



K – 20 Competitiveness Subcommittee

Wednesday, January 26, 2011

2:00 PM – 5:00 PM

17 HOB – Morris Hall

Amended Action Packet

**Dean Cannon
Speaker**

**Erik Fresen
Chair**

COMMITTEE MEETING REPORT
K-20 Competitiveness Subcommittee

1/26/2011 2:00:00PM

Location: Morris Hall (17 HOB)

Summary: No Bills Considered

Committee meeting was reported out: Wednesday, January 26, 2011 6:06:15PM

COMMITTEE MEETING REPORT
K-20 Competitiveness Subcommittee

1/26/2011 2:00:00PM

Location: Morris Hall (17 HOB)

Attendance:

	<i>Present</i>	<i>Absent</i>	<i>Excused</i>
Erik Fresen (Chair)	X		
Janet Adkins	X		
Douglas Broxson	X		
Dwight Bullard	X		
Rachel V. Burgin	X		
Charles Chestnut IV	X		
Gwyndolen Clarke-Reed	X		
Marti Coley	X		
Richard Corcoran			X
Daniel Davis	X		
Reggie Fullwood	X		
Jeanette Nuñez	X		
W. Keith Perry	X		
Betty Reed	X		
Carlos Trujillo	X		
Totals:	14	0	1

Committee meeting was reported out: Wednesday, January 26, 2011 6:06:15PM

COMMITTEE MEETING REPORT
K-20 Competitiveness Subcommittee

1/26/2011 2:00:00PM

Location: Morris Hall (17 HOB)

Other Business Appearance:

Teacher Quality

Kayla McGannon (Lobbyist) (At Request Of Chair) - Information Only
Stand for Children Colorado
1201 E. Colfax Ave, # 203
Denver CO 80202
Phone: 303-648-1165

Teacher Quality

Joe Williams, Executive Director (At Request Of Chair) - Information Only
Democrats For Education Reform
433 W. 21st Street, #30
New York NY 10011
Phone: 646-354-9625

Teacher Quality

Terrie Brady (Lobbyist) (At Request Of Chair) - Information Only
Duval Teachers United
1601 Atlantic Blvd.
Jacksonville FL 32207
Phone: 904-396-4063

Teacher Quality

Andy Ford, President (Lobbyist) (At Request Of Chair) - Information Only
FEA
213 S. Adams Street
Tallahassee FL 32301

Teacher Quality

Joy Frank, General Counsel (Lobbyist) (At Request Of Chair) - Information Only
Florida School Superintendents Assoc.
208 S. Monroe Street
Tallahassee FL 32301
Phone: 850-222-2280

Teacher Quality

Commissioner Smith (Lobbyist) (State Employee) (At Request Of Chair) - Information Only
Commissioner of Education
325 W. Gaines Street
Tallahassee FL 32399
Phone: 850-245-9641

Teacher Quality

Levesque , Patricia (Lobbyist) (At Request Of Chair) - Information Only
Foundation for Florida's Future
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Tallahassee FL 32301
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DEMOCRATS *for* EDUCATION REFORM

Reforming Teacher Tenure and Evaluation

January 26, 2011

Good morning. [Committee leadership] and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to speak with you today.

I am Joe Williams, executive director of Democrats for Education Reform, a national education policy advocacy organization. I first became involved with education policy in my years as a reporter with the *New York Daily News* and *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, covering large urban school systems. I became intimately familiar with the heartbreaking failures of the status quo in American public education. In 2005, I wrote a book called *Cheating our Kids: How Politics and Greed Ruin Education*, which documented much of what I observed about the entrenched interests and cynical politics that compromise the quality of our schools and shortchanged generations of children. As a policy advocate and as a parent of two children in public schools, my approach to education policy centers around creating a public education system that ensures every child, in every neighborhood, has access to an excellent education.

