



December 15, 2006

ITEMS

DOES YOUR SCHOOL HAVE THEIR FINGERPRINTING REPORTS COMPLETED?

Does Your Have Their Fingerprinting Reports Completed?

If your school has not completed the fingerprinting requirements for compliance, please do not wait. Be aware that it can take up to 30 days to become licensed with VECHS and complete the fingerprinting process.

If you are planning to start the process after the first of the year, you may have difficulty meeting the March 1st compliance date.

The Choice Office has a PDF presentation on the process of applying to VECHS and to completing the fingerprinting requirement. Go to www.floridaschoolchoice.org, click on McKay Scholarships and then go to the bottom left hand corner of the screen to find the VECHS presentation.

The Compliance Form is due March 1st. Please make sure that you have all of your compliance issues settled BEFORE that date and submit all of your forms in.

Have a great holiday season,

Robyn A. Rennick, MS
President

November 17, 2006

ITEMS

SHARE YOUR THANKS

LEGISLATOR EDUCATION/REEDUCATION

RE-EVALUATIONS

Share Your Thanks

Happy Thanksgiving!

During this holiday let's take a moment to give thanks. The McKay Scholarship has been a blessing for our students and families. In the rush of every day, we all too often forget the "nuts and bolts" that truly make the McKay Scholarship function.

Take a moment and send an email or a card to your regional manager and/or a staff member of The Choice Office who has helped

Coalition of McKay Scholarship Schools

this year. All too often they hear the "complaints" and never really get the thanks for solving them.

Don't let this opportunity to reach out and touch someone slip by.

The Choice Office address is:

Independent Education and Parental Choice Office
Department of Education, Room 522
325 W. Gaines
Tallahassee, FL 32301

Legislator Education/Reeducation

Now is the time to begin inviting the legislators to visit your school and with your parents. Even if they were in office last year, it is important to continue to keep the positive aspects of the McKay Scholarship Program before them.

New legislators need to have an education concerning what the McKay Scholarship is all about. Remember, the McKay Scholarship Program had only a 17% name recognition rate by the general public last January. New legislators are flooded with information. Let us make sure the information they are receiving concerning the McKay Scholarship is positive.

We are updating our Talking Points and will have them on the web-site shortly. We'll let you know when they are on-line.

Re-evaluations

We placed information concerning re-evaluations on the website www.mckaycoalition.com. Take a moment to review this information that you can better educate your parents as to the benefits and/or risks of re-evaluations.

Have a wonderful Thanksgiving.

Robyn A. Rennick, MS
President

November 1, 2006

ITEMS

ENCOURAGE YOUR PARENTS TO VOTE

KNOW WHERE YOUR CANDIDATES STAND ON SCHOOL CHOICE

Know Where the Candidates Stand on School Choice

The election is drawing close. We know that you are encouraging your parents to vote. Many schools are involved with Kids Voting which teaches the younger generation the importance of having their voice heard through their votes.

Attached to this email are two articles from the Florida Committee for Educational Freedom concerning where legislators and gubernatorial candidates stand on parental choice in education.

Please send these to your parents.



FL Voter's Guide



Governor Race Voter's Guide

Have a great week.

Sincerely,
Robyn A. Rennick
President

October 6, 2006 - FYI

ITEMS

FULL STEAM AHEAD

KNOW YOUR CANDIDATES

Full Steam Ahead

Our September conference, "Full Steam Ahead", was a great experience for all involved. Representative Arza, Representative Baxley, Representative Traviesa all challenged McKay schools and parents to "Know this is a very serious battle – worth fighting." (Arza) children with disabilities "need a voice" (Traviesa) and this voice is found in their parents and schools. We must not be silent.

Rep. Baxley encouraged all to realize that term limits means that new legislators must constantly be educated to the benefits and value of the McKay Scholarship Program. "Sell the benefits. It's a great program and we must let others know."

With these words of wisdom, The Coalition of McKay Scholarship Schools will precede full steam ahead to protect the McKay Scholarship Program but we need all Coalition members to raise their voice in order for us to be heard and to encourage their parent groups to also rise to the challenge.

