



# FLORIDA

## Parent and School Handbook

### Florida Income-Based Scholarship Programs

**AAA Scholarship Foundation – Florida**

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# **Florida Income-Based Scholarships**

AAA Scholarship Foundation (“AAA”), a private non-profit organization, is an approved Florida Scholarship Funding Organization (“SFO”). AAA awards annual scholarships to eligible students entering eligible grade levels from eligible households to help them pay for private school, curriculum, instructional materials, internet resources, assessments, tutoring, and more. An AAA family may NOT accept a scholarship from more than one state voucher or other Tax Credit Scholarship program for the same time period.

Currently, there are two Florida income-based scholarship programs: the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship (“FTC”) and the Family Empowerment Scholarship for Educational Options (“FES-EO”). FES-EO scholarships are government-funded, and the payments come from the State to the SFO serving the student each quarter. FTC scholarships are privately funded. The funding for a student receiving an FTC Scholarship comes from donations raised by the SFO that serves their household.

If you intend to use your student’s scholarship account primarily for private school, please DO NOT enroll them until you have actually received an AAA Scholarship Award Letter and have been notified that your student’s scholarship has been funded. Funding is not guaranteed. If you enroll your child before the scholarship is funded, you will be responsible for their tuition and fees.

**Please remember that in applying and if accepting a scholarship, you have agreed on the application to the below statements in the Certification and Authorization section.**

- √ I certify that the information provided on the application and all supporting documentation submitted at any time is true, correct, and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that if I give information that is not true or if I withhold information and my student(s) receive a scholarship for which they are not eligible, I can be lawfully punished for fraud, and the scholarship will be denied or revoked.
- √ I certify that no parent/guardian of a child on this application is an owner, operator, principal, or person with equivalent decision-making authority of an eligible private school or not at the private school that my student will attend.
- √ I understand that any information I provide at any time will be verified, which may include computer file matching, public records search, IRS transcripts, and that I may be required to provide other information and/or documentation.
- √ I authorize the release of personal, financial, and educational information for the purpose of determining eligibility and for research.
- √ I understand that AAA Scholarship Foundation does not discriminate because of race, color, sex, age, disability, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, political affiliation, or gender identification or expression.
- √ I authorize AAA Scholarship Foundation to make this form and the information therein available to the appropriate state agencies as required by the law governing the scholarships.
- √ I agree to follow the rules and responsibilities as they apply to the program as set forth in the Parent and School Handbook, available online at [www.aaascholarships.org](http://www.aaascholarships.org).
- √ I understand if my child is deemed eligible and is awarded a scholarship, that he/she is not automatically entitled to a scholarship in following years.
- √ I understand that it is my responsibility to notify my child’s public school district if I intend to withdraw him/her.
- √ I understand that it is my responsibility to reapply and document my eligibility whenever I am required to if I accept a scholarship.
- √ I understand if I enroll my child into a private school before receipt of a Scholarship Award Letter and School Commitment Form (SCF), I will be responsible for their tuition and fees.
- √ I understand if I intend to enroll my student(s) into a private school, I must: select the eligible private school and apply for the admission of my student; meet with the private school’s principal or the principal’s designee to review the school’s academic programs and policies, specialized services, code of student conduct, and attendance policies before enrollment in the private school; be responsible for their tuition and fees if enrollment occurs before receipt of a Scholarship Award Letter and School Commitment Form (SCF); require my student to remain in regular attendance throughout the school year, require my student to take the norm-referenced assessment offered by the private school or have my student participate in the statewide assessments pursuant to s. 1008.22.; agree that scholarship funds will be committed for tuition and fees for which I am responsible for payment at the private school before any may be used for additional authorized purposes; be responsible for all eligible expenses in excess of the amount of the scholarship.
- √ I understand funding is not guaranteed, and participation in a scholarship program does not guarantee enrollment at a private school.

## **Scholarship Types**

Households must first complete the AAA application process and be determined eligible in order to be awarded a scholarship. Applications are available on the AAA website beginning mid-March and remain available until funding is determined exhausted by AAA.

During the application process, applicants will need to select one of two scholarship types for their student(s):

- 1) Full-Time Private School Scholarship - for students enrolled full-time at an eligible private school. Scholarship funds must be committed for payment of the tuition and fees of the eligible private school before any may be used for additional authorized purposes.
- 2) Personalized Education Program ("PEP") Scholarship - for students not primarily enrolled full-time in public or private school. Scholarship funds must be used by the parent/guardian to procure the services necessary to educate their student. The parent/guardian must annually submit a sworn compliance statement affirming that funds will be used only for authorized purposes serving the student's educational needs and that they are responsible for all excess expenses. They must submit an annual student learning plan to the SFO, and they must require the student to take a nationally norm-referenced test and provide the results to the SFO. The law limits the number of PEP students to 60,000 for the 2024-25 school year. Once that limit is reached, no additional Personalized Education Program student accounts will be funded. Please consider this before deciding how you intend to use your student's scholarship.

## **Renewal Scholarship Eligibility**

Scholarships may be renewed every year through 12<sup>th</sup> grade as long as the household and student(s) continue to meet the conditions of eligibility.

