



# FLORIDA

## Parent and School Handbook

### Florida Income-Based Scholarship Program

**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 (averaging \$7,000) to eligible students entering eligible grade levels from eligible households to help them attend an eligible private school of their choice or assist with transportation costs (*up to \$750*) to attend a public school that is different than their assigned school. The scholarships for private schools are for tuition, books and fees (including technology). 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 to the Scholarship Organization that serves their household.

Please DO NOT enroll your child into a private school until you have actually received an AAA Scholarship Award Letter and School Commitment Form (SCF)! Funding is not guaranteed. If you enroll your child before receipt of an SCF, you will be responsible for their tuition and fees and your child may not qualify for future scholarship funding.

**Please remember that in applying and if accepting a scholarship you have agreed on the application to the below statements in the Certification Signature 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 which 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 or political belief.
- √ 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.aascholarships.org](http://www.aascholarships.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 the child may not qualify for future scholarship funding.
- √ I understand funding is not guaranteed.
- √ I understand that it is my right and responsibility to read and understand a private school's admission and conduct policy before requesting to enroll my child into an eligible private school.
- √ I consent and agree that AAA Scholarship Foundation may obtain my child's free and reduced price meal and free milk eligibility information for the purpose of helping to determine my child's eligibility for the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program. I understand that this information will not be shared with any other entity or program. In addition, I may limit my consent to only those programs with which I wish to share this information.

## **Scholarship Awarding Procedures**

Households must first complete the AAA application process and be determined eligible in order to be awarded an initial scholarship.

By law, scholarships are awarded to eligible students in the following order of priority: renewing students from the previous school year; new students whose household income levels do not exceed 185 percent of the federal poverty level or who are in foster care or out of home care; all others on a first-completed, first-awarded basis until funding is exhausted (see the Scholarship Granting Priority section below). Funding is not guaranteed.

Households that are determined eligible AND have received funding for the upcoming school year will receive a Scholarship Award Letter and School Commitment Form (SCF) in the mail directly from AAA.

The use of a scholarship cannot be postponed. The household must find an eligible private school for their student(s) as soon as they receive a scholarship award letter and SCF. Failure to meet the deadline stated on the SCF will result in the forfeiture of the awarded scholarship.

Families should make a copy of the blank SCF before taking it to an eligible private school in case they decide to transfer to a different eligible private school later in the year (see the Student Transfer Procedure on page 11).

**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 SCF 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 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 unless they receive a Scholarship Award Letter and SCF at a later date.

## **Scholarship Granting Priority**

**First Priority (Renewals and Renewal Add-Ons):** Renewal students, who received an AAA scholarship for the previous year, meet the current eligibility criteria (Page 4) and meet all deadlines for renewal priority. Add-On siblings of Renewal students, who received an AAA scholarship during the previous year, meet the current eligibility criteria (Page 5) and meet all deadlines for renewal priority. Funding is not guaranteed.

**Second Priority (Transfers and Transfer Add-Ons):** Students who received a scholarship from another scholarship funding organization or from the State of Florida during the previous school year, meet the current eligibility criteria (Page 5) and meet all deadlines for transfer priority. Add-On siblings of students who received a scholarship from another scholarship funding organization or from the State of Florida during the previous school year, meet the current eligibility criteria (Page 5) and meet all deadlines for transfer priority. Funding is not guaranteed.

**Third Priority (New with Household Incomes at 185 Percent of Poverty and Under, Foster or Out-of-Home Care):** New applicants whose household income levels do not exceed 185 percent of the federal poverty level or who are in foster care or out of home care, meet the current eligibility criteria (Page 6) and meet all stated deadlines. Funding is not guaranteed.

