEFP) and that the student will not be entered by the school district as returning to public school. You may even want to ask for this confirmation in writing as a precaution.

Q. There is still some money left over from my child's McKay scholarship amount for this year. Can it be used towards a summer program for my child?

A. It may be possible for the remaining amount to be used towards a summer program at your child's participating private school. Summer school must be included as an option on the School Fee Schedule. For specific questions, the school should contact their Regional Manager in our office.

Planning for Next School Year

Once your child is a McKay Scholarship student, their scholarship status will continue until they graduate, turn 22, or returns to public school enrollment, so there's no need to file a new Intent to continue in the scholarship program each year. And, if you're planning on your student remaining at the same private school next fall, just be sure they are re-enrolled by the private school at the

recommendations of the re-evaluation, but it may be a helpful starting point in planning for the services and support that will help your child to achieve their best.

If you have questions about the re-evaluation process, or if you would like more information, we recommend that you contact your local public school district's ESE office.

Resources



The [20th Annual Family Cafe](#) is set for June 15-17, 2018 at the Hyatt Regency Orlando. This three-day event features dozens of breakout sessions, a full Exhibit Hall, a series of Keynote speakers and multiple opportunities to network with other families. There is no registration fee for individuals with disabilities and their family members or caregivers. To make a hotel reservation for the event, contact the Hyatt Regency Orlando at 888-421-1442 and refer to The 20th Annual Family Café.



[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

end of the school year. The deadline for re-enrollment is August 2 each year.

If, however, you have concerns regarding your child's experience in their current private school, you do have options. If you wish, you can transfer your child to another participating private school. You may make the transfer at any time during the school year, but it may be simplest to do so at the end of the school year. To be eligible for 100% of your child's scholarship amount for next school year, the new school must enroll them by August 2.

You also have the option of transferring your child back to public school, either as a public school McKay Scholarship student or as a regular student. However, doing so will forfeit the private school scholarship. If you wish your child to return to private school at a later time a new Intent must be filed, and the student will need to meet all eligibility criteria, including prior year public school attendance, as well as having an active IEP or 504 plan and being enrolled in public school at the time of filing.

McKay Scholarship Funding Amounts

The funding amounts for the various matrix levels are set annually by the Florida state government, and may vary from year to year. The updated amounts for future school years are usually available at the beginning of July. 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.

school options as well as other school choice options.

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.

Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice

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