We are developing a Legislative Committee and a Media Committee. These action committees will work in their communities to educate and to publicize the McKay Scholarship Program. Come on board with these committees. Contact us at drills@talstar.com to let us know you will be involved.

Know Your Candidate

As non-profit schools and organizations, we can not endorse any candidate, but we can present the candidates' records and stand for our parents. We can urge our parents to be politically active for the candidate of their choice. Candidates must hear from parents that there is an issue worth fighting for.

At the conference, Rep. Arza said that he could not find 5 McKay parents in the Miami-Dade area to campaign for the candidate against a senator who had opposed the McKay Scholarship. That senator won by only 400+ votes. Miami-Dade has over 3,000 schools on the McKay Scholarship. If only a quarter of those parents had voted, this opponent to choice programs such as the McKay Scholarship could have been defeated.

WE MUST LET OUR PARENTS KNOW OF OPPORTUNITIES THEY HAVE TO SUPPORT CANDIDATES WHO SUPPORT THE MCKAY SCHOLARSHIP. If they do not support candidates that support their children, then the McKay Program will not have a future.

Patricia K. Hardman, PhD, a great advocate for children with disabilities and one of the voices who helped to create the McKay Scholarship Program, has generously developed a talking points paper which can be sent home to your parents. Because this is done under her name, as a point of interest to parents, and your school or organization is not endorsing any candidate, this will not impact the non-profit status.

Please send this home to your parents. They have the voices and power to make a difference. And if they don't, WHO WILL?

Technical Assistance Paper



August 11, 2006 - FYI

ITEMS

FINGERPRINTING IS A MUST

DIALOGUES WITH LEGISLATORS

DON'T MISS THE CONFERENCE EARLY BIRD DISCOUNTS

Fingerprinting is a Must

The new legislation for private schools participating in state school choice scholarship programs such as the McKay Scholarship requires state and federal background checks of each employee and contracted personnel with direct student contact.

It is crucial for each school set up their procedures to identify those who need fingerprinting and to follow through on this requirement. DOE has indicated that, at some point during the fall, they will be checking schools to see if the fingerprinting and background checks have been completed.

Schools are eligible to use the Volunteer & Employee Criminal History System (VECHS) and information concerning this program is available at www.fdle.state.fl.us/backgroundchecks/

1002.421 Accountability of private schools participating in state school choice scholarship programs

(i) Require each employee and contracted personnel with direct student contact, upon employment or engagement to provide services, to undergo a state and national background screening, pursuant to s. 943.0542, by electronically filing with the Department of Law Enforcement a complete set of fingerprints taken by an authorized law enforcement agency or an employee of the private school, a district, or a private company who is trained to take fingerprints and deny employment to or terminate an employee if he or she does not meet the screening standards under s. 435.04. Results of the screening shall be provided to the participating private school.

See the complete statutes and requirements at: www.floridaschoolchoice.org Go to the McKay Scholarship page. The laws applying to the program are now in two statutes. On the left hand side, choose "McKay Statute" for the basic requirements of the program for private schools, districts, etc. To view the fingerprinting requirements and other compliance issues, choose "Scholarship Accountability Statute".

Dialogue with Legislators

Coalition of McKay Scholarship Schools

Keeping the McKay Scholarship Program a viable program means continual dialogue with our legislators. Don't miss the fall conference September 18-19, in Tampa. Participants will have the opportunity to have round table discussions with our legislators and voice thanks at their support and our concerns and issues for keeping this program alive.

As Rep. Baxley spoke so eloquently at our past conference, "We must constantly keep this program in the forefront of the legislative minds. It is a continual education process." Legislators who have confirmed are: Representatives Culp, Arza, Traviesa, Galvano, anticipate several more.

Take this opportunity for your voice to be heard! Register for the conference.

Early Bird Special

Don't miss the Early Bird Special for the conference. Registrations to the hotel must be made by September 1st to obtain the conference price. Discounts on the conference registration are available for those registering by September 1st as well. www.mckaycoalition.com and download the registration forms.

