

2023-2024 School Year Information

Table of Contents

- District and School Leader Supports.....4**
- 2023 Legislative Review4
- Adult Education.....4
- Alyssa’s Alert.....4
- Annual Volunteer Survey.....5
- Apprenticeship.....5
- B.E.S.T. Standards for Mathematics Resources6
- Bureau of Educator Certification.....6
- Bureau of Family and Community Outreach6
- Bureau of Standards and Instructional Support7
- CPALMS7
- Career and Professional Education (CAPE).....8
- Career Planning and Work-Based Learning System.....9
- Career and Technical Education Program Quality Audit10
- Career and Technical Education Frameworks10
- Civics Literacy Excellence Initiative (CLEI)11
- College and Career Decision Day.....12
- Commission on Presidential Scholars12
- Commissioner’s Academic Challenge.....12
- Commissioner’s African American History Task Force13
- Commissioner’s Holocaust Education Task Force.....13
- Computer Science Updates13
- Congress-Bundestag Vocational Exchange14
- Dual Enrollment.....14
- Entrepreneurship Education and Training (EET).....15
- Family, Community and Volunteer Awards15
- Florida Civics and Debate Initiative16
- Family Reunification Plan.....16
- Florida Future Educators of America17
- Florida Safe School Assessment Tool (FSSAT)17

Florida Safe Schools Canine Program	18
Florida’s Purple Star School of Distinction Designation.....	18
FortifyFL	18
Gifted Endorsement Add-on Renewals and Revisions.....	19
Graduation Requirements for Certain Students in an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Program.....	19
Healthy Schools	19
Instructional Materials	20
Learnfare Program.....	20
Literacy Policies and Initiatives.....	21
New Career Readiness Education Framework and Needs Assessment.....	22
New Science and Mathematics Courses in Course Code Directory	22
Nita M. Lowey 21 st Century Community Learning Centers (21 st CCLC).....	23
Paperless Communications	23
Professional Learning Contact Verification.....	23
School-Based Behavioral Threat Assessments.....	24
School Environmental Safety Incident Reporting (SESIR).....	24
School Guardians.....	25
School Immunization Requirements.....	25
School Safety Drills Requirement	26
Substance Use and Abuse School Assemblies Toolkit.....	26
Suicide Prevention Certified Schools	26
Sunshine State Scholars 2024.....	26
U.S. Senate Youth Program (USSYP).....	27
Teacher Supports	27
Literacy Micro-Credentials	27
Florida History Day	27
Just for Teachers Newsletter.....	28
Office of Professional Practices Services.....	28
Professional Learning and Florida’s Birth to Kindergarten Standards.....	28
Student and Parent Supports	28
Child Care Resource and Referral	28
Home Education	29
New Worlds Reading Initiative.....	29
Pre-Employment Transition Services.....	29
School Readiness (SR) Program.....	29

Seal of Biliteracy	30
The Division of Early Learning	30
Virtual Education Options	30
Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education.....	30
Assessments.....	31
ACCESS for ELLs English Language Proficiency Assessment	31
ACT/SAT/CLT	32
Accommodations of the Statewide Assessment Program Instruments and Procedures for English Language Learners	32
Coordinated Screening and Progress Monitoring Program in Voluntary Prekindergarten	32
Florida Alternate Assessment.....	33
Florida Civic Literacy Exam	33
Florida Pre-College Entrance Examinations	33
General K-12 Assessments	34
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)	34
Postsecondary Education Readiness Test	34
Program Assessment in School Readiness Program and Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program.....	35
Important Dates/Events	35
2024 Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida!	35
9/11 Heroes' Day.....	35
Administrator, Teacher and Support Personnel Awards	36
Afterschool Professionals Appreciation Week.....	36
Art in the Capitol Competition	36
Attendance Awareness Month	37
Black History Month	37
Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month.....	37
Celebrate Freedom Week	37
Family Engagement in Education Month	38
Florida School Volunteer Appreciation Month	38
Hispanic Heritage Month.....	38
Holocaust Education Week.....	39
Lights On Afterschool!	39
Manufacturing Day.....	39
Native American Heritage Month	39
Victims of Communism Day	39

District and School Leader Supports

2023 Legislative Review

Information on the 2023 legislative session will be available at <https://www.fldoe.org/policy/edu-laws-legislation/governmental-relations/pubs.stml>, including the School District Actions Chart and summaries for each bill related to education.

Adult Education

Adult Education programs provide a path forward for Floridians who lack the foundational knowledge, skills and experiences needed to find a meaningful career. It is a mechanism for economic mobility for adults and their families that places them on an upward trajectory to postsecondary education and workforce opportunities. Adult Education programs offer quality instruction in fundamental reading, writing, and math as well as the competencies needed to attain a high school diploma. Courses are available to help non-native English speakers improve their language skills, enabling them to communicate effectively and integrate into society. Adult General Education programs include Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult High School (AHS), Adult High School Co-Enrolled, Academic Skills Building (ASB), English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and GED® Preparation Programs.

In 2023-24, Adult Education programs will offer new courses under the Academic Skill Building (ASB) framework to help prepare students who may already hold a high school diploma but do not possess the literacy and math skills needed to get a job, upskill or enter postsecondary education. All 2023-2024 Adult General Education Curriculum Frameworks can be found at <https://www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/adult-edu/2023-2024-adult-edu-curriculum-frameworko.stml>. The Adult High School Co-Enrolled Course List, as required by section (s.) 1011.80(11), [Florida Statutes, \(F.S.\)](#), is posted on the framework page as well. The eligibility list was determined based upon review of the 2023-24 Course Code Directory for Grades 9-12 and Adult Education Courses.

Additionally, the 2023-2024 Florida Adult Education Assessment Technical Assistance Paper is available at <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/5398/urlt/2223FlAssessTAPaper.pdf> to assist educators in administering state-approved assessment instruments. As part of Adult General Education, Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs provide a contextualized learning approach that links academic learning with occupational skills training. IET equips adult learners with a comprehensive set of academic, technical and employability skills that make them more competitive in the job market. IET is a critical component of Florida's vision for Adult Education as part of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the Unified State Plan. Florida's Adult Education programs currently offer more than 400 IET programs across the state.

For more information, please contact Ashley Yopp, Chief, Bureau of Adult Education, at Ashley.Yopp@fldoe.org.

Alyssa's Alert

During the 2020 legislative session, [Senate Bill 70](#) was passed and became law to provide an extra layer of protection in Florida's schools. This mandate, known as Alyssa's Law, requires all Florida public schools, including charter schools, to implement a mobile panic alert system, known as Alyssa's Alert, capable of connecting diverse emergency services technologies to ensure real-time coordination between multiple first responder agencies and integrate with 911 public safety answering points (PSAP) beginning

with the 2021-22 school year.

[Rule 6A-1.0018, Florida Administrative Code, \(F.A.C.\)](#), provides additional guidance regarding Alyssa's Alert system devices placed throughout each school campus and implementing Alyssa's Alert in local emergency policies and procedures. School districts are required to maintain current listings of mobile panic alert systems implemented by all public schools, including charter schools, and provide any update to this information within five school days of a school opening or closing, or when any other change occurs that impacts the accuracy of district-provided information.

For additional information, please visit <http://www.fldoe.org/safe-schools/alyssas-alert.stml> or contact the Office of Safe Schools at Alyssas.Alert@fldoe.org.

Annual Volunteer Survey

Florida's school volunteers, mentors and community partners support classroom instruction, assist with school-related activities and enhance student learning. Facilitated by the Bureau of Family and Community Outreach, the Department reaches out to districts to gather data on volunteer and mentor programs including number of hours, types of programs, engagement practices and supports needed. Collecting this information is vital as we consider the impact of the important contributions of volunteers and mentors. Survey results may be used for volunteer and mentor program planning, leveraging business partnerships, securing grant funding and replicating exemplary practices.

The 2023-24 annual volunteer survey guidelines will be posted at <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/family-community/activities-programs/volunteer-community-involvement/>. For more information, contact BFCO_Family.Community@fldoe.org.

Student Apprenticeship

Registered Apprenticeship is another pathway to success that students graduating from high school can embrace as they consider their future career paths. Apprenticeship programs range from one year to five years (depending on occupation). Apprentices primarily work full-time earning income while attending occupational related instruction. Apprentice wages increase in direct relation to their level of skill and knowledge gains. Apprentices in some occupations earn college credit that may be applied to an apprentice's continuing education goals. All registered apprentices who successfully complete a registered apprenticeship program receive an Apprenticeship Completion Certificate issued by the Department, which is recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor and is nationally portable. Please visit the <https://apprenticeflorida.com/> website for more information.

Registered Preapprenticeship programs in high schools are an option for juniors and seniors. These programs allow students to remain in their chosen career and technical education (CTE) courses while at the same time receiving credit toward entrance into a Registered Apprenticeship program. Preapprentices who successfully complete all the requirements of the preapprenticeship program receive a Completion Certificate from the Department.

Toward these ends, the 2023 General Appropriations Act provided \$20 million to the Pathways to Career Opportunities Grant fund for the expansion of registered apprenticeship and preapprenticeship training opportunities in Florida in support of meeting the demand for mid to high-wage, high-skilled workers needed to support Florida's growing economy. Funds must be used to expand or operate an existing program or create a new program. Eligible applicants include high schools, career centers, charter technical career centers, Florida College System institutions, and/or other entities authorized to sponsor

an apprenticeship or preapprenticeship program as defined in [s. 446.071, F.S.](#)

For more information, visit <http://www.fldoe.org/pathwaysgrant> or contact Julie Nichols, Pathways to Career Opportunities Grant Manager, at Julie.Nichols@fldoe.org.

For more information about student apprenticeship programs, please contact Kathryn Wheeler, State Director for Apprenticeship, at Kathleen.Taylor@fldoe.org.

B.E.S.T. Standards for Mathematics Resources

The Office of Mathematics and Science, in collaboration with teacher work groups, has created various resources to assist in the learning and teaching of the B.E.S.T. Standards for Mathematics. On the [B.E.S.T. Mathematics Resources webpage](#), you will find a separate webpage dedicated to resources for the [B.E.S.T. Planning for Student Learning and Instruction](#). Here you can find a list of information and resources specific to the B.E.S.T. Instructional Guides for Mathematics (BIG-M) and standards progressions for district administration and teachers.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to Courtney Starling, Secondary Mathematics Specialist at Courtney.Starling@fldoe.org.

Bureau of Educator Certification

The Bureau of Educator Certification (BEC) is responsible for issuing Florida Educator Certificates by implementing the certification provisions in Florida law ([Chapter 1012, F.S.](#)) and State Board of Education administrative rules ([Chapter 6A-4, F.A.C.](#)). Annually, BEC staff evaluate over 160,000 applications to determine eligibility for certification.

More information and resources can be found on the BEC webpage accessed at <https://www.fldoe.org/teaching/certification/>.

For general questions about educator certification, call the Customer Access Number at 1-800-445-6739 or submit the online form for email service at <http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/certification/staff-contact/>.

To assist certification applicants with online applications, the BEC developed short Applicant How To Videos on the most common certification actions. Videos can be accessed at <https://www.fldoe.org/teaching/certification/how-to.stml>.

