

# Just for Teachers



News from the Florida Department of Education

April 2012

## From Commissioner Robinson...

During the State Board of Education meeting on February 28, 2012, in Tallahassee, the board voted to create a taskforce to develop an implementation plan to include students with disabilities, students who are learning the English language, and students enrolled in exceptional student education centers in Florida's school accountability system and to create recommendations for consideration by the U.S. Department of Education regarding Florida's Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) flexibility waiver.

Commissioner Robinson outlined four goals for the taskforce:

1. Identify best practices to ensure Florida leads the nation in fully including students with disabilities, students who are learning the English language, and students enrolled in exceptional student education (ESE) centers.
2. Identify strategies to reduce unintended consequences of including students with disabilities, students who are learning the English language, and students enrolled in ESE centers.
3. Identify potential enhancements to Florida's school grade rule regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities, students who are learning the English language, and students enrolled in ESE centers that are consistent with the conditions of the federal ESEA flexibility waiver.
4. Identify recommendations and strategies to discuss/negotiate with the U.S. Department of Education to inform future federal policy.

To listen to the audio of the subcommittee meetings, visit

<http://www.fldoe.org/esea/default.asp#ctia>.

For more information about upcoming meetings of the taskforce, visit the Department of Education's Calendar.





Teacher Talk April Episode

## ESE Transitions

In this episode we take a look at the transitions ESE students face as they move through the K-20 educational system.

Visit <http://www.fldoe.org/JustForTeachers/tta.asp> to view past episodes!

## Curriculum Corner



### Florida Teacher Community

A one-stop communication venue where you can join subject and grade level forums and groups, host live chats, catch up on DOE social media, and find loads of free classroom resources – all for FREE! In addition, all of the resources listed on the Apps page are available to all educators at <http://www.novachi.com/b/>.

How to log-in to the FL Teacher Community:

1. Using a browser, go to <https://www.novachi.com/p/fl/getcred.sf>
2. Enter your school email address
3. Enter a password that is personal to you
4. Enter the same password for match verification
5. Click the Get Credential button

If the information above is all valid, the system will automatically change your account password to the one you just entered. You can click the Login button to login and start using the system. The Florida Teacher Community is the first app on the Apps->Launch page with the Just for Teachers Logo.

If you are still having trouble, contact Novachi Support at [support@novachi.org](mailto:support@novachi.org) if you need us to resend an invitation.

Join today and win fabulous prizes, including an iPad 3!

## Teacher Treasures

Our March Giveaway for a set of four Wet-n-Wild tickets was won by **Judy Lewis**, a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher at Orange Park Elementary School in Jacksonville.

Our April Giveaway will be for a GradeCam (<http://www.gradecam.com/>).

With such a variety of offerings, we will clear all entry forms on the day of the drawings. Our submission form will reopen on the first of each month. Enter today at <http://www.fldoe.org/JustForTeachers/>.



### **Florida Missing Children's Day Statewide Essay Contest Deadline - April 20, 2012**

The Department of Education recognizes that schools impart valuable safety lessons to students every day. To reinforce the message of personal safety, the Missing Endangered Persons Information Clearinghouse is sponsoring the 2012 Florida Missing Children's Day. This ceremony promotes awareness of missing children and recognizes citizens who work hard to bring children home safely. This year's ceremony will be held on Monday, September 10, 2012, at the Florida Capitol in Tallahassee.

To create awareness among the children of Florida, an essay contest will be held in conjunction with Florida Missing Children's Day. We encourage all fifth grade students to participate in this contest. Each school will be responsible for selecting one winner. The chosen essays will be submitted to the Missing Endangered Persons Information Clearinghouse. One essay will be selected as the statewide winner. The statewide winner will read his or her essay during the Missing Children's Day ceremony in Tallahassee on September 10, 2012, and will receive a trophy, a \$100 cash award, and a Universal Studios Very Important Person package. Please visit <http://www.fmcdf.org> for essay contest guidelines. Each school's winning essay must be submitted by April 20, 2012, to

Florida Department of Law Enforcement  
Missing Endangered Persons Information Clearinghouse  
ATTN: Essay Contest Coordinator  
Post Office Box 1489  
Tallahassee, Florida 32302-1489

The essay entry may also be faxed to (850) 410-8744 or e-mailed to [fmcd@fdle.state.fl.us](mailto:fmcd@fdle.state.fl.us). If you have any questions, please call Ms. Patricia Rutherford at (850) 410-8598.

