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## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** School District Superintendents  
Charter School Leaders

**FROM:** Henry Mack, Ed.D.

**DATE:** August 14, 2026

**SUBJECT:** **Upholding Florida's Commitment to Safe Schools, Academic Excellence and Student Success**

The purpose of this memorandum is twofold: to reiterate my welcome and gratitude for your service to our state, its families, and students. Thank you. Secondly, I would like to remind district and school leaders of their responsibility to comply with Florida law and State Board of Education rules.

As you know, Florida's education laws and rules establish high expectations and provide a clear roadmap for serving students and families. Every district and public charter school must ensure that its policies, instructional practices, programs and daily operations align with these requirements. Compliance with the law represents more than an administrative responsibility. It protects students, supports educators, promotes accountability and preserves the trust that Florida families place in our schools. I encourage you to review your local policies and practices, communicate clear expectations to school leaders and staff, and address questions or concerns directly with your respective stakeholders.

Florida is proud to lead the nation as the Education State. Over the past eight years, Governor Ron DeSantis and the Florida Legislature have advanced bold policies and made historic investments to strengthen school safety, raise academic achievement, support educators and expand opportunities for students. Florida has invested more than \$3.6 billion to strengthen mental health and school safety and security. Our state's high school graduation rate has reached a record 92.2 percent and Florida students continue to demonstrate strong academic progress. These accomplishments reflect the dedication of educators, school leaders, families and communities across our state. Again, thank you.

As we begin another school year, I encourage every school district and public charter school to build on this momentum by maintaining safe learning environments, delivering high-quality instruction, supporting a strong educator workforce and preparing every student for success. Whether a student plans to attend college, pursue technical education, enter the workforce or

serve in the military, our schools must equip that student with the knowledge, skills and character needed to succeed. In Florida, we are [committed](#) to educating our students in a way that forms them into citizens capable of sustaining self-government. That formation requires sustained engagement with the primary texts and ideas (e.g., the Great Books) that have shaped Western Civilization—works that cultivate reasoned judgment, moral clarity, and an understanding of the rights and responsibilities that undergird free societies.

Moreover, as we begin the year, may we collectively agree to reject the outdated “college-for-all” mindset that treats a four-year degree as the *only* path to dignity and opportunity? High-quality workforce training, [Registered Apprenticeships](#), industry credentials or certifications, and technical education are equally rigorous routes to meaningful careers and economic independence, and they deserve the same institutional priority and respect. Please make sure you are elevating and evaluating your plans, here. Communicate clearly the options available at our state college system institutions and technical centers/colleges. If you need direction, guidance, or insights, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Ashley Meros ([Ashley.Yopp@fldoe.org](mailto:Ashley.Yopp@fldoe.org)), Chancellor for Career, Technical, and Adult Education here at the Department.

As you know, parents play an essential role in their children's education. Schools achieve their best results when educators treat parents as valued partners, keep them informed and invite their meaningful involvement. Strong partnerships between schools and families support student well-being, improve academic outcomes and reinforce the shared expectations that help students thrive. Please ensure that your offices and schools communicate openly and directly with parents, provide timely access to information and create meaningful opportunities for families to participate in the educational process. Welcome their questions, respect their rights and include them in decisions affecting their children. When educators and parents work together, students benefit. The Florida Department of Education stands ready to support when questions arise.

Finally, and above all, school and district leaders share a responsibility to protect the safety and well-being of Florida's students. Please ensure your organization maintains and follows procedures for reporting suspected misconduct involving instructional personnel or school administrators. When allegations involving certified educators fall within the Department's authority, we investigate and take appropriate action to hold educators accountable. Rule 6A-10.081, Florida Administrative Code, also requires supervising administrators to cooperate fully with all Department investigations. Timely reporting and cooperation allow us to address misconduct, uphold the integrity of the education profession and protect students from harm. Additional information is available on [reporting educator misconduct and abuse](#). Thank you for your leadership and your commitment to Florida's students. I look forward to working with you to strengthen our schools, support our educators, and ensure every student succeeds.

HM

cc/ Paul Burns, Ed.D., Senior Chancellor  
Ashley Meros, PhD., Chancellor