



PreK-12 Innovation Subcommittee

January 9, 2019

5:00 PM

Mashburn Hall (306 HOB)

Meeting Packet

Committee Meeting Notice

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PreK-12 Innovation Subcommittee

Start Date and Time: Wednesday, January 09, 2019 05:00 pm
End Date and Time: Wednesday, January 09, 2019 06:30 pm
Location: Mashburn Hall (306 HOB)
Duration: 1.50 hrs

Presentation on early learning and implementation of HB 1091

Presentations on state scholarship programs

NOTICE FINALIZED on 12/21/2018 1:06PM by Jones.Missy



Office of Early Learning Overview

Florida House of
Representatives

PreK-12 Choice
and Innovation
Subcommittee

Jan. 9, 2019



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Early Learning Overview

State Administration

- Created within the Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice in the Department of Education
- Fully accountable to the Commissioner of Education but shall independently exercise all powers, duties, and functions prescribed by law and shall not be construed as part of the K-20 education system (Section 1001.213[1], F.S.)



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Early Learning Overview

Office of Early Learning

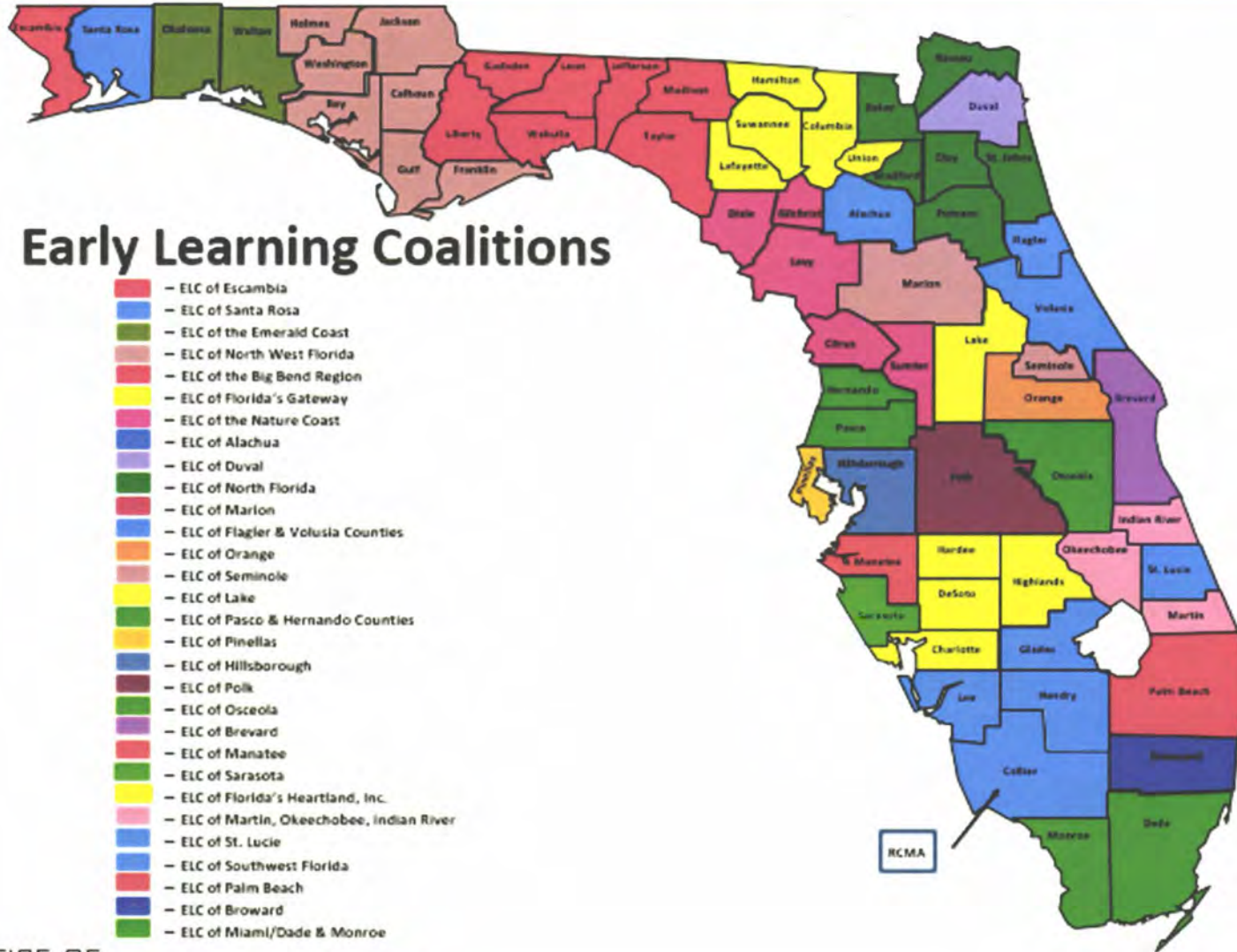
- Lead agency for administering **state and federal child care funds**
- Partners with **30** early learning coalitions, Redlands Christian Migrant Association and others to deliver comprehensive, statewide early learning services
- Responsible for implementing state's **School Readiness** and **Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK)** Education programs



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Regional Administration



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Early Learning Overview

Florida's Early Learning Population

- Approx. 1.3 million children younger than 6¹
- Approx. 41 percent of those are from low-income families²
 - Of the 41 percent, approx. 25 percent participated in school readiness³
- Approx. 76 percent of Florida 4-year-olds participated in VPK⁴

¹US Census Bureau – Census 2010 Summary, File 1, Table PCT12, Feb. 7, 2014.

²US Census American Factfinder, table B17024, year 2015.

³OEL Score Card, low-income eligibility group.

⁴VPK Estimating Conference, Dec. 6, 2018.