I am joined today by my colleague Jocelyn Huber, who began her career in the classroom as a Teach for America corps member. Teaching in a rural public school, she saw firsthand the lifelong challenges facing students who are denied access to an excellent education. Prior to joining us at Democrats for Education Reform, Jocelyn worked as the grants manager for the National Education Association Foundation, where she evaluated proposals for instructional and development projects submitted by public school teachers around the country. We are both honored to appear before the committee today to discuss the urgent need for teacher evaluation and tenure reform in Florida.

I would like to start by commending the leadership and members of this committee for taking on such an important issue. No matter your party affiliation, the first principle of education policy in Florida and in our country should acknowledge that an excellent teacher in the classroom is the most important determinant of a child's educational success.

The only way to close the achievement gap and transform public education in Florida and around the country is by recruiting, developing and retaining great teachers and principals. A Stanford University study found that, regardless of demographics, students with good teachers make an average of a grade and a half worth of gains in an academic year. Students with the least effective teachers progress only one-half a grade, falling a grade behind their peers year

after year. Another study in Dallas found that students starting at similar levels of math performance in the third grade had markedly different outcomes by the end of the fifth grade – this was a function of who taught them. Those taught by three effective teachers in a row moved up from the 56th percentile to the 77th percentile, while those taught by three ineffective teachers dropped down to the 27th percentile. Many children will never recover from such significant impediments to their development.

A top-notch public education system requires a structure for identifying and rewarding greatness in classroom teaching and school leadership. Existing evaluation and tenure systems are not equipped to measure excellence; all too often, these systems accept mediocrity as the fullest extent of a teacher's potential. We owe it to our children to set the bar higher. Currently, in most states, the best we can hope for stops at "satisfactory" teachers and "acceptable" schools.

What is most disappointing about existing tenure and evaluation systems is that in setting the highest standard at "satisfactory," they short-change our best teachers and our most effective school leaders. We know there are incredible teachers in classrooms all across America. But when excellence itself has become irrelevant in public education, as it has through the proliferation of ill-equipped and broken tenure systems, the best teachers and the most promising school leaders go unrecognized. A system designed to protect its worst members will inevitably harm its very best.

The steps the legislature is taking today begin the process of ensuring that excellence becomes cornerstone of Florida's public education system, one that will be a model for the country. A reformed and effective tenure system can elevate our best teachers – real American heroes – while shaping a newly vitalized public education system that overwhelms the challenge before us. That challenge -- providing every student in every community with an excellent education – requires bold action.

The transformative power of an effective tenure system is great: Florida will retain and promote its best teachers, ensure that struggling teachers get the resources they need to improve, and, when necessary, be able to replace ineffective teachers with better ones. However, a structure that yields these results cannot exist without a rigorous teacher evaluation system. I will lay out four principles for such a system:

1. Florida's teacher evaluation system must be based at least 50% on student academic progress, using valid and reliable measures, such as classroom observation developed with on-the-ground teacher input.
2. The evaluation system must also provide teachers with meaningful opportunity to improve by incorporating useful feedback and directing targeted resources to areas in need of development. This feature enables teachers to succeed in their chosen profession, and is a necessary step between measuring performance and replacing ineffective teachers.

3. The system's evaluations must be central to the hiring, promotion and dismissal processes in Florida schools. The current "last in, first out" system forces out excellent young teachers – exactly the kind of people Florida needs to recruit for its schools – and gives blind preference to ineffective teachers solely based on seniority. Experience can make a great teacher better; but experience alone cannot outweigh excellence during job decisions.
4. We need to acknowledge the origin of tenure systems in protecting teachers from abuse and arbitrary dismissal. These were real obstacles to earlier generations of educators, and today's teachers still need and deserve protection against unfair treatment. An effective tenure and evaluation system will be unbiased, fair, transparent and expeditious – and will ensure that teachers are treated like professionals.

An effective evaluation system will enable Florida to put an excellent teacher in every classroom and address inequities in the distribution of great teachers. Across the country, the uneven quality of teaching from district to district, reinforced by the failure to implement rigorous evaluation systems, has a disproportionately negative impact on students in schools with high proportions of poor and minority children. This injustice is on par with, and perhaps even more dire than, dilapidated school facilities, scant textbooks and key resources, and other traditional markers of educational inequity.

