

PROVINCE POLICY FOR ACCEPTING A MCKAY SCHOLARSHIP STUDENT

Approved by the Bishops, August 18, 2008

A. McKay Scholarship Program

The McKay Scholarship Program for Students with Disabilities was established for parents to select schools of their choice, be it public or private, on behalf of their children with a documented disability who were enrolled in a public school or public special education programs. A condition of eligibility is that the student's disability must be documented in an Individual Education Plan and the student was enrolled in a public school or public special education program in October and February of the prior school year. The Bishops of Florida encourage Catholic schools to participate in scholarship programs when feasible.

B. Acceptance Policy

A diocesan Catholic school in Florida may accept McKay Scholarship students, provided the school is in compliance and agrees to remain compliant with all State Laws and Administrative Rules associated with the McKay Scholarship Program, and if both the parent and the school enter into a written "Agreement of Understanding" identifying the services the school is capable of providing.

C. Procedures for Accepting a Student with a McKay Scholarship

Obligations of Principal

Before a principal meets with a parent to discuss enrollment for a child who is eligible for a McKay Scholarship, the school must already be registered to participate in the Program.

Following are steps to be undertaken by the school before a McKay Scholarship student is officially enrolled in the school:

1. The Principal must review the student's current Individual Education Plan (IEP), psycho-educational evaluation results and other pertinent student records such as a 504 Plan, report cards and progress reports, as well as the matrix or funding level of the scholarship. The **Individual Education Plan** or 504 plan is a detailed educational action plan designed to meet the special learning needs of a child.
2. The Principal is to disclose to the parent and report to the Florida Department of Education the school tuition, or its specialized program tuition, which is what the school would have charged the student if he or she had not received a scholarship.
3. The Principal is to determine the cost of special education services based on the needs of the individual student. In order to determine the amount available for special educational services, the school must calculate the difference between the scholarship, and the total of tuition and other educational costs listed on the student's fee schedule. The fee schedule is to be submitted by the school to the Florida Department of Education, and will include but not be limited to tuition, general fees, special programs, tutoring, therapy, transportation, uniforms, field trips, books, and other expenses associated with educational items or activities.

4. If the scholarship amount is sufficient to cover tuition and educational costs listed in the Agreement of Understanding, there will be no additional charge to the family for these costs. If the scholarship amount is insufficient to cover tuition and educational costs listed in the Agreement of Understanding, then the parents and/or legal guardians are financially obligated to pay the difference.
5. The Principal is to provide the school's handbook as to code of conduct and require that the parent or legal guardian sign a statement indicating review and understanding of the handbook.
6. The Agreement of Understanding is valid for one school year. The Agreement of Understanding shall delineate the special educational services and costs as well as the tuition and fee schedule associated with it. The Agreement of Understanding shall also reflect the parental financial obligations to the school not covered by the scholarship. If the amount of the scholarship is insufficient to cover all costs, the school may require the parent to supplement it, or agree on what services will be provided based on the total amount of the scholarship.
7. Schools are required to provide to the FDOE all documentation required for a student's participation at least 30 days before the first quarterly scholarship payment. Schools are required to be academically accountable to the parent for meeting the educational needs of the student by annually providing the parent a written explanation of the student's progress; and, cooperating with the parent of a scholarship student who chooses to participate in the statewide assessments.
8. If after reviewing the application and supporting documentation, the principal determines that the school is unable to meet the needs of the child, the school's decision is to be conveyed in a meeting with the parent or through formal written communication.

Obligations of Parent or Legal Guardian

Following are steps to be undertaken by the parent or legal guardian before a McKay Scholarship student is officially enrolled in the school:

9. Complete the school's admission procedures.
10. Provide a letter of eligibility from the local school district to the school as documentation that the student is eligible for a McKay scholarship for the applicable year;
11. Provide to the school/principal the student's current IEP, psycho-educational evaluation results, and other pertinent records such as a 504 Plan, diagnostic testing results and progress reports;
12. Provide the matrix/funding level of the McKay Scholarship;
13. Decide to enter into an agreement of understanding, or withdraw the McKay Scholarship application, based on the determination as to whether or not the school can provide the academic and special education services desired for the child.

This policy updates FCC Guidance to assist Catholic schools when determining to enroll McKay scholarship students. The Guidance was adopted by the Catholic School Superintendents in November 2001.

McKay Scholarship Program for Students with Disabilities

Agreement of Understanding

_____ (school) enters into an Agreement with _____ (parent/guardian) to accept _____ (student) into the ___ grade. The Principal is to determine what special education services the school can provide based on the amount of the scholarship, and inform the parent or legal guardian the services that would be provided to the student.

It is understood that _____ (student) will participate in the McKay Scholarship Program and will be awarded a voucher amount of \$_____. In return, _____ (school) will provide the following additional services:

	Service	Sessions Per Week	Amount Per Session
	Speech Therapy		
	Occupational Therapy		

In addition to the services listed above, the following will be charged against the amount from the McKay Scholarship voucher:

	Annual Educational Cost	Annual Cost
	Tuition	
	Uniforms	
	Books	
	Fees	
	Speech Therapy	
	Occupational Therapy	
	Total Tuition and Fees	
	McKay Voucher	
	Family Financial Obligation	

Additional expenses:

We agree to the program designed by _____ (school) and desire to enroll _____, as a student in the ___ grade for the _____ school year. We agree to assume the total financial obligation not covered by the McKay Scholarship Program.

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature

Date

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature

Date