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School Readiness

About the Program

- Typical family is single-parent household with two children and annual income of \$21,160
- With current cost of child care in Florida, that parent would pay almost 59 percent of income for child care
- School readiness program reduces that parent's child care costs to approximately five percent of income
- Program supported primarily by federal block grants – Child Care and Development (CCDF) and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) – and state general revenue



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School Readiness

Children Served by Category



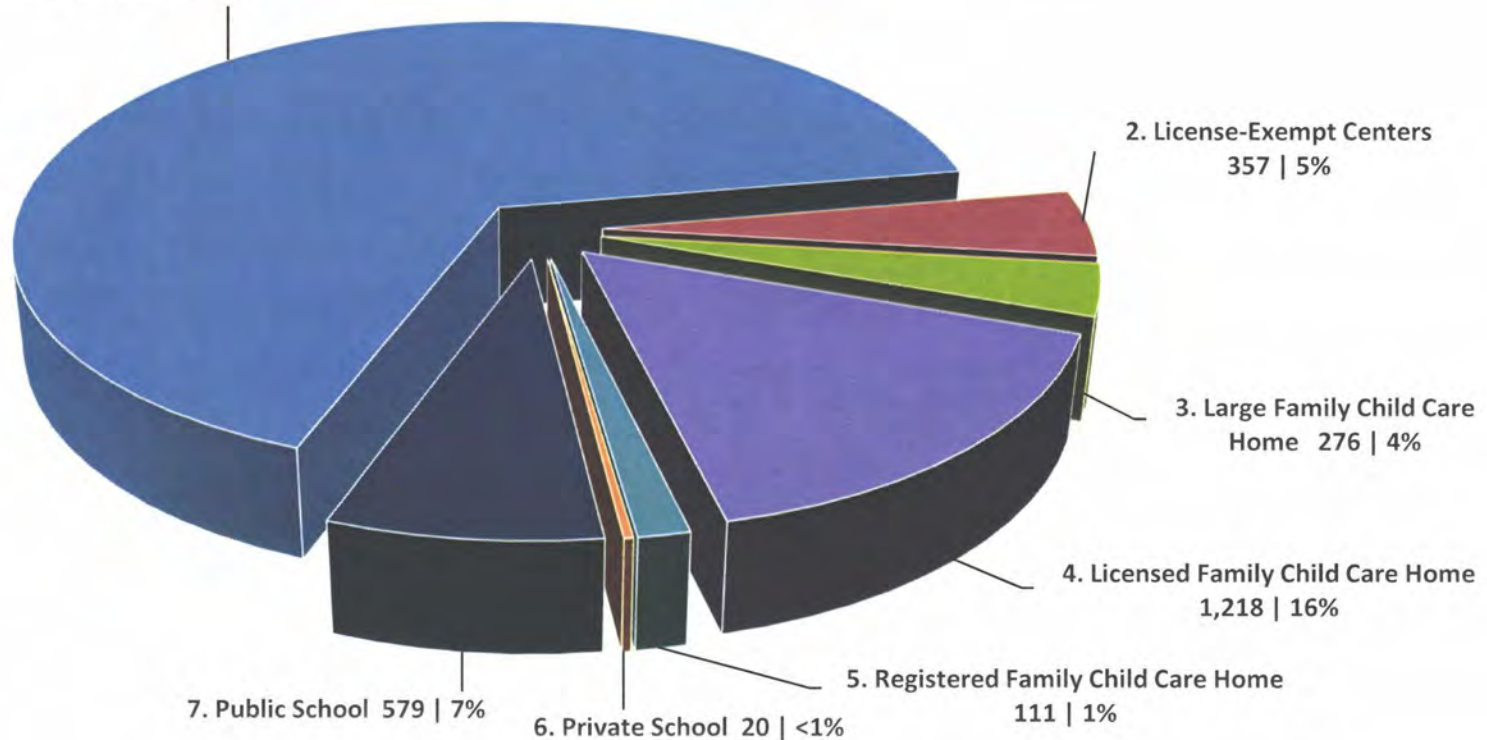
Source: Office of Early Learning Annual Reports



School Readiness

School Readiness Providers FY 2017-2018 (7,676)

1. Licensed Private Centers 5,115 | 67%



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Source: Consolidated database as of Sept. 30, 2018

Voluntary Prekindergarten

About the Program

- The Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program prepares 4-year-old children for success in school and in life.
- Mandated by the Constitution, this program is a free, high-quality education program available to all 4-year-old children residing in the state.
- More than 2 million children have participated in and benefited from VPK.



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Voluntary Prekindergarten

About the Program

- Data collected by DOE show that children who participate in VPK are more ready for kindergarten than children who do not participate in VPK.
- VPK Specialized Instructional Services is a newer program option available for VPK-age children with current individualized educational plans (IEP).
- VPK-SIS allows parents of a VPK-age child to choose additional therapy services in line with child's IEP instead of attending VPK in traditional classroom.

