

CS/HB 1505 — McKay Scholarship/Students with Disabilities

by PreK-12 Policy Committee, Rep. Flores, and others (CS/CS/SB 2746 by Policy and Steering Committee on Ways and Means; Education Pre-K Committee; and Senator Gardiner)

For the John M. McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program, the bill allows the parent of a student with a disability to receive a scholarship if the student received specialized instructional services under the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program during the previous school year and has an individual education plan (IEP) developed by the school district.

The bill also authorizes a student to receive a McKay Scholarship if the student:

- Has been enrolled in a public school in any of the five years before the 2010-2011 fiscal year;
- Has a current IEP developed by the district school board in accordance with State Board of Education rule before June 30, 2011; and
- Has not received a McKay scholarship before the 2011-2012 school year.

A school district, at the request of the parent, must complete a matrix of services to ensure that the student's IEP reflects the level of services required.

The bill also authorizes the Commissioner of Education to deny, suspend, or revoke the participation of any private school determined to be operating or have operated an educational institution in Florida or another state that jeopardizes the health, safety, or welfare of the public.

For the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education program, the bill creates a prekindergarten program option for children with disabilities, which:

- Allows parents of eligible children to select one or more services that are consistent with the child's individual education plan;
- Requires specialized instructional services to be provided according to professionally accepted standards and those adopted by the Department of Education;
- Provides for payment to specialized instructional service providers by early learning coalitions;
- Allows parents who have not expended more than 70 percent of the funds for services to withdraw their children from the specialized instructional services program option for good cause and reenroll in the VPK school-year or summer program; and
- Provides that the Agency for Workforce Innovation, in collaboration with the Department of Education and subject to the department's approval, must develop procedures governing the determination of eligibility, enrollment of children, and payment of specialized instructional services providers.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2010.

Vote: Senate 37-0; House 118-0