



September 13, 2007

ITEMS

REGISTRATION FOR FALL CONFERENCE

Don't Miss the Early Bird Discount for the Fall Conference!

"EARLY BIRD" REGISTRATIONS MUST BE POSTMARKED BY SEPTEMBER 16th

Go to www.mckaycoalition.com for registration information.

Hotel Reservations must also be made by September 16th. Call the Hilton Tampa Hotel at 813 877-6688.

This is One Conference You Can't Afford to Miss

October 8-9th

Conference Topics:

Past, Present & What Does the Future Hold?

If you thought the battle was over concerning required testing, teacher certification, and accreditation – think again! Find out how opponents for choice programs like the McKay Scholarship are girding up for battle again.

Where are our Champions?

We are quickly losing our strong supporters in the legislature. Schools and parents must speak out and educate the new legislators concerning the policies and the crucial need for the McKay Scholarship.

What's Happening Nationally?

A representative from the Alliance for School Choice will enlighten us about other states' successes and challenges in the choice movement.

It's Not All About Politics! – Professional Development

Two national speakers will be presenting topics "Emotions: A Pre- requisite to Learning" and "Collaborating with Parents of Childrer Disabilities". These will enhance our information and the quality of services we provide to our students and their parents.

"Opportunities for our Students" will provide a student panel to discuss opportunities in which your students can participate.

AND MORE GREAT TOPICS!

Register Now!

August 29, 2007

***Just When You Thought It Was Safe To Go Back Into The Water!
Attacks on Choice Programs and McKay Beginning Again***

ITEMS

Renewed attacks on Choice Programs
Register for Fall Conference

RENEWED ATTACKS ON CHOICE PROGRAMS

The first salvo of attacks on Choice Programs has begun this summer. Don't think they are the last.

1) Sara Mead's report "Information Underload: Florida's Flawed Special Ed Voucher Program." criticizes Florida McKay vouch program for special education students. See it at http://www.educationsector.org/research/research_show.htm?doc_id=506895 .

2) Couple this with Rep. Siplin's proposed bill:

S704 GENERAL BILL by Siplin

Private Schools/FCAT/HS Diploma [SPCC]; provides that earning passing scores on Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) or, in specified circumstances, on an equivalent standardized test is prerequisite to receiving high school diploma from private school in this state.

While these are not new attacks, the choice programs' problem is that many of the champions in the legislature choice have either termed out or will term out this year. There are over 30 new Republican faces in the House **These legislators do not have the history, knowledge or the commitment to The McKay Scholarship Program that our champions have had in the past.** Not to sound partisan, there are 20 freshmen Democrats. Rest as they will vote the party line which is to obstruct any choice program.

Leadership in the Department of Education is non-existent at this time. No director of The Choice Office has been appointed and we have no Commissioner of Education. Depending on the choices made for these two positions choice programs can be weakened or helped.

Our governor has been very quiet on his support of choice programs. We are concerned as to where he will lean support as these attacks continue.

Schools and parents involved in the McKay Scholarship Program must be proactive NOW in order to protect the scholarship. Make appointments with your representatives early this fall and educate them about the McKay Scholarship Program and what it means to children's future.

REGISTER FOR THE FALL CONFERENCE

The Fall Conference is just around the corner. Our theme "**Information...The Key to Growth, Strength and Success**" is even more important and timely. We need to learn how to get our information in front of legislators and the public in order for the McKay Scholarship Program to continue to grow, maintain strength and be successful.

Put October 8-9, 2007, Hilton Hotel, North Lois Avenue, Tampa, Florida on your calendar.

Register by Sept 16th to get the early bird discounts. Go to www.mckaycoalition.com and download the registration form.

Keep your sights on what is important.

Coalition of McKay Scholarship Schools

Sometimes we wonder why we continue the fight. Take a moment today to stand in a classroom and see the faces of the children we are fighting for. Take strength from them. We make a difference in children's lives and that is what counts.

Have a great school year.

