

## **DVD Roll-out Talking Points February 8, 2007**

### **General**

- Today, the Department of Education rolled-out a special DVD providing information on Florida's public school system.
- Called "Your Child, Your Public Schools," it is free and available to anyone who is interested.
- Designed with parents/guardians in mind, it provides an overview of public schools and answers many "frequently asked questions" about our schools.
- The information on the DVD primarily focuses on Prekindergarten through high school.
- Both the Florida PTA and the Florida Association of Partners in Education (FAPE) have endorsed this project and are partnering with the Department of Education to promote it.
- A total of three million copies of the DVD were produced.
- The Department of Education will work closely with local school districts, the Florida PTA and the Florida Association of Partners in Education to distribute the DVD to parents/guardians.

### **What kind of information is on the DVD?**

- The DVD is broken into five "buttons" or sections that address:
  - Family/parent involvement
  - Information on school grades
  - Basic facts about annual testing and understand students' scores on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test
  - Public and private school choice options
  - Comparison of Florida student achievement with students across the nation
- If viewed from start to finish, the DVD is about two hours long.
- However, the DVD was designed so parents/guardians can scroll through each button and choose which section they want to view.
- They can view as many or as a few as they want – similar to the "special features" section on many movie DVDs.
- It may be played in a DVD player or on a computer (PC or Mac).
- When played on a computer, special "Web Alerts" link viewers directly to additional information on the Department of Education website.
- The full DVD content is also available online at [www.fldoe.org/parentdvd](http://www.fldoe.org/parentdvd).

### **How will the DVD get to parents?**

- The majority of the three million DVDs will be shipped in "waves" to all 67 school district volunteer coordinators.
- District volunteer coordinators will then take the DVDs to the schools in their communities.
- Key grade levels – PreK, 2, 3, 5, 8 and 9 – will receive the DVDs first followed by additional grade levels once district volunteer coordinators receive their second and third shipments.
- Students will receive the DVDs and will take them home to parents.
- We are fortunate to have the support of the district volunteer coordinators.
- They know their communities and the schools within their districts best.

- By partnering with them to deliver the DVDs to parents/guardians, we can tap into their existing distribution channels and have confidence that the DVDs will reach parents/guardians.
- In addition, the Florida PTA and Florida Association of Partners in Education will assist with the distribution of the DVDs at the state and local levels.

### **Why did the Department of Education decide to produce the DVD?**

- Most importantly, the DVD is intended to provide parents/guardians with essential information about the schools their children attend.
- Florida's education system can sometimes be difficult to navigate especially for those who are new to it.
- There is a lot of information out there available to parents/guardians about public schools, but it may not always be accurate, reliable or easy to understand.
- The DVD packages important information for parents/guardians that is simplified and easy to use.
- Research has shown that when parents/guardians are involved in their child's schooling, it has a positive impact on their child's academic performance and success.
- On the DVD, there are numerous tips for parents/guardians on how they can take an active role in their child's education – everything from helping with homework to volunteering at school.
- The Department of Education, along with the Florida PTA and Florida Partners for Education, strongly encourage partners and teachers working together as a team to help students make the most out of their education experience.
- This is also an excellent resource for teachers, particularly those new to teaching in Florida, and a tool that will help them engage the parents of their students.

### **How was the DVD produced?**

- Before the DVD was even developed, the Department of Education traveled to different parts of the state to meet with groups of parents.
- We knew it was critical that we talk with them about the kinds of information they wanted to know about public schools and discovered that each group of parents has similar questions and concerns.
- Parents wanted to know what they could do to best help their children in school, what kinds of education resources were available to them and how to interpret the sometimes overwhelming information they receive from their schools, the state and even the media.
- Questions ranged from annual testing to school grades to choice options.
- A script was developed based on this input, as well as feedback from school administrators, principals, teachers and other education stakeholders.
- The Department of Education also filmed in the DVD in actual Florida schools and in the homes of Florida parents.
- We wanted the DVD to convey real stories from real people because parents often relate best to other parents and their children's teachers.
- Parents from throughout the state participated in the DVD and shared their personal experiences with education and approach to their children's learning.

- In addition, the DVD features principals and teachers, many of whom are past or current state and local teachers of the year, from Florida elementary, middle and high schools.