



## SPREADING THE NEWS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Thursday, July 8, 2010

**CONTACT:** Jon East, 813-258-2700 x232, 727-420-6993, [jeast@stepupforstudents.org](mailto:jeast@stepupforstudents.org)  
Adam Emerson, 813-258-2700 x233, 813-777-1903, [aemerson@stepupforstudents.org](mailto:aemerson@stepupforstudents.org)

# Top Nonprofit Watchdog Gives Highest Mark to Florida School Choice Fund — Again

The Florida School Choice Fund, the administrator of the Step Up For Students Scholarship Program for low-income students, has again received the top rating from Charity Navigator, the nation's largest independent evaluator of charities.

This is the fourth consecutive four-star rating The Florida School Choice Fund has received from Charity Navigator. Only 8 percent of the charities rated by Charity Navigator have received the top rating four consecutive times.

When Charity Navigator rates a nonprofit organization, it examines its efficiency and its performance. More than 97 percent of the corporate contributions The Florida School Choice Fund receives go directly to scholarships for students who normally qualify for a free or reduced-price lunch.

Ken Berger, Charity Navigator's president and chief executive officer, said The Florida School Choice Fund "consistently executes its mission in a fiscally responsible way, and outperforms most other charities in America.

"This 'exceptional' designation from Charity Navigator differentiates The Florida School Choice Fund from its peers and demonstrates to the public it is worthy of their trust," Berger continued.

The Step Up For Students Scholarship Program served 27,700 students at 1,017 schools this past school year. It is financed by companies whose contributions receive a dollar-for-dollar state tax credit. This spring, the state Legislature expanded the program, increased the scholarship amount and added new testing and financial controls. The maximum annual scholarship this fall will be \$4,106. For more information, visit [www.stepupforstudents.org](http://www.stepupforstudents.org).

Charity Navigator has become the nation's largest and most-utilized evaluator of charities since it was founded in 2001. It provides an unbiased, objective, numbers-based rating system to assess the financial health of more than 5,000 of America's best-known charities. Charity Navigator's rating system examines two broad areas of a charity's financial health: how responsibly it functions day to day as well as how well positioned it is to sustain its programs over time. Each charity is then awarded an overall rating, ranging from zero to four stars. For more information, visit [www.charitynavigator.org](http://www.charitynavigator.org).

- END -