To be eligible for a renewal scholarship, all of the following requirements must be met:

1. The household must complete the renewal application and send it along with **ALL** required supporting documentation listed on the application BY THE STATED DEADLINE. Failure to meet all renewal deadline requirements will result in the household losing their renewal priority and may result in the household not receiving a scholarship even if they eventually complete the required process.
2. The household must have been actively using their AAA scholarship in the prior school year.
3. The student(s) must continue to age qualify by state guidelines on September 1<sup>st</sup>, by law.
4. The household must be in good standing with the private school(s) the student attended during the prior school year.
5. The household must not have been disqualified/revoked from the program for any reason, including the internal audit process.

## **Initial Scholarship Eligibility**

To be eligible for an initial scholarship, all five (5) of the following requirements must be met:

1. The household must complete the scholarship application and send it along with **ALL** required supporting documentation listed on the application BY THE STATED DEADLINE.
2. The household must be residents of Florida or stationed in Florida for military families.
3. Student(s) entering Kindergarten – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade.
4. Students must meet the age eligibility for Florida:
  - a. Student(s) entering Kindergarten must be 5 years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - b. Student(s) entering first grade must be 6 years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup>.
5. The household must not have been disqualified/revoked from the program for any reason, including the internal audit process.

## **Foster or Out-of-Home Care Eligibility**

To be eligible for a foster or out-of-home scholarship, all six (6) of the following requirements must be met:

1. The household must complete the scholarship application and send it along with **ALL** required supporting documentation listed on the application BY THE STATED DEADLINE.
2. The household must be residents of Florida.
3. The household must not have been disqualified/revoked from the program for any reason, including the internal audit process.
4. Student(s) entering Kindergarten – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade.
5. Students must meet the age eligibility for Florida:
  - a. Student(s) entering Kindergarten must be 5 years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - b. Student(s) entering first grade must be 6 years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup>.
6. The household must provide documentation from the state of Florida verifying that the child meets one of the following definitions:
  - a. A child in foster care as defined by the following: "Foster care" means care provided a child in a foster family or boarding home, group home, agency boarding home, child care institution, or any combination thereof, as defined by s. 39.01(29).
  - b. A child in out-of-home care placement as defined by the following: "Out-of-home" means a placement outside of the home of the parents or a parent, as defined by s. 39.01(48), which is further defined as the placement of a child in licensed and non-licensed settings, arranged and supervised by the department or contracted service provider, outside of the home of the parent, as defined by DCF Rule: 65C-30.001 Definitions (91).

## **Household Income Levels for Priority Scholarship Funding**

The household must meet the financial eligibility guidelines listed below in order to receive priority funding. The guidelines change each year and are based on household size and income. The household size includes ALL of the people living in the household. Household income includes ALL the income added together for everyone who lives in the household.

Income includes but is not limited to Gross Income from Federal Income Taxes (if filed), Social Security Income/Disability for every household member (including all children), Child Support, and any other non-taxable income, along with various other categories including other money that may be available.

AAA will verify the household's eligibility through the application process. Completing the application process is the responsibility of the parent/guardian, not the private school.

<b>2024- 2025 Household Income/Financial Resources Eligibility Table - Florida</b>		
<b>1. Household size:</b> count all the people who live in your household (regardless of their relationship to you); this is your household size. <b>2. Household income:</b> add together ALL the 2023 annual gross earnings and assistance (taxable and non-taxable) for everyone in the household; this is your household income. <b>3. Use these two numbers to look at the chart below.</b> Your household income must be at or below the listed value for your household size in order to apply. <b>Note:</b> Any business losses will be adjusted to zero, and therefore, the total income will be adjusted accordingly to determine household eligibility.		
<b>Household size</b>	<b>Maximum 2024-2025 Household Income for priority funding #1 status</b>	<b>Maximum 2024-2025 Household Income for priority funding #2 status</b>
1	\$27,861	\$60,240
2	\$37,814	\$81,760
3	\$47,767	\$103,280
4	\$57,720	\$124,800
Each additional person add:	\$9,953	\$21,520

## **Scholarship Awarding Procedures**

Households that are determined eligible AND have received funding for the upcoming school year will receive a Scholarship Award Letter in an email directly from AAA.

The use of a scholarship cannot be postponed. If the scholarship will be used primarily for full-time enrollment in an eligible private school, the household must select an eligible private school via the online School Commitment Form ("SCF") for their student(s) as soon as they receive the scholarship determination email. Failure to meet the deadline stated on the SCF may result in the forfeiture of the awarded scholarship.

**Schools should not accept any students without an SCF** unless the household: 1) is willing to self-pay their tuition and fees until they are awarded a scholarship and 2) will self-pay if they are not.

If a household receives an award letter in error or their eligibility is revoked, the private school that has enrolled the student will be notified as soon as possible. By accepting the scholarship student(s) and scholarship payment(s) the eligible private school agrees to repay any incorrectly made or overpayment of funds on behalf of the student(s), regardless of the reason.

Households that document eligibility but are placed on a waitlist do not have a scholarship until/unless they receive a notification that they have been funded.