Have a great start to the new year.

Sincerely,

Robyn A. Rennick, MS

President

July 28, 2006 - FYI

ITEMS

COALITION CONFERENCE

YOUR DISTRICT HAS ADDITIONAL FUNDS FOR PARENTALLY PLACED PRIVATE SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES – TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PAPER

Coalition Conference

The 4th Annual Coalition of McKay Scholarship Schools Conference will be filled with opportunities for your school with the varied programs being offered. You will be:

1) Meeting with legislators and sharing your concerns and ideas as well as

listening to their perspectives on the future of the McKay Scholarship;

2) Participating in workshops aimed at helping your school develop even stronger programs for your students –

a) Building a Big Library on a Small Budget and Developing

Enthusiastic Readers

- b) Assisting your high school students in making the transition to post high school
 - c) Using and adapting on-line courses for your students (Florida Virtual School and the University of Miami On-line High School will featured)
- 3) AND MORE

We will be hosting the 4th Annual Coalition of McKay Scholarship Schools Conference, September 18th – 19th at the Doubletree Hotel Tampa. Put those dates on your calendar! We will be sending you more information in the coming weeks. You may go to our web for registration forms. www.mckaycoalition.com

Your District Has Additional Funds for Parentally Placed Private School Students With Disabilities – Technical Assistance Paper

Attached **here** is a Technical Assistance Paper (TAP) from DOE which outlines the “obligations of public agencies to provide special education and related services to students enrolled in private schools...” This applies to students who are on the McKay Scholarship, students who have been identified by the public school as having a disability but are not on the McKay Scholarship, students who have transferred from an ESE program in another state but enrolled in a private school, as well as other categories.

It is a lengthy paper but well worth reading. Each district has a plan for how to use this money. Services may range from testing, teacher training, assistive technology, speech and language therapy, etc. If you do not know what their plan is, after reading this contact your district and find out.

Can you believe summer is almost over! A new year ahead!

Sincerely,

Robyn Rennick, MS
President

June 21, 2006 - FYI

ITEMS

URGENT! CHECK YOUR COMPLIANCE STATUS

MCKAY SCHOLARSHIP CONFERENCE DATES

NEW WEB PAGE

URGENT! CHECK YOUR COMPLIANCE STATUS

You may have sent in your compliance forms, but we have learned that a number of schools, especially those who sent in the

Coalition of McKay Scholarship Schools

documentation records, may be missing information which means your school is not in compliance and your school could lose their eligibility to participate if everything is not in by July 1st.

Don't take for granted that you are in compliance. The quickest way to find out is to go to <http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org/Information/directory/schoolreport.asp> If the 06-07 says no or pending under the compliance li PLEASE CALL AND EMAIL your regional manager and ask what is missing. (Make sure to email as well and keep documentation.)

Coalition Conference

We will be hosting the 4th Annual Coalition of McKay Scholarship Schools Conference, September 18th – 19th at the Doubletree Ho Tampa. Put those dates on your calendar! We will be sending you more information in the coming weeks.

Web Page

Check out our newly designed web page at www.mckaycoalition.com. We are excited about the design and the added features. Especially check out the McKay commercial that is available to Coalition member schools.

The email alerts will be added to the web page so if you miss one, you can catch up on the news.

Let us know what you think of the site and/or if you have any technical difficulties.

We want to thank Deborah Kelley who designed the web site. If you are looking for someone to design or maintain your website w heartily recommend her. Obviously, from the design of the website, she has great expertise in this area. She is extremely easy to w with and guided us through this process very graciously (since she was dealing with technophobes or at the least technodummies!) may reach her at TheWriteOneCS@aol.com.

Hope you are having a great summer.

Sincerely,

Robyn Rennick, MS
President

May 22, 2006 - FYI

ITEMS

Florida Virtual School (FLVS)

Florida Virtual School (FLVS)

Last week several McKay Schools contacted us because they had received information from the Florida Virtual School that Scholarship Students and Corporate Tax Scholarship Students were not eligible to take FLVS courses.