For assistance with online certification accounts, educators should complete the online form at <https://www.fldoe.org/teaching/certification/staff-contact/technical-contact-us.stml>.

Bureau of Family and Community Outreach

The Department recognizes family, school and community partnerships as critical learning supports, and the [Bureau of Family and Community Outreach](#) (BFCO) supports Florida's K-12 students and families by augmenting academics through discretionary projects. Resources and technical assistance for school and district mentoring programs, recognition programs, statewide initiatives, pre-collegiate initiatives and out-of-school time programs, are based on district self-assessments that focus on ensuring all students are prepared before, during and after the school day, and when transitioning to postsecondary pursuits.

For more information on BFCO projects, please contact the following staff:

- Nita M. Lowry 21st Century Community Learning Centers – Dr. Contobia Horsey-Adams, Director, Contobia.HorseyAdams@fldoe.org
- Family and Community Engagement – Cindy Huffman, Director, Cindy.Huffman2@fldoe.org
- State Mentoring and Instructional Enhancement Grants – Tiffany Chandler, Specialist, Tiffany.Chandler@fldoe.org
- Pre-Collegiate Programs – Yolanda Miranda-Hill, Director, Yolanda.MirandaHill1@fldoe.org

Bureau of Standards and Instructional Support

The Bureau of Standards and Instructional Support (BSIS) provides quality services and resources focused on helping teachers implement Florida’s state academic standards. The following program offices support school districts, communities and families working toward the common goal of highest student achievement and success.

- Healthy Schools
- Library Media and Instructional Materials
- Math and Science
- Project Management and Grant Support
- Social Studies and the Arts

For more information, please contact (850) 245-0423 or visit the [BSIS webpage](#).

CPALMS

CPALMS is the official public school K-12 repository for Florida’s state academic standards, courses and aligned resources. Recent updates include:

- All the new state academic standards and course descriptions are available on CPALMS.
- CPALMS is now integrated with all the public school districts for single sign-on for teachers and students and it can be accessed through the multiple CPALMS apps within the school app dashboards in Clever or ClassLink.
- More than 700 million resource downloads have been served on CPALMS.
- CPALMS offers more than 10,000 free instructional and educational resources for teachers and students including resources for the new B.E.S.T. Standards.
- More than 1,250 original student tutorials are now available for math, science, ELA and civics for grades K-12. These interactive online lessons are available to teachers and students to use at any time and from anywhere. These are available on CPALMS.org, CMAP Class Sites and FloridaStudents.org.
- The CPALMS CMAP tool is a powerful tool for curriculum planning at the district, school and teacher level. It incorporates the course descriptions and requirements, standards, benchmarks, resources, state-adopted instructional materials, and much more to save time and make planning easier. Teachers can collaborate, share their plans within the system and create Class Sites that provide students access to resources such as tutorials, assignments and other items the teacher needs to share with students and parents. The CMAP now comes with a mobile app called CMAP Daily Viewer and is available for Android and iOS device users.
- The CMAP now integrates the alignment information for state-adopted instructional materials. With only a few clicks, the teacher can bring in the information provided by publishers to their curriculum plan based on what benchmarks they are teaching and when.

- CPALMS Standards Viewer mobile app has been updated with the latest information on the standards and offers great convenience to browse all the state's academic standards. To view and explore the CPALMS Standards Viewer mobile app, please visit https://www.cpalms.org/standards/standards_viewer_app.aspx.

Career and Professional Education (CAPE)

The Florida Career and Professional Education (CAPE) Act was created in 2007 to provide a statewide planning partnership between the business and education communities in order to attract, expand and retain targeted, high-value industry, and to sustain a strong knowledge-based economy. The primary purpose of the CAPE Act is to:

- Improve middle and high school academic performance by providing rigorous and relevant curriculum opportunities;
- Provide rigorous and relevant career-themed courses that articulate to postsecondary-level coursework and lead to industry certification;
- Support local and regional economic development;
- Respond to Florida's critical workforce needs; and
- Provide state residents access to high-wage, high-demand careers.

Participation in CAPE can be beneficial for students. Students are able to earn industry certifications, making them college and career ready. Some industry certifications articulate for college credit. College credit articulated through industry certifications may contribute to requirements for the Gold Seal CAPE (GSC) Scholarship. Other benefits for school districts include weighted FTE funding, teacher bonuses and contribution to the school grades/acceleration formula.

The administrative rule for the implementation of the CAPE Act is [Rule 6A-6.0576, F.A.C.](#), which includes specific requirements for teachers and proctors related to the delivery of industry certification exams to K-12 students. In order for industry certifications to be delivered and reported, districts and schools must comply with this rule. Provisions include the following:

- Teachers may not administer an industry certification exam to students to whom they provide direct instruction for the certification.
- Exam questions are delivered in a secure manner.
- The exam is scored by certifying agency or vendor, not a school district employee.
- A student cannot be given the same exam more than three times during the academic year. There must be a minimum of 20 calendar days between test administrations.
- School districts shall create and maintain local test administration procedures for the administration of all industry certification exams.
- Teachers, proctors and monitors for industry certification exams must sign the [CAPE Test Administration Form, Florida](#) CAPE Act Industry Certification Test Administration and Security Agreement.
- Exams may not be used to satisfy the requirements for more than one industry certification or certificate.

When teachers, proctors and monitors sign the [CAPE Test Administration Form](#), they attest that they have been trained in their local test administration procedures and will not engage in cheating. Industry certification exams administered that do NOT adhere to all of the required test administration procedures cannot be reported to the state for school grades or any other purpose.

The Department typically updates the rules in late summer to adopt the CAPE Industry Certification Funding List for the program year. A mid-year update occurs to update any industry certification weights and to make any other amendments for program administration.

Additional resources are provided through the following links:

- [Industry Certification Articulation Agreements](#)
- [Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program](#) (Click on “Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholarship”)
- [Resources CAPE Secondary](#) (Included on this webpage is the CAPE Technical Assistance Paper)
- [CAPE Technical Assistance Paper](#)
- [CAPE Statutes and Rule](#)

For more information, contact IndustryCertification@fldoe.org.

Career Planning and Work-Based Learning System

Beginning in the fall of 2023, all districts will have access, at no cost, to a full suite of K-12 tools for career exploration and planning, as well as work-based learning coordination to support the delivery of on-the-job training, student preapprenticeship and internship opportunities. Xello is Florida’s K-12 career planning and work-based learning coordination provider and may be accessed at <https://xello.world/en/florida-college-career-ready/>.

The goal of the system is to provide students with the information, data and experiences they need to explore their options, create a personalized career and academic plan, and prepare for a successful career of their own choosing. The system meets the online career exploration and personalized career and academic plan requirements of [s. 1003.4156\(1\)\(e\), F.S.](#)

Elementary through high school students will be able to:

- Explore high-skill, high-wage and in-demand occupations in Florida
- Understand their own career interests, values and skills through assessments
- Explore postsecondary training opportunities
- Complete interactive college and career readiness lessons
- Manage the entire college application process – transcripts and letters of recommendation submission, scholarships and Common App integration
- Participate in local internships and other work-based learning opportunities
- Develop a resume and shareable professional portfolio
- Read all content in Spanish and other languages

Educators will be able to:

- Manage and run reports on individuals and groups of students to ensure college and career readiness
- Message students with reminders and guidance
- Manage work-based learning opportunities
- Integrate with the district’s single-sign-on provider
- Integrate with the student information system provider for easy account management
- Invite parents and guardians to view their child's college and career progress.

Reach out to Lee Chipps-Walton, Manager of CTE Strategic Initiatives, with questions or feedback at Lee.Chipps-Walton@fldoe.org or 850-245-0911.

Career and Technical Education Program Quality Audit

On January 30, 2019, Executive Order 19-31 charted a course for Florida to become number one in the nation for workforce education by 2030. In accordance with Executive Order 19-31 and [s. 1003.491\(5\), F.S.](#), the Commissioner of Education tasked the Division of Career and Adult Education (DCAE) with the responsibility of developing a methodology for auditing Career and Technical Education (CTE) program offerings in the school districts and Florida College System institutions on a recurring basis.

To meet these goals, the DCAE formed the Office of CTE Quality, which, in part, maintains responsibility for conducting the annual Career and Technical Education Program Quality Audit (CTE Audit). The CTE Audit is in its third year and includes the most recently available education program data for students in the 2021-22 Reporting Year (RY). The CTE Audit assesses:

- Alignment of offerings with the framework of quality under [s. 445.004\(4\), F.S.](#)
- Alignment of offerings at the K-12 and postsecondary levels with credentials or degree programs identified on the Master Credentials List under [s. 445.004\(4\), F.S.](#)
- Program utilization and unwarranted duplication across institutions serving the same students in a geographical or service area.
- Institutional performance measured by student outcomes such as academic achievement, college readiness, postsecondary enrollment, credential and certification attainment, job placement and wages.

DCAE has conducted a local-level institutional performance data pull based on the CTE Audit institutional performance metrics to serve as an informational resource for secondary and postsecondary CTE programs. The most recent version of these data were disseminated to district superintendents, CTE directors and college presidents in May 2023. The DCAE is now in the rule development process to adopt rules to administer s. 1003.491, F.S.

For additional information regarding the CTE Audit, please email Dr. Keith Richard, Vice Chancellor of Workforce Innovation, at Keith.Richard@fldoe.org, or review periodic updates at <http://www.fldoe.org/careerpathways/>.

Career and Technical Education Frameworks

The 2023-24 Career and Technical Education Program Frameworks are available to facilitate instructional planning for the 2023-2024 school year. The 2023-24 Change Document is also available; this document is a synopsis of all changes which occurred to frameworks due to the annual review that is required by [s. 1004.92, F.S.](#)

For the 2023-24 academic year, three new high school programs were added to the statewide inventory.

	Program Name	Program Length	Program Number
Secondary (9-12)	Equine Science	4 credits	8004300
	Data Science and Machine Learning	4 credits	9007700
	Careers in Public Service	2 credits	8607100

We are pleased to announce the adoption of 13 new career and technical education (CTE) curriculum programs for the 2023-24 school year, which will expand access to high-wage, in-demand jobs for Florida's high school and Florida College System students. The approved curriculum frameworks consist of seven college credit certificates, three secondary programs, one career certificate, one associate in science degree and one adult education program. The frameworks range from Careers in Public Service, Cyber Security, and Control Tower Operators, to Data Science and Machine Learning, with each focused on educating students for employment and high earning potential ranging from an estimated \$40,000 to \$100,000 a year after graduating.

For more information, please contact NiñaFe Awong, Director for the Office of Career and Technical Education, at Ninafe.Awong@fldoe.org.

