



# Just for Parents

The Florida Department of Education understands that there is a direct correlation between parent involvement and student achievement and supports Governor Rick Scott's recognition of November as "Florida Parental Involvement in Education Month." Research shows that when schools and families work together to support learning, children are more successful in school and throughout life.

This issue of *Just for Parents* offers some ways to get involved and stay active in your child's education. We have also included an article on how coursework in science will be affected by the Common Core Literacy Standards for Science.

*Sincerely,*  
**Pam Stewart, Commissioner of Education**

## November is Parental Involvement in Education Month!

### Simple Ways to Get Involved in Your Child's Education

No doubt about it: it takes a village to raise a child. Schools and families must mutually support each other to ensure children succeed. Schools offer nurturing environments for student learning and the building of social skills, and parents create a nurturing climate at home. Supportive parents, involved in their children's studies and schools, are fundamental to academic success.

#### Take the Pledge!

Consider making a formal commitment to get involved.

[Pledge for Parental](#)

During Parental Involvement in Education Month, consider boosting your efforts by getting involved, staying informed, and continuing to make your child's education a top priority.

Research on parent involvement shows that regardless of family income or background, students with involved parents are more likely to succeed on a number of fronts.

- Higher grades, test scores, and graduation rates
- Better school attendance
- Increased motivation and self-esteem
- Lower rates of suspension
- Decreased use of drugs and alcohol
- Fewer instances of violent behavior



Parents whose children are doing well in school have been found to engage in some very specific behaviors. These families foster home environments where children feel valued and receive regular messages on the importance of education.

*(Continued on page 2)*

**The Bureau of Family & Community Outreach offers the following 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](#)

[21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers](#)

**Bureau of Family & Community Outreach**

**(850) 245-0847**

Visit The Florida Department of Education at:  
[www.fldoe.org](http://www.fldoe.org)



Join FDOE's online Parent Community. Sign up today!

<http://www.fldoe.org/family/>



# Just for Parents

## Tips for Parental Involvement

*(Continued from page 1)*

### Support your child's education at home with some of the following activities:

**Establish a daily family routine.** Provide adequate time as well as a quiet place for your child to study. Assign age-appropriate responsibility for daily household chores. Try to eat dinner together as often as possible and be firm about sticking to a set bedtime.

**Monitor out-of-school activities.** Arrange for supervised after-school care for younger children. Set limits on TV watching and computer time. Check up on children when you are not home.

**Express high, but realistic expectations for achievement.** Set age-appropriate goals and standards for your child. Recognize and encourage special talents, sharing your child's successes with friends and family.

**Encourage your child's development and progress in school.** Show interest in what your child is learning in school. Help with homework and engage in discussions about the value of education and career options. Stay in touch with teachers and school staff.



**Encourage reading, writing, and discussions among family members.** Read and listen to your children read. Talk about what is being read. Encourage your child to write stories and letters to relatives and friends.

For additional ways to get involved in your child's education, please visit the following:

[Florida Department of Education - Bureau of Family and Community Outreach - Parental Involvement](#)

[Different Levels of Parent Involvement](#) - Fact Sheet

This link provides information on the five different levels of Parent Involvement: Level 1 - Responsibilities and Attendance; Level 2 - Communication and Support; Level 3 - Literacy and Tutorial Assistance; Level 4 - Volunteer and Mentoring; and Level 5 - Leadership and Partnership.

## School-Parent Compact

Parents of children attending [Title I Schools](#) sign an annual compact with their child's school. This is an opportunity for both the school and parents to commit formally to a child's success. The school pledges to provide high-quality instruction, hold parent-teacher conferences, and offer parents opportunities for participation.

The parents pledge to

- Stay informed about their children's education;
- Communicate with the school as appropriate;
- Promote positive use of their children's time; and
- Remind children of the importance of respecting others.

Remember: As a parent, you have a significant impact on your child's success in school.

For more information about the School Parent Involvement Policy and Compact, visit [Title I Parent Involvement - Bureau of Federal Educational Programs](#).



# Just for Parents

## Create a Family Involvement Calendar!

Calendars are an easy way to plan and structure activities. They can also help you commit to staying involved in your child's education.

Have your child help you plan some fun, educational activities for November. Create and even decorate your own family involvement calendar by using the [Calendar Templates](#).

Need some more ideas? Visit [Parental Involvement in Education Month Calendar - November 2012](#).



## How Is Science Instruction Affected by Common Core?

Science instruction in Florida's schools continues to be shaped by the [Next Generation Sunshine State Standards](#). Science courses now include a new component—science literacy instruction—to help students read and write using the language of science. The standards that guide this instruction are called the [Common Core Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects](#).

Like any subject, science has its own conventions. Students learn science primarily through a process called scientific inquiry: asking questions, conducting investigations, collecting evidence to answer questions, and drawing evidence-based conclusions.

Scientific inquiry requires that students read, understand, and learn from challenging scientific and technical texts. Elaborate diagrams, data charts, and graphs are often part of science-based texts. To truly grasp scientific concepts, students must be familiar with the language and principles in these texts and science practices.



Here are some examples of skills children will be expected to master in science class now that incorporate the new literacy standards:

- Identify the kinds of evidence used in science
- Understand scientific words and phrases
- Pay attention to precise details (a crucial aspect to scientific investigation)
- Evaluate intricate scientific arguments
- Process complex information
- Follow detailed descriptions of scientific events and concepts

Florida's Science Course Descriptions (and other content areas) now include the literacy standards being implemented this school year. Follow these directions to read descriptions of your child's courses:

Click on the [Course Descriptions](#) website.

Select the "Browse for Courses" tab.

Select "Grades PreK to 12 Education Courses" from the drop-down menu.

Select the "Grade Group" of your choice.

When prompted, select "Science" from the "Subject" drop-down menu.

**Literacy standards are meant to complement and support the science curriculum, not replace it.**