



# FROM THE COMMISSIONER'S DESK

September

Teachers,

As we wrap up the second month of the 2025-26 school year, I am proud to highlight the incredible achievements we have made so far. Thanks to your commitment and hard work, Florida continues to lead the nation in education.

For the fourth year in a row, the Heritage Foundation has ranked Florida #1 in the nation for Education Freedom. This honor reflects the bold leadership of Governor DeSantis and the hard work of Florida's parents, teachers, and students. In addition to earning the overall top spot for Education Freedom, Florida also ranked #1 in several key categories that show how we're setting the standard nationwide:

- Florida is #1 in Education Choice
- Florida is #1 in Civics Education
- Florida is #1 in Academic Transparency
- Florida is #1 in Teacher Freedom

The data shows that Florida's focus on choice, accountability, and parental rights is directly translating into better outcomes for students. Today, nearly 115,000 more Florida students are meeting grade-level standards in English language arts and 100,000 more in math compared to the past three years.

All these accomplishments reflect more than just numbers; they reflect your impact on students' lives. Let's continue to lead with purpose and strive for even more success throughout this school year!

Sincerely,  
Anastasios Kamoutsas



## BRIGHT FUTURES

I recently had the privilege of visiting six schools across Miami-Dade County to share information about the Bright Futures Scholarship Program to more than 2,000 students. Each year, nearly 10,000 eligible students miss out on this opportunity simply because they never apply. That's why I'm passionate about raising awareness and helping students understand how Bright Futures can open doors to their future.

I encourage you to share this valuable information with your students. It's never too early to start preparing them for life after high school, and Bright Futures can be a key part of that journey.



**LEARN MORE ABOUT BRIGHT FUTURES OPPORTUNITIES**



**FLORIDA Lottery Funds BRIGHT FUTURES SCHOLARSHIPS**

## UPHOLDING PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Over the past few weeks, I have become aware of deeply concerning posts made by a small number of educators in our state. These individuals have used social media to express support for acts of violence, specifically celebrating the assassination of Charlie Kirk on a school campus. Educators who post this type of content will be investigated by the Department's Office of Professional Practice Services. Although educators have First Amendment rights, these rights do not extend without limit into their professional duties.

I recognize and deeply appreciate the outstanding work being done every day in classrooms across Florida. The actions of a few should not diminish the dedication, care, and excellence demonstrated by the vast majority of Florida's teachers.

Now more than ever, it is critical that we come together to uphold the highest standards of professionalism—online and in person—and ensure that Florida's schools remain places of safety, respect, and academic excellence for all students.

**UPHOLDING PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES**



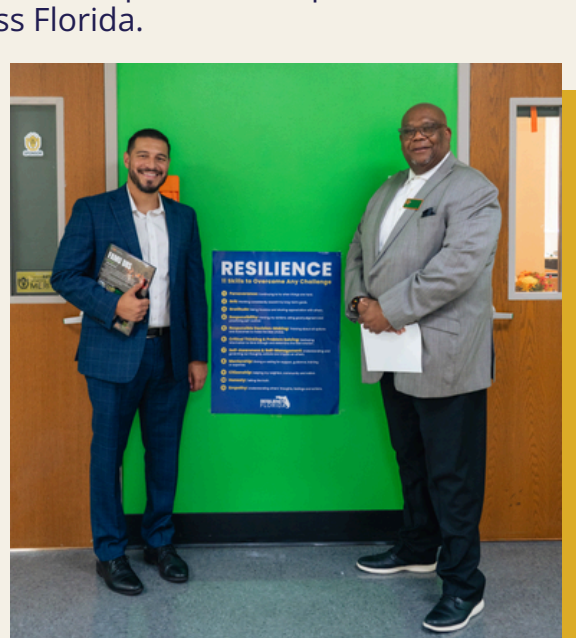
## STORY ROOM

Schools are dynamic learning communities shaped by the expertise, care and commitment of educators like you. At the core of all successful classrooms are teachers who bring both skill and heart to their practice. It is deeply meaningful to witness the power of great teaching and the profound impact it has on students across Florida.

I've had the privilege of observing this work firsthand in classrooms and schools throughout the state, where standards-based instruction, academic rigor and high expectations create meaningful outcomes for students. These visits continue to prove that excellent teaching changes lives.

I look forward to continuing this journey and learning from the incredible work happening in every district. The Story Room showcases the latest school visits and events.

**VISIT THE STORY ROOM**



## TEACHER SALARY REMINDER

Governor Ron DeSantis understands the critical role you play in providing high-quality education to Florida's students. To recognize this role, he championed significant and ongoing investments in teacher compensation, totaling nearly \$6 billion so far.

In order to ensure you receive your salary increase in a timely manner, school districts have until October 1<sup>st</sup> to develop a plan for these increases. If you haven't seen movement yet, I encourage you to contact your local union representative and demand the pay raise you've earned.

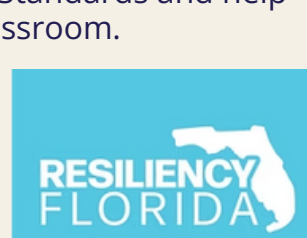
**TEACHER SALARY INCREASE ALLOCATION IMPLEMENTATION**



## RESILIENCY

Resiliency Florida's Teacher Resources are now live! These 44 new resources are designed to support Florida's Resiliency Education Standards and help teach the state's 11 Resiliency Characteristics in the classroom.

Florida is leading a first-in-the-nation approach that empowers students to persevere and overcome life's inevitable challenges. Launched in 2023, Resiliency Florida is an initiative started by First Lady Casey DeSantis to equip students with the skills and mindset needed to face adversity head-on.



**DOWNLOAD RESILIENCY RESOURCES FOR FREE**



## SUGGESTED READING

Literacy skills developed during formative years are essential for students to succeed both academically and in life, and reading comprehension develops as students engage with interesting and meaningful books. Teachers and parents are encouraged to recommend this book to students.

### PROUD TO BE AN AMERICAN

by Lee Greenwood

This inspiring book follows a grandfather and his grandson as they travel across the United States, visiting some of the nation's most iconic landmarks and landscapes. Based on Lee Greenwood's timeless hit, "Proud to be an American", the story teaches students about what makes our country special, all while celebrating the pride and spirit of America.

Recommended for grades 3-5.