Civics Literacy Excellence Initiative (CLEI)

On July 13, 2021, Governor Ron DeSantis announced \$106 million to establish the Civic Literacy Excellence Initiative. Components of the initiative are:

- Revised civics and government standards will be fully implemented in school year 2023-24.
 - Florida teacher experts convened to revise the standards.
 - National experts provided feedback and guidance.
- Civics Seal of Excellence Endorsement
 - Fifty-sixty hour online program including video lectures delivered by the nation's authorities on American history, civics and government.
 - First cohort cycle began in January 2023 and others are scheduled through September 2023.
 - Initial phase included 15 cohort cycles enrolling 20,000 teachers, with another 13,000 on waiting lists.
- Three-day summer civics professional learning
 - Training for an objective and deep understanding of American history and civics.
- Portraits in Patriotism
 - Initial resources are currently available on CPALMS.
 - Additional resources will be available prior to the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year.
- K-12 civics curriculum
 - Comprehensive primary instructional tool or supplemental resource.
- K-12 integrated civics curriculum
 - Supplemental civics resources for teachers in other subject areas.

For more information, please visit [Civics Literacy Excellence Initiative \(CLEI\)](#) or contact Barbara Cook (K-8) at Barbara.Cook@fldoe.org or Timothy MacGregor (9-12) at Timothy.MacGregor@fldoe.org.

College and Career Decision Day

[Section 1001.43\(14\)\(b\), F.S.](#), encourages districts to recognize high school seniors for their postsecondary education plans, encourages early preparation for college and encourages students to pursue advanced career pathways through attaining industry certifications. District school boards are encouraged to adopt policies and procedures to celebrate the academic and workforce achievements of students by:

- Declaring an “Academic Scholarship Signing Day” to recognize seniors who sign actual or ceremonial documents accepting scholarships or enrollment by a postsecondary institution.
- Declaring a “College and Career Decision Day” to encourage early preparations for college and to pursue advanced career pathways through attainment of industry certifications that have statewide college credit articulation.

The district school board may encourage holding such events in an assembly or gathering of the entire student body as a means of making academic success and recognition visible to all students.

For more information, contact Sarah Harmon, Assistant Director, at Sarah.Harmon@fldoe.org.

Commission on Presidential Scholars

The mission of this program, established in 1964, is to recognize and honor superior high school seniors. Students are selected on the basis of outstanding scholarship in one of two categories: 1) Students are nominated for the academic component based on SAT/ACT scores, and 2) Students nominated for the CTE component demonstrate excellence in CTE.

The CTE component of the program will honor students on the basis of outstanding scholarship and demonstrated ability and accomplishment in career and technical education fields. Each year, up to 161 students are named as Presidential Scholars, one of the nation’s highest honors for high school students.

State nominees will be invited to apply in mid-to-late January 2024 for the national program. Completed applications will be due in February and scholars will be announced at the beginning of May 2024. We encourage you to nominate two students from your district, one for the academic portion and one for the CTE portion, who are deserving of this honor. The Department is only accepting one academic and one CTE nomination per district.

More information about the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program and the Commission on Presidential Scholars is available at <http://www.ed.gov/psp>.

Commissioner’s Academic Challenge

The Commissioner’s Academic Challenge (CAC) is a statewide high school tournament inaugurated in 1986. Students enrolled in grades 9-12 during the 2023-24 school year are eligible to be on a district team with each district represented by one team consisting of a coach and six students. Districts are placed in three divisions based on overall student population. A maximum of six teams may compete in one competition round. Teams are asked questions from the areas of language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, the fine arts, world languages (French and Spanish), physical education, health and technology. The questions are written by educators from high schools throughout the state.

This year's CAC will take place in spring 2024. Dates and location have yet to be finalized, but details will be posted at <http://academic-challenge.org/> when they become available.

Questions regarding the CAC should be addressed to the Tournament Director, Lisa Rawls, at Lisa.Rawls@polk-fl.net.

Commissioner's African American History Task Force

The Commissioner's African American History Task Force (AAHTF) supports Florida's school districts on their implementation of [s. 1003.42, F.S.](#), regarding the history of African peoples and the contributions of African Americans to society. The Task Force works to improve awareness of the requirements, collaborates with the FDOE to provide professional learning and teaching resources to educators and identify and build supporting partnerships. The FDOE surveys all districts annually through the Required Instruction Portal to ensure African American History is taught throughout the entire state. Additionally, the Task Force reviews district implementation plans, including educator professional learning, curriculum, structure of teaching and university and community collaboration plans, and awards exemplary status to those districts that excel in African American history instruction.

For more information about the African American History Task Force, visit <https://afroamfl.org/>.

Commissioner's Holocaust Education Task Force

The Commissioner's Holocaust Education Task Force (HETF) is to promote Holocaust education in the state of Florida. HETF is available to support the teaching and learning of Holocaust education, including the section of Florida's required instruction statute ([s. 1003.42, F.S.](#)). On a continual basis, the Task Force shall survey the status of Holocaust Education; design, encourage and promote the implementation of Holocaust education and awareness; provide programs in all Florida school districts; and coordinate designated events that will provide appropriate memorialization of the Holocaust on a regular basis throughout the state.

For more information about the Holocaust Education Task Force, visit <http://www.fldoe.org/holocausteducation/>.

Computer Science Updates

In May, the Florida Department of Education, along with Computer Science educator experts from across the state, began the Computer Science State Standards Review. The current standards were adopted in 2016, and as technology is rapidly changing and the workforce demands are increasing, computer science education must adapt. The goal is to have an updated set of Florida's State Academic Standards for Computer Science to be implemented for the 2024-25 school year.

The legislature has appropriated funds for 2023-24 for Computer Science projects. The funding has two main purposes.

First, it provides funding to districts or consortia to enhance the capacity of schools to employ staff who are trained and certified as appropriate to meet the requirements of [s. 1007.2616, F.S.](#) Specifically, funding may be used for:

- Delivering or facilitating training for classroom teachers to earn an educator certificate in computer science pursuant to [s. 1012.56, F.S.](#);

- Training that leads to an industry certification associated with a course identified in the [Course Code Directory Computer Science course list](#);
- Paying fees for examinations that lead to a credential; or
- Professional learning that provides classroom teachers instruction in computer science courses and content.

Secondly, the funding will reward appropriately certified teachers by providing a bonus after each year the individual completes teaching a general education computer science course or identified CTE course at a public middle or high school (for up to three years subject to legislative appropriation).

More information on this year's grants and related documents can be found at <https://www.fldoe.org/academics/standards/subject-areas/computer-science/>.

To meet high school graduation requirements, a student who earns a computer science credit may substitute the credit for up to one credit of the mathematics requirement (except for Algebra 1 and Geometry) or up to one credit of the science requirement (except for Biology 1).

For more information, contact Justin Early, Computer Science Specialist, at Justin.Early@fldoe.org.

Congress-Bundestag Vocational Exchange

Florida is once again participating in the Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange (CBYX) Vocational Program. Administered by Nacel Open Door, a non-profit educational exchange organization. This scholarship provides an opportunity for 25 graduating high school seniors from across the United States to spend one year in Germany learning the German language and culture while exploring their career interests. This unique program allows graduating high school seniors to spend a year in Germany living with a host family, participating in a school or training program and getting hands-on work experience through an internship with a German company.

Participants have been placed in fields as diverse as the arts, architecture, automotives, carpentry, child care, culinary arts, education, engineering, filming, forestry, graphic design, health care, hotel management, industrial design, information technology, international business, journalism, machining, nursing, photography, theatre and veterinary science, to name a few.

For more information, visit <https://www.nacelopendoor.org/cbyx>. Applications for the 2024-25 program will be available in fall 2023 and will be due in January 2024.

Dual Enrollment

Florida's academic and career dual enrollment programs allow high school students to pursue advanced courses that are applicable to high school graduation requirements, and a postsecondary certificate or degree, or industry certification. This acceleration mechanism continues to be popular among Florida high school students serving as a conduit to college and career. Below are a few reminders moving into the 2023-24 academic year.

- Florida College System (FCS) institutions ([s. 1007.271\(21\), F.S.](#)) and District-Sponsored Career Centers ([s. 1007.271\(7\), F.S.](#)) are required to have a dual enrollment articulation agreement with each public school district or high school in their service area that includes college credit and clock-hour offerings, if applicable.
- FCS institutions may establish additional agreements with districts outside of their service

areas. Districts may also establish additional agreements with other institutions.

- State University System (SUS) institutions and eligible Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida (ICUF) institutions may also enter into an agreement with any school district that wishes to offer this opportunity to their students.
- Public postsecondary institutions must enter into a dual enrollment articulation agreement with any private school that is eligible to participate pursuant to [s. 1011.62\(1\)\(i\), F.S.](#), as well as any eligible student enrolled in a home education program pursuant to [s. 1002.41, F.S.](#)

All dual enrollment articulation agreements are due by August 1 of each year for all institutions mentioned above as being required to have established agreements. Completed agreements and templates should be submitted through the Dual Enrollment Articulation Agreement Submission Site at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DEAgreements>.

For questions, please contact Shannon Mercer, Office of Articulation, at Shannon.Mercer@fldoe.org.

Entrepreneurship Education and Training (EET)

Florida's Perkins V State Plan commits to creating a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem through career and technical education (CTE). CTE does not just prepare students to take jobs, but also helps students to create the jobs of the future. A competitive opportunity was made available in the 2022-23 program year for the development of new entrepreneurship opportunities or the expansion of existing entrepreneurship opportunities in secondary and postsecondary CTE programs.

In addition, the Entrepreneurship Education and Training Combine was restructured to provide a platform for all awarded institutions to highlight their program, initiatives and best practices. The 2023-24 grant award year will host one funding category requiring three high-impact initiatives targeting students in special populations such as students from low-income families, students in foster care, veterans and military dependents.

In 2023-24, three postsecondary institutions will participate in a mentoring program, which allows students with a growing or expanding business to be partnered with mentors in the same field. The purpose of this mentoring program will be to provide personal guidance to students with an existing business promoting business growth and self-sustainability.

The upcoming professional learning opportunities of 2023-24 are slated to include a training series for CTE administrators and instructors focusing on innovation, virtual open house meetings to connect veteran students to local Entrepreneurship Education and Training resources, in addition to the restructured Entrepreneurship Education and Training Combine. Please note that all institutions who receive funding from the EET grant initiative must attend the EET Combine to be held in the same award year.

More information may be found at [Entrepreneurship Education & Training Grant](#).

Please contact MarLinda S. Monroe-Johnson, Career and Technical Education Program Specialist, at MarLinda.Monroe-Johnson@fldoe.org for more information.

Family, Community and Volunteer Awards

The Bureau of Family and Community Outreach (BFCO) Family and Community Engagement team coordinates the following annual recognitions which highlight outstanding volunteer practices and

showcase exemplary family and community engagement programs in Florida schools. When schools, families, and communities work together to support students, everyone benefits.

- Outstanding School Volunteer Award – Recognizes Florida school volunteers who demonstrate exceptional commitment to student success. 2023-24 nomination information will be posted at <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/family-community/activities-programs/volunteer-community-involvement/the-outsting-school-volunteer.stml>.
- Family and Community Involvement Award – Recognizes innovative Florida school programs and practices that increase family engagement, and family, school, and community partnerships. 2023-2024 nomination information will be posted at <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/family-community/activities-programs/volunteer-community-involvement/the-parent-involvement-award.stml>.
- Golden and Silver School Awards – Recognizes Florida elementary and secondary schools with outstanding school-based volunteer programs. 2023-24 nomination information will be posted at <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/family-community/activities-programs/volunteer-community-involvement/the-golden-silver-schools-awards.stml>.