## **CompareCards.com Announces Student Scholarship Essay Contest**

**CompareCards.com**, a leading service for consumers to compare credit cards and manage their personal finances, has announced its \$1,000 Student Scholarship Essay Contest. The submission period will run through May 29, and the competition gives students a chance to express their thoughts on topics in student debt and personal financing.

The college experience provides many educational opportunities for students outside the classroom, and one of the most valuable lessons they can learn is financial responsibility. Grades in this subject don't end at graduation either as credit scores and financial matters follow students well beyond graduation and impact their future in many ways, including the determination of future interest rates on car loans, mortgages and other important items.

To participate in the special CompareCards.com \$1,000 Student Scholarship Essay Contest, students must be graduating high school seniors, or freshmen or sophomores in college and between the ages of 16 and 21. Find more information by visiting <http://www.comparecards.com/about/credit-cards-scholarship>.

## **Education News**

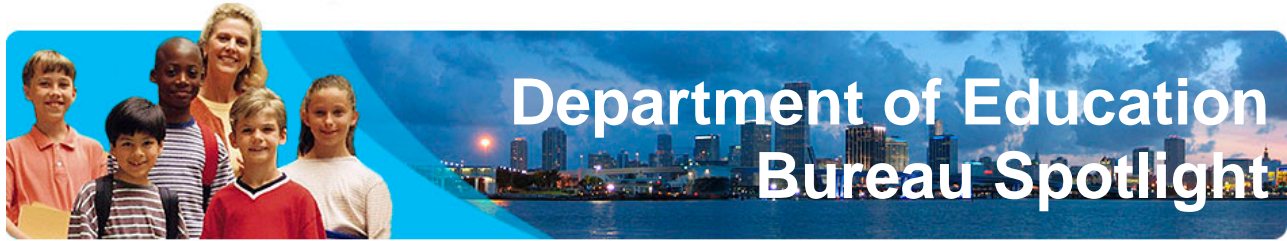
### **A Once-in-a-Lifetime Experience for Teachers**

Middle and high school teachers from throughout Florida experienced the state courts firsthand during the 2012 Florida Supreme Court Justice Teaching Institute. Twenty-six middle and high school teachers from 17 of Florida's 20 judicial circuits were selected to participate in a four-and-a-half day program designed to prepare teachers to accurately and effectively teach about the state courts and the judicial branch. All seven justices served as faculty for the institute which was held in the Florida Supreme Court. The program is administered by The Florida Law Related Education Association, Inc., and funded in part by the Florida Bar Foundation.

The 2012 program utilized a case study approach to teach about the state courts and the appellate process. Teachers explored the Fourth Amendment, the structure and function of the courts, the Florida Constitution, and judicial decision-making and accountability. Each justice presented one or more sessions as well as interacted with the teachers throughout the week at lunch or dinner events.

"This was the most amazing experience of my life," stated Brian Firtell, a seventh grade civics teacher in the Miami-Dade Public Schools. "In my 26 years of teaching, nothing has come close to this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity!"

The institute began with a mock oral argument exercise to provide teachers with a simulation that could be used when they returned to the classroom to teach about the appellate process. Justice R. Fred Lewis and Annette Boyd Pitts, Executive Director of the Florida Law Related Education Association, Inc., facilitated the experience. At the conclusion of the week, teachers observed the real case argued before the Supreme Court.