The Coalition contacted both The Choice Office and the Florida Virtual School and pointed out that SB 256 which was just passec students in both scholarship programs the right to take a maximum of two FLVS courses a year.

FLVS has updated the language in their "Non-Public School and Charter School Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for 2006-2 reflect this change.

If you had already submitted your MOA to FLVS with the old language, you do not have to resubmit the document. However, if you have not submitted the MOA and would like to have students enroll in FLVS, go to http://www.flvs.net/educators/affiliating_with_flvs.php.

You may also contact Mary McCool, e-learning Manager, FLVS – office (386) 478-4201 and voice mail (407) 317-3326 X4333 or MmcCool@flvs.net.

Have a great summer.

Robyn A. Rennick, MS
President

May 18, 2006 - FYI

ITEMS (LEGISLATIVE UPDATES)

1) Constitutional Amendment for Ballot Was Not Passed

2) The Accountability Bill (SB 256) Was Passed

3) Coalition Conference

Constitutional Amendment for Ballot Was Not Passed

The May 4th Wall Street Journal editorial concerning the constitutional amendment failure to pass in the Senate says it all. "We're not blaming whom to hold in highest contempt here: the four Republicans who buckled to union pressure, the Democrats who voted en masse in the interests of their own constituents, or the unions that pretend their political actions are in the interests of "the children" -- when that conflicts with their own economic self interest."

Instead of letting the issue of vouchers come before the voters of Florida, a small group of Senators blocked this. Go to www.FLACE.org to read the entire editorial and other editorials concerning this decision.

What does this mean for The McKay Scholarship Program? At this point, no suit has been filed to challenge the constitutionality of the McKay Scholarship Program (MSP). Indications are that the Teacher's Union and/or ACLU may file suit against the McKay Scholarship Program before the McKay Scholarship Program. If a suit is filed against MSP, our advisors report that it would take 12 -18 months for the suit to make its way through to the court decision. The McKay Scholarship will exist for the 2006-2007 school year. We are encouraging parents to still accept McKay Scholarships so that parents may continue to have options for their children's futures.

SB 256 – The Accountability Bill – Was Passed

SB 256 was passed. This bill contained most of the language and provisions which had been agreed upon by both the private and public sectors. Over the next month, we will be sending information concerning how the bill will affect private schools.

One of the major changes is the requirement that all employee and contracted school personnel with direct student contact or employment or engagement to provide services, undergo a state and national background screening check. Most of our schools have already been doing this, but if your school has not been requiring both state and national background screening, you will need to

now.

One of the issues we were unable to convince the Senate to change was the issue requiring that students attend school in a "p location". We asked for exception language to be placed in the bill stating except where the child's disability makes a self-co environment more appropriate as prescribed by a medical professional or psychologist. This means that those students who re homebound situation may no longer access the McKay Scholarship. We will revisit this issue next year. If you know of a pare student who required a homebound situation and this change will affect his/her ability for a safe and appropriate educational please have them get in touch with me.

Overall, this bill did address many needed "tweaks" and changes in the McKay Scholarship Program. We want to thank Rep. Picke Rep. Baxley for standing behind the house language and not allowing intrusive or over bureaucratic language and rules in the legi We want to thank Sen. King for his willingness to compromise to benefit the needs of children.

To see the text of SB 256:

Go to www.flsenate.gov Jump to Bill (on left hand side)

Type SB 256

Go to the May 5th date for the bill and click on for the text

Coalition Conference

We will be hosting the 4th Annual Coalition of McKay Scholarship Schools Conference, September 18th – 19th at the Doubletree I Tampa. Put those dates on your calendar! We will be sending you more information in the coming weeks.

Have a great end of the year!

Sincerely,

Robyn A. Rennick, MS
President

April 6, 2006 - FYI

ITEMS

1) Continue to contact legislators

2) Special recognition to senators on the Senate Education Committee

3) How to locate your representative

Continue to contact legislators

Your voices are making a difference, but we need to keep the pressure on our legislators to "do the right thing" and vote to p Constitutional Amendments so that it can be placed on the ballot in November.

