



## McKay Scholarship Parent Bulletin | Fall 2020

### Emergency Order - School Reopening Plans

The Florida Department of Education 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 – as well as parents like yourself. While no Emergency Orders have been issued regarding the extension of the current waiver, the Department is taking every consideration to protect our most vulnerable students and families. Please visit our [COVID-19 webpage](#) for up-to-date information and official Department guidance/orders.

### 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's scholarship. You can keep your address, email, and phone number up-to-date through the Parent Login on our main webpage at [www.floridaschoolchoice.org](http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org). Once logged in, you'll see: **"Click here to Change your Contact Information."** Simply enter any changes and click "Save Changes."

### 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 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 your 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.



## 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.

## Money Matters: What is a Fee Schedule?

As a McKay parent, you are probably aware 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 are enrolled in their selected private school. You can view it by logging on to the Parent Login at [www.floridaschoolchoice.org](http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org). You should have received a password at the time your child enrolled, but please feel free to contact our office for password assistance.

Items on your child's fee schedule include tuition as well as a number of other academic items or services related to your child's education. Non-academic items such as meals or day care cannot be included on the 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 make up the difference. If you have any questions about your child's fee schedule, please arrange to discuss them with your school administrator.



## Your Questions Answered

The following are a list of frequently asked questions received from McKay scholarship parents. If you have questions about your child's scholarship, please 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 our office. 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 considered 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 can sign. 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](https://www.flvsflex.org/), or from a district part-time virtual program. Contact the virtual provider for more information and available course options.



## McKay 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 the next deadline to file a new intent is December 3, 2020. The student must be enrolled by January 2, 2021 in order to receive the February 1, 2021 scholarship payment.

## McKay Deadlines

The deadlines for intent filing, private school enrollment, and quarterly payments are set by Florida Statute. For the 2020-21 school year...

If intent is filed by:	Private school must enroll your child by:	For the school to receive payment on:	Scholarship coverage percentage:	Payment Period:
July 3	Aug. 2	Sept. 1	100%	July 1 - Sept 30
Sept. 2	Oct. 2	Nov. 1	75%	Oct 1 - Dec 31
Dec. 3	Jan. 2	Feb. 1	50%	Jan 1 - Feb 28
Feb. 1	Mar. 2	April 1	25%	March 1 - June 30

The scholarship amount is the state maximum amount or the private school tuition and fees, whichever is less. The scholarship amount is divided into four quarterly payments for the school year. If intent is filed or the student is enrolled after a deadline, the student will not be eligible to receive that quarter's scholarship payments, but will have met the deadline to receive payment the next quarter.

Note: A valid 2020-21 intent will expire if unused by April 30, 2021. A new Intent may be filed for the following year.





## 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](https://www.fndusa.org/register) on their website at [fndusa.org](https://www.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](https://www.fcsua.org).