## **Scholarship Funding Priority**

Due to changes in the Florida law, all households (including renewals, members of the military, and law enforcement officers) will need to select their preferred Priority Funding Status when applying. **Renewing households in every Priority Funding Status will be awarded before any initial applicants are awarded.**

**Priority funding status #1:** This status is for households with documented household incomes of up to 185% of the Federal Poverty Level ("FPL") and for students who are documented as foster or out-of-home care. Students found eligible for priority funding status #1 will be funded with contributions from AAA's FTC program first.

**Priority funding status #2:** This status is for households with documented household incomes between 186 and 400% of FPL. Students found eligible for priority funding status #2 will be funded with contributions from AAA's FTC program after priority status #1.

**Non-priority funding status:** This status is for households with documented household incomes of over 400% of FPL or those who are unable to document their household incomes. The non-priority funding students will be funded after priority funding status #1 & 2 students with contributions from AAA's FTC program.

If insufficient FTC contributions are available at any stage, non-FTC-funded student information will be submitted quarterly to the Florida Department of Education to request funding from state tax dollars ("FES-EO"). Funding is not guaranteed.

## **Scholarship Award Amounts**

Students qualifying for an **FTC** scholarship are awarded the lesser of 1) the amounts listed in the table on page 15 or 2) the cost of tuition, books, and fees at the eligible private school of their choice if using their scholarship primarily for full-time enrollment in an eligible private school.

Students qualifying for an **FES-EO** scholarship are awarded the lesser of 1) the amounts listed in the table on page 16 or 2) the cost of tuition, books, and fees at the eligible private school of their choice if using their scholarship primarily for full-time enrollment in an eligible private school. The state of Florida then reduces the student's FES-EO award by 50 percent if the student submits their SCF to AAA after 10/26/2024. The FES-EO award amount is reduced to zero by the state of Florida if the student submits their SCF to AAA after 2/17/2025.

## **Full-Time Private School Scholarship Acceptance**

Scholarships are not awarded to schools. Scholarships are awarded to eligible households for eligible students. The household decides which eligible private school to send their student(s) and notifies AAA of their decision by submitting an SCF. Failure to enroll the student in an eligible private school by the deadline listed on the SCF may result in the loss of the scholarship.

It is the parent/guardian's right and responsibility to read and understand a private school's admission and conduct policy before requesting to enroll their child(ren) in an eligible private school. The parent/guardian should not rely solely on the fact that a school meets the state eligibility requirements to determine whether the school is appropriate for their child(ren). Likewise, parents/guardians should be aware that private schools set their own admission and conduct policies and are not required to enroll a student solely on the basis of their eligibility for a scholarship.

Once the parent/guardian has decided on a school and enrolled their student, they will start their student's SCF by logging into the SMP, clicking on the Find a School button, and then searching for the name of the school. Once the eligible private school has been selected, they will receive a notification to start their portion of the SCF for the student and then submit it back to the parent for review. The parent will receive a notification from the school to review and submit to AAA for approval.

It is the responsibility of the household to determine if the chosen eligible private school is meeting their student(s) needs. If the eligible private school is not meeting their needs, the household may transfer their student at any time during the school year or for the next school year if deemed eligible to renew. The scholarship follows the student(s) to any eligible private school as long as the household is eligible. For information on changing schools during the school year (see the "Student Transfer Procedure" on page 11).

### **Full-Time Private School Scholarship Funding Amounts**

AAA's scholarship funding calculation is based on a 36-week school year beginning on the first day of school, as listed on the SCF. School breaks of one week for Thanksgiving, two weeks for winter, and one week for spring are factored into the calculation as well. Every school has different calendars and different breaks. AAA does not try to match its scholarship funding calculation to any specific school calendar.

If the student remains in the school the entire year, the scholarship is paid in four equal installments throughout the 36-week school year. The payment calendar is available at <https://www.aaascholarships.org/schools/>.

If a student attends an eligible private school for a period of less than a full school year, the scholarship funding value will be prorated. For example, if a student's maximum scholarship award is \$5,886 but begins attending 21 weeks after the beginning of the school year, the calculated value of those 21 weeks (\$3,435) will be subtracted from the maximum scholarship award to determine the prorated scholarship funding value (\$5,886 – \$3,435 = \$2,451).

If the student transfers during the school year, AAA will determine the prorated amount owed to/from the eligible private school for tuition. The remaining balance of the student's scholarship will then be available for use at a new eligible private school if the student remains on the scholarship. See page 11 for details on transferring schools.

Schools may not charge a different rate for scholarship students. The published tuition schedule must apply to all students enrolled, whether they are on AAA scholarships or if their parents are paying for their tuition and fees. Scholarship students are allowed to receive private scholarships or discounts to assist with paying their portion of the financial responsibility to the school.