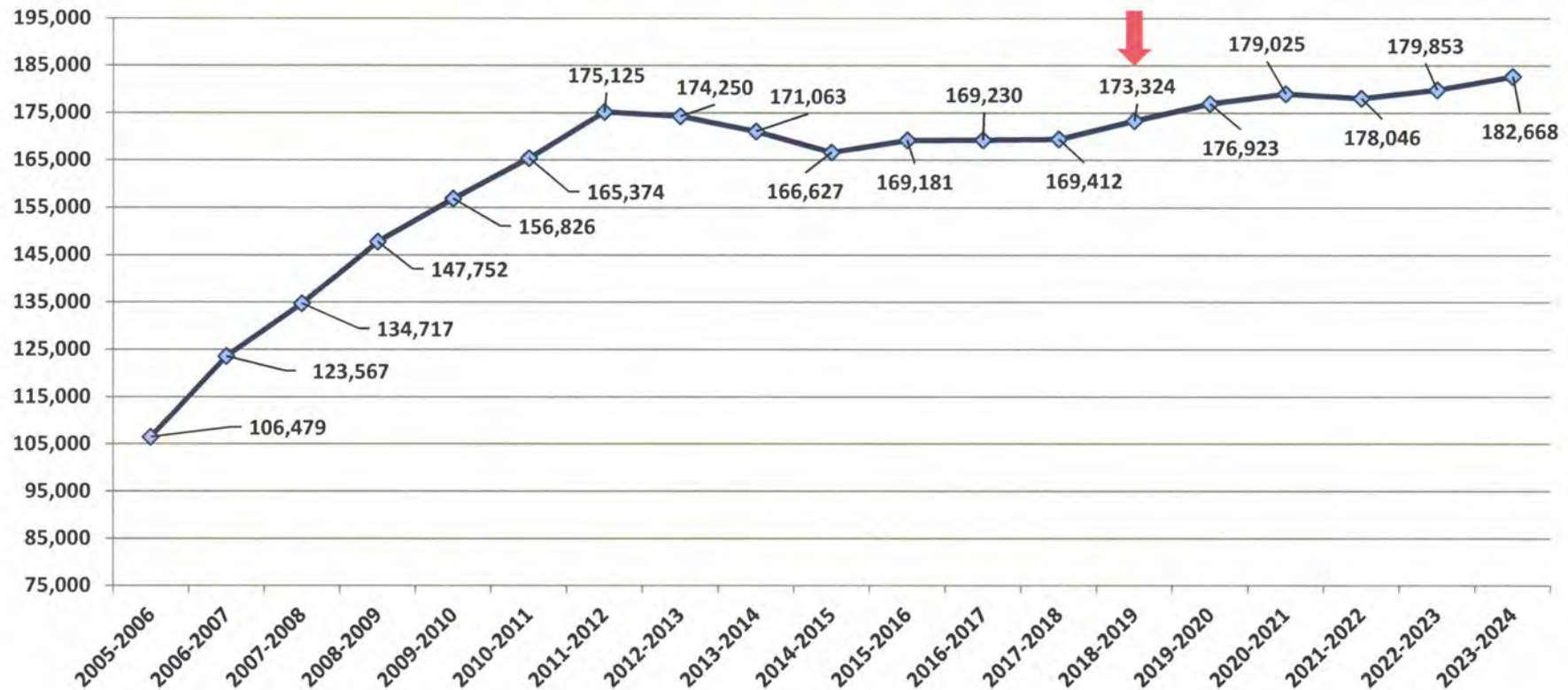


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Voluntary Prekindergarten

VPK Program Year Enrollments 2005-2006 to 2023-2024*



Source: Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Estimating Conference, Dec. 6, 2018

* 2005-2006 - 2017-2018 are actual enrollments and 2018-2019 to 2023-2024 are projected enrollments



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OEL Operations Update

HB 1091 – Effective July 1, 2018

- During 2018 Legislative Session, Florida Legislature passed House Bill 1091 increasing quality and accountability in School Readiness Program.
- Implemented by OEL in partnership with local early learning coalitions.
- Three key issues to providers
 - Program assessment
 - Child assessment
 - Differential payment rates



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Agency Update – HB 1091

Program Assessment 1002.82(n), F.S.

Adopt a program assessment for school readiness providers that measures the quality of teacher-child interactions, including emotional and behavioral support, engaged support for learning, classroom organization and instructional support for children, ages birth to 5

- Program assessment tool is the Classroom Assessment Scoring System
 - Recognized internationally for capturing the elements within classroom that improve child outcomes
 - Primarily measures quality of classroom interactions between teachers and children



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Agency Update – HB 1091

CLASS is an observation-based program assessment instrument and associated system of learning, measuring and improving teacher-child interactions

PreK	Emotional Support	Classroom Organization	Instructional Support
Toddler	Emotional and Behavioral Support	Engaged Support for Learning	
Infant	Responsive Caregiving		



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Agency Update – HB 1091

Differential Payment

- **No later than July 1, 2019, develop differential payment program based on quality measures adopted by office**
- Provide appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities and English Language learners
- Provide data in a format for use in single statewide information system
- Be administered by qualified individuals, consistent with publisher's instructions