Robyn A. Rennick
President

March 16, 2007

ITEMS

Legislative News
Contact your Legislators
Rally in Tally

LEGISLATIVE NEWS

The Legislative Session has begun. You may have noticed several House and Senate bills being filed concerning The McKay Scholarship Program. Most are dealing with assisting the students who, due to medical or psychological issues, can not attend at a school's physical location on a direct and regular basis.

It is too early to identify the bills that will fix this problem, but we are working with Rep. Pickens and Sen. Wise to help these children have access to The McKay Scholarship.

We will keep you apprised of the situation and when and where we will need support.

CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATORS

Many new legislators have arrived in Tallahassee. It is crucial that YOU continue the process of educating these legislators concerning the merits and importance of The McKay Scholarship Program. Even though the program is of great importance to our students, families, and schools, be aware that it is not "on the radar" of most of the legislators.

Much of the legislators' knowledge of The McKay Scholarship Program comes from what they read in the newspaper. Scary though it may be, the negative press that the choice programs receive from the press.

The Coalition has revised our Talking Points for you or your parents to use as you discuss The McKay Scholarship Program with your legislators.

Even though they are in Tallahassee, this is the time to make appointments with your legislators. Find out when they will be in the city and have a delegation of parents make an appointment with them. The delegation should take the Talking Points with them for the legislators as well as their stories of the progress their children have made. Pictures are great as well.

Coalition of McKay Scholarship Schools

Don't be lulled into a false sense of security as to the future of The McKay Scholarship Program. As both Rep. Baxley and Rep. Trav said at the conference, the opponents to all choice programs such as The McKay Scholarship are continually working behind the scenes to destroy them.

WE MUST RAISE OUR VOICES TO PROTECT THESE PROGRAMS.

RALLY IN TALLY

The Rally in Tally is April 12th. We greatly appreciate the Florida Alliance for Choices in Education as they organize and support this program. We encourage your school to Rally in Tally with us. It is a great, empowering civics lesson for our students and their presence gives support to the program.

See you in Tally,

Robyn A. Rennick, MS
President
The Coalition of McKay Scholarship Schools

February 5, 2007

ITEMS

Compliance Form

Educating Our Legislators: New Faces in Tallahassee

Rally in Tally, April 12



COMPLIANCE FORM

The Compliance Form is due for ALL schools by March 1st.

Due to the new state rules, each year one third of the participating schools will be asked to submit full documentation to DOE with the Compliance Form. If your school is one of those selected this year for a document check, you will have already received information from DOE.

We have received many questions from schools that are having their documents checked this year concerning the Private School Survey Form. If you are one of the schools required to send in your complete documentation, the Private School Survey being referred to is the 2006 - 2007 survey form. Your school should have already turned this in and DOES NOT have to re-submit as long as on your school's file of the www.floridaschoolchoice.org web site, your school is listed as having filed the Survey Form.

Call your regional manager if you have any questions concerning the Compliance Form.

NEW FACES IN TALLAHASSEE

The November election brought many new faces to the legislature. These freshmen legislators are surrounded by thousands of issues. We must not let the McKay Scholarship Program get lost amid all these other issues.

NOW is the time to make an appointment with your legislator. Do this BEFORE the session in March. Take several parents who can help legislators know how important the McKay Scholarship Program is for their children.

We will be sending talking points to you by the end of the week which will assist in educating the legislators, but set up your appointment now.

RALLY IN TALLY

The Florida Alliance for Choices in Education is sponsoring the third Rally in Tally on April 12. As mentioned above, many new legislators and policy makers have gone to Tallahassee. It is crucial that they see and hear the voices for choice in education.

Attached to this FYI find the information which must be sent back by Thursday, February 22nd if your school intends to participate. We would encourage all schools to participate and send students, parents and staff. It is a great civics lesson for our students and we emphasize the importance of showing the legislator how many Florida tax payers and voters are for more choices in education.

Check out the McKay Website www.mckaycoalition.com to find pictures from last year's rally.

Looking forward to seeing you there.

Robyn A. Rennick
President
