

# McKay Scholarship Funding in Orange County, Florida

## How OCPS handles the public school transfer option.

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The McKay Scholarship is a district-administered program. It is not administered by the state, by schools, or by principals. The McKay Scholarship program is administered by each district, and each district administers the McKay based on its own guidelines.

The McKay can be used two ways. Parents may use the McKay to move their student to a McKay-accepting private school, or parents can use that McKay to move their student to a different public school. That is known as the "public transfer option", and that situation is where OCPS does things very differently than most other districts.

Parents of students in Orange County CANNOT use the McKay to move their child to another public school of the parent's choosing. Let me repeat - parents cannot use the McKay to move their child to a different public school that the parents have chosen. Even if the principal says there is room for the child - even if the school has the services the child needs - parents cannot simply move their child to that school with the McKay Scholarship. Instead, OCPS will ASSIGN the child to a different public school. If a parent requests the public transfer option for their McKay student, Orange County will then look at the following information:

1. The child's needs as listed on the IEP
2. Which schools have those services available
3. Which schools have room in their population for the child
4. What kind of transportation may be needed for the student being transferred

Orange County is also still functioning under the desegregation order, so that will also play a role in this process.

Once this information is considered, the district will ASSIGN the child to another public school. Parents do not have a say in this process, and principals do not have a say in this process. The McKay is administered at the district level, and each district has its own choice plan. Here in Orange County, that choice plan does not give parents the right to choose a different public school for their McKay student; instead, that child will be assigned to a different public school by district officials.

This policy is not explained in any of the printed information I received about the McKay Scholarship, it is not explained on any website that I researched (at the county or state level), and the staffers at the McKay Hotline phone bank were also not familiar with this Orange County district procedure.