The situation is most urgent in math, where the relationship between a teacher's subject matter knowledge and effectiveness is clear, and where the link between a child's success in the classroom and success in the 21st century workforce is the strongest. Studies and empirical data on the inequitable distribution of high-quality teachers is emerging, and patterns are becoming more clear. A recent study in the District of Columbia found, for example, that only 5% of the 636 top-performing teachers work in that city's highest-poverty community. In contrast, 22% of the top-performing teachers are in the city's most affluent district, which has eight fewer schools. These statistics are available only because Washington, DC implemented its IMPACT teacher evaluation system – one of the most advanced and robust in the country. The problem of teacher inequity I have just described is exacerbated by the last in, first out policies protected by existing tenure systems. These policies have a devastating impact on schools with the highest proportion of poor and minority students as those schools tend to have a younger teaching corps.

Florida can lead the country by creating a rigorous teacher evaluation and tenure system. To be certain of that, we need only look at the failing status quo. Teacher evaluations in other states, to the extent that they currently exist, are -- for the most part -- neither rigorous nor fair. Indeed, teachers and principals themselves are some of the strongest critics of existing tenure and evaluation systems. A Gates Foundation and Scholastic survey found that only 32% of teachers view teacher and peer observations as very accurate measures of performance; only 22% see principal observations and reviews as very accurate; and only 10% find teacher tenure to be a very accurate gauge of performance. Teachers have lost faith in the ability of evaluation

systems to gauge performance – and with good reason. Most states and districts use a binary rating system for teachers: satisfactory or unsatisfactory. It is typical for 99% of teachers to be placed in the top category. A system that passes 99% of its subjects simply isn't reviewing very much. A 2007 New Teacher Project study found that 87% of Chicago's city schools – 87% – did not issue even a single "unsatisfactory" rating from 2003 to 2006. During that time, 69 of those schools were declared educationally failing. The system is broken.

As currently constituted, these tenure systems are unable to recognize excellence; poor performance goes entirely unaddressed. Great teachers quickly learn that their exemplary work in an incredibly challenging profession will not be acknowledged, let alone rewarded. And the teachers who do the poorest job of educating students understand that the system takes no notice. Regardless of how many students they let down year after year, they will, in all likelihood, be lumped in with everyone else. Unfortunately, good teachers must work twice as hard to offset the damage done by their less effective peers. Eric Hanushek, an education policy specialist at Stanford University, found that the costs of allowing the most ineffective teachers to remain in the classroom are high. Sadly, damage is done by a relatively small minority of teachers: removing the bottom 6 to 10% of teachers has enormous implications for the system.

Like a "satisfactory" evaluation, tenure – the ultimate reward – is bestowed upon nearly every teacher who can outlast the perfunctory waiting period. In 2008, the National Council on Teacher Quality reported that 41 states received failing grades for tenure policies, with only 2 states requiring evidence of effectiveness for tenure decisions. Just as educators know that evaluation systems are not working, so too do they recognize that existing tenure systems fail their profession. A survey completed in 2009 for The New Teacher Project found that 68% of teachers and 91% of principals "strongly agree" or "agree" that dismissing poorly performing tenured/non-probationary teachers is an important part of maintaining a high-quality teaching staff. An Education Sector survey from the year before found that 46% of teachers said they knew a teacher in their own school who was past the probationary period and was clearly ineffective and should not be in the classroom. This system is failing students, but it is also failing teachers and principals.

How likely are we to ensure that every student has a talented, dedicated and effective teacher with the perverse incentives offered by existing tenure systems? How can the interests of children – who will form our workforce and citizenry -- ever be a first priority with such a broken structure?

I applaud the leadership and members of this committee for taking up this issue today. Florida will do a real service to its children, and can lead the rest of the country forward, by establishing a meaningful tenure system that is based on rigorous, impartial and effective evaluations of its teachers and principals. Thank you again for your time and for allowing us to appear before your committee. I would be happy to answer any questions that the members may have.