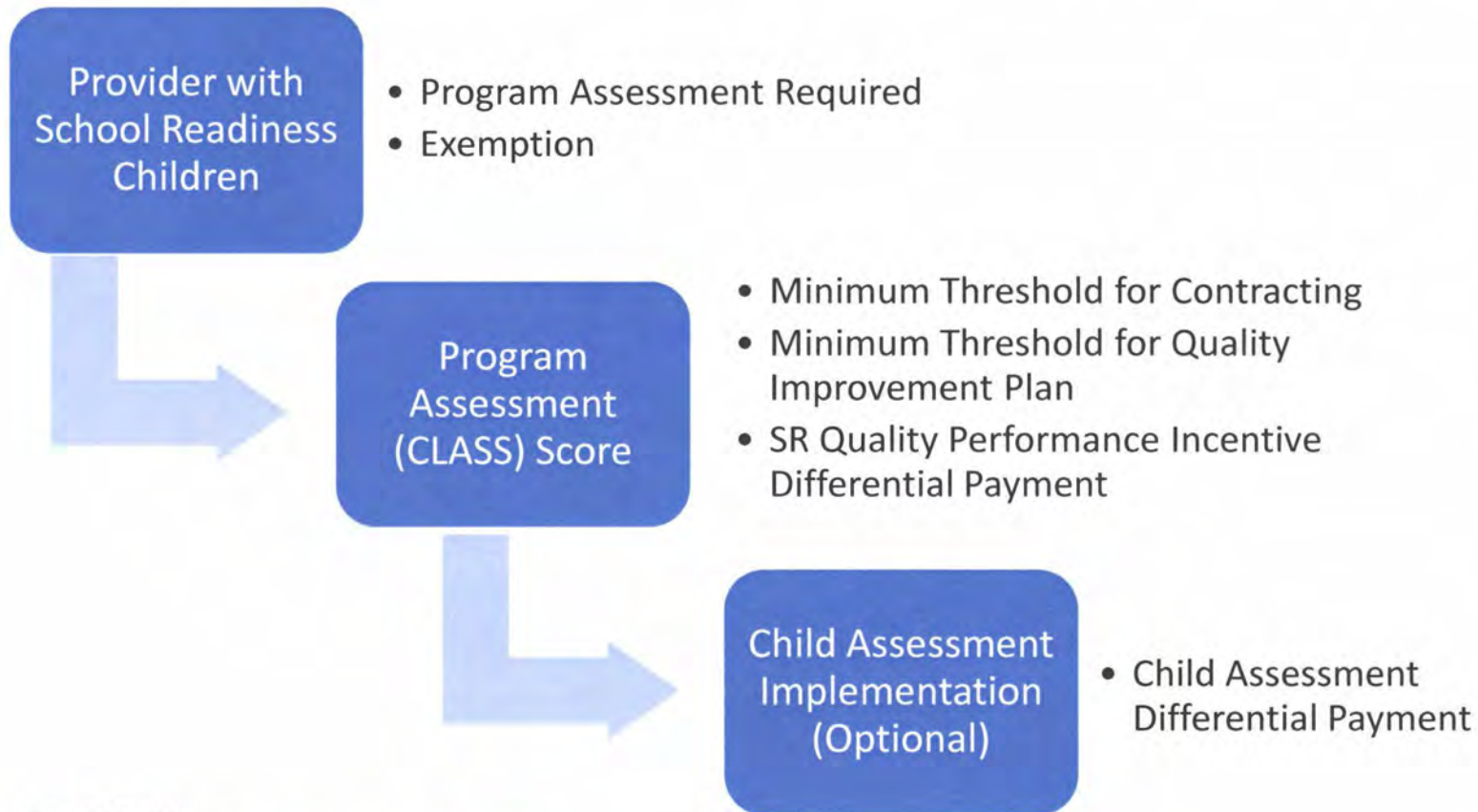


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Agency Update – HB 1091

Before contracting in 2019-20 program year, all SR programs serving children birth to 5, unless exempt, will be assessed with CLASS tool



Early Learning Partnerships

Office of Early Learning

- School Readiness Program
- Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program
- Child Care Resource and Referral
- Child Care Executive Partnership
- Quality Initiatives

Statewide Partners

- Department of Children and Families
- Department of Education
- Department of Economic Opportunity
- Department of Health
- Children and Youth Cabinet
- Department of Financial Services

Community Partners

- Early Learning Coalitions
- Redlands Christian Migrant Association (RCMA)
- Local Child Care Licensing Agencies
- DCF Child Welfare Agencies
- Child Care Providers
- School Boards
- CareerSource Boards (formerly Workforce)
- Health Departments
- Business and Industry



Early learning and child care providers serve families and support state's economic development



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Questions

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STEP UP FOR STUDENTS

Helping public education fulfill the promise of equal opportunity

House PreK-12 Innovation Subcommittee

January 9, 2019

Amy Graham

Senior Policy Director

Hannah Plante

Manager, Legislative Affairs



Scholarship Funding Organizations

- The Department of Education approves eligible nonprofits as Scholarship Funding Organizations to administer four scholarship programs.
 - Tax Credit Scholarship (2002)
 - Gardiner Scholarship (2014)
 - Hope Scholarship (2018)
 - Reading Scholarship Accounts (2018)
- Currently, two SFOs administer the Tax Credit Scholarship and Gardiner Scholarship.
- Step Up For Students administers the Hope Scholarship and Reading Scholarship Accounts.



Accountability for SFOs

- Must conduct level 2 background checks on owners and operators of the SFO.
- Must apply annually to be approved by the State Board of Education. Approval requires an IRS Form 990, financial plans, geographic regions served, description of the application process, an annual report, and a copy of the audits.
- Are subject to 2 audits each year:
 1. Operational and compliance audit by the Auditor General.
 2. Financial audit of accounts and records by an independent CPA, which must be provided to the Auditor General and the Department of Education.
- Must prepare and submit quarterly reports on scholarships to the DOE.



General Responsibilities

- Review student applications and determine eligibility for four scholarship programs.
 - FTC: process documentation of household income
 - Gardiner: process documentation of qualifying disability
- Answer calls, emails and chats from current and prospective parents and providers.
- Communication during the eligibility and funding process.
- Create and maintain Parent and Provider Handbooks.
- Produce quarterly scholarship payments and a weekly ACH payment file for providers and parents for the Gardiner program.
- Produce quarterly reports for the Department of Education.
- Perform quality assurance on reimbursement and application processing.
- Recruitment of contributions and marketing.
- Respond to data requests from external organizations.
- Assist in fraud prevention.



General Responsibilities

- Additional Gardiner Scholarship administration:
 - Establish student accounts.
 - Verify providers and confirm a valid license at the time of each expense.
 - Process reimbursements by reviewing invoices and verifying expenditures.
 - Conduct weekly meetings to review reimbursement requests.
 - Review appeals for denied reimbursements.
 - Conduct Parent and School Advisory Council meetings to receive feedback.



Tax Credit Scholarships for Financial Need

- Created in 2001 for economically disadvantaged students.
- Provides tuition scholarships for private schools or transportation scholarships for students attending a public school in another district.
- Step Up For Students serves 98,826 students in 1,796 schools this year.