### **Full-Time Private School Scholarship Funding Examples**

Here are some examples of how we determine the maximum funding levels for a **Florida** income-based scholarship student who has submitted their SCF to us by the deadline to receive a full award:

	Example #1 3 <sup>rd</sup> -grade student eligible for 100% award, but school charges less than the full value of the award	Example #2 4 <sup>th</sup> -grade student eligible for 100% award, but school charges more than the full value of the award	Example #3 9 <sup>th</sup> -grade student eligible for 50% FES-EO award, but school charges less than the full value of the award	Example #4 9 <sup>th</sup> -grade student eligible for 50% FES-EO award, but school charges more than the full value of the award
<b>Registration Fee</b>	\$100	\$150	\$250	\$500
<b>+ Book Fee</b>	\$150	\$250	\$250	\$550
<b>+ Tuition</b>	\$2,800	\$7,186	\$2,100	\$5,000
<b>+ Additional Fees</b>	\$300	\$300	\$250	\$750
<b>= Total Tuition and Fees</b>	<b>\$3,350</b>	<b>\$7,886</b>	<b>\$2,850</b>	<b>\$6,800</b>

<b>Maximum Award Level</b>	\$7,320	\$6,781	\$3,412	\$3,412
<b>Parent Responsibility</b>	\$0	\$1,105	\$0	\$3,388

If the student transfers to a different school during the school year, AAA will determine the prorated amount owed to/from the school for tuition. The remaining balance of the student's scholarship will then be available for use at a new eligible private school if the student remains on the scholarship.

Schools may not charge a different rate for scholarship students. The same tuition schedule must apply to all students enrolled, whether they are on AAA scholarships or if their parents are paying for their tuition. Scholarship students are allowed to receive private scholarships to assist with paying their portion of the financial responsibility to the school.

### **Personalized Education Program "PEP" Scholarship**

A "personalized education program" means the sequentially progressive instruction of a student directed by his or her parent to satisfy the attendance requirements of ss. 1003.01(13) and 1003.21(1) while registered with an eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization pursuant to s. 1002.395. Eligible PEP students will be granted an educational savings account to help fund their educational needs. PEP scholarship funds must be used by the parent/guardian to procure the services necessary to educate their student.

Please review the [FTC/FES-EO Purchasing Handbook](#) for the categories of educational products and services that are reimbursable. All reimbursement requests must be properly supported. Proper support includes but is not limited to a copy of the provider's paid receipt listing the educational items and/or services purchased, the date the items were purchased, or the services were provided, and the name of the student for whom the items/services benefitted. Here is a [helpful guide on how to request a reimbursement](#).

A parent whose student will not be enrolled full-time in a public or private school must:

1. Apply to an eligible SFO to participate in the program as a personalized education student by a date set by the organization. The request must be communicated directly to the SFO in a manner that creates a written or electronic record of the request and the date of receipt of the request.
2. Sign an agreement with the organization and annually submit a sworn compliance statement to the SFO to satisfy or maintain program eligibility, including eligibility to receive and spend program payments, by:
  - a. Affirming that the program funds are used only for authorized purposes serving the student's educational needs, as described in paragraph (6)(d), and that they will not receive a payment, refund, or rebate of any funds provided under this section.
  - b. Affirming that the parent is responsible for all eligible expenses in excess of the amount of the scholarship and for the education of his or her student.
  - c. Submitting a student learning plan to the organization and revising the plan at least annually before program renewal.
  - d. Requiring his or her student to take a nationally norm-referenced test identified by the Department of Education or a statewide assessment under s.1008.22 and provide assessment results to the organization before the student's program renewal.
  - e. Renewing participation in the program each year. A student whose participation in the program is not renewed may continue to spend scholarship funds that are in his or her account from prior years unless the account must be closed pursuant to s.1002.394(5)(a)2.
  - f. Procuring the services necessary to educate the student. When the student receives a scholarship, the district school board is not obligated to provide the student with a free, appropriate public education.

### **Parent and Student Responsibilities for Full-Time Private School Scholarship Program Participation**

1. A parent whose student will be enrolled full-time in an eligible private school must select an eligible private school and apply for the admission of his or her child.
2. If the student was enrolled in a Florida public school in the year prior to entering the scholarship program, the parent must inform the student's school district that the child will be attending an eligible private school.
3. The parent shall meet with the private school's principal or the principal's designee to review the school's



academic programs and policies, specialized services, code of student conduct, and attendance policies before enrollment in the eligible private school. Each parent and each student has an obligation to the private school to comply with the private school's published policies and procedures once enrolled.

4. The parent shall ensure that the student remains in attendance at their chosen school(s) for at least 90 percent of each school year (maximum 18 days absent per school year). **See page 12** for information on how to request a scholarship deferment in the rare instance the student will be absent for more than the 18 days maximum.
5. The parent shall ensure that the student in grades 3 through 10 participating in the scholarship program takes the norm-referenced assessment test offered by the private school. The parent may also choose to have the student in grades 3 through 10 participate in the statewide assessments pursuant to s. [1008.22](#). If the parent requests that the student participating in the scholarship program take statewide assessments pursuant to s. [1008.22](#), and the eligible private school has not chosen to offer and administer the statewide assessments, the parent is responsible for transporting the student to the assessment site designated by the school district.
6. The parent shall approve each payment before the scholarship funds may be deposited to the eligible private school by funds transfer. The parent may not designate any entity or individual associated with the participating eligible private school as the parent's attorney, in fact to approve a funds transfer.
7. The parent shall authorize the SFO to access information needed for income eligibility determination and verification held by other state or federal agencies.
8. The parent shall agree to have the SFO commit scholarship funds on behalf of his or her student for tuition and fees for which the parent is responsible for payment at the eligible private school before using scholarship funds for additional authorized uses. A parent is responsible for all eligible expenses in excess of the amount of the scholarship.

