

Florida Department of Education

February 2013

On January 18th-20th, I had the wonderful opportunity to attend the Florida Future Educators of America (FFEA) Conference in Orlando, Florida. This year's theme was "Teachers Are Superheroes." High school and college students from around the state participated in this event that is geared toward encouraging young people to pursue teaching as their career path. If you would like more information regarding FFEA and the potential of starting a chapter at your school, please visit the [FDOE FFEA](#) webpage.



Kelly Seay

Educator Liaison

Teacher Treasures

February Giveaway

Our February [Teacher Treasures](#) Giveaway will be for another two-night stay at the **Plantation on Crystal River**. Congratulations to our January winner, Debora Hubbard, a kindergarten teacher at Sunrise Elementary School in Brevard County. Stay tuned for more information on upcoming Teacher Treasures' giveaways for 50 teachers!

Education Conferences

Plant Camp 2013

June 17 - 21, 2013

Gainesville, FL

This summer learn about the numerous invasive plant (and animal) species silently invading Florida's natural areas and neighborhoods. Along the way, learn about the wild and wonderful native flora and fauna that make Florida a unique place to live and a world-famous travel destination. [Applications](#) are accepted online or via US mail through February 24, 2013.

- Expand your knowledge and field experience with aquatic and upland plant biology.
- Study the ecology of native, non-native and invasive plants and animals in Florida
- Practice plant identification techniques.
- Discover the impacts of invasive plants on Florida's ecology and economy.
- No registration fee; lodging and most meals provided.

Curriculum Corner

CPALMS

[CPALMS](#) has developed many supportive resources that are available online to help Florida educators be successful with new state standards. Current CPALMS initiatives include Lesson Plan Development, Activities Development, Peer & Subject Area Expert Reviews, Curriculum Mapping, Videos, and much more. In addition, the [iCPALMS](#) platform has fourteen new web applications.

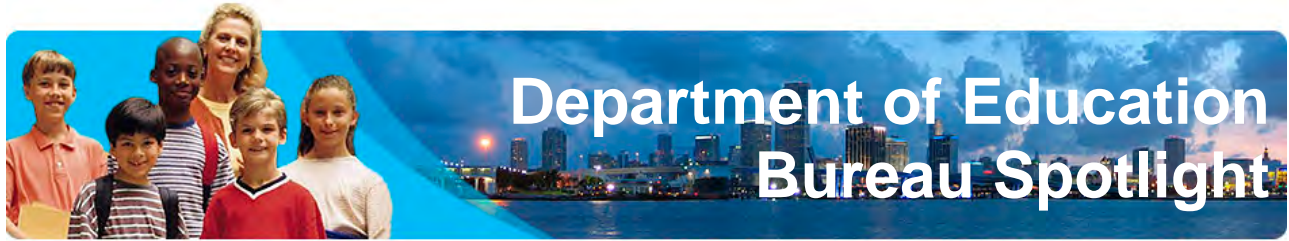
Algebra Nation

[Algebra Nation](#) makes learning in Florida a dynamic, multidimensional social process - inclusive, non-linear, hands-on, energizing, effective and fun. The University of Florida (UF) and Study Edge pledge to help students unlock the door to success by giving them access to some of the state's best math teachers and a host of valuable online learning resources through unique Algebra Nation features. UF professors, master teachers and Study Edge experts have dissected and aligned Algebra Nation to the latest state standards. Read more about [UF](#) highlighting Algebra Nation.

Education News

Congratulations Alex Lopes!

For the fourth year in a row, the Florida Department of Education/Macy's Teacher of the Year is a contender for the National Teacher of the Year award. Alex Lopes, Florida's 2013 Teacher of the Year, was named one of four finalists for the prestigious award by the Council of Chief State School Officers. He joins educators from Maryland, New Hampshire, and Washington in line for the national award. The winner will be announced at a White House ceremony during National Recognition Week April 21-16, 2013, in Washington, D.C.



From the introduction of charter schools and the Florida Virtual School in 1996 and 1997, to the creation of the McKay Scholarship program for students with disabilities and the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship program for low income families in 1999 and 2001, Florida continues to offer its families more choices than ever.

The positive effect of increased educational options is evident in the continuous upward surge in student performance in our public schools over the past 15 years. From magnet schools to career academies, controlled-open enrollment and advanced placement, Florida school districts have introduced numerous new programs and schools that provide unique learning opportunities tailored to the interests and aptitude of their students.

More than providing competition among the providers of education in our state, school choice is about giving parents, rather than geographic boundaries, control over their child's educational opportunities. School choice is about empowering parents and helping them learn how to become active participants and decision-makers in finding the best educational environment for their child. While thousands of parents will continue to make the choice to keep their children in the public school to which they've been assigned, the very fact that they have a choice contributes to the type of parental engagement that is so important to the education of our children. In fact, the latest data from the 2011-12 school year shows that the parents of nearly 43 percent of Florida's overall K-12 student population chose to send their child to a school other than the one to which they were assigned.*

Recently, the Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice in the Florida Department of Education proudly celebrated (along with their national counterparts) National School Choice Week. We recognize and embrace the fact that Florida has long been a national leader in the field of educational choice.

**Includes controlled open enrollment, private schools, choice and magnet programs, career and professional academies, charter schools, VPK, home education, Florida Tax Credit scholarships, McKay Scholarships, NCLB transfers, IB, AICE, fulltime virtual, lab schools and Opportunity Scholarships.*