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Voucher application process starts in February

Pinellas County has one of the highest participation rates in the state with more than 1,700 students in the program.

The state's tax credit scholarship program, which aims to give low-income families a broader choice of schools, is one of the fastest-growing sectors in Florida education.

More than 50,000 students participate in the program this year, up from 21,493 just five years ago.

Pinellas has one of the highest participation rates in the state with more than 1,700 students in the program 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. This year, the scholarships were valued at up to \$4,335.

To pay for the program, corporations redirect money they owe for certain state taxes to Step Up for Students, the organization that manages the program. The state, in turn, gives those corporations \$1 in tax credit for every dollar they give.

Application time is approaching for families with eligible incomes who want to try for a scholarship for the 2013-14 school year. The process begins in February for families who are new to the program. Returning families can apply in March. A more detailed schedule will be announced soon. For more information: stepupforstudents.org or call toll-free 1-877-735-7837.

Pinellas schools in voucher program

These Pinellas schools participate in the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program.

Clearwater

- Abundant Life Christian Academy
- Blossom Montessori School for the Deaf
- Calvary Christian High School
- Clearwater Academy International
- Clearwater Central Catholic High School
- Countryside Christian Academy
- Crossroads School Clearwater Campus
- DePaul School for Dyslexia
- First Lutheran School
- Guardian Angels Catholic School
- Heritage Christian Academy

- Iva Christian School
- Kids First Christian Preschool and Kindergarten
- 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

Gulfport

- Walden School

Indian Rocks Beach

- Coti Community Christian School

Largo

- Camelot School
- Country Day School
- Grad Academy
- Indian Rocks Christian School
- St. Patrick School
- The Movement School
- Westside Christian School

Oldsmar

- Oldsmar Christian School

Palm Harbor

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

Pinellas Park

- American Montessori Academy
- Center Academy — Pinellas Park
- Classical Christian School for the Arts
- Creative Learning Center
- Esther's School
- Morning Star School of Pinellas Park
- Sacred Heart Interparochial School

Safety Harbor

- Northbay Christian Academy

St. Petersburg

- Aba Academy
- Academy Prep Center of St. Petersburg
- Admiral Farragut Academy
- Alegria Montessori School
- Bethel Community Christian School
- Community Christian School of Five Oaks
- Elim Junior Academy
- Grace Lutheran School
- Gulf Coast Christian School
- Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School
- Holy Family

- Keswick Christian School
- Liberty Christian School
- Mount Moriah 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. Petersburg Christian School
- Shorecrest Preparatory School
- Southside Christian Academy
- St. Raphael Catholic School
- The Academy
- The Broach School
- The New Latter Day King Queen Christian School for all Students

- The School of the Immaculata
- Yvonne C. Reed Christian Academy

St. Pete Beach

- Little Angels Learning Academy
- Montessori by the Sea
- St. John Vianney Catholic School

Seminole

- Bay Pines Lutheran School
- Blessed Sacrament Catholic School
- Esther's School Seminole
- Special Kids Academy

Tarpon Springs

- Solid Rock Community School

Source: Step Up for Students