**Fourth Priority (Waitlist and Waitlist Add-Ons, New with Household Incomes over 185 Percent of Poverty):** Waitlist students who were approved for an AAA scholarship but were put on a waiting list due to lack of funding and who meet the current eligibility criteria. Add-On siblings of waitlist students, who were determined eligible and waitlisted during the previous year and who meet the current eligibility criteria. New household applicants whose household income levels exceed 185 percent of the federal poverty level and who meet current eligibility criteria (Page 6). Scholarships for those in this fourth priority will be awarded on a first completed, first awarded basis until funding is exhausted. Funding is not guaranteed.

**NOTE:** If a student is found eligible for both Florida income-based scholarship programs, and their household income is determined to be at or below 300% of the federal poverty level, AAA will grant them an FTC scholarship. If their household income is between 301% and 375% of the federal poverty level, AAA will grant them an FES-EO scholarship. In the event that FES-EO funding is exhausted, the student will be granted an FTC scholarship.

### **Renewal K- 12 Scholarship Eligibility (NOT Add-On, New or Transfer Students)**

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 guideline 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.

### **Add-On Siblings Scholarship Eligibility (NOT Renewals, New or Transfers)**

To be eligible for an add-on scholarship (sibling to a renewal or FES-UA student), all 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 student(s) must reside in the same household as the previously awarded sibling.
3. The student(s) must be entering Kindergarten – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade. **OR**
4. The student(s) must meet the age eligibility for Florida:
  - Student(s) entering Kindergarten must be 5 years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - 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.

### **Transfer Scholarship Eligibility (NOT Renewals, New or Add-on Students)**

To be eligible to transfer your current tax-credit scholarship to AAA (within Florida only), 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 transfer priority and may result in the household not receiving a scholarship even if they eventually complete the required process.
2. The student(s) must have been a previous recipient of a tax credit scholarship the prior year.
3. The student(s) must continue to age qualify by state guideline 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.

### **New Scholarship Eligibility (NOT Renewals, Add-on, Transfer or New Students)**

To be eligible for a new 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 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 meet the income guidelines (*see chart on Page 7*) unless military.
6. 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 (NOT Renewals, Add-on or Transfer Students)**

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).

**\*\*\*An eligible household may not accept a tax credit scholarship for their student from more than one Scholarship Organization and/or from any other tax credit program for the same time period they have accepted an AAA Scholarship.\*\*\***

## **Household Income Levels for Initial (non-military) Scholarship Eligibility**

The financial eligibility 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, 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>2021- 2022 Household Income/Financial Resources Table - Florida</b>		
AAA considers ALL household members and their income. To figure out your household size, add all the people you live with together, this is your household size. Now add ALL the annual earnings (before tax) for everyone in the household, this is your total annual income. Use these two numbers to look at the income chart below for your household size and income.		
<i>Note: Any business losses will be adjusted to zero and the total income will be adjusted accordingly to determine household eligibility.</i>		
<b>Household size</b>	<b>Maximum Household Income for a Florida Tax Credit ("FTC") Scholarship</b>	<b>Maximum Household Income for a Family Empowerment Scholarship ("FES")</b>
1	\$38,640	\$48,300
2	\$52,260	\$65,325
3	\$65,880	\$82,350
4	\$79,500	\$99,375
Each additional person add:	\$13,620	\$17,025

## **Scholarship Award Amounts**

Students qualifying for an **FTC** scholarship are awarded the lesser of 1) the amounts listed in the table on page 13 or 2) the cost of tuition, books and fees at the eligible private school of their choice (see Scholarship Funding Examples on page 8).

Students qualifying for an **FES-EO** scholarship are awarded the lesser of 1) the amounts listed in the table on page 14 or 2) the cost of tuition, books and fees at the eligible private school of their choice (see Scholarship Funding Examples on page 8). The state of Florida then reduces the student's FES-EO award by 50 percent if the student submits their SCF to AAA after November 1<sup>st</sup>. The FES-EO award amount is reduced to zero by the state of Florida if the student submits their SCF to AAA after March 1<sup>st</sup>.