For more information, visit <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/family-community/activities-programs/volunteer-community-involvement/> or contact BFCO_FamilyCommunity@fldoe.org.

Florida Civics and Debate Initiative

The mission of the Florida Civics and Debate Initiative (FCDI) is to create access and opportunities for all students to have the best civics education, including curriculum, debate programs and highly skilled teachers, which is a catalyst for students to become great citizens who can preserve our constitutional republic for future generations.

The FCDI elevates civic knowledge, civic skills and civics disposition for middle and high school students by establishing competitive speech and debate teams. Before the initiative was created, there were 11 school districts in Florida that participated in competitive debate. As we move into the initiative's third year, Florida will have over 350 active teams in 59 different school districts across the state and we are still growing. The goal is to have 100 percent of school districts participating by the end of the 2023-24 school year.

The FCDI also supports professional learning for new debate coaches and for civics and history teachers. Over 25 debate tournaments are offered throughout the state each year. All schools are welcome to compete with us. The hallmark event is the National Civics and Debate Championship in November of each year.

To learn more, please visit www.civicsanddebate.com or email David Fechtel, Program Manager, at David.Fecht1@fldoe.org.

Family Reunification Plan

[Section 1006.07, F.S.](#), requires district school boards and charter school governing boards to adopt a family reunification plan to reunite students and employees with their families in the event that a school is closed or evacuated due to an emergency. These plans are to be developed in coordination with local law enforcement agencies and local governments.

With school safety a priority of Commissioner Diaz, the Office of Safe Schools developed a model family

reunification plan that is available at <https://www.fldoe.org/safe-schools/>.

Florida Future Educators of America

Since 1986, the Department has provided assistance to schools in forming and maintaining chapters of Florida Future Educators of America (FFEA), a pre-collegiate and collegiate teacher recruitment program. The program provides a forum for students to become aware of career opportunities in education and nurtures their interest in teaching as a career. The FFEA chapters provide unique opportunities for members to learn about the teaching profession and develop some of the skills needed. It also provides an avenue for collegiate members to stay informed of the latest issues and advancements in the education profession. FFEA is administered through local school chapters at all grade levels – elementary through postsecondary. A teacher or faculty advisor is required to provide leadership for each chapter.

Educator recruitment is a priority of Commissioner Diaz and each year, the Department coordinates a state conference for postsecondary chapters and high school student members and their advisors. The [FFEA state conference](#) provides a wonderful opportunity for chapter members to meet with fellow students, chapter advisors and new and experienced teachers. Conference attendees have the opportunity to hear from inspiring speakers whose experiences and knowledge will guide them as they contemplate the challenges and rewards that lie before them as future educators. The Department also provides promotional materials to support the advancement of the FFEA program.

Schools interested in establishing a chapter may submit a [New Chapter Form](#) to the Bureau of Educator Recruitment, Development and Retention. Students interested in joining FFEA should check with their school to determine whether a chapter has already been established.

For more information, please visit the [FFEA website](#) or contact Ashley Monroe, recruitment coordinator, at EdRecruit@fldoe.org.

Florida Safe School Assessment Tool (FSSAT)

Continuing the Commissioner's priority of school safety, [s. 1006.1493, F.S.](#), outlines requirements for school officials at each school district and public school site to utilize the FSSAT to conduct security assessments to identify threats, vulnerabilities and appropriate safety controls for the schools they supervise. Each school must complete a school security risk assessment in FSSAT annually by October 1. Districts must report to the department by October 15 that all public schools, including charter schools, within the school district have completed the school security risk assessment.

[Rule 6A-1.0018, F.A.C.](#), further specifies that the district school safety specialist must coordinate with public safety agencies that are designated as first responders to a school's campus to tour such campuses once every three years and provide recommendations related to school safety. These tours must be documented in FSSAT. Additionally, districts are to use the FSSAT to document the findings and recommendations from these assessments to the school board, and report such findings, recommendations and school board action to the Office of Safe Schools within 30 days after the district school board meeting, but no later than November 1. School districts are required to ensure the accuracy of school listings in FSSAT and report to the Office of Safe Schools of any changes within five (5) school days.

For more information, please contact the FSSAT support team at FSSAT@fldoe.org.

Florida Safe Schools Canine Program

Section 1006.121, F.S., is a new statute effective on July 1, 2023. It requires the establishment of the Florida Safe Schools Canine Program (Program) so that an individual, school or business entity can be nominated or apply to be designated as a Florida Safe Schools Canine Partner (Partner) if they provide a monetary or in-kind donation to a law enforcement agency to offset the costs of a firearm detection canine. This new statute section outlines requirements for firearm detection canines as well as eligibility criteria for Florida Safe Schools Canine Partners. The Office of Safe Schools is tasked with awarding the Partner designation to eligible nominees and applicants, developing a Program logo and establishing a Program website. Program details will be included in a State Board of Education rule, as required in the new law.

Florida's Purple Star School of Distinction Designation

Florida's Purple Star School of Distinction Designation recognizes schools that demonstrate a significant commitment to military-connected families and students and provides critical transition supports as provided in [s. 1003.051, F.S.](#)

In order to qualify as a Florida Purple Star Campus, eligible schools must meet the following five requirements designed to support the unique needs facing military students and families:

- Designate a school staff point of contact for military students and families to ease entry into the new environment;
- Establish and maintain a dedicated page on the school's website featuring school information and community resources for military families;
- Maintain a student-led transition program to help ease transitions, and create and maintain connections;
- Provide professional development which addresses the unique needs of military students and families; and
- Reserve at least 5% of open enrollment seats for military-connected students in alignment with [s. 1000.36, F.S.](#), Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children.

In addition to these requirements, schools must also demonstrate an enriched military family-friendly culture by facilitating at least three school-based activities as specified in [Rule 6A-1.0999, F.A.C.](#)

The Florida Purple Star School of Distinction application must be submitted by September 30 of each school year. The designation will remain in effect for three years. After three years, schools must reapply to maintain their Purple Star Campus status.

For more information, visit <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/family-community/activities-programs/parental-involvement/purple-star.stml>, or email Cindy Huffman at Cindy.Huffman2@fldoe.org or PurpleStarSchools@fldoe.org.

FortifyFL

[Section 943.082, F.S.](#), establishes the use of a mobile suspicious activity reporting tool, known as FortifyFL, to allow for students, parents or members of the community to submit tips regarding public or private schools to designated law enforcement and school officials throughout the state. Any tips submitted via FortifyFL are sent to local school, district and law enforcement officials, and the designated officials are contacted until action is taken on the tip. Florida Statutes require district school boards to promote the use of FortifyFL by advertising it on the school district website, in newsletters, on school

campuses and in school publications by installing it on all mobile devices issued to students and by bookmarking the website on all computer devices issued to students.

To add, change or delete a closed school in the tool, or if users have any questions or need assistance with FortifyFL, contact FortifyFL@fldoe.org.

Gifted Endorsement Add-on Renewals and Revisions

Objectives, guiding questions and topics for the gifted endorsement courses are in the process of being updated. Districts renewing or wanting to revise their current gifted endorsement add-on are required to adopt the new objectives once approved.

To view the updated objectives, guiding questions and topics, please visit the gifted education programs at <http://fldoe.org/academics/standards/gifted.stml> or contact Alicia.Foy@fldoe.org for more information.

Graduation Requirements for Certain Students in an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Program

Beginning with the 2022-23 school year, students who have been enrolled in an ESOL program for less than two school years and have met all requirements for the standard high school diploma except the passage of any assessment required for graduation under [s. 1003.4282, F.S.](#), or [s. 1008.22, F.S.](#), or alternate assessment, may meet the graduation requirement to pass the statewide, standardized grade 10 English Language Arts assessment by satisfactorily demonstrating grade-level expectations on formative assessments, in accordance with [Rule 6A-1.09422, F.A.C.](#)

For more information, contact Dr. Arlene Costello, Chief, Bureau of Student Achievement through Language Acquisition, at Arlene.Costello@fldoe.org.

Healthy Schools

Health Education Standards Review

The Health Education standards, last updated in 2014, were reviewed and developed by a workgroup of health and physical education specialists beginning in January 2023. The Health Education standards establish the core content of health education curriculum to be taught in kindergarten through grade 12 in Florida public schools, and recent revisions were based on recommendations by workgroup members and stakeholders in public comment. These new standards are rigorous, relevant to current health education best practices and provide for logical, sequential progression of core curricular content that incrementally increases a student's core content knowledge and skills over time. Standards are available to view on the [CPALMS](#) webpage and will be adopted into courses for the 2024-25 school year.

Required Instruction

Rule 6A-1.094124, F.A.C., requires school districts to annually plan and report on components of s. 1003.42, F.S. District plans to implement Resiliency Education, Substance Use and Abuse Health Education and Child Trafficking Prevention Education are due December 1, 2023. District reports regarding all required instruction topics, including health education topics, are due July 1, 2024. For more information, please contact Justen Early at Justen.Early@fldoe.org.

Resiliency Education

State Board of Education [Rule 6A-1.094124, F.A.C.](#), Required Instruction Planning and Reporting, was amended and effective November 23, 2022. School districts shall annually provide a minimum of five

hours of data-driven instruction to students in grades 6 through 12 related to civic and character education and life skills education through resiliency education using the health education standards. Resiliency Education encompasses civic and character education and life skills education that builds confidence, supports mental health and prepares more resilient learners. The purpose of aligning these two components of statutorily required instruction is to initiate a first in the nation approach to connecting the concepts of students' readiness, resiliency and, when necessary, response and recovery. Resiliency Education standards were developed to implement this instruction and are available on the [CPALMS](#) webpage.

Social Media Standards

The effects of social media are now required instruction for students in grades 6 through 12 beginning in the 2023-24 school year. Social media standards were developed and adopted as part of the Health Education standards, highlighting the negative effects of social media on mental health, internet safety, maintaining personal security and screen time limitations. Benchmarks are available for students in kindergarten through grade 12 and are available on the [CPALMS](#) webpage.

Summer Academy

The Florida Department of Education Office of Healthy Schools hosted over 150 educators in Lakeland, Florida, for the 12th annual Healthy Schools Summer Academy. This interactive professional learning opportunity incorporated integrated standards-based health education, physical education, civic and character education, and life skills education for the development of healthy, confident and resilient learners.

For more information about the 2024 Healthy Schools Summer Academy, please contact the Office of Healthy Schools at HealthySchools1@fldoe.org.

Instructional Materials

The 2023-24 state instructional materials adoption has called for bids in K-12 Science. The list of participating publishers and the materials that have been submitted for adoption consideration, along with information regarding the state adoption process, may be found on the Instructional Materials website at <http://www.fldoe.org/academics/standards/instructional-materials>.

The Department will be seeking reviewers with content expertise and an in-depth understanding of the current state academic standards to review the submitted materials for adoption consideration. State academic standards detail what students should know and be able to do as the result of a quality educational program. State reviewers must complete a training before completing an evaluation of instructional materials to assess whether the materials align to Florida's state academic standards.