Representatives of The Coalition of McKay Scholarship Schools, parents of McKay Students, representatives from FLACE, and other spoke before the House Committee and the Senate Committees on the bills concerning the constitutional amendment. Both of the passed through these committees. They still have more committees to pass through and then go to the floors of the House : Senate.

Coalition of McKay Scholarship Schools

For the most part the votes have been drawn to party lines. Republicans have been supporting our children's rights to have alternative education and Democrats have been voting against any alternatives for our children.

Continue to make calls and send letters to ALL of the legislators, especially those in your district!

Many of your legislators will be in their district offices next week. Call and or visit them and tell them you expect them to vote on amendments so the people of Florida can make the choice whether to allow your children with disabilities the right to have more for their education.

Calls, visits, and letters rank high on gaining their attention. Emails are usually just scanned for the tag line, but send them well.

House Joint Resolution 1573 (HJR 1573) is the bill before the House concerning the constitutional amendment and Senate Joint Resolution 2170 (SJR 2170) is the bill before the Senate concerning the constitutional amendment. (See information below for links to the text resolutions.)

Model Letter (send pictures)

Use the model letter below, but personalize your letter as much as possible. Remember the legislative staff basically reads only one paragraph, so we need to get a lot in a few sentences.

Dear (representative or senator's name),

First Paragraph: My name is _____. I am a Democrat/Republican (only state this if the legislator is in your party). My child is in the McKay Scholarship Program and has been attending (school's name) since (when). (Write one sentence about how your child is doing better now - ex: John could not read before and now he is excelling in reading. Mary was harassed and was picked on because of disability; she now feels safe and is making better grades.) Finally, state how important the McKay Scholarship Program is for you and ask them to vote for the Joint Resolution which will place an amendment on the ballot in November that will protect the McKay Scholarship Program.

Second paragraph - give more information about how your child has improved, but keep it to 3-4 sentences.

Third Paragraph - Restate that protecting your child's options for education through programs like the McKay Scholarship is crucial and you will be watching this issue closely and will appreciate their support for the constitutional amendment which will protect your child's right to have options for their education and their future.

Sign your name and your complete address and phone number.

Let us know who you are contacting. Send ONE cc: email to drills@talstar.com.

Information concerning HJR 1573 can be found at:

<http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Bills/billsdetail.aspx?BillId=33832> & Information concerning SJR 2170 can be found at: http://www.flsenate.gov/session/index.cfm?BI_Mode=ViewBillInfo&Mode=Bills&SubMenu=1&Year=2006&billnum=2170

Special recognition to senators on the Senate Education Committee

SUPPORTERS:

Thanks should be sent to Senators Lynn, King, Webster, and Wise for supporting and voting for the Constitutional Amendment. If there are senators in your district, let them know you appreciate their support and want them to continue to support the Constitutional Amendment.

SPECIAL THANKS:

Senator Larcenia Bullard (Democrat) made a courageous vote as she voted against the Democratic Party line and voted F

Coalition of McKay Scholarship Schools

constitutional amendment and FOR our children. Please send her thank-yous if she is in your district (and even if she isn't). County representatives are Broward, Collier, Hendry, Miami- Dade, Monroe, and Palm Beach.

DISSENTING VOTE

We value the right of a legislator to vote for his or her conscience, however, Senator Frederica Wilson voted against the constitutional amendment. Her comment was that she had heard of no one asking for this action to be taken. If you are in Sen. Wilson's district, call her office or visit her office, LET HER HEAR YOU, and ask her to vote for this bill because it allows your child to have an educational future. Her Tallahassee number is (850) 487-5116 and her district number is (305) 654-7150. Let her hear from her constituent and clearly.

How to locate your representative

To find your senator go to <http://www.flsenate.gov/> and follow the directions down at the bottom right side of the page. You need to know your zip code + 4 digits. (This will help you find this if you do not know it.)

To find your representative go to:

<http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Representatives/representatives.aspx>

On the right hand side you will see "Find Your Representative". Click on that. Again, you need to know your zip code + 4 digits. (This will help you find it if you do not know it.)