DASSC Letter

October 23, 2009

Dear Lieutenant Governor O'Brien and Commissioner Jones,

The Denver Area School Superintendents' Council (DASSC) applauds the efforts in Colorado to develop a proposal for "Race to the Top" funding. We know that many individuals have devoted long hours to determine the most effective strategies for accelerating the achievement of Colorado students. The members of DASSC, the superintendents of the 23 Front Range school districts, are taking this opportunity to clearly state our opinion that the critical element in school reform and in accelerating student achievement is Teacher Effectiveness. This opinion is based on research, literature, and experience. Consequently, we are advocating for the following changes in statute and in practice as part of the application for "Race to the Top" and as part of Colorado's future policy efforts in school reform.

Changes in the Probationary and Continuing Contract Status of Teachers

- Currently Colorado statute requires that teachers are granted continuing contract status on the first day of their fourth year of teaching. Once a teacher has continuing contract status, they are protected by the Teacher Dismissal Act. We would advocate a change in this statute so that teachers are not automatically granted continuing contract status after three years. The superintendents in DASSC have discussed two options for changing the automatic granting of a continuing contract. We would look forward to wider discussion of these options with other superintendents and with policy makers in Colorado.
 - a. The first option is that districts would have discretion to grant continuing status at any time after the end of a teacher's third year and before the end of a teacher's seventh year. We would advocate that the current statutory provision for non-renewal be maintained. That provision provides for the standard that a probationary teacher may be non-renewed for "any reason deemed sufficient by the superintendent."
 - b. The second option is to lengthen the period of time before continuing contracts are granted to five years for all teachers in all school districts. Again, we would advocate that the current statutory provision for non-renewal be maintained. That provision provides for the standard that a probationary teacher may be non-renewed for "any reason deemed sufficient by the superintendent."
- Another provision we would suggest changing is that once teachers have non-probationary status, their status is subject to renewal every five years. That renewal would clearly symbolize the need for continuous learning and continued high quality performance for educators.

Changes in the Teacher Dismissal Act

- All superintendents in DASSC want teachers protected from arbitrary decisions and capricious behavior on the part of any school administrator. However, the Teacher Dismissal Act has created an unworkable, complex, drawn out process for dismissal of any licensed teacher whose performance is not satisfactory. We would advocate that the Teacher Dismissal Act be reviewed and revised so that the following could be accomplished.
 - a. While maintaining protection, the protracted process should be simplified and shortened. Teachers should not have 100 days of pay while the case is moving forward from the grievance process through a hearing in front of an administrative law judge unless the teacher wins the hearing in question and is reinstated. Otherwise, we would advocate that paying teachers ends when the district moves for dismissal.
 - b. Remediation and dismissal statutes should align with districts' teacher evaluation systems. To be successful and drive student achievement, districts must be able to reward talented educators and replace those who are ineffective. With the goal of a fair and efficient dismissal process, the statute should streamline provisions on remediation. Rather than a lengthy remediation process the statute should require that before teachers are recommended for dismissal, they have received a notice of deficiencies and a reasonable time within which to improve to the point of consistent satisfactory performance. The required due process should center on the notification and the fairness of the treatment received prior to dismissal, rather than around the "remediation process" currently required before the recommendation for dismissal. Streamlining the process would eliminate a separate "remediation process" while protecting the rights of teachers to notice of deficiencies and an adequate opportunity to improve. Through notification and focus on improvement, the process can become a more meaningful performance improvement process rather than a procedural step towards dismissal.
 - c. The burden of proof at a contested dismissal hearing for performance based issues should be shifted from the school district to the individual teacher. The teacher should have to prove arbitrary or capricious behavior on behalf of the school district. The use of the arbitrary and capricious standard should recognize that school administrators should have considerable discretion and judgment about whether a teacher is performing his or her job in a satisfactory manner. We also believe that the losing party should pay hearing related expenses.
- Another aspect of the Teacher Dismissal Act that we would advocate be changed is that when teachers lose their position at a particular school, they are not guaranteed another teaching position in the district. Districts should have no obligation to force place those teachers in other schools. Rather, teachers should be given some fair time period, perhaps up to a full year including one full hiring season, to find a position in another school. If that period expires without the teacher finding a job through the voluntary staffing process, the district should have no further obligation to continue

employing that teacher even if the teacher has a continuing contract. The provision for allowing time for a teacher to find another position should not apply when a district is involved in a reduction in force because of declining enrollment or budget reductions.