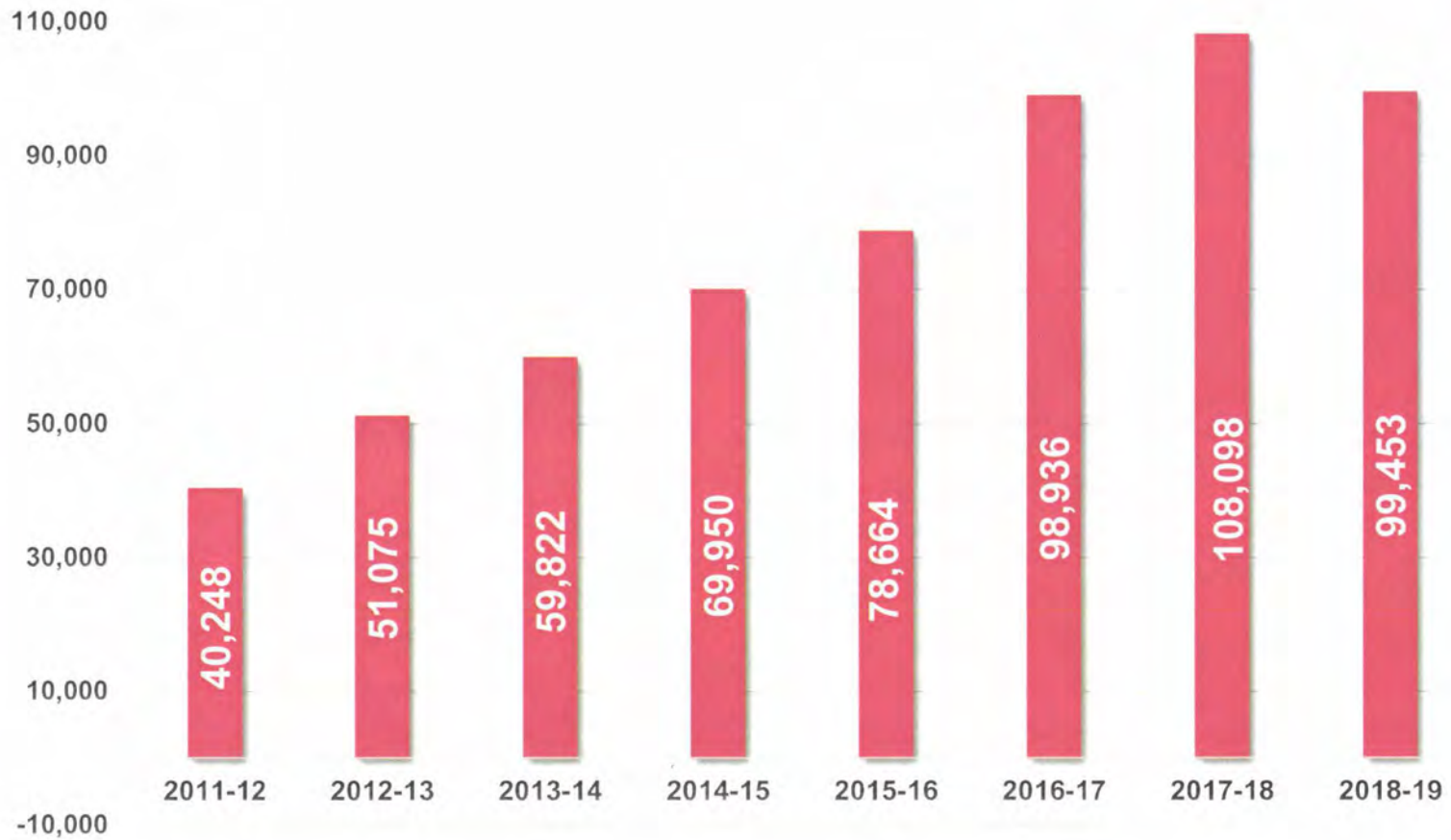


Demand Exceeds Supply

- Received 170,096 student applications before shutting down the online application system on June 29.
- We have 12,974 approved student applications on a waitlist.



Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Enrollment Growth



The Typical Tax Credit Scholarship Student

- **Lives near poverty:** Household income average this year is \$25,738, or 9.1 percent above poverty.
- **Is Hispanic or Black:** 38 percent Hispanic, 30 percent Black, and 26 percent White.
- **Lives with one parent:** 55 percent live in single-parent households.
- **Has struggled academically:** Research shows students “tend to be among the lowest-performing students in their prior school, regardless of the performance level of their public school.”



Tax Credit Scholarship Program Mechanics

- **Eligibility:** Household income must not exceed 200% of poverty (\$50,200 for a household of four) for full scholarship. Partial scholarships for income no greater than 260% of poverty, or \$65,260.
- **Priority:** Renewal students and students with household incomes that do not exceed 185% of poverty, or who are in foster care or out-of-home care have priority.
- **Scholarship:** Full scholarship worth between 88-96 percent of the unweighted FTE amount for public school students, which is \$6,519 for grades K-5, \$6,815 for grades 6-8, and \$7,111 for grades 9-12 this year.
- **Tax-credited contributions:** Companies receive a dollar-for-dollar tax credit on five different state taxes for contributions to SFOs.



What the Research Tells Us

- **Academics:** Annual reports show: 1) Students are the lowest-performing from the public schools they left; 2) they achieve the same test score gains in reading and math as students of all income levels nationally.
- **Long term effects:** An independent study from the Urban Institute found that FTC students were up to 43% more likely to attend college than their public school peers.
- **Financial impact:** Five independent organizations have concluded the scholarship saves tax money. Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability said in 2010 that the state saved \$1.44 for every \$1 lost in tax credits.
- **Public school impact:** Research has shown that “the increased competitive pressure faced by public schools associated with the introduction of Florida’s FTC Scholarship Program led to general improvements in public school performance.”