For more information, contact Katelyn Barrington, Instructional Materials Specialist, at Katelyn.Barrington@fldoe.org.

Learnfare Program

The Learnfare Program is primarily related to student attendance for families who are eligible to receive temporary cash assistance (TCA). [Section 414.1251, F.S.](#), requires the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to reduce the amount of TCA for families with students who are identified as habitual truants or dropouts. Implementation procedures require DCF to provide a list of TCA-eligible children to the Northwest Regional Data Center monthly. Each school district should download the list and identify students who are truant or have dropped out. The school district's response is then shared with DCF who

takes the appropriate action. In response, DCF reviews the case record to make certain determinations. If good cause does not exist, the parent of a student who is a habitual truant or a dropout receives notice of possible reduction of the benefit amount. DCF procedures include a fair hearing process.

If a sanction is imposed to the benefit amount, the benefit may be reinstated when the truant student has substantially improved attendance during a subsequent grading period, or after a student who has dropped out of school re-enrolls in school, receives a high school diploma or its equivalent, enrolls in preparation for the high school equivalency assessment, or enrolls in another educational activity approved by the district school board.

Please contact Beverley Wilks, School Social Work Consultant, at Beverley.Wilks@fldoe.org if you need a better understanding of how districts can effectively utilize the Learnfare Program.

Literacy Policies and Initiatives

The Just Read, Florida! Office will continue to implement statewide literacy policies and initiatives to improve literacy achievement for Florida students. Just Read, Florida! has created 20 literacy support regions with 30 State Regional Literacy Directors to support implementation of K-12 Comprehensive Evidence-Based Reading Plans and build capacity of school literacy leadership teams, school administrators and literacy coaches for effective implementation of the Benchmarks for Excellent Student Thinking (B.E.S.T.) English Language Arts (ELA) Standards.

The following includes an overview of literacy policies and initiatives being implemented to improve literacy achievement:

- In partnership with the University of Florida (UF) Lastinger Center for Learning and the Florida State University Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR), Just Read, Florida! has developed and deployed literacy coach professional learning resulting in a [Florida Literacy Coach Endorsement](#) upon successful completion.
- Created in partnership with Just Read, Florida! and the Division of Early Learning, the UF Lastinger Center for Learning's [Emergent Literacy, Elementary Literacy and Secondary Literacy Micro-Credentials](#) provide educators with evidence-based, high-quality online courses to build their literacy knowledge and skills.
- The VPK-Grade 10 coordinated screening and progress monitoring system for ELA, the Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) is used for monitoring student progress.
- School districts, institutions of higher education and other entities that provide reading endorsement courses submit the Florida [Reading Endorsement Matrix](#) to document the alignment of their coursework to the competencies and indicators adopted by the State Board of Education in July 2022.
- Two state [Reading Endorsement](#) pathways are deployed in partnership with the FCRR and the UF Lastinger Center for Learning.
- The [New Worlds Reading Initiative \(NWRI\)](#) is a free Florida literacy program for public or public charter school students in PreK-Grade 5 who are currently reading below grade level. The program provides free books to eligible students on a monthly basis until the student is promoted to sixth grade or the parent opts out of the program.
- The [Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic Excellence \(RAISE\) Tutoring Program](#) allows high school students to tutor K-3 students having reading difficulties.
- [Read-at-Home Plan Resources](#) are required to be provided to parents of any K-3 student who has been identified with a substantial deficiency in reading.
- The following grants provide funding to increase intervention and tutoring opportunities for students, professional learning for administrators, teachers and literacy coaches, and other

local educational agencies' (LEAs) literacy initiatives to increase student reading achievement.

- High-Impact Reading Interventions and Targeted Supports (HIITS) – PreK-Grade 3
- Reading Tutoring for K-3 Students Grant – Grades K-3
- District Intensive Reading Initiative Pilot (DIRIP) – Grades K-5
- Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) – Birth-Grade 12
- The FCRR Literacy and Leadership Professional Learning Series, developed in partnership with the Florida Department of Education, is designed to support school leaders in building capacity of teachers and instructional coaches to implement evidence-based literacy practices to improve student learning and achievement.
- The Practice Profiles are frameworks that define evidenced-based instructional practices that support effective literacy instruction in a way that is teachable, learnable, doable and assessable in practice. These Practice Profiles are research-based and related to Florida's Benchmarks for Excellent Student Thinking (B.E.S.T.) Standards. The Grades PreK-5 and 6-12 Practice Profiles are designed to increase understanding of evidence-based practices in delivering literacy instruction including explicit, systematic, scaffolded and differentiated instruction with corrective feedback.

For more information, contact Melinda Webster, Executive Director of Just Read, Florida!, at Melinda.Webster1@fldoe.org.

New Career Readiness Education Framework and Needs Assessment

The Florida Department of Education, in collaboration with numerous workforce stakeholders, has developed a career readiness education framework and needs assessment. This framework provides secondary educators, including administrators, counselors and teachers with an overview of career readiness and will allow educators to assess the extent to which they are providing their students with the full range of educational experiences that lead toward career readiness. As career readiness is both an educational and economic imperative, secondary educational staff are encouraged to assess their school's or district's career readiness education using the instrument. This needs assessment can be conducted at the classroom level, the school level and the district level. View the document on the Department's updated College and Career Planning site available at <https://www.fldoe.org/academics/college-career-planning/>.

Reach out to Lee Chipps-Walton, Manager of CTE Strategic Initiatives, with questions or feedback at Lee.Chipps-Walton@fldoe.org or 850-245-0911.

New Science and Mathematics Courses in Course Code Directory

Coastal Science I and II Courses

We are pleased to announce that new science courses, Coastal Science I and Coastal Science II, were approved for entry into the 2022-23 Course Code Directory. The interdisciplinary elective courses provide middle school students with scientific principles, concepts and methodologies required to identify, develop and utilize sustainable resource management practices for marine, coastal and wetland environments. Students are introduced to coastal science careers and current scientific research as they develop coastal management and stewardship skills. The course descriptions for both courses are currently available on www.cpalms.org.

Course Number	Course Title	Link to Course Description
2001100	M/J Coastal Science 1	https://www.cpalms.org/PreviewCourse/Preview/22468
2001105	M/J Coastal Science 2	https://www.cpalms.org/PreviewCourse/Preview/22469

AP Precalculus Course

We are pleased to announce that the AP Precalculus course was approved for entry into the 2023-24 Course Code Directory. The Course Code Directory is being updated to reflect this change.

Course Number	Course Title	Link to Course Description on CPALMS
1202305	AP Precalculus	https://www.cpalms.org/PreviewCourse/Preview/22608

Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC)

The purpose of the 21st CCLC program is to provide academic enrichment and a broad array of additional services to students and their families to increase academic achievement and engagement. These programs are competitively awarded to school districts and community-based organizations to serve students in schools in need of improvement primarily during afterschool and summer.

To learn more about the 21st CCLC program and out-of-school time and summer learning, please contact Dr. Contobia Horsey-Adams, Assistant Chief, Bureau of Family and Community Outreach, and 21st Century Community Learning Centers State Director, at Contobia.HorseyAdams@fldoe.org or visit <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/family-community/activities-programs/21st-century-community-learning-center/>.

Paperless Communications

In order to facilitate communications with Florida's education community, the Department of Education developed the Paperless Communications System as a means of notifying interested parties when official correspondence is posted on our website. By signing up for this service, anyone will be able to receive e-mail notices containing links to messages, reports, legislative updates, technical assistance papers and official memoranda issued by the Department. All messages will link to downloadable PDF files. To sign up, go to <https://www.fldoe.org/policy/pubs/paperless-communications.stml>. Users can establish a profile by selecting interest areas, program areas and other details that tailor the content to the user's needs. It is suggested that users select the *K-12 Weekly Memo (Chancellor's Weekly Memo)* to receive a weekly summary of memos of interest to the K-12 community.

Professional Learning Contact Verification

The Bureau of Educator Recruitment, Development and Retention (BERDR) is requesting several specific pieces of information to ensure the department has the most up-to-date professional learning contact information for your district or organization:

- Primary Professional Learning Contact: This is the person within the district or organization whose main job responsibility is the oversight of the professional learning system and catalog and

professional learning opportunities. This person's name will also appear on the department's Professional Learning Contacts webpage.

- Secondary Professional Learning Contact(s): This is the person or people within the district or organization whose job responsibilities include assisting with oversight of the professional learning system and catalog and professional learning opportunities. These are people the primary contact wants to keep in the know regarding department communications.
- Inservice Record Contacts: This is the person within the district or organization whose job responsibilities include tracking of inservice points for educators.
- Professional Education Competence (PEC) Program Contact: This is the person within the district or organization whose job responsibilities include oversight of the PEC program.
- Level II Program Contact: This is the person within the district whose job responsibilities include oversight of the district's Level II principal preparation program.

To make this data collection as easy as possible, BERDR staff have designed a survey that will only take a few minutes to complete. The survey may be accessed at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/23-24PLContacts>.

If you have any questions about the survey, please contact the Educator Retention team at professionalllearning@fldoe.org.

School-Based Behavioral Threat Assessments

[Sections 1001.212](#) and [1006.07, F.S.](#), have been revised and require school districts and charter schools to transition to a new threat management system that will replace the current Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines (CSTAG) model. The Office of Safe Schools (OSS) is required to develop a Florida-specific threat assessment instrument by August 1, 2023, and to develop a statewide behavioral threat management operational process by December 1, 2023. Development of these materials and accompanying administrative rules is ongoing and further information will be provided as it is available. The transition to the new threat management system will include training of district- and school-level threat management team members.

Part of the new threat management process will require all districts to designate a District Threat Management Coordinator (DTMC). Effective May 24, 2023, Emergency Rule [6AER23-02](#) requires each district to report the name and contact information for the DTMC to OSS by July 1, 2023. This is a necessary step in the transition to the new threat management model and will allow OSS to begin to coordinate training activities.

Finally, by August 1, 2025, OSS is required to develop, host, maintain and administer a threat management portal, and provide portal training to all authorized users. Further information will be provided on the portal at a later date.

For additional information, please contact the Office of Safe Schools at FloridaModel@fldoe.org.

School Environmental Safety Incident Reporting (SESIR)

[Section 1006.07\(9\), F.S.](#), requires each district school board to adopt policies to ensure the accurate and timely reporting of incidents related to school safety and discipline. This section also designates the district school superintendent as responsible for school environmental safety incident reporting. State Board of Education [Rule 6A-1.0017, F.A.C.](#), establishes requirements for reporting SESIR incidents to the department and includes incident definitions as well as responsibilities for training and accountability.

Emergency [Rule 6AER23-01](#), effective April 19, 2023, states that all SESIR incidents must be reported to law enforcement except: Bullying, Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Tobacco. Also, any SESIR incidents that are Alcohol-related, Drug-related, Gang-related, Hate crime-related, Hazing-related, Injury-related (more serious) or Weapon-related must be reported to law enforcement. These requirements were approved for inclusion into [Rule 6A-1.0017, F.A.C.](#), by the State Board of Education at their July 2023 meeting.

Online training is available via <https://sesir.org/>. For additional information, please contact the Office of Safe Schools at SafeSchools@fldoe.org.