- If a teacher is not recommended for dismissal following a hearing process and the Board of Education places that teacher on a year of probation, the law should be clarified that the teacher can be non-renewed at the discretion of the superintendent at the end of that year if the teacher does not meet performance standards as defined in the evaluation process.

Implement the Professional Work Year

- Superintendents applaud the success of our teachers over the last five years. Their worlds have changed and the majority of teachers have met the challenges with distinction. However, despite the dramatic changes in the expectations and in the requirements, the time teachers have for teaching and for learning has not expanded significantly over the past 30 years. If we know that the well trained, well paid teacher is the key variable in changing student achievement, then we must find more time for meaningful teacher professional development and more time for intense work with students.
- If we are truly committed to reform in education, the teaching profession must be expanded to a full time profession. We would advocate that by having teachers work a longer year, they would have more time for instructing students and more time for adult learning. The science and art of teaching have changed. The time for developing skills in teaching has not.
- We understand that expanding the teacher work year would require significant new funds. We believe that school districts would willingly pilot the concept if any of the "Race to the Top" funds are dedicated to a professional work year for teachers and principals. We are willing to be held accountable for determining if more time for teachers results in meaningful changes in student learning.

Implement an Effective Evaluation System

- The sciences of assessment and measurement offer an opportunity to revise and, even, revolutionize how we evaluate districts, schools, and individuals. The evaluation processes for all three of those entities must be aligned and must be based on tangible results with students.
- We would advocate that Colorado develop a consistent evaluation system that is results based and fair and that aligns the systems used to evaluate districts, schools, and individuals.

Finally, we would encourage the distribution of Race to the Top funding to all school districts in Colorado. Our state has an opportunity to truly advance student achievement. All students in all districts should have access to the reforms that could be advanced with Race to the Top funds.

The superintendents represented by DASSC understand fully that our suggestions are not going to be welcomed by all stakeholders in public education. However, we believe it is time to professionalize education and take meaningful, bold steps related to Teacher Effectiveness. The vast majority of educators are capable, competent, and highly committed to their students. The steps we suggest above would strengthen an honorable profession.

Members of DASSC are willing to meet with anyone at any time to discuss our recommendations. Thank you for your work for the students of Colorado.

Sincerely,

The Denver Area School Superintendents, Council

cc: Matt Gianneschi

November 11, 2009

TO: Denver Area School Superintendents Council
FROM: Tony Salazar, CEA Executive Director
RE: October 23 DASSC Letter

We were disheartened to read DASSC's letter to Lt. Governor O'Brien and Commissioner Jones. It is unfortunate that DASSC is using the banner of "teacher effectiveness" to advance a political agenda that underscores a decades-old dispute. Your letter is an unnecessary diversion in the Race to the Top process that adds no value to Colorado's application.

CEA members have been involved from the outset of the process as serious participants. As such, we have consistently said that improving "teacher effectiveness" requires a systemic approach that recognizes, supports and measures a teacher's ability and growth along a continuum of preparation, licensure, recruitment, induction and professional development.

DASSC places teacher evaluation at the end of the list of points in the letter. Is this really how superintendents view the importance of an effective teacher evaluation system? We believe teacher evaluation should be a priority, not an afterthought. We should be working together to revamp teacher evaluations so they measure educators' performance and truly serve as the foundation for quality instruction.