Please raise your voices. It makes a difference.

Sincerely,

Robyn A. Rennick, MS
President

January 24, 2006 - FYI

ITEMS

The McKay Scholarship is Alive and Well for 2006-2007 School Year!

Get the Word Out!

Dear McKay Scholarship Schools,

With the negative Supreme Court decision concerning the Opportunity Scholarship, rumors are running over concerning the fate of the McKay Scholarship Program. Yes, a threat exists that the McKay Scholarship could be challenged and this is a real threat.

However, all of our legal experts say that even if a suit was to be filed right now, it would take 18 - 24 months or more for it to work through the court system. No such suit has been filed at this point.

The Board of The Coalition of McKay Scholarship Schools is confident that the McKay Scholarship will be viable and available to students for the 2006-2007 year. However, the public perception is that the McKay Scholarship may be terminated at any moment.

To counter this public relations problem, all schools need to:

Coalition of McKay Scholarship Schools

- 1) Reassure their present parents that you are confident the McKay Scholarship is going to be available next year;
- 2) Reassure inquiring parents that you are confident that the scholarship is going to be available and let them know how to access it;
- 3) Be involved in our TV. Campaign (more information to come) to let parents know about this great program.

We have heard reports of several public schools "informing" parents that the McKay Scholarship was not going to be available. If you hear of this, please send us the name of the school, method in which it was told, and any copies of such information. WE WILL FOLLOW UP. Parents need to be told the truth.

Sincerely,

Robyn A. Rennick
President

January 12, 2006 - FYI

ITEMS

PLEASE HAVE YOUR PARENTS RESPOND TO THE THREAT ON THE MCKAY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM!

Dear McKay Scholarship Schools, Are you are the negative decision on the Opportunity Scholarship by the Florida Supreme Court have negative ramifications for the McKay Scholarship. NOW IS THE TIME TO RAISE OUR VOICES TO TELL HOW IMPORTANT THE MCKAY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM IS to allow the educational needs of our students with disabilities to be met.

Over the next several months, we need to commit to the following actions:

- 1) IMMEDIATELY, have parents write letters to the editor. (See info below)
- 2) Set up appointments with your legislators in their district office and tell them how important it is to support the McKay Scholars to protect it.
- 3) Invite your legislators to your schools.
- 4) Write letters to your legislators.

Don't wait for "someone else" to do this. We must ALL be proactive to protect the program.

INFORMATION ON WRITING LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Please work with your parents to write letters to the editors of their newspapers. (We have listed the major newspapers below with an internet link.) They need to express their

Support of the McKay Scholarship program and let the community know that it is essential for the education of their child.

To submit a letter to the editor in support of McKay Scholarships, compose a letter about 100-150 words or about 4-5 sentences maximum. Letter writers should cite their relation to the program (i.e., parent, teacher, school administrator), what kind of benefits they've seen for students on McKay scholarships in their chosen school, what might happen if the scholarships were canceled and close with a call to action for their elected officials. Make sure to include your address and phone number under your signature. (SEE EXAMPLE BELOW)

Coalition of McKay Scholarship Schools

Please send us any editorials which are published in your area.

Here's an example:

Dear Editor:

My son, Jimmy, age 12, has attended the Dyslexia Institute of America in Orlando for the past 3 years. At his assigned public school he was unable to get the support and special attention he needs to learn and keep up with his classmates. Since being enrolled at the Dyslexia Institute, his grades have gone from Fs to all As and he has rediscovered a love for learning. Once, I worried about his ability to graduate from high school but now he talks about college and even medical school. The teacher's union has already said it would sue the state on McKay Scholarships, too, if they had known how long it would take for the Opportunity scholarship case to reach the Florida Supreme Court. If he were to lose his scholarship, he would again languish in a school setting unable to meet his needs, become a burden on the state instead of contributing to our society as he hopes to. I urge our elected officials to do what is necessary to save this invaluable program for our children and for the future of our state.