## **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 responsibility of the household to determine if the chosen private school is meeting their student(s) needs. If the private school is not meeting their needs, the household should 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).

Scholarship payments will be sent to the eligible private school selected by the household. The check will be made payable to the name of parent/guardian A on the application and will require that specified parent/guardian's endorsement before the private school can deposit the payment.

## **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 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.

## **Transportation Scholarship**

This scholarship is up to \$750 and is to be used for transportation to a Florida public school in which a student is enrolled and that is different from the school to which the student was assigned or to a lab school as defined by law. The transportation scholarship is not available for private school students.

## **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:

	<b>Example #1 3<sup>rd</sup>-grade student eligible for 100% award but school charges less than the full value of the award</b>	<b>Example #2 4<sup>th</sup>-grade student eligible for 100% award but school charges more than the full value of the award</b>	<b>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</b>	<b>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>
<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.



## **Parent and Student Responsibilities for Program Participation**

1. The parent 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. Each parent and each student has an obligation to the private school to comply with the private school's published policies and procedures.
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 grade 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 grade 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 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 to whom the scholarship check is made payable must restrictively endorse it over to the private school for deposit into the account of the private school. The parent may not designate any entity or individual associated with the participating private school as the parent's attorney in fact to endorse a scholarship warrant or approve a funds transfer.
7. The parent shall authorize the nonprofit scholarship-funding organization to access information needed for income eligibility determination and verification held by other state or federal agencies.

## **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 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.

### **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 will 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.

### **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 be sent to the private school, 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 sign and date the verification report and return it to AAA by the stated deadline. Private schools must explain any "no" answers, in writing, on this report and/or attach documentation.

A separate check is issued for each scholarship student attending a private school, even if multiple students are from the same household.

Student withdrawal may result in the private school being required to reimburse the scholarship for the difference between actual time period attended, and actual scholarship funds received to date. For information on changing 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 un-cashed check 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 check for a student, who is not currently attending their private school they must return the un-cashed check 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 check, it is the household's responsibility to pay the debt. The private school may not deposit the check. If pro-rated monies are owed to the private school, a check will be issued following receipt of the Student Withdrawal Form (SWF).

Failure to return the checks 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.

### **Depositing Scholarship Checks**

Private schools must process and deposit the checks for scholarship students promptly. Upon receipt of a scholarship check, the private school must immediately stamp/write the first three of the following lines on each check before the Parent/Guardian A signs the check. The back of the check should read:

**For Deposit Only  
(Name of School's Bank)  
Into the account of (Name of School/Account Number)  
Parent Signature**

The private school should notify the household that the scholarship check has arrived and had them come in to "restrictively endorse" the check to the private school. Failure of the designated parent to sign the check **within 5 business days of being notified** by the private school or within the time specified by the private school policy, whichever is less, may result in the loss of the scholarship.

**The check will be made payable to the name of Parent/Guardian A listed on the application. That individual MUST be the person who endorses the scholarship check when received by the private school. ONLY the individual on the check can endorse the back of the check. If a household needs the parent listed to be changed, they must make a *request to AAA in writing to change the name to the other parent/guardian.***

### **NO POWER OF ATTORNEY OR OTHER TRANSFER OF SIGNATURE AUTHORITY IS ALLOWED.**

The scholarship checks may not leave the possession of the private school. Students may not bring scholarship checks home for parent endorsement (signature).

Failure by the private school to follow these procedures may result in loss of eligibility as a participating private school for the Scholarship program, legal ramifications with the state attorney's office, and reimbursement in full of any overpaid monies due to AAA.

There is a 90 day stale date for scholarship checks so please be sure to follow the proper procedures in a timely manner to prevent loss of funds. The school will be required to pay for any stop payment fees incurred for checks that need to be reissued after the 90 day stale date and/or for any excessive re-issue requests, as determined by AAA.

### **Student Transfers**

One of the benefits of private education is that if the parent/guardian is not satisfied with a 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 private school.