Gardiner Scholarships for Special Needs

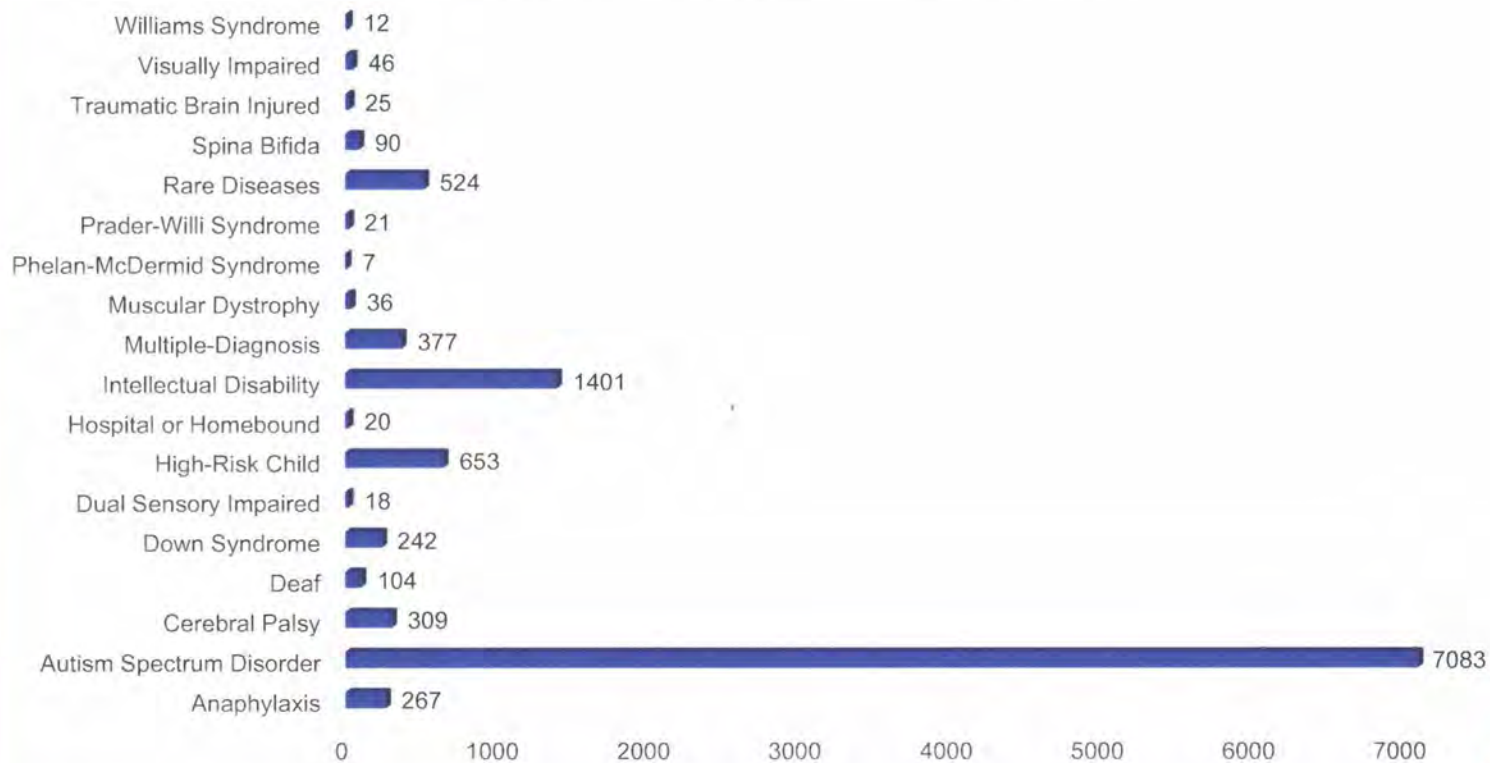
- Created in 2014, the Gardiner Scholarship program allows parents to personalize the education of their special-needs children by directing money toward a combination of programs and approved providers.
- Florida was the second state in the country to use this model, known nationally as an education savings account, or ESA.
- Parents are able to customize their child's learning by incorporating the best of all delivery methods (home education, private school, public school, online learning, tutoring, etc.)



Eligibility

Students age 3 years through 12th grade, or age 22, who qualify under one or more of the diagnosis categories listed below.

Enrollment by Diagnosis: 2018-19



The Scholarship

The average scholarship is (*scholarships vary per grade and county of residence*). Funds may be rolled over from year to year. Parents may pick and choose from a variety of approved items and services, including:

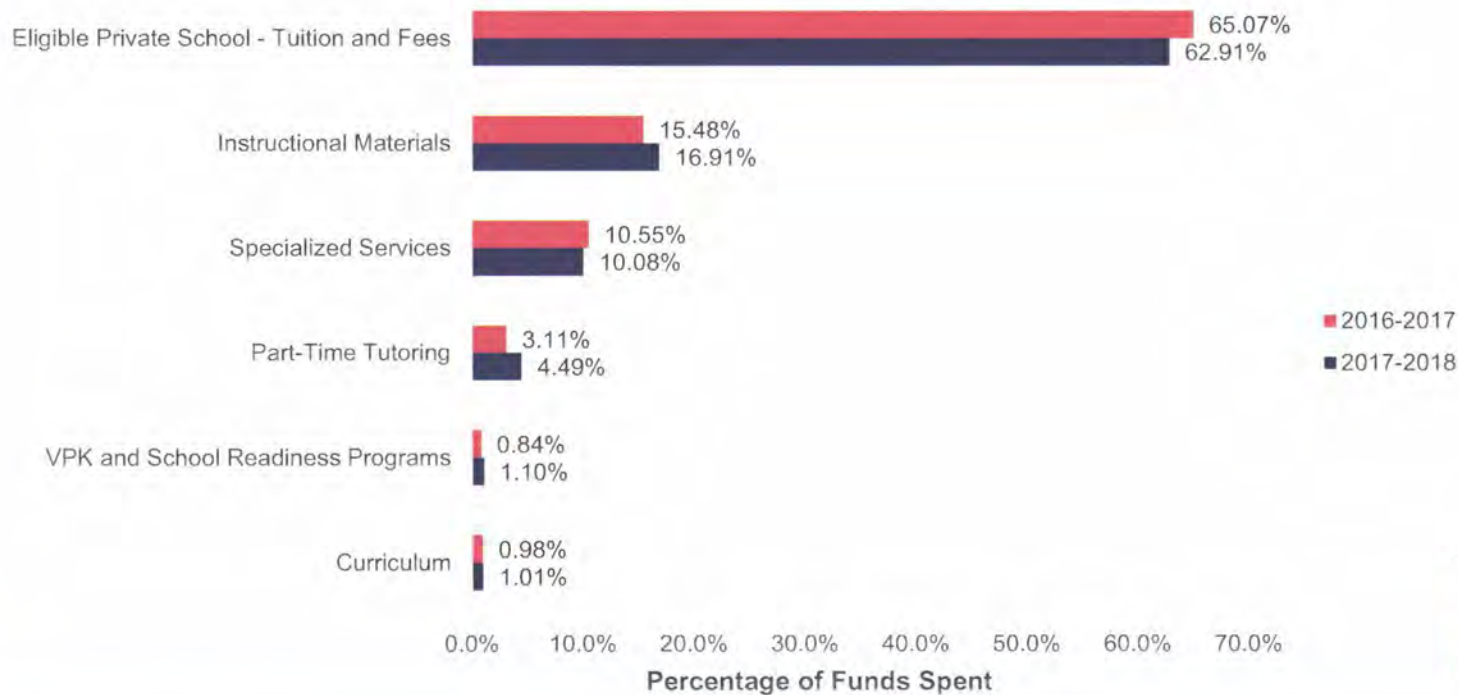
- Curriculum
- Instructional materials, including digital devices
- Specialized services, such as therapy with a Florida licensed professional
- Tuition and fees for an eligible private school, post-secondary or virtual program, or Florida Virtual School
- Fees for nationally standardized, norm-referenced achievement tests, placement tests, or industry certification examinations
- Florida Prepaid or 529 college savings plan
- Tuition and fees for full-time or part-time tutoring
- Contracted services from a public school