### **Eligible Private Schools**

**Florida-eligible schools** are private schools (grades K-12) that meet the following criteria:

- Must be physically located in Florida
- Must be determined eligible to accept the scholarship by the Florida Department of Education-Visit [www.floridaschoolchoice.org](http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org) for details
- Comply with all requirements for private schools participating in state school choice scholarship programs pursuant to s. [1002.421](#).
- Be academically accountable to the parent for meeting the educational needs of the student by:
  - At a minimum, annually providing to the parent a written explanation of the student's progress.
  - Annually administering or making provision for students participating in the scholarship program in grades 3 through 10 to take one of the nationally norm-referenced tests identified by the Department of Education or the statewide assessments pursuant to s. 1008.22 f.s. Students with disabilities for whom standardized testing is not appropriate are exempt from this requirement. A participating private school must report a student's scores to the parent. A participating private school must annually report by **August 15** the scores of all participating students to the Learning System Institute described in s. 1002.395(9)(j) f.s.
  - Cooperating with the scholarship student whose parent chooses to have the student participate in the statewide assessments pursuant to s. 1008.22 or, if a private school chooses to offer the statewide assessments, administering the assessments at the school.
    1. A participating private school may choose to offer and administer the statewide assessments to all students who attend the private school in grades 3 through 10.
    2. A participating private school must submit a request in writing to the Department of Education by March 1 of each year in order to administer the statewide assessments in the subsequent school year.
- Employ or contract with teachers who have regular and direct contact with each student receiving a scholarship under this section at the school's physical location.
- Annually contract with an independent certified public accountant to perform the agreed-upon procedures developed under s. 1002.395(6)(o) f.s. and produce a report of the results if the private school receives more than \$250,000 in funds from scholarships during a state fiscal year. A private school subject to this paragraph

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must submit the report annually by **September 15** to the scholarship-funding organization that awarded the majority of the school's scholarship funds. The agreed-upon procedures must be conducted in accordance with attestation standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

### **Full-Time Private School Scholarship Parental Tuition Payments**

Parental tuition payments are necessary when an eligible private school's tuition and fees total *more* than the awarded scholarship. The household is responsible for the additional charges that exceed the awarded scholarship.

At times, the private school may award a supplemental scholarship to the household, but if this does not occur, the difference is the sole responsibility of the household. NO EXCEPTIONS.

All households must remain current with their payments to the private school for any fees owed by the household, not including the scholarship payments. Failure to pay or make arrangements to pay a balance owed may result in the private school suspending or expelling your student. If the student is expelled, they may no longer be eligible for the scholarship.

AAA Scholarship Foundation will not renew or transfer scholarships while money is owed to a school unless a current payment plan is in place.

### **Full-Time Private School Scholarship Payments**

*By accepting the scholarship student(s) and scholarship payment(s), the private school agrees to repay any incorrectly made or overpayment of funds on behalf of the student(s), regardless of the reason. Failure to return the funds to AAA could lead to loss of eligibility as a participating private school in the scholarship program and/or may lead to legal ramifications relating to the scholarship laws. The household is responsible for any balance of tuition/fees not covered by the scholarship.*

Scholarships are generally paid in four installments throughout the school year. The payment calendar can be found at <http://www.aaascholarships.org/schools/>

Before each installment is processed, a verification report will become active in the private school's SMP account, listing the student's name and scholarship payment amount. The private school must: 1) verify each student's information, 2) indicate each student's absences to date, and 3) state whether the household is current with any monies privately owed to the private school. The private school must submit the verification report by the stated deadline. Private schools must explain any "no" answers in writing on this report and/or attach documentation.

**View Verification Report Tutorial:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nlli2aM\\_DK0&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nlli2aM_DK0&feature=youtu.be)

Once the school has finished its part, the parent/guardian will 1) receive a notification by email to review the verification report, 2) login to their SMP account, 3) click Verification Report Active for the individual student, and 4) complete and submit the form by the deadline.

**View Tutorial:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nlli2aM\\_DK0&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nlli2aM_DK0&feature=youtu.be)

Scholarship payments will be directly deposited to the eligible private school selected by the household for verification reports that are completed and approved by the deadline.

Student withdrawals may result in the private school being required to reimburse the scholarship for the difference between the actual time period attended and actual scholarship funds received to date. For information on changing eligible private schools during the year (see the "Student Transfer Procedure" on page 11). The scholarship only pays for services rendered.

If any student receiving a scholarship from AAA also receives a scholarship from another Scholarship Organization or the state of Florida, the school and/or guardian must contact AAA, and the private school must return the funding to AAA immediately. Failure to report such situations to AAA may result in a private school's loss of eligibility to enroll new scholarship students and/or to legal ramifications with the State Attorney's Office.

If a private school receives a payment for a student who is not currently attending their private school, they must return the funds to AAA immediately unless it is the final "exit" payment as determined by AAA. If the student has expenses over and above tuition for actual attendance at their private school before the receipt of this payment, it is the household's responsibility to pay the debt. The private school may not retain the funds. If pro-rated monies are owed to the private school, a payment will be issued following the submission of the Student Withdrawal Form (SWF).