School Guardians

[Section 1006.12, F.S.](#), requires safe-school officers at each public school, including charter schools. To meet this requirement, each district school board and school district superintendent shall partner with law enforcement agencies or security agencies to establish or assign one or more safe-school officers at each school facility within the district.

Many of Florida's school districts are utilizing the option of training staff to serve as School Guardians through the newly renamed Chris Hixon, Coach Aaron Feis, and Coach Scott Beigel Guardian Program (Guardian Program) to meet the expectation laid out in law. The Guardians are school district or charter school employees or personnel who volunteer to serve in addition to his or her official duties, or an employee of a school district or charter school who is hired for the specific purpose of serving as a Guardian. Additionally, a school district or charter school may contract with a security agency to employ a school security guard. Guardian candidates must demonstrate completion of 144 hours of required training through their local sheriff's office or, through mutual agreement, by another sheriff's office who is implementing the program.

Effective July 1, 2023, sheriffs must assist private schools in exercising their options under the Chris Hixon, Coach Aaron Feis, and Coach Scott Beigel Guardian Program. Private schools can request that their county sheriff establish a Guardian Program, or if the sheriff declines to do so, the private school can contract with a sheriff from another county for training. Private schools must pay for all aspects of guardian training and employment. Additionally, 2023 legislation clarified that the Guardian training program is considered a standardized statewide curriculum. Successful completion of the training should be accepted in any Florida county unless there has been at least a one-year break in Guardian employment.

More information specific to the Guardian Program can be accessed at <http://www.fldoe.org/safe-schools/guardian-program.stml> or by contacting the Office of Safe Schools at SafeSchools@fldoe.org.

School Immunization Requirements

School districts and private schools are required to have a policy for each student to have a Florida Certificate of Immunization on file with the state immunization registry, Florida State Health Online Tracking System (SHOTS). If a parent or guardian chooses to exclude their child from participation in Florida SHOTS, he or she may instead provide a paper copy of their child's certification of immunization to the school prior to admittance or attendance.

Please refer to the 2021 memo at <https://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-9192/dps-2021-80.pdf> for additional guidance, or contact Karla Bass, School Nurse Consultant, at Karla.Bass@fldoe.org

for more information.

School Safety Drills Requirement

[Section 1006.07\(4\), F.S.](#), provides statutory requirements for district school boards with regard to emergency drills and emergency procedures. Amendments to [Rule 6A-1.0018, F.A.C.](#), approved by the State Board of Education in March 2023, incorporate requirements related to emergency drills as required in the 2022 House Bill 1421. Schools should consult and work with their school safety specialist and notify the law enforcement agency that is the first responder to the school to plan and carry out their school safety drills.

For additional information, please contact the Office of Safe Schools at SafeSchools@fldoe.org.

Substance Use and Abuse School Assemblies Toolkit

The Substance Use and Abuse School Assemblies toolkit, a part of the *The Facts. Your Future.* initiative, was assembled by experts throughout the state including health educators, school nurses and school counselors, to assist schools in supporting required instruction on substance use and abuse prevention.

Schools and districts utilizing the resources found in this toolkit will be able to provide appropriate instruction on the Substance Use and Abuse Standards updated and adopted by the State Board of Education in March 2023. *The Facts. Your Future.* School Assemblies Toolkit is available at <https://www.cpalms.org/Homepage/index.aspx>.

Suicide Prevention Certified Schools

On May 13, 2020, the State Board of Education adopted [Rule 6A-4.0010, F.A.C.](#), to establish criteria and procedures for implementation of [s. 1012.583, F.S.](#) This statute requires continuing education and inservice training materials for Youth Suicide Awareness and Prevention for school staff, and criteria for Suicide Prevention Certified Schools. [Rule 6A-4.0010, F.A.C.](#), contains the components of the department-approved youth suicide awareness and prevention training materials, criteria for the provision of approved training and policies and procedures for administering suicide risk assessments.

For more information on the criteria for Suicide Prevention Certified Schools or the list of department-approved suicide risk assessment instruments and youth suicide awareness and prevention training materials, please visit the Student Support Services website at <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/k-12-public-schools/sss/suicide-prevent.stml>.

If you have questions regarding [Rule 6A-4.0010, F.A.C.](#), please contact Andrew Weatherill, Director, Student Support Services, at Andrew.Weatherill@fldoe.org or 850-245-7851.

Sunshine State Scholars 2024

The Florida Department of Education celebrated academic excellence at Florida's 26th annual Sunshine State Scholars conference in Orlando, honoring the state's top performing 11th grade students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). More than 100 student-scholars and their parents attended the prestigious two-day event, which was hosted by the Florida Department of Education and the Florida Education Foundation. Twenty-eight students also received one-year scholarships funded by State Farm and the Florida Prepaid College Foundation. To read more about our 2023 event, please visit

<https://www.fldoe.org/newsroom/latest-news/florida-department-of-education-honors-top-stem-students-at-2023-sunshine-state-scholars-conference.stml>.

More information on the 2023-24 Sunshine State Scholars, including scholar designation deadlines and 2024 event program, will be shared at a later time via the SunshineStateScholars@fldoe.org email account.

U.S. Senate Youth Program (USSYP)

The [United States Senate Youth Program](#) (USSYP) mission is to encourage the best and brightest students in America's high schools to pursue careers in public service. Each year, two outstanding high school student leaders from each state spend a week in Washington, D.C., experiencing their national government in action. In addition, students selected to attend receive a \$10,000 undergraduate college scholarship. Students may qualify to apply through leadership positions they currently hold per the USSYP official criteria.

To view the USSYP official brochure, please visit <http://ussenateyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/USSYP-2024-Official-Brochure.pdf>.

For additional information about the USSYP, visit <https://www.fldoe.org/civilliteracy/ussyp.stml> or contact USSYP@fldoe.org.

Teacher Supports

Literacy Micro-Credentials

In support of Florida's birth through grade 12 educators, the Florida Department of Education is pleased to launch the emergent, elementary and secondary literacy micro-credentials. The literacy micro-credentials are available at no cost through the UF Lastinger Center for Learning and provide instructional personnel with high-quality, evidence-based online courses through which participants build literacy knowledge and skills to effectively support literacy learning for students. School Readiness personnel, child care personnel and prekindergarten instructors who complete the emergent literacy or elementary literacy micro credential are eligible for a \$2,000 completion stipend.

For more information, visit <https://lastinger.center.ufl.edu/work/literacy/flamingo-literacy/literacy-microcredentials/>.

Florida History Day

To encourage high-quality teaching and learning of history and historical thinking skills, the Florida Department of State sponsors the Florida History Day (FHD) competition annually. Participating in FHD-related activities requires analysis and interpretation of sources, synthesis and reporting of information; evaluation of events; and the presentation of research in a variety of formats. To learn more about FHD, view past winners and find contact information, visit <http://www.floridahistoryday.com>.

For more information, contact Barbara Cook (K-8) at Barbara.Cook@fldoe.org or Timothy MacGregor (9-12) at Timothy.MacGregor@fldoe.org.

Just for Teachers Newsletter

The Just for Teachers Newsletter provides educators throughout the state of Florida with updated information and resources. The newsletter is sent periodically throughout the year. If you are not currently registered to receive Just for Teachers emails, please email JustforTeachers@fldoe.org to begin receiving these updates.

For more information about the Just for Teachers newsletter, please email JustforTeachers@fldoe.org.

Office of Professional Practices Services

Each year, the Office of Professional Practices Services (PPS) receives multiple complaints regarding posts made by educators on social media. While educators do have the right to use social media, they are held to a higher standard and their posts are frequently scrutinized and may be reported to both the school district and the PPS.

Each year, investigators from the PPS make hundreds of visits to school sites throughout Florida to interview students and staff members regarding allegations of educator misconduct. While some educators are familiar with the role of the office, we consistently encounter educators who are unaware of the existence of the PPS and may be hesitant to meet with us. Information and resources regarding the role of the PPS and the Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida can be found on the web at <http://www.myfloridateacher.com/>. All educators are encouraged to review them and become familiar with the purpose of PPS. Together we can work toward upholding the integrity of the teaching profession and help ensure a safe environment for our students to learn and you to work.

For more information, contact PPS at 850-245-0438.

Professional Learning and Florida's Birth to Kindergarten Standards

The Florida Department of Education Division of Early Learning, in collaboration with the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF), offers a variety of online and instructor-led training. Training is aligned with Florida's Early Learning and Developmental Standards (FELDS), Birth to Kindergarten, which are benchmarks that reflect the knowledge and skills a child should know and be able to do at the end of an age-related timeframe.

Learn more about FELDS, the Professional Learning Registry, and VPK-specific training on our webpage at [Early Learning](#).

Student and Parent Supports

Child Care Resource and Referral

Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) helps families identify and select quality early learning programs based on their child care needs. CCR&R also provides consumer education on local community resources available to support families and providers.

Contact CCR&R through your local early learning coalition or through the Division of Early Learning's Family Line: 1-866-357-3239 or view our webpage at [Early Learning](#).

Home Education

Home Education is a parent-directed educational option that satisfies the requirement for regular school attendance enshrined in the Florida Statutes since 1985. Parents have the freedom to determine their child's educational path and the plan for reaching their goals. Students have the opportunity to explore and learn at their own pace, in any location or at any time. Home education students are able to enter institutions of higher learning and are eligible to participate in the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program. Home education students have the opportunity to participate in the Family Empowerment Scholarship – Unique Abilities (FES-UA) and the Personalized Education Program (PEP) offered through the scholarship organizations.

Learn more at <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/other-school-choice-options/home-edu/>. Please direct any questions to Sandy Eggers at Sandra.Eggers@fldoe.org.

New Worlds Reading Initiative

Thanks to the support and investment of the Florida Legislature, the New Worlds Reading Initiative (NWRI), a statewide book delivery program, was expanded to include eligible Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) students. Students in VPK through grade 5 who are not yet on grade level are eligible to participate in the NWRI program.

Enrollment flyers are available in English at <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7539/urlt/NWRIFlyer-English.pdf>, Spanish at <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7539/urlt/NWRIFlyer-Spanish.pdf> and Haitian Creole at <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7539/urlt/NWRIFlyer-HC.pdf>.

Pre-Employment Transition Services

A student with a disability as evidenced by a current individual educational plan (IEP) or 504 Plan that is between the ages of 14 and 21 is able to receive Pre-employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to help prepare the student for higher education or work after high school. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) provides students the opportunity to participate in the following services based on individual need: Career Exploration Counseling, Work Readiness Training, Self-Advocacy Training, Postsecondary Educational Counseling and Community-Based Work Experiences. Parents with questions about accessing Pre-ETS for their child, should contact their local VR office.

- VR Office Directory: <https://www.rehabworks.org/index.html>

School Readiness (SR) Program

The School Readiness (SR) program helps children from low-income families get the support they need to be successful in school. The program provides child care so eligible parents can work or attend a training or education program. In 2022-23, 208,174 children were enrolled with 6,888 providers in Florida's SR program.

Apply for services online at <https://familyservices.floridaearlylearning.com/> or contact your local early learning coalition with any questions.