Gardiner Facts

- 2018-19 allocation for scholarship awards: \$124.6 million
- 11,247 funded students this year through Step Up
- Waitlist of 1,861 students
- More than 3,000 participating providers through Step Up

Top Spending Categories



Hope Scholarships

- Began in 2018 for students who are subjected to an incident, including battery; harassment; hazing; bullying; kidnapping; physical attack; robbery; sexual offenses, harassment, assault, or battery; threat or intimidation; or fighting at school.
- Provides tuition scholarships for private schools or transportation scholarships for students attending a public school in another district.
- Contributions began October 1st. The purchaser of a motor vehicle receives a sales tax credit, up to \$105, against tax imposed by the state and collected by the dealer or private tag agent.
- Over \$8.9 million in contributions received so far.
- Student applications opened November 1st. Over 127 applications completed and 66 students awarded so far.



Reading Scholarship Accounts

- Created in 2018 for students who are struggling in reading.
- First ESA program in the nation for students who are in public school.
- Students must be in grades 3-5 and score a level 1 or 2 on the third or fourth grade statewide English Language Arts assessment in the prior year.
- Students classified as English Language Learners receive priority.
- \$500 scholarships. \$9.7 million allocation. 4,149 funded students, and an additional 471 conditionally eligible so far.
- Funds may be used for part-time tutoring, instructional materials or curriculum related to reading or literacy, or afterschool and summer education programs designed to improve reading or literacy.



About Step Up

- **Top-ranked charity:** Step Up has a 4-Star rating by national watchdog Charity Navigator 12 different years, and is recognized as a Platinum GuideStar member. These accolades are achieved through the organization's commitment to fiscal responsibility in accounting and transparency.
- **National charity rankings:** *Forbes* ranked Step Up 19th largest charity, and *Parade* named it among its "Top Charities That Keep Giving All Year Long." The *Chronicle of Philanthropy* ranked Step Up 31st in its 2018 list of America's Favorite Charities.





Florida K-12 Scholarship Programs

PreK-12 Innovation Subcommittee

January 9, 2019

Presented by: Adam Miller, Executive Director,
Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice

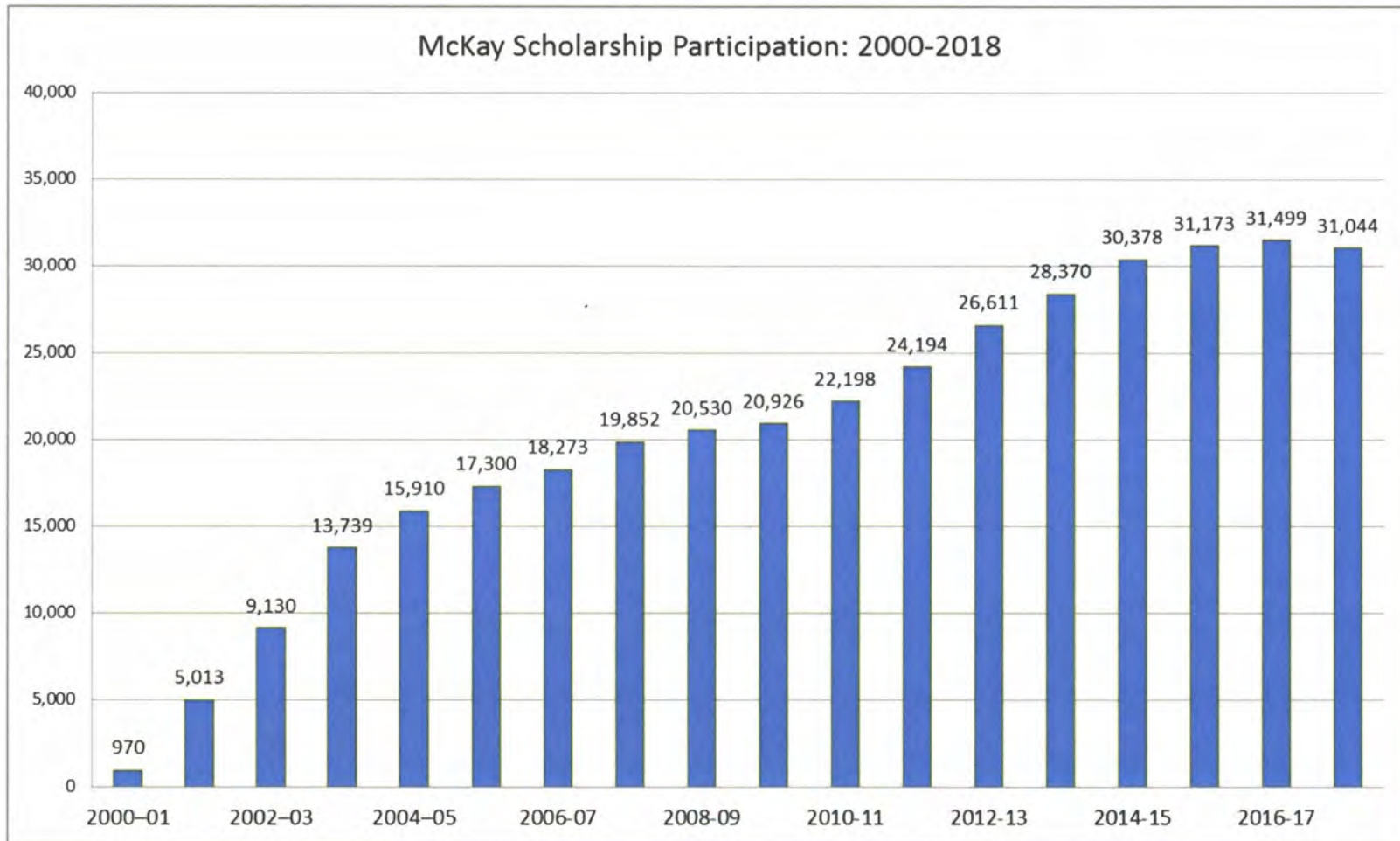
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K-12 Scholarship Programs

- Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program (Section 1002.395, F.S.)
- McKay Scholarship Program for Students with Disabilities (Section 1002.39, F.S.)
- Gardiner Scholarship Program (Section 1002.385, F.S.)
- Hope Scholarship Program (Section 1002.40, F.S.)
- Reading Scholarship Program (Section 1002.411, F.S.)

