



Just for Parents



The “back to school” exhilaration you are all feeling is very familiar to me. The arrival of students in our classrooms is a reminder of the many bright possibilities each student has for success.

As your Commissioner of Education, our charge as educators to help them realize those possibilities is no less significant to me on this day than it was when I served as a teacher, school principal or administrator. Education is the only profession I know in which you can begin anew each year. What an amazing opportunity!

During the past few weeks as commissioner, I have been inspired by the clear message I have received from everyone I’ve spoken with - parents and teachers, Governor Scott and other state officials, superintendents and business leaders: make Florida's education system the best it can be so all students succeed in college, careers and in life.

The most important part of a child’s education is the support from his or her family. All educators need the support and communication from a child’s parents or guardians to make sure they are working together to help each child succeed. Please help your child by sharing your concerns and support for your child’s teacher and schools and please consider volunteering to help other children. It is not easy work, but a few hours of your time with students can make a lifetime of difference.

As leaders in a state at the forefront of education, we enter this school year together, facing our challenges and our abundant opportunities with equal confidence, creativity and hard work.

I am grateful for each of you and the care and talent you contribute to the education of our students, and for making Florida the best place in the nation to learn, work and live.

Best wishes for a successful year.

Pam Stewart, Commissioner



Just for Parents

The Bureau of Family & Community Outreach offers a number of services and programs to parents and guardians.

Click on a link below to learn more!

[Parent Involvement](#)

[Faith and Community Based Initiatives](#)

[Safe Schools](#)

[Dropout Prevention](#)

[Volunteer and Recognition Programs](#)

[21st Century Community Learning Centers](#)

[Mentoring/Student Assistance Initiatives](#)

Bureau of Family & Community Outreach
850-245-0847

Join our online parent community!

[FDOE Online Parent Community](#)

Visit the Florida Department of Education online at www.fldoe.org and on social media.



Tips for a Happy, Healthy School Year

Kids can be picky eaters, but parents can help them develop healthy eating habits that will serve them well for a lifetime. Good nutrition in childhood helps prevent health problems such as obesity, osteoporosis, tooth decay and iron deficiency.

Here are some tips from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) on how to incorporate healthy foods into your child's diet.

- Offer low- or non-fat dairy products.
- For protein, serve lean meats, poultry, fish, lentils and beans.
- Limit or eliminate high-sugar, high-fat treats and salty snacks.
- Encourage kids to drink plenty of water. Even little bodies need water, and it's much better for them than sugary drinks.
- Serve reasonable portion sizes. A heaping plate isn't necessarily a healthy plate.
- Make favorite family dishes healthier by adding more [fruits and vegetables](#).

Is my child's grade level using Common Core this year?



In 2010, Florida adopted a new set of standards called the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Florida educators and postsecondary leaders reviewed the standards to ensure the increased rigor would successfully prepare students for college and career.

This school year, lesson plans for students in kindergarten through second grade will align to Common Core. These standards are the "what" not the "how" of teaching. Teachers will still have control over how they teach their students, but now they will encourage deeper, critical-thinking skills.

Students in grades 3 -12 will be taught a blended curriculum so they can better transition to these new, higher standards. You can view the standards at [Common Core State Standards](#).

Kindergarten Example: [CCSS.Math.Content.K.CC.A.1](#) Count to 100 by ones and by tens.

You can also learn more by visiting [Just for Parents Newsletter - All About Common Core](#).

Here are some ways to help your child have a successful new school year.

At Home

- Establish a daily routine for meals, homework, play time, family time and bedtime.
- Set up a quiet area for home work, encouraging daily reading.

At School

- Communicate regularly with your child's teachers and the school's support staff through notes, emails, phone calls and meetings.
- Help your child learn his or her new schedule, including bus stops and walking routes.
- Ask your child's teacher(s) for examples of your child's work and/or lesson plans.

Get Involved

- Join the school's PTA or school advisory committee.
- Volunteer at the school as your time permits.
- Take a look at Florida's Common Core State Standards and read which standards apply to your child.

To view more tips, visit [School Family – Back to School Tips](#).