Seal of Biliteracy

The Seal of Biliteracy program was established to provide high school graduates with the recognition that they have achieved biliteracy. Biliteracy is the attainment of a high level of competency in listening, speaking, reading and writing in one or more world languages in addition to English. Qualifying high school graduates will have an insignia on their diploma and a notation on their high school transcript as either a Gold Seal of Biliteracy (highest level of competency) or a Silver Seal of Biliteracy (second-highest level of competency) awarded by the Commissioner of Education in accordance with [Rule 6A-1.09951, F.A.C.](#), Requirements for the Florida Seal of Biliteracy Program.

For more information, contact Dr. Arlene Costello, Chief, Bureau of Student Achievement through Language Acquisition, at Arlene.Costello@fldoe.org.

The Division of Early Learning

As part of the Florida Department of Education, the Division of Early Learning (DEL) dedicates its people, time and energy to ensuring access, affordability and quality of early learning services for the state's children and families. The division partners with 30 early learning coalitions and the Redlands Christian Migrant Association to deliver these services.

To learn more about early learning in Florida and resources to support children's readiness for school, contact your local early learning coalition or visit our webpage at [Early Learning \(fldoe.org\)](#).

Virtual Education Options

Florida is a recognized leader in K-12 virtual education. As the largest state virtual school in the nation, the Florida Virtual School (FLVS) offers full- and part-time options for students. Information can be found at www.flvs.net.

Each school district operates virtual schools, programs and/or courses for students. Florida's virtual schools and programs provide high-quality online instruction and curriculum and are held accountable for student and school performance.

The Florida Online Course Catalog includes information about the available online courses offered by district virtual schools, department approved providers and FLVS. This catalog provides an opportunity for each entity to showcase the online courses they offer. For each course, the catalog provides access to the official course description, a description of unique features of the course, a method for students to provide evaluative feedback and course passage and completion rates. The catalog is an informative tool for parents and students and can be accessed at <http://web06.fldoe.org/CourseCatalog/>.

Learn more at <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/virtual-edu/>.

Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education

The Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program prepares children for success in school and in life. VPK is a free, high-quality education program available to all 4-year-old children residing in the state. Since the program's inception in 2005-2006, over 2.6 million children have benefited from VPK. In 2022-2023, an estimated 156,486 children were enrolled with over 6,100 providers in Florida's VPK program. Data show that children who participate in VPK are more likely to be ready for kindergarten than children who do not participate in VPK.

Parents can select from VPK program options available from private and public providers: School-Year Program – 540 instructional hours; Summer Program – 300 instructional hours; Specialized Instructional Services (SIS) Program – variable hours. VPK-age children with current individualized educational plans (IEP) may be eligible for specialized instructional services.

Contact your local early learning coalition or the Division of Early Learning at 1-866-447-1159 with questions or visit our webpage at [Early Learning](#).

Assessments

ACCESS for ELLs English Language Proficiency Assessment

Florida continues to partner with the WIDA consortium to administer English language proficiency assessments that are aligned to Florida’s English Language Development (ELD) standards. Florida’s English language proficiency assessments, ACCESS for ELLs and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs, will be administered as paper-based tests for the spring 2024 administration. Additional information and resources about the assessments will be provided this fall on department’s [ACCESS for ELLs](#) webpage.

Participation in Florida’s English language proficiency assessment system is required for students in grades K-12 who are actively enrolled in the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program. Since Florida is a WIDA consortium member, Florida districts may continue to use the following WIDA English language proficiency screening tools at no cost for evaluating and making placement decisions for incoming students:

- WIDA Screener Online is a flexible, on-demand assessment for grades 1-12. Information about the WIDA Screener Online is available at <https://wida.wisc.edu/assess/screener/online>.
- WIDA Screener for Kindergarten is a paper-based assessment available for local download via the WIDA Secure Portal. More information about WIDA Screener for Kindergarten is available at <https://wida.wisc.edu/assess/screener/kindergarten>.

In addition, WIDA offers the following English language proficiency screening tools that districts can purchase directly from the WIDA store at the Wisconsin Center for Education Products and Services (WCEPS) at <https://www.wceps.org/store>:

- WIDA Screener Paper is available for students in grades 1-12. Information about WIDA Screener Paper is available at <https://wida.wisc.edu/assess/screener/paper>.
- WIDA Measure of Developing English Language (MODEL) is an adaptive test that can be administered online or in a paper-based format to students in grades K-12. More information about WIDA MODEL is available at <https://wida.wisc.edu/assess/model>.

For more information, contact Sabrina Read, WIDA Florida ACCESS Manager, at Sabrina.Read@fldoe.org.

ACT/SAT/CLT

In accordance with [s. 1008.22\(3\)\(c\), F.S.](#), districts will select either the SAT, ACT or – new for the 2023-24 school year – the Classic Learning Test (CLT) to administer to all public school students in grade 11, including students attending public high schools, alternative schools and Department of Juvenile Justice education programs, during the 2023-24 school year. The Department will be responsible for contracting with College Board, ACT and CLT, and districts will not be required to manage any funding or invoicing for the contracts to be executed under this statutory requirement.

For the CLT only, a charter school or charter school operator may select to administer the CLT to their 11th graders regardless of the district's selected test. More information will be provided this summer when selection forms are distributed to districts.

For more information about the SAT, ACT and CLT please visit the appropriate vendor's website at <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat> (SAT), <https://www.act.org/> (ACT) and <https://www.cltxam.com/> (CLT) or contact Teri Williams, Program Specialist, at Teri.Williams@fldoe.org.

Accommodations of the Statewide Assessment Program Instruments and Procedures for English Language Learners

The State Board of Education approved amendments to [Rule 6A-6.09091, F.A.C.](#), Statewide Assessment Program Instruments and Procedures for English Language Learners. The amendment updates the descriptions of approved dictionaries and glossaries to include print, electronic and digital formats. The rule now allows use of the internet to access word-to-word glossaries and dictionaries and requires districts to establish procedures to ensure ELLs access to only these tools during test administration. Additionally, students in K-2 who are identified as ELLs may now be provided with a picture translation dictionary or glossary that meets the requirements of this rule.

For more information, contact Dr. Arlene Costello, Bureau Chief, Student Achievement through Language Acquisition, at Arlene.Costello@fldoe.org.

Coordinated Screening and Progress Monitoring Program in Voluntary Prekindergarten

All VPK programs are required to implement the Coordinated Screening and Progress Monitoring Program, which is the statewide, standardized program known as the Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) Star Early Literacy. VPK Programs are required to administer FAST Star Early Literacy three times a program year to assess and monitor student achievement on the performance standards in early literacy and mathematics. Early learning coalitions must refer VPK students who demonstrate a substantial deficiency in reading or math to the local school district for a potential opportunity to receive instructional supports prior to kindergarten entry.

For more information on this assessment, including ways to support children's learning, contact your local early learning coalition or the Division of Early Learning's webpage at www.floridaearlylearning.com.

Florida Alternate Assessment

The Florida Alternate Assessment (FAA) program consists of two pathways for assessing students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who require instruction and assessment on Alternate Academic Achievement Standards—Access Points (AAAS—AP):

- FAA—Performance Task, developed for students for whom participation in the general statewide assessment is not appropriate, even with accommodations.
- FAA—Datafolio, developed to support students who do not have an identified formal mode of communication and may be working at pre-academic levels.

Both an individual educational plan (IEP) team recommendation and parent consent are required for participation in the FAA.

For the 2023-24 school year, the FAA program (Performance Task and Datafolio) includes assessments aligned to the following standards:

- Benchmarks for Excellent Student Thinking (B.E.S.T.) Standards Access Points: grades 3–10 ELA, grades 3–8 Mathematics and Algebra 1 and Geometry
- Florida's Access Points for Science: grades 5 and 8 Science and Biology 1
- Florida's Access Points for Social Studies: Civics and U.S. History
- Florida Standards Alternate Assessment Access Points: grade 10 ELA and Algebra 1 (fall 2023 makeup only)

More information is available at the Florida Alternate Assessment webpage on the Department's website, on the FAA Students and Families Portal, or by contacting Angela Nathaniel, FAA Program Specialist, at Angela.Nathaniel@fldoe.org.

Florida Civic Literacy Exam

In accordance with [s. 1003.4282\(3\)\(d\), F.S.](#), students taking a United States Government course are required to take the assessment of civic literacy identified by the State Board of Education. Students earning a passing score on the assessment are exempt from the postsecondary civic literacy assessment required by [s. 1007.25\(5\), F.S.](#) The Florida Civic Literacy Exam (FCLE) will be delivered through Cambium's Test Delivery System and will be offered in late fall, and again in the spring semester.

For more information about the FCLE, please visit the [FCLE](#) page on the Department's website or contact Jenny Black, Director of Test Administration, at Jenny.Black@fldoe.org.

Florida Pre-College Entrance Examinations

The Florida Legislature has again allocated funds to support the administration of the PSAT/NMSQT or PreACT pre-college entrance examinations to grade 10 public school students, including students attending public high schools, alternative schools and Department of Juvenile Justice education programs, in fall 2023.

For more information about these tests, please visit the appropriate vendor's website at [PSAT/NMSQT](#) and [PreACT](#) or contact Teri Williams, Program Specialist, at Teri.Williams@fldoe.org.

General K-12 Assessments

The following statewide assessments will be administered in the 2023-24 school year:

- Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST): VPK–grade 2 Early Literacy, Reading, and Mathematics, grades 3–10 English Language Arts (ELA) and grades 3–8 Mathematics
 - FAST assessments will be administered three times per year; the first testing window (PM1) will occur in the beginning of the school year, the second window (PM2) will occur in the middle of the school year, and the third window (PM3) will occur at the end of the school year.
 - Beginning with the 2023-24 school year, the FAST ELA Reading Retake assessment will be administered four times per year for students who need to meet their Grade 10 ELA assessment graduation requirement.
- Statewide Science Assessment: grades 5 and 8
- B.E.S.T. End-of-Course (EOC) assessments: Algebra 1 and Geometry
- B.E.S.T. Writing: grades 4–10
- Biology 1, Civics and U.S. History EOC assessments
- Florida Standards Assessments (FSA): Grade 10 ELA (Reading and Writing) Retake and Algebra 1 EOC Retake assessments

Note: The last administration of the FSA Grade 10 ELA Retake will be in spring 2024. Students who have not yet met the FSA Grade 10 ELA requirement by that time may participate in the FAST ELA Reading Retake to meet the graduation requirement.

Information about these assessments, including policy, scoring and schedule information, will be provided in the 2023-24 Fact Sheets (available in fall 2023) on the Florida Statewide Assessments Portal at <https://flfast.org/index.html>.

Information regarding assessments required for graduation purposes is provided in the Graduation Requirements for Florida’s Statewide Assessments document on the Graduation Requirements webpage at <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/k-12-public-schools/sss/graduation-requirements/>.

Additional information about the statewide assessment program is provided on the portal at <https://flfast.org/index.html>.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

During the 2023-24 school year, selected schools will administer the grades 4, 8 and 12 Mathematics assessments; the grades 4, 8 and 12 Reading assessments; and the grade 8 Science assessment.