Failure to return the funds to AAA in these situations could lead to loss of eligibility as a participating private school in the AAA scholarship program and/or may lead to legal ramifications relating to the scholarship laws.

### **Student Transfers**

One of the benefits of private education is that if the parent/guardian is not satisfied with an eligible private school, they may choose another one.

**A student's scholarship may be transferred to another eligible in-state private school at any time during the year.** However, AAA will not renew or transfer scholarships while money is owed to a previous eligible private school unless a payment plan is in place.

If the parent/guardian plans to withdraw a student from a school during the school year, the parent/guardian should notify the private school two weeks prior to withdrawal.

#### 1. How to transfer a scholarship during the school year:

- a. The school that the student is leaving must complete a Student Withdrawal Form (SWF) online within **5 business days** of being notified that the student is leaving. AAA will not transfer a scholarship until the school confirms that: 1) the household has no outstanding balance owed or 2) that a payment plan is in place.
- b. Parent/Guardian A is responsible for finding another eligible private school within **5 business days** after exiting the previous school. Using your SMP account, you must click on the Find a School button and then click on the eligible private school of your choice to begin the SCF process. Any SCFs that reach AAA after the cut-off date may result in the **forfeit** of the scholarship. *Example: If the student's last day is on a Friday at **SCHOOL A**, the new SCF must be submitted to AAA by **SCHOOL B** no later than the following Friday.*
- c. The new school will receive a notification to start the School Commitment Form (SCF) for each student and submit it back to the parent for review. The parent will receive a notification from the school to review and submit to AAA for approval.
- d. AAA will complete the transfer process when the Withdrawal and SCF is received. This process may include: 1) a final payment to the school that is being exited, or 2) a request for a refund of overpayment from the school that is being exited for the student transferring.

#### 2. How to transfer a scholarship for the following school year during the renewal process:

- a. The household must complete the renewal process.
- b. Upon receipt of the SCF, the household must find the eligible private school of their choice online, be it the same as the previous year or another eligible private school.
- c. The school will receive a notification to start the School Commitment Form (SCF) for the student(s) and submit it back to the parent for review. The parent will receive a notification from the school to review and submit to AAA for approval.

If, at any time while utilizing the scholarship, a student returns to public school, the student will lose their scholarship. The household will be required to reapply and document eligibility to qualify in future years.

### **Student Behavior**

Scholarship students must follow all academic and discipline policies of the individual eligible private school; eligible private schools are free to expel or suspend students if their policies are not followed.

If a student is expelled from a private school, he or she will lose the scholarship, with no option to renew. This will not affect the scholarships of any siblings.

Students expelled from public school are not eligible for a scholarship.

Scholarship students assigned by the courts to the juvenile justice system will immediately lose their scholarship and will be required to reapply and document eligibility to qualify in future years.

## **Attendance**

Florida law states that students who are enrolled in eligible private schools are deemed to be in compliance with the compulsory attendance requirements provided the student maintains regular school attendance during the entire school term of either:

- (1) One hundred eighty (180) actual school days determined as prescribed by Section 1011.60(2), F.S., or
- (2) A minimum of one hundred seventy (170) actual school days and the hourly equivalent of one hundred eighty (180) actual school days, determined as prescribed below:
  - a. Kindergarten: Five hundred forty (540) net instructional hours.
  - b. Grades 1-3: Seven hundred twenty (720) net instructional hours.
  - c. Grades 4-12: Nine hundred (900) net instructional hours.

Regular school attendance means the actual attendance of a student during the school day. AAA monitors regular school attendance via the quarterly verification report process. To maintain compliance, AAA scholarship students may not be absent more than 18 days during the 180-day school year ("90 percent attendance"). Failure to maintain regular school attendance for this minimum amount of time may result in the loss of the scholarship. See below for information on how to request a scholarship deferment in the rare instance the student will be absent for more than the 18 days maximum. If you plan to withdraw your student during the school year, please notify the eligible private school two (2) weeks prior to withdrawal.

## **Authorized Scholarship Deferment**

In rare circumstances, the use of a scholarship may be deferred for a maximum of 30 days per school year if the student: 1) has a valid reason to be temporarily unable to attend school for more than the 18 days maximum, as determined by AAA on a case-by-case basis, and 2) the absence is excused by the school.

To request a deferment, the parent must notify AAA by clicking on the Request Deferral button in the online SMP account within 5 business days before they wish to temporarily postpone using their child's scholarship, including detailed supporting documentation as to why the child is unable to attend school, the beginning and end dates for the requested deferment period, and written proof of the school's approval of the absence as excused. AAA's approval or denial of the request will be provided via the online SMP, and the parent will be notified to check their online account.

During the deferment period, no scholarship payments will be made for the student. Additionally, the student may not attend a public school. Otherwise, the public school disqualification will take effect, and the scholarship will be considered a forfeit. In a penalty situation, such as a suspension, the parent may be responsible for payments due to the school during the deferment period.

Once the student returns to the eligible private school, the parent must notify AAA within 5 business days following the expiration of the deferment period or the date the child returned, whichever is less. At that time, scholarship payments will resume as normal.