McKay Scholarship Program for Students with Disabilities

- Established in 2000
- The John M. McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program is established to provide the option to attend a public school other than the one to which assigned, or to provide a scholarship to a private school of choice, for students with disabilities for whom:
 - An individual educational plan has been written in accordance with rules of the State Board of Education; or
 - A 504 accommodation plan has been issued under s. 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
- If student enrolls in a private school, the scholarship award is a portion of the amount the student would generate through the FEP at his or her assigned public school or the private school's tuition, whichever is less.



Requirements for Private Schools to Participate in Scholarship Program

Requirements for Participating Private Schools

A participating school must:

- Be a private school as defined in law
- Register with the Florida Department of Education (Department) and apply to participate
- Notify department of change in school name, director, address, or physical location (within 15 days after the change)
- Maintain surety bond for $\frac{1}{4}$ of scholarship funds for first three years of operation
- Require the parent of each scholarship student to personally restrictively endorse the scholarship warrant to the school
- Provide a report from an independent certified public accountant who performs the agreed-upon procedures if the school receives more than \$250,000 in scholarship funds

Requirements for Participating Private Schools

- Meet health, safety and welfare laws, codes, and rules
- Comply with student enrollment/attendance verification requirements
- Maintain a physical location at which each student has regular and direct contact with teachers
- Cooperate with a student whose parent chooses to participate in the statewide assessment program
- Publish on school's website, or provide in written format, information for parents regarding the school and qualifications of teachers
- Provide each parent a written explanation of student progress on a quarterly basis

Requirements for Participating Private Schools

- Employ or contract with only qualified teachers (baccalaureate or higher degree; at least 3 years of teaching experience; or special or expertise in subjects taught)
- Require each employee and contracted personnel with direct student contact to undergo state and national background screening and annually certify compliance with this requirement
- Adopt standards of ethical conduct for instructional personnel and school administrators
- Conduct employment history checks with each previous employer of newly hired instructional personnel and school administrators
- **Require each owner or operator of the private school to undergo level 2 background screening**

Private School Application to Participate

- School must submit:
 - Annual survey
 - Signed and notarized Scholarship Compliance form
 - Owner(s)/Director(s) Level 2 background screening results
 - School ownership report (Sunbiz)
 - Private School Inspection Report (Department of Health)
 - Department receives report from Department of Health
 - Radon Report
 - Fire Inspection Report
 - State Fire Marshal provides Department access to reports
 - Fiscal soundness documentation, if required
 - Employee ethical standards
 - School VECHS Number (fingerprinting)
 - School Fee Schedule (McKay Only)
- Approximately 350 new schools apply annually
 - Approximately 190-200 approved

Renewal Process

- Annually
 - School must submit:
 - Annual Survey
 - Signed and notarized Scholarship Compliance Form
 - Fiscal soundness documentation, if required
 - Health Inspection
 - Fire Inspection
- Every 3 years
 - School must submit:
 - Annual survey
 - Signed and notarized Scholarship Compliance form
 - Owner Level 2 background screening results
 - School ownership report (Sunbiz)
 - Private School Inspection Report (Department of Health)
 - Radon Report
 - Fire Inspection Report
 - Fiscal soundness documentation, if required
 - Employee ethical standards

Department Oversight and Responsibilities

Department Responsibilities

- Cross-check students against public school enrollment data and each scholarship program to avoid duplication
- Notify Scholarship Funding Organizations (SFO) of any students participating in other scholarship programs through other SFO
- Require quarterly reports by eligible SFOs
- Approve nationally norm-referenced tests (NRT)
- Monitor private school compliance and take administrative action when warranted
- Upon request of eligible private school, provide at no cost to the school the statewide assessment and any related materials for administering the assessment
- Take receipt of SFOs report on annual Agreed Upon Procedures (AUP) and conduct follow up with schools
- Work with Learning Systems Institute (LSI) to ensure schools submit assessment results

Department Responsibilities

- Maintain a fully-integrated web-based application to administer the scholarship programs
 - Available to parents and private schools 24 hours a day, 365 days a year
 - The system currently handles records for over 175,000 students and 2,200 private providers and is used by Florida families, school district personnel, accrediting agencies, private school administrators, and scholarship funding organizations.
- Process and issue McKay scholarship payments at least 4x per year (avg. 30,000 checks issued each quarter)
- Calculate scholarship amounts, process scholarship awards, and distribute scholarship funds to SFO (Gardiner & Reading)
- Maintain list of approved providers, post-secondary institutions and eligible private schools (Gardiner)

Private School Site Visits

- Department must conduct site visits to all newly approved schools beginning in 2018-19
- Beginning in 2019-2020, a private school is not eligible to receive scholarship payments until a satisfactory site visit has been conducted and school is in compliance with all requirements in law.

Additional Roles and Responsibilities

- Monitor fiscal soundness requirements
- Monitor fingerprint retention compliance
- Collaborate and consult with key stakeholders
- Maintain a directory of all registered private schools
 - Searchable by county and program participation
- Maintain toll-free hotline for parents
 - Average 2,380 calls per month
- Technical support to private schools and families
 - Average 1,870 calls per month
 - Receive/respond to 2,600 emails per month (avg)
- Additional Outreach
 - Monthly newsletters
 - Web tutorials
 - Presentations and conferences



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