Districts will be notified of selected schools no later than fall 2023. For more information, contact Tamika Brinson, Florida’s NAEP Coordinator, at Tamika.Brinson@fldoe.org.

Postsecondary Education Readiness Test

The Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (PERT) will continue to be available throughout the 2023-24 school year to administer as a college-ready assessment.

- PERT will be available for districts to purchase at their own expense directly from McCann Associates/Vantage Learning.
- Districts will continue to have local flexibility with administering PERT by setting their own

testing dates, retake policies and postsecondary preparatory course placement decisions.

- The five college readiness/success courses linked to college readiness cut scores are a required provision in the Student Progression Plan (see [s. 1008.25\(2\)\(a\), F.S.](#)). The five courses are included in Florida's course code directory and in [CPALMS](#). Districts and schools should make local decisions in the best interest of each student regarding college and career readiness course enrollment and instructional support for success.

For more information, contact Dr. Cassandra Grayson, Program Manager, at Cassandra.Grayson@fldoe.org.

Program Assessment in School Readiness (SR) Program and Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program

SR providers, unless exempt, must annually participate in a program assessment for 50% of SR classrooms at each care level with children ages birth to 5. VPK providers must annually participate in a program assessment for 100% of VPK classrooms. Program assessments measure the effectiveness of teacher-child interactions within the classroom.

For questions about program assessment (CLASS®), contact your local early learning coalition or the Division of Early Learning at QualityPerformance@del.fldoe.org for SR Program Assessment or VPKCLASS@del.fldoe.org for VPK Program Assessment.

Important Dates/Events

2024 Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida!

Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida! is designed to raise awareness about the importance of reading and to inspire Florida's students and families to make reading part of their daily routines. Please mark calendars and start planning for the [2024 Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida!](#), scheduled for January 22-26, 2024.

For more information, contact Melinda Webster, Executive Director of Just Read, Florida! at Melinda.Webster1@fldoe.org.

9/11 Heroes' Day

Section 683.335, F.S., was recently created to establish each September 11 as "9/11 Heroes' Day." This day honors those who died in the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. It coincides with "Patriot Day," which is a national day of remembrance for those fallen. All middle and high school students in Florida public schools must receive 45 minutes of instruction every "9/11 Heroes' Day" on topics including the history and significance of the attacks, remembering the sacrifice of military personnel, government employees, civilians and emergency responders who were killed, wounded or suffered sickness as a result of the attacks.

Administrator, Teacher and Support Personnel Awards

The Department recognizes and honors the contributions of outstanding school administrators, classroom teachers and education support personnel. The Bureau of Educator Recruitment, Development and Retention will release all applications with detailed instructions in the fall. Application due dates will be similar to the previous school year.

The Bureau of Educator Recruitment, Development and Retention coordinates the following recognition programs:

- Principal Achievement Award for Outstanding Leadership. The nomination packet may be obtained at <http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/recognition/principal-achievement-award-for-outsti/>.
- Outstanding Assistant Principal Achievement Award. The nomination packet may be obtained at <http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/recognition/outsting-assistant-principal-achievement/>.
- Florida School-Related Employee of the Year. The Florida School-Related Employee of the Year nomination packet may be obtained at <http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/recognition/fl-school-related-employee-of-the-year/>.
- Florida Teacher of the Year. The Florida Teacher of the Year nomination packet may be obtained at <http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/recognition/>.

For more information, contact Julie Caylor, Recognition Coordinator, at EdRecognition@fldoe.org.

Afterschool Professionals Appreciation Week

Afterschool Professionals Appreciation Week (April 22-24, 2024) is a time to recognize, appreciate and advocate for those who work with young people during out-of-school hours. The week is marked by celebrations and public recognitions encouraging appreciation and support for all the afterschool professionals who make profound difference in the lives of young people.

For more information, please contact Dr. Contobia Horsey-Adams, Assistant Bureau Chief, Bureau of Family and Community Outreach, and 21st Century Community Learning Centers State Director, at Contobia.HorseyAdams@fldoe.org.

Art in the Capitol Competition

The Art in the Capitol Competition, required by [s. 1003.49965, F.S.](#), is a statewide visual arts contest that requires each school district to annually hold an art competition for all students in grades 6-8. The winning selection from each district will be on display at the Capitol during the Florida legislative session.

The timeline for the 2023-24 Art in the Capitol Competition is as follows:

- Fall 2023 – Districts hold annual Art in the Capitol Competition for all students in grades 6-8.
- November 10, 2023 – Each district's winning selection of student artwork is given to the legislator of the legislative district in which the student resides prior to this date. Once this date is determined, it will be shared with district supervisors and posted on the Fine Arts page of the department's website.
- January 9, 2024 – Start of regular legislative session and opening date of exhibit at the Capitol.

- March 8, 2024 – Last day of regular legislative session; legislator will return winning submission to the student after this date.

For more information, contact Amanda El Shemi, Fine Arts Specialist, at Amanda.ElShemi@fldoe.org.

Attendance Awareness Month

September is designated Attendance Awareness Month. To spread awareness and build the future of numerous children, the Attendance Awareness Campaign was first celebrated in September 2013. The goal of the campaign is to reduce chronic absenteeism. Patterns of nonattendance and truancy are identified as early warning signs of academic failure. The continuum of truancy to delinquency typically includes other behaviors that result in suspension, expulsion and drop out. Students with chronic absenteeism are found to have the lowest academic achievement, which puts them at greater risk for dropping out of school.

Attendance Awareness Month brings awareness to the issue and works to improve the attendance of every student, through development of strategies that motivate students to attend school.

For more information, please contact Beverley Wilks, School Social Work Consultant, at Beverley.Wilks@fldoe.org.

Black History Month

Each year the Governor and First Lady invite students in grades K-12 to participate in art and essay contests, and students, parents, teachers and school leaders are encouraged to nominate educators for the Excellence in Education Award in observance of Black History Month in February.

More information will be available at <http://www.floridablackhistory.com/>.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month

February is Career and Technical Education Month, or CTE Month. CTE Month is a public awareness campaign that takes place in the month of February to celebrate and highlight the value of CTE and the achievements and accomplishments of CTE programs across Florida. CTE Month is a great time to focus on partnerships between education and industry through mutually engaging activities. The department provides a toolkit with resources on how to participate in CTE Month and engage with local community and business partners.

For more information or tips on how to promote CTE Month, email Sarah Harmon, Assistant Director of CTE Outreach and Recruitment, at Sarah.Harmon@fldoe.org.

Celebrate Freedom Week

In accordance with [s. 1003.421, F.S.](#), the Department calls on all public schools to recognize Celebrate Freedom Week during “the last full week of classes in September.” During Celebrate Freedom Week, all social studies classes in each school district shall dedicate at least three hours to an in-depth study of the intent, meaning and importance of the Declaration of Independence. Moreover, at the beginning of each school day or in homeroom during Celebrate Freedom Week, public school principals and teachers shall conduct an oral recitation by students of the following words from the Declaration of Independence:

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.”

If you have additional questions, contact Barbara Cook (K-8) at Barbara.Cook@fldoe.org or Timothy MacGregor (9-12) at Timothy.MacGregor@fldoe.org.

Family Engagement in Education Month

Family Engagement in Education Month is recognized annually in November to highlight the importance of schools and families working together to support learning for every student. This awareness not only provides schools and communities the opportunity to show appreciation for families who support student learning at home and school, but also encourages families to become involved and invested in their child’s education.

All K-12 Florida schools are encouraged to foster this important connection throughout the year. Capacity-building for families includes providing information about their child’s learning goals; creating collaborative learning environments; and offering opportunities to obtain new skills and resources to support their child’s learning.

For more information, contact Cindy Huffman, Director, Family & Community Engagement, at Cindy.Huffman2@fldoe.org or visit <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/family-community/activities-programs/parental-involvement/family-engagement.stml>.

Florida School Volunteer Appreciation Month

Florida School Volunteer Appreciation Month is recognized annually in April to highlight the outstanding dedication and commitment to quality education provided by volunteers in support of Florida’s K-12 educators and students. School volunteers are a vital part of building relationships between schools, parents, community members and business partners, while adding value to the educational experience of students. From donating time to assist with classroom and school activities to mentoring students, volunteers play a significant role in our schools. When schools and volunteers work together to support learning everyone benefits.

For more information on school volunteer programs, contact Cindy Huffman, Director, Family & Community Engagement, at Cindy.Huffman2@fldoe.org or visit <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/family-community/activities-programs/volunteer-community-involvement/>.

Hispanic Heritage Month

Each year the Governor and First Lady invite students in grades K-12 to participate in art and essay contests, and students, parents, teachers and school leaders are encouraged to nominate educators for the Excellence in Education Award in observance of Hispanic Heritage Month in September/October.

More information will be available at <https://floridahispanicheritage.com/>.

Holocaust Education Week

In accordance with [s. 1003.42\(2\)\(g\)2., F.S.](#), Holocaust Education Week in Florida is held annually the second week in November which coincides with the anniversary of Kristallnacht (November 9-10, 1938) a major turning point in the persecution of European Jews by the Nazi regime.

Resources for Holocaust Education Week, November 6-10, 2022, are available from the Commissioner's Task Force on Holocaust Education and may be found at: <https://www.fl DOE.org/holocausteducation/holocaust-week.html>.

Lights On Afterschool!

Lights On Afterschool! is a nationwide event that celebrates the importance of afterschool in the lives of children, families and communities. This event, in its 24th year, draws attention to the many ways afterschool programs support students by offering them opportunities to learn new things. Please mark your calendar for October 26, 2023, and plan ways to highlight afterschool in your community.

For more information, please contact Dr. Contobia Horsey-Adams, Assistant Bureau Chief, Bureau of Family and Community Outreach and 21st Century Community Learning Centers State Director, at Contobia.HorseyAdams@fldoe.org.

Manufacturing Day

Manufacturing Day was created by the National Association of Manufacturers and the Manufacturing Institute. The goal is to address misperceptions of the industry by having real manufacturers open their doors to the next generation to show what modern manufacturing really looks like. Manufacturing Day is scheduled to take place across North America on October 7, 2023. Visit <https://creatorswanted.org/register-event/> to register to host or find an event near you, along with toolkits and other resources to have a successful Manufacturing Day.

For more information, contact Robert Blevins, State Supervisor for Manufacturing Education Programs, at Robert.Blevins@fldeo.org.

Native American Heritage Month

In November, the Governor and First Lady invite students in grades K-12 to participate in art and essay contests and students, parents, teachers and school leaders are encouraged to nominate educators for the Excellence in Education Award in observance of Native American Heritage Month.

More information will be available at www.FloridaNativeAmericanHeritage.com.

Victims of Communism Day

November 7th is recognized as "Victims of Communism Day." This date is the anniversary of the start of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia and the formation of the first communist government in the world under Vladimir Lenin; a government which led to decades of death, oppression and violence under communist regimes. "Victims of Communism Day" will be observed in the Florida public schools as a day honoring the 100 million people who have fallen victim to communist regimes across the world. The statute requires high school students enrolled in the U.S. Government course to receive at least 45 minutes

of instruction on topics of communist dictators and how the victims of communism suffered under these regimes.