If, within 5 business days after the deferment period has passed, the parent has not notified AAA that their child has returned to the private school, their child's scholarship will be considered a forfeit. If any, a final scholarship payment will be made to the school for actual services rendered to the student before the first day of the deferment period.

## **Loss of A Scholarship**

A household will lose their scholarship for any of the following:

1. Providing fraudulent information or withholding information on the application or at any time (pg. 3)
2. Enrolling the student in a private school that is not eligible (pg. 9)
3. The student is receiving multiple scholarships- An AAA family may NOT accept a scholarship from more than one state-approved scholarship organization and/or tax credit program for the same time period (pg. 3)
4. The student being expelled from school (pg. 12)
5. The student not maintaining 90 percent attendance for the entire school year (pg. 12)

6. The household owing private school money or not maintaining an agreed-upon payment schedule (pg. 10)
7. Not completing the renewal process by the deadline (pg. 5)
8. Failing to complete the internal audit process, if required.
9. Parent/Guardian is the owner, operator, principal or person with equivalent decision-making authority of an eligible private school, regardless of where the student attends (pg. 3)
10. Otherwise, violating the conditions of the scholarship program.

### **Change of Contact Information**

If there is a change of address, telephone, cell phone, or E-mail address, the parent/guardian must immediately notify AAA. AAA must be notified if the household is moving regardless of whether it is within the area or outside the area the household currently resides in. A scholarship can be transferred to any eligible private school in the state of Florida as long as eligibility is maintained.

Failure to inform AAA of the household's current address may result in the household not receiving important, time-sensitive communication from AAA. It may result in the loss of the scholarship. It is very important that AAA be able to reach you! You can reach us at [FLDocs@aaascholarships.org](mailto:FLDocs@aaascholarships.org).

### **Handbook Disclaimer and Acknowledgment**

The information, policies, and procedures described in this Handbook are necessarily subject to change. Revisions may occur and the revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies. This Handbook is not a contract or guarantee of a scholarship. By accepting a scholarship, you are acknowledging that you have received, read, and agreed to comply with the policies contained in the Handbook and any revisions made to it.

### **Tutorial Information**

Below are the links available on our website - [www.AAAScholarships.org](http://www.AAAScholarships.org).

**PARENTS:** <https://www.aaascholarships.org/parents/video-tutorials/>

### **SCHOLARSHIP MANAGEMENT PLATFORM ("SMP")**

Our SMP makes it SIMPIE and convenient to manage your student's scholarship with AAA. You will receive an onboarding email inviting you to create a secure SMP account once a determination has been made about your student's eligibility.

[Here is a link to log back into our online SMP after accepting our onboarding invitation.](#)

If you are not able to find your child's school on the SMP, please contact them to ask if they have responded to the AAA email invitation. The school must complete their onboarding process before parents can choose them on the SMP.

This current year, you will not lose your child's scholarship for missing an SMP deadline. However, we do ask that you contact your child's school to ask if they have completed the AAA onboarding process so that your child's scholarship payments are not delayed.

Once the school has completed that process, they will be available for you to select. If they're having trouble with that process, we ask that they please send an email with details of the problem to us at [help@aaascholarships.org](mailto:help@aaascholarships.org).

Below are helpful tutorials to help you get started using the SMP:

[1. Understanding your SMP email invitation – Part 1](#)

[2. Understanding your SMP email invitation – Part 2](#)

[3. Final step of the SMP email invitation process – Verification Code](#)

[4. Review of the SMP dashboard and School Commitment Form process](#)

Need more help? [Check out our SMP FAQ page.](#)

**SCHOOLS:** <https://www.aaascholarships.org/schools/florida/>

[Link to log into our online SMP after accepting an onboarding invitation.](#)

Links to SMP tutorials for school administrators:

[1. Understanding your school SMP onboarding invitation – video](#)

[2. Final step for your school SMP onboarding – verification code – video](#)

[3. How to create, edit and delete a school tuition schedule – pdf](#)

[4. Understanding the School Commitment Form and Verification Processes – video](#)

[5. Review of Onboarding Process and Tutorial for adding School Banking Information – video](#)

Need more help? [Check out our SMP FAQ page.](#)



**2024-25 Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Maximum Award Values\***

Students who have maintained an active Florida Tax Credit scholarship since the 2018-2019 school year or earlier should compare the values listed here\* to the district tables below. The 2024-2025 school year award will be the greater of the two.

*2018-2019 or Earlier Renewals Only			
Grade	K-5	6-8	9-12
Award	\$ 6,519	\$ 6,815	\$ 7,112

2024-2025 school year award values for Florida Tax Credit scholarship students who entered the program in 2019-20 or after will be based on the tables below (student grade level and district of residence listed on the household's application).