The most important factor in the achievement of our students is the effectiveness of the teachers and principals who serve them. The [Bureau of Educator Recruitment, Development and Retention](#) is committed to supporting and improving educator quality by providing assistance to educators, potential educators and school district staff in the following areas:

[Recruitment](#) provides information for job seekers for Florida schools, coordinates Florida's teacher recruitment website (TeachinFlorida.com), hosts the Great Florida Teach-In job fair, manages Florida Future Educators of America, and administers grant programs to increase the number of teachers with diverse backgrounds.

[Professional Development & Evaluation Systems](#) focuses on protocol reviews (feedback to districts on improving district professional development systems), assists districts in developing instructional and administrative evaluation systems, provides capacity-building web-based learning tools and resources for teachers and school leaders, administers the W.C. Golden School Leadership Development Program, and coordinates statewide professional learning supports with partner organizations.

[Educator Preparation](#) has the responsibility of reviewing and approving initial teacher preparation programs and Educator Preparation Institutes, which are offered statewide by public and private universities and colleges, and lead to certification to teach in Florida's public schools. This unit also oversees the state approval of Educational Leadership programs for those seeking careers in school administration or principalship.

[Title II, Part A](#), Teachers and Principals Training and Recruiting Fund, provides grants to state educational agencies, local educational agencies, state agencies for higher education and eligible partnerships in order to increase student academic achievement through strategies such as improving teacher and principal quality and increasing the number of highly qualified teachers in the classroom and highly qualified principals and assistant principals in schools.

[Recognition](#) honors the contributions of outstanding school administrators, classroom teachers, and education support personnel through the coordination of the Florida Teacher of the Year Program, Florida School-Related Employee of the Year Program, Principal Achievement Award for Outstanding Leadership Program, and Outstanding Assistant Principal Achievement Award.

The [Dale Hickam Excellent Teaching Program](#) was established to provide incentives for qualified Florida educators to pursue excellence by obtaining advanced certification through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. National Board Certification is achieved upon successful completion of a voluntary assessment program designed to recognize effective and accomplished teachers who meet high standards based on what teachers should know and be able to do.



## CPALMS

CPALMS, also known as FloridaStandards.org, is a collaborative, interdisciplinary project being built upon requests from Florida's educators. CPALMS aims to organize efforts to support educators working together toward goals of understanding and implementing standards. CPALMS is not only the official source of Florida's Standards, including Common Core State Standards (CCSS), and Courses, with a collection of some of the best educational resources, and tools to help educators develop and use those resources; it is a community of educators. The CPALMS community is growing, with over 27 million visitors and more than 26,000 registered users. Registered users have built and shared more than 4,400 resources using the CPALMS tools. Resources include course plans, units, lessons, simulations, activities, professional development, and more from some of the best sources, including Florida's teachers. All resources that are shared through CPALMS are reviewed by peer teachers and content-area experts using a criteria-based feedback system, with the aim of providing constructive feedback toward high-quality lessons and resource integration. The review process ensures CPALMS resources are aligned with standards, include accurate and appropriate content, and utilize research-based approaches to instruction.



CPALMS already has excellent coverage of resources for the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards for mathematics and science, and resources for the CCSS for Mathematics and English Language Arts are now under review. This spring, the CPALMS community is launching several initiatives to support understanding and implementing the CCSS. Initiatives toward understanding the standards will include “**unpacking**” the standards to analyze what students are expected to know and be able to do, what common misconceptions students have related to standards, and what research tells us about how students learn the content and skills in the standards. The **cognitive complexity of the standards** will be determined to help educators align their instruction and assessment with the cognitive complexity expected of the standards. **Standards progressions** will be developed in a web-based and interactive map. Initiatives toward implementing standards include development of **lesson study toolkits** to maximize the benefits of and support school-based implementation of lesson study, and development of **resource collections with innovative and integrated approaches** to standards-based instruction and assessment. The most exciting development for CPALMS – *iCPALMS* – is coming this summer. The *individualized* CPALMS portal will take full advantage of individual interests to bring standards information, resources, and professional development to educators in a customizable portal with apps designed to make the CPALMS initiatives work together to truly support educators working individually and together. Visit us at <http://www.floridastandards.org> to learn more and maybe you'll become a CPALMS Champion.