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

How to transfer a scholarship *during the school year*:

1. The private school, the student, is leaving must complete a Student Withdrawal Form (SWF) and return it to AAA **within 5 business days of being notified** that the student is leaving. AAA will not transfer a scholarship until the private school confirms that the household has no outstanding balance owed or a payment schedule is in place.
2. The new private school must fill out a School Commitment Form for each student and send it to AAA.

AAA will complete the transfer process when both documents have been received. This process may include a final payment to the private school that is being exited, which must be signed by the appropriate individual following the check cashing policy, or a request for refund of overpayment for the student that is transferring.

How to transfer a scholarship *for the following school year during the renewal process:*

1. The household must complete the renewal process.
2. Upon receipt of the School Commitment Form the household must take it to the eligible private school of their choice; be it the same as the previous year or another eligible private school.
3. The private school must complete and sign the form then send it to AAA.

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 private school; 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**

AAA Scholarship students may not be absent more than 18 days during the 180-day school year ("90 percent attendance"). Failure to be present for this minimum amount of time will result in the loss of the scholarship. If you plan to withdraw your student during the school year, please notify the 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 in writing within 5 business days that 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 decline of the request will be provided in writing to the parent within 2 business days of receipt of a valid request.

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 private school, the parent must notify AAA within 5 business days following 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. Not endorsing scholarship payments within 5 business days of being notified by the private school or within the time specified by private school policy, whichever is less (pg. 11)
7. The household owing private school money or not maintaining an agreed-upon payment schedule (pg. 10)
8. Not completing the renewal process by the deadline (pg. 5)
9. Exceeding the household financial eligibility guidelines (pg. 7)
10. Failing to complete the internal audit process, if required.
11. 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)
12. 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 the scholarship was awarded and 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 and may result in the loss of the scholarship. It is very important that AAA be able to reach you! You can reach us at [info@aaascholarships.org](mailto:info@aaascholarships.org).



Students who have maintained an active Florida Tax Credit scholarship since the 2018-19 school year or earlier should compare the values listed here\* to the district tables below. The 2021-2022 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

2021-2022 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 2021-2022		
	K-3	4-8	9-12
Alachua	\$ 7,320	\$ 6,781	\$ 6,823
Baker	\$ 7,748	\$ 7,212	\$ 7,255
Bay	\$ 7,388	\$ 6,854	\$ 6,897
Bradford	\$ 7,927	\$ 7,394	\$ 7,437
Brevard	\$ 7,408	\$ 6,863	\$ 6,907
Broward	\$ 7,485	\$ 6,924	\$ 6,968
Calhoun	\$ 8,111	\$ 7,597	\$ 7,638
Charlotte	\$ 7,786	\$ 7,241	\$ 7,284
Citrus	\$ 7,384	\$ 6,863	\$ 6,904
Clay	\$ 7,378	\$ 6,834	\$ 6,877
Collier	\$ 8,757	\$ 8,178	\$ 8,224
Columbia	\$ 7,467	\$ 6,946	\$ 6,987
Dade	\$ 7,626	\$ 7,067	\$ 7,112
DeSoto	\$ 7,730	\$ 7,190	\$ 7,233
Dixie	\$ 7,851	\$ 7,334	\$ 7,375
Duval	\$ 7,471	\$ 6,917	\$ 6,961
Escambia	\$ 7,410	\$ 6,873	\$ 6,915
Flagler	\$ 7,334	\$ 6,806	\$ 6,848
Franklin	\$ 8,338	\$ 7,826	\$ 7,867
Gadsden	\$ 7,748	\$ 7,224	\$ 7,265
Gilchrist	\$ 8,095	\$ 7,569	\$ 7,611
Glades	\$ 8,424	\$ 7,878	\$ 7,922
Gulf	\$ 8,230	\$ 7,711	\$ 7,752
Hamilton	\$ 8,099	\$ 7,591	\$ 7,631
Hardee	\$ 7,533	\$ 7,001	\$ 7,043
Hendry	\$ 7,145	\$ 6,593	\$ 6,637
Hernando	\$ 7,349	\$ 6,816	\$ 6,858
Highlands	\$ 7,421	\$ 6,893	\$ 6,935
Hillsborough	\$ 7,426	\$ 6,872	\$ 6,916
Holmes	\$ 8,030	\$ 7,512	\$ 7,553
Indian River	\$ 7,697	\$ 7,146	\$ 7,190
Jackson	\$ 7,711	\$ 7,201	\$ 7,241
Jefferson	\$ 9,158	\$ 8,635	\$ 8,676