District	Grade Level during 2024-2025		
	K-3	4-8	9-12
Alachua	\$ 8,147	\$ 7,518	\$ 7,401
Baker	\$ 8,722	\$ 8,076	\$ 7,955
Bay	\$ 8,255	\$ 7,626	\$ 7,509
Bradford	\$ 8,815	\$ 8,169	\$ 8,048
Brevard	\$ 8,202	\$ 7,573	\$ 7,456
Broward	\$ 8,310	\$ 7,665	\$ 7,545
Calhoun	\$ 9,062	\$ 8,416	\$ 8,295
Charlotte	\$ 8,693	\$ 8,064	\$ 7,947
Citrus	\$ 8,127	\$ 7,498	\$ 7,381
Clay	\$ 8,159	\$ 7,530	\$ 7,413
Collier	\$ 9,908	\$ 9,249	\$ 9,126
Columbia	\$ 8,378	\$ 7,732	\$ 7,611
Dade	\$ 8,467	\$ 7,824	\$ 7,705
DeSoto	\$ 8,692	\$ 8,046	\$ 7,925
Dixie	\$ 8,799	\$ 8,153	\$ 8,032
Duval	\$ 8,246	\$ 7,612	\$ 7,493
Escambia	\$ 8,230	\$ 7,601	\$ 7,484
Flagler	\$ 8,067	\$ 7,438	\$ 7,321
Franklin	\$ 9,733	\$ 9,087	\$ 8,966
Gadsden	\$ 8,640	\$ 7,994	\$ 7,873
Gilchrist	\$ 9,034	\$ 8,388	\$ 8,267
Glades	\$ 9,326	\$ 8,680	\$ 8,559
Gulf	\$ 9,394	\$ 8,748	\$ 8,627
Hamilton	\$ 9,027	\$ 8,381	\$ 8,260
Hardee	\$ 8,433	\$ 7,787	\$ 7,666
Hendry	\$ 8,116	\$ 7,470	\$ 7,349
Hernando	\$ 8,112	\$ 7,483	\$ 7,366
Highlands	\$ 8,368	\$ 7,722	\$ 7,601
Hillsborough	\$ 8,251	\$ 7,615	\$ 7,496
Holmes	\$ 8,999	\$ 8,353	\$ 8,232
Indian River	\$ 8,495	\$ 7,866	\$ 7,749
Jackson	\$ 8,745	\$ 8,099	\$ 7,978
Jefferson	\$ 10,224	\$ 9,578	\$ 9,457

District	Grade Level during 2024-2025		
	K-3	4-8	9-12
Lafayette	\$ 9,126	\$ 8,480	\$ 8,359
Lake	\$ 8,109	\$ 7,480	\$ 7,363
Lee	\$ 8,596	\$ 7,962	\$ 7,844
Leon	\$ 8,201	\$ 7,572	\$ 7,455
Levy	\$ 8,848	\$ 8,202	\$ 8,081
Liberty	\$ 9,200	\$ 8,554	\$ 8,433
Madison	\$ 8,684	\$ 8,038	\$ 7,917
Manatee	\$ 8,276	\$ 7,647	\$ 7,530
Marion	\$ 8,131	\$ 7,502	\$ 7,385
Martin	\$ 8,769	\$ 8,135	\$ 8,017
Monroe	\$ 11,983	\$ 11,330	\$ 11,209
Nassau	\$ 8,553	\$ 7,924	\$ 7,807
Okaloosa	\$ 8,294	\$ 7,665	\$ 7,548
Okeechobee	\$ 8,511	\$ 7,865	\$ 7,744
Orange	\$ 8,264	\$ 7,629	\$ 7,511
Osceola	\$ 8,164	\$ 7,535	\$ 7,418
Palm Beach	\$ 8,698	\$ 8,044	\$ 7,922
Pasco	\$ 8,157	\$ 7,528	\$ 7,411
Pinellas	\$ 8,440	\$ 7,809	\$ 7,691
Polk	\$ 8,164	\$ 7,535	\$ 7,418
Putnam	\$ 8,614	\$ 7,968	\$ 7,847
St. Johns	\$ 8,244	\$ 7,615	\$ 7,498
St. Lucie	\$ 8,278	\$ 7,649	\$ 7,532
Santa Rosa	\$ 8,138	\$ 7,509	\$ 7,392
Sarasota	\$ 8,936	\$ 8,297	\$ 8,178
Seminole	\$ 8,205	\$ 7,576	\$ 7,459
Sumter	\$ 8,761	\$ 8,132	\$ 8,015
Suwannee	\$ 8,399	\$ 7,753	\$ 7,632
Taylor	\$ 8,667	\$ 8,021	\$ 7,900
Union	\$ 8,885	\$ 8,239	\$ 8,118
Volusia	\$ 8,067	\$ 7,438	\$ 7,321
Wakulla	\$ 8,412	\$ 7,766	\$ 7,645
Walton	\$ 9,878	\$ 9,249	\$ 9,132
Washington	\$ 9,026	\$ 8,380	\$ 8,259

\*Subject to change

Source: Conference Report for HB 5001 3/5/2024 - FEFP Fiscal Year 2024-2025

updated 4/27/2024



2024-25 Family Empowerment Scholarship for Educational Options Maximum Award Values\*

District	Grade Level during 2024-2025		
	K-3	4-8	9-12
Alachua	\$ 8,147	\$ 7,518	\$ 7,401
Baker	\$ 8,722	\$ 8,076	\$ 7,955
Bay	\$ 8,255	\$ 7,626	\$ 7,509
Bradford	\$ 8,815	\$ 8,169	\$ 8,048
Brevard	\$ 8,202	\$ 7,573	\$ 7,456
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updated 4/27/2024