*Sincerely,
Jane Doe
123 Any Street
Orlando, FL 55555
(407) 555-5555*

To submit a letter to your local paper, send an email or fill out the online form for the newspaper in your area.

St. Petersburg Times - <http://www.sptimes.com/letters/> and use their form.

Tampa Tribune - tribletters@tampatrib.com

Miami Herald - heralded@herald.com

South Florida Sun-Sentinel - letters@sun-sentinel.com

Orlando Sentinel - insight@orlandosentinel.com

Tallahassee Democrat - letters@tallahassee.com

Jacksonville Times-Union - parent will have to visit

<http://www.jacksonville.com/aboutus/letters_to_editor.shtml> and use their form.

Lakeland Ledger - voice@theledger.com

Ft. Myers News-Press - <http://www.news-press.net/CS/index.php>- scroll down to Readers, click on Letters Editor and fill out Step 1, 2 and 4 only

Naples Daily News - http://www.naplesnews.com/help/letters_to_the_editor/ and fill out the form

Daytona News-Journal - letters@news-jrnl.com

Florida Today - letters@flatoday.net

Pensacola News-Journal -

<http://www.pensacolanejournal.com/helpdesk/contact/> and fill out the form

Gainesville Sun - voice@gvillesun.com

Palm Beach Post -

<http://www.palmbeachpost.com/opinion/content/info/mail.html> and fill out the form

Bradenton Herald - dklement@heraldtoday.com

Hernando Today - <http://www.hernandotoday.com/lettertotheeditor.htm> and fill out the form

St. Augustine Record - editor@staugustinerecord.com

Charlotte Sun Herald - <http://www.sun-herald.com/newsquestion1.htm> and fill out the form

Northwest Florida Daily News - patrickr@nwfdailynews.com

Sarasota Herald-Tribune -

<http://www.heraldtribune.com/apps/pbcs.dll/section?CATEGORY=OPINION04> scroll down and fill out form

Stuart News / Vero Beach Press Journal - editorial@stuartnews.com

We want to thank Florida Alliance for Choices in Education for providing us with the newspaper information.

Robyn A. Rennick

President

January 6, 2006 - FYI

ITEMS

SUPREME COURT DECISION

Get Involved in Saving the McKay Scholarship Program

The Florida Supreme Court issued its long awaited ruling on the state's Opportunity Scholarship program yesterday. The Court determined that the scholarship program violated the Florida Constitution's "uniformity" clause guaranteeing all students a "uniform" system of public schools. Unfortunately, the nearly 800 students that are currently participating in the program will now be forced to return to failing schools.

The Florida Supreme Court ruled 5-2 that the state's Opportunity Scholarship Program (OSP) is unconstitutional. The Corporate Tax Scholarship Program (CTC) is not affected in today's Florida Supreme Court ruling and isn't threatened. The McKay is threatened and immediately struck down.

We are confident that the legislature and the Governor do all they can to preserve educational options for these children and hope the Florida legislature will make the necessary structural changes to the program so that students can continue to receive a quality education.

http://www.floridasupremecourt.org/pub_info/summaries/briefs/04/04-2323/Filed_01-05-2006_Opinion.pdf

The Coalition is working with The Florida Alliance for Choices in Education (F.A.C.E.), and others to find a constitutional, legal solution. All of us who benefit from the OSP and McKay programs must proactively work towards protecting all programs that ensure parental rights in deciding the best educational environment for their children.

IF YOUR SCHOOL HASN'T REGISTERED TO BE INVOLVED WITH THE RALLY IN TALLAHASSEE ON FEBRUARY 15, GO TO **www.FLACE.org** and register NOW.

This is a great opportunity to let the legislators see the faces of children being affected and to realize that they MUST SAVE OUR PROGRAMS.

We will keep you posted on other ways to help through the session.

The Supreme Court decision has been a blow to parents' rights to make sure their tax dollars are being wisely used as opposed to being forced into a monopoly system of the public school which DOES NOT PROVIDE A UNIFORM, STANDARD EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN, especially those with disabilities. However, this does not have to be a death knell for the McKay Scholarship BUT YOU MUST BE WISE TO RAISE YOUR VOICE AND TO ACT TO SAVE THE PROGRAM.

