FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
fldoe.org

FLORIDA SCHOOL CHOICE
OFFICE OF INDEPENDENT EDUCATION & PARENTAL CHOICE

MCKAY SCHOLARSHIP FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITES
TRANSITIONS TO
THE FAMILY EMPOWERMENT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS WITH UNIQUE ABILITIES

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Florida's many school choice programs have been creating opportunities for parents to choose the best educational setting for their child for over twenty years. During the 2021-2022 school year, the **McKay Scholarship Program for Students with Disabilities** is providing approximately 27,000 Florida students with special needs the opportunity to attend a participating private school. This notice is to inform your family of upcoming changes to the program and the additional opportunities these changes will bring.

As of June 30, 2022, the McKay Scholarship Program will no longer exist. For the 2022-2023 school year, students who have been receiving the McKay Scholarship to attend a private school will be transferred to the **Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities**, or FES-UA. This transition will provide families with access to a personal Education Savings Account, or ESA, empowering you to further tailor the use of scholarship funds for your child's unique educational needs.

With an ESA, parents can receive a deposit of public funds into government-authorized savings accounts with restricted, but multiple, uses. An ESA can be used to fund items such as private school tuition and fees, online learning programs, private tutoring, community college costs, higher education expenses, and other approved customized learning services and materials. The FES-UA program is based on the belief that parents know what's best for their children, and that they should have the final say in their child's education. With access to an ESA, more Florida families will have the power to transform their child's education into a customized experience that expands access to learning opportunities specifically tailored to their unique needs.

Current McKay Scholarship students will not need to requalify to participate in FES-UA, but your family will need to select a Scholarship Funding Organization (SFO), which will work with you to administer your child's ESA. Be on the lookout for correspondence from SFOs, listed below, that will assist you in making a selection and in following the steps required to indicate your intent to continue using the FES-UA scholarship. Transitioning from the McKay Scholarship's private school choice program to the ESA model provided by FES-UA will bring some changes to funding processes that will affect both families and participating private schools. Our office is working closely with SFOs and other stakeholders to streamline the process and minimize any potential disruption that would impact families.

The Florida Department of Education believes that giving parents the freedom to choose how their child is educated is critical to their wellbeing and future. The FES-UA will financially empower parents to guide their child on a path to success. To learn more about the FES-UA, as well as Florida's other school choice options, visit our website linked in the box below.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Scholarship Funding Organizations (SFOs)</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">AAA Scholarship Foundation
http://www.aaascholarships.org/
888-707-2465
info@aaascholarships.org</td><td>Step Up for Students
https://www.stepupforstudents.org/
877-735-7837
info@stepupforstudents.org</td></tr>
<tr><td>WEB:
FLORIDASCHOOLCHOICE.ORG</td><td>Main Line: (850) 245-0502
TOLL FREE HOTLINE: (800) 447-1636</td><td>EMAIL:
SCHOOLCHOICE@FLDOE.ORG</td></tr>
</table>