District	Grade Level during 2021-2022		
	K-3	4-8	9-12
Lafayette	\$ 8,169	\$ 7,659	\$ 7,700
Lake	\$ 7,315	\$ 6,775	\$ 6,817
Lee	\$ 7,732	\$ 7,169	\$ 7,213
Leon	\$ 7,294	\$ 6,759	\$ 6,801
Levy	\$ 7,904	\$ 7,379	\$ 7,421
Liberty	\$ 8,334	\$ 7,819	\$ 7,860
Madison	\$ 7,735	\$ 7,225	\$ 7,266
Manatee	\$ 7,474	\$ 6,928	\$ 6,971
Marion	\$ 7,290	\$ 6,768	\$ 6,810
Martin	\$ 7,912	\$ 7,352	\$ 7,396
Monroe	\$ 9,979	\$ 9,400	\$ 9,446
Nassau	\$ 7,678	\$ 7,132	\$ 7,176
Okaloosa	\$ 7,547	\$ 7,001	\$ 7,044
Okeechobee	\$ 7,539	\$ 6,999	\$ 7,042
Orange	\$ 7,458	\$ 6,903	\$ 6,947
Osceola	\$ 7,375	\$ 6,830	\$ 6,873
Palm Beach	\$ 7,906	\$ 7,331	\$ 7,377
Pasco	\$ 7,394	\$ 6,852	\$ 6,895
Pinellas	\$ 7,560	\$ 7,010	\$ 7,053
Polk	\$ 7,341	\$ 6,807	\$ 6,850
Putnam	\$ 7,654	\$ 7,126	\$ 7,168
St. Johns	\$ 7,482	\$ 6,928	\$ 6,972
St. Lucie	\$ 7,540	\$ 6,988	\$ 7,031
Santa Rosa	\$ 7,375	\$ 6,840	\$ 6,883
Sarasota	\$ 8,041	\$ 7,484	\$ 7,528
Seminole	\$ 7,282	\$ 6,734	\$ 6,778
Sumter	\$ 7,920	\$ 7,386	\$ 7,428
Suwannee	\$ 7,530	\$ 7,016	\$ 7,057
Taylor	\$ 7,733	\$ 7,223	\$ 7,264
Union	\$ 7,904	\$ 7,377	\$ 7,418
Volusia	\$ 7,248	\$ 6,716	\$ 6,758
Wakulla	\$ 7,500	\$ 6,975	\$ 7,016
Walton	\$ 8,468	\$ 7,927	\$ 7,970
Washington	\$ 8,025	\$ 7,507	\$ 7,548

Source: Florida Department of Education

updated 7/14/2021



**2021-22 Family Empowerment Scholarship for Educational Options Maximum Award Values**

District	Grade Level during 2021-2022		
	K-3	4-8	9-12
Alachua	\$ 7,320	\$ 6,781	\$ 6,823
Baker	\$ 7,748	\$ 7,212	\$ 7,255
Bay	\$ 7,388	\$ 6,854	\$ 6,897
Bradford	\$ 7,927	\$ 7,394	\$ 7,437
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Walton	\$ 8,468	\$ 7,927	\$ 7,970
Washington	\$ 8,025	\$ 7,507	\$ 7,548

updated 7/12/2021