



Florida Department of Education

September 2012

With the school year just beginning, I want to take this opportunity to welcome back and express my hopes for an exciting and promising school year. Even though the summer was a busy time for many of us, I hope you took the time to relax and rejuvenate and are ready to begin a new year full of optimism and high expectations. My wish for you is that the spirit and enthusiasm of the first day of school reside with you each and every day.

Best wishes for a healthy, safe and productive school year!

Pam Stewart, Chancellor, Division of Public Schools

Teacher Treasures

September Giveaway

Our September [Teacher Treasures](#) Giveaway will be for a two night, 3 day stay at The Holiday Inn Express in Siesta Key.

Ripley Attractions Educator Appreciation Days

[Ripley Attractions](#) in the state of Florida will be hosting *Educator Appreciation Days* for all K – 12 Educators in the state of Florida from September 4th thru October 14th. All Educators will be admitted free with a current pay stub and photo ID to all Florida Ripley Attractions! Guests of Educators will receive a 50% off discount.

Education Conferences

Florida Council of Teachers of Mathematics

60th Annual Conference
October 18-20, 2012
Orlando, FL
<http://fctm.net>

Florida Reading Association's Fall Conference

50th Annual Conference
October 18-21, 2012
Orlando, FL
<http://www.flreads.org>

Find many more conferences at <http://www.fldoe.org/JustForTeachers/conferences.asp>

Curriculum Corner



Novachi Classroom Collaboration (NCC)

Take Novachi Classroom Collaboration for a test drive at <http://www.novachi.com/b/try-it-now/>

2013 Teacher of the Year - Alexandre Lopes!

Alex Lopes, Pre-Kindergarten Special Education teacher from Carol City Elementary School in Miami-Dade County, was named the 2013 Macy's/Florida Department of Education Teacher of the Year at the annual awards gala at Hard Rock Live at Universal Studios Orlando on Thursday, July 12, 2012.



Our 2013 Florida Teacher of the Year Finalists:

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| Escambia | Jeffery Pribble, HS English and Technology |
| Lee | Dawn Voyer, MS Social Studies |
| Osceola | Nanci Brillant, HS Reading |
| Wakulla | Megan Crombie, Elementary 4th and 5th |

STARS

We have a new section on our JFT homepage titled STAR Stories. These stories are all about successful Florida teachers who either reach their students in innovative ways or have achieved grand personal accomplishment. Submit articles about yourself or a colleague for us to post to [Successful Teachers And Real Stories](#).

Fun Florida Fieldtrips

Fun Florida Fieldtrips ...encouraging discovery, promoting academic enthusiasm, gaining knowledge, all while having a great time! Find a list of them at <http://www.fldoe.org/JustForTeachers/ff.asp>



Classroom Adventures

Take a trip around the world with your next lesson through [Google Lit Trips](#) and [Real World Math](#).

Education News

New Parent Communication Initiatives

Florida's Path to Success

Visit the Florida's Path to Success website to find out more information about Florida's transition to tougher standards and higher expectations. The website features a letter from Commissioner Robinson, timelines about Florida's education system, a question and answer page, and video from a Florida public school parent.

DOE Parent Portal

The department is launching the [DOE Parent Portal](#). This public forum is designed for parents to ask questions and voice ideas at the state level. The portal features a parent blog, discussion board, and announcements page with more education resources coming soon. Parents may logon for access to this free user-friendly site.



Library Sign-up Month

Library Card Sign-up Month is a time to remind parents and children that a library card is the most important school supply of all. Find more information at the [American Library Association Website](#).

Common Core State Standards

Florida has set the pace of transforming public education by increasing state achievement standards and assessments so students continue to learn the fundamentals at a deeper level each academic year. Moving forward to Common Core State Standards, which will be the national standard in 2013-2014, is a natural progression for our state and our students. The Common Core State Standards will be fully implemented and fully assessed in Florida beginning with the 2014-15 school year.

The Common Core State Standards Summer Institutes were hosted by the Florida Department of Education in June and July. The institutes were designed for school and district educators to benefit from additional planning and training around Common Core Standards. Educators who were unable to attend one of the Summer Institutes may view all sessions on the Florida Department of Education website. The presentations and materials are available at <http://www.fldoe.org/schools/ccs.asp>.

Starting this month, the Department will be sending weekly updates to teachers and parents about how Common Core will integrate into the classroom and student learning. Be on the lookout for weekly Common Core e-blasts!

There is a great CCSS resource for parents available by grade levels at <http://www.pccpta.org/advocacy.html>



Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

Students with Disabilities as 21st Century Learners

Over 333,000, or 12%, of all students in public school in Florida are students with disabilities who have individual education plans (IEPs). We are proud that our students with disabilities have been experiencing much success. They are spending more time in regular classrooms; trend data show increases in FCAT scores in reading and math; the graduation rate is rising; and options for students with disabilities – including students with intellectual disabilities – to attend postsecondary education programs are increasing.

While we celebrate our students' successes, there is still work to be done. [The Office of Special Education Programs](#) (OSEP) has noted that national educational outcomes for students with disabilities have not improved as much as expected, that an emphasis on compliance over results fails to properly acknowledge achievements, and that the accountability system should focus first and foremost on student learning.

OSEP stresses that students with disabilities are **part of, not separate from**, the general education population and that special education accountability should strengthen and align with other accountability. OSEP's Results-Driven Accountability (RDA) in Special Education will reform accountability to improve educational outcomes for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities. The RDA model will focus on results, not on procedures, and embraces a model of prevention, not a model of failure.

We at the [Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services](#) (BEESS) are delighted with this new direction. Participation in the Common Core State Standards will help students with disabilities succeed as 21st century learners. The Common Core State Standards focus on results, not means, fitting perfectly into the new vision.

Please feel free to share this newsletter with your colleagues and administrators.