Sincerely,

Robyn A. Rennick, MS
President

Below is information sent concerning the Rally - Please read and go to **www.flace.org** to register.

Coalition of McKay Scholarship Schools

Save Our Scholarships (SOS)
McKay Rally in Tallahassee
February 15, 2006

Information for the Chart Attached

The following FINAL information needs to be sent back to Michael Benjamin by Thursday, January 12th. Either fill out the attached sheet (descriptions of each box is below) OR you may type in your information below by each item. Please return via email to Benjamin at mbenjamin@flice.org or call him at 813-318-0995 x 227 or toll free at 1-800-782-9140. Please take care to fill in you may have missed on your prior notification of attendance. Especially cell phone #'s, spokespeople, t-shirt sizes, # of adult students and if you are willing to participate in visiting with your legislator?

General Contact Information:

1. School Name
2. Contact: Name of who is to be in charge of organizing your school
3. Email: Of the organizing parent or administrator
4. Cell: Of the organizing parent or administrator
5. Fax: Of the organizing parent or administrator or the school

T-Shirt Information: T-shirts will be provided. They may be mailed to each school or be distributed at the rally. We will let you Please provide the following information.

1. T-shirt Mailing Address
2. City
3. Zip
4. E-mail
5. Sizes: How many of the following:
Small
Medium
Large
X-Large
XX-Large
XXX-Large

Transportation Information: Florida Alliance for Choices in Education (F.A.C.E.) will be supplying some buses. Buses have a capacity of 15 people. Some schools may "double" up on a bus.

1. Is your school already set up with a bus through F.A.C.E.?
2. Do you need a bus provided?
How many people do you anticipate riding the bus?
3. Can you provide school buses or your own transportation for your group?*

*Reimbursement for gas will be provided for your school buses and vans if you provide receipts. Contact Michael Benjamin for information.

4. Bus Captains: Each bus needs two people to be bus captains. One may be the organizer. Please place their names in the appropriate box WITH CELL PHONE NUMBERS.
5. ETA Tally: All participants should arrange to arrive in Tallahassee by 9:30 a.m.
6. Departure time from Tallahassee: This will be after lunch, approximately 2:00 p.m.
7. Bus arrival at pick-up: Leave at least 45 minutes between bus arrival and bus departure. (If F.A.C.E. is supplying the bus, they will provide the bus.)

Coalition of McKay Scholarship Schools

you the arrival and pick-up times.

8. Pick-up location: If F.A.C.E. is supplying the bus, they will need to know the address where the bus will pick-up. If "doubling" bus choose one location.

9. Bus departure from pick-up: Set a time which will allow for safe travel to Tallahassee and, depending on the distance, any along the way. Breaks with 50 people will take at least 30 minutes (although not recommended).

Parent Media Contact: A participating parent who is willing to speak to the media should present themselves well. Has this person been interviewed by a reporter before? If so, what kind of reporter - TV, print, radio? Please choose this person carefully and with permission. We will ask that they review media talking points with us prior to the event and be prepared to be interviewed by local F.A.C.E. will help with understanding the issues and talking points. Please see attached spokesperson info.

1. Name:

2. Address:

3. Phone:

4. Cell:

5. Names of Children and Ages

6. Name of the Scholarship Program they are in

This year's rally will again focus on:

thanking legislators for their support of Florida's school choice program

advocating for the protecting and expansion of choice programs, and

putting a face on the success of scholarship programs

Parents, students and school administrators are our best spokespeople and legislative visits will be a priority!

Also attached please find a release form that we will require all individuals riding buses to have completed and signed. We only need one release form per family. If there is only an adult from a family attending (no children) then that adult needs to complete the form.

Each school is responsible for distributing the forms to the rally attendees and collecting them. Please have them bring the signed forms to your school and then mail them to Michael Benjamin at F.A.C.E., 339 S. Plant Ave., Tampa, FL 33606 by Thursday, January 12th.