Vouchers

Scholarship funds help

Times staff

Florida’s tax-credit scholarship program is becoming an option for an increasing number of families in Pinellas and throughout the state. The program, which aims to give low-income families a broader choice of schools, continues to report tremendous growth.

In the last decade, participation has increased at a clip of 22 percent each year. More than 60,000 students statewide have received scholarships for this school year, up from 21,500 last year and 21,500 six years ago.

Pinellas has one of the highest participation rates in the state with more than 2,300 students in the program this year, compared with fewer than 500 in 2007-08. The scholarships, also known as vouchers, cover private school tuition or can pay a student’s transportation costs to a public school in another county.

To qualify, students must be eligible for the federal free and reduced-price lunch program. This year, the scholarships are valued at up to $4,880.

Application time is approaching for the 2014-15 school year. Students who have a scholarship for this year can apply now. Families who are new to the program and want to try for a scholarship for next year can apply in February.

Visit stepupforstudents.org or call toll-free 1-877-775-7837 for more detailed information.

Pinellas schools in voucher program
These Pinellas schools participate in the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program:

Clearwater
- Blossom Montessori School for the Deaf
- Calvary Christian High School
- Clearwater Academy International Inc.
- Clearwater Central Catholic High School
- Countryside Christian Academy
- The dePaul School for Dyslexia Inc.
- First Lutheran School
- Guardian Angels Catholic School
- Iva Christian School
- Lakeside Christian School
- Safety Harbor Montessori Academy
- St. Cecelia Interparochial
- Saint Paul’s School
- Skycrest Christian School
- Woodlawn Community Academy

Dunedin
- Cornerstone Christian School
- Dunedin Academy
- Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School

Gulfport
- Sunflower Private School
- Walden School
- Indian Rocks Beach
- Coi Community Christian School
- Largo
- Camelot School
- Country Day School
- Grad Academy
- Indian Rocks Christian School
- St. Patrick Catholic School
- The Movement School
- Westside Christian School

Oldsmar
- Oldsmar Christian School
- Palm Harbor
- Center Academy-Palm Harbor
- Huntington Learning Center
- New Horizons Country Day School
- New Middle School
- Palm Harbor Montessori School
- Suncoast Waldorf School
- Tampa Bay Waldorf Middle School
- Westlake Christian School

Pinellas Park
- American Montessori Academy
- Center Academy-Pinellas Park

St. Petersburg
- Classical Christian School for the Arts Inc.
- Creative Learning Center
- Esther’s School
- Morning Star School of Pinellas Park
- Sacred Heart Interparochial School
- Safety Harbor
- Espiritu Santo Catholic School
- Northbay Christian Academy

St. Pete Beach
- Aba Academy
- Academy Prep Center of St. Petersburg
- Admiral Farragut Academy
- Alegria Montessori School Inc.
- Bethel Community Christian School
- Community Christian School of Five Oaks
- Elm Junior Academy
- Grace Lutheran School
- Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School
- Holy Family
- Keswick Christian School
- Liberty Christian School
- Mount Moran Christian Fundamental Academy
- Mount Zion Christian Academy
- Northside Christian School
- Our Savior Lutheran School
- St. Jude Cathedral School
- St. Paul Catholic School
- St. Petersburg Catholic High School
- St. Petersburh Christian School
- Shorecrest Preparatory School
- Southside Christian Academy
- St. Raphael Catholic School
- The Academy
- The Broach School
- The School of the Immaculata
- World Changers Christian Academy

St. Pete
- Little Angels Learning Academy
- Montessori by the Sea
- St. John Vianney Catholic School
- King Queen Christian School for All Students Inc.

Seminole
- Bay Pines Lutheran School
- Blessed Sacrament Catholic School
- Esther’s School Seminole
- L.I.F.T. Academy
- Special Kids Academy

TARPON SPRINGS
- Solid Rock Community School

Sources: Step Up For Students, Florida Department of Education