Your letter does not mention principals. Teachers must have instructional leaders who know how to recognize effective teaching practice, provide useful feedback and encourage professional growth. Teachers are willing to be held accountable for their classroom practice and performance when evaluations are based on effective teaching methods and not on brief observations that often include no direct feedback to improve instruction.

CEA makes every effort to partner with administrators and school board members, through their professional associations, on issues that impact public education. For example, we are working collaboratively on fiscal/tax reform and the school finance adequacy lawsuit. CEA has committed time and money to this work. Your letter is a passive technique that not only weakens these partnerships, but threatens potential new federal funding for our schools.

CEA views your recommendations as a means of stripping our members of their statutory protections. Teachers are placed in difficult, vulnerable situations every day of their professional lives. Superintendents should be identifying ways to support teachers through better teaching and learning conditions, improved induction programs, meaningful professional development, increased mentoring opportunities, and of course, quality evaluation systems. We view your attempt to scapegoat teachers for public education system failures as irresponsible when so many aspects of supporting healthy instruction can and should be addressed by superintendents.

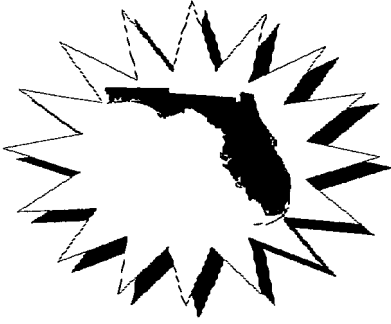
Now is not the time to create divisiveness. Now is the time to develop a shared vision on teacher effectiveness and other critical topics by having an open, honest dialogue with all public education stakeholders.

cc: Lt. Governor Barbara O'Brien
Education Commissioner Dwight Jones
Matt Gianneschi, Governor's Office
John Hefty, CASE

Florida Association of District School Superintendents

*Students
Are
Our
Success*

2011 Legislative Platform
January 26, 2011



Florida Association of District School Superintendents

2011 Legislative Platform

We are pleased to present the 2011 Legislative Platform of the Florida Association of District School Superintendents. School Superintendents are the chief executive officers and education leaders in the 67 school districts of Florida. Currently, of the 67 School Superintendents, 42 are elected and 25 are appointed. Districts range in size from Lafayette County School District with under 1,050 students to Miami Dade County School District with almost 350,000 students.

Florida's students are successful. Student achievement is rising in the public school system. Florida's education system is now ranked 5th in the nation according to Education Week's 2011 Quality Counts Report. The performance of Florida's high schools reached record levels in 2009-10 under a new expanded high school grading system. Nearly three-quarters (71%) of the state's high schools achieved either an "A" or "B" grade during the 2009-10 school year. In 2010, 74% of elementary schools earned an "A" or a "B" school grade. In 2010, 78% of middle schools earned an "A" or a "B" school grade.

Please take a look at the work being accomplished every day in your Florida public schools. We have compiled examples of successful educational programs and strategies that are enabling students to be prepared to meet the challenges of the 21st Century.

As the educational leaders in Florida's school districts, we look forward to working with you to ensure that all Florida's students have a bright and successful future as productive members of our society. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Joy Frank, our legislative liaison, at 850.222.2280.

Florida Association of District School Superintendents

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Florida's Public School System

Students are Our Success

Florida's education system is now ranked 5th in the nation according to Education Week's 2011 Quality Counts Report – up from 31st in 2007.

National Assessments: Florida's students were stellar in their performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress or NAEP. Florida was one of only four states to improve significantly in both 4th and 8th grade reading on NAEP.

Florida's participation on the SAT has reached its highest point yet, with over 100,000 of its 2009 public and nonpublic high school graduates having taken the SAT. Florida's average combined score on the SAT increased for the first time in the last four years. Florida's minority student participation continues to far exceed the nation. The combined score of African-American test takers is 7 points higher than the national average for African-American students. The combined score of Hispanic test takers is 42 points higher than the national average for Hispanic students.

Florida's participation on the ACT has reached its highest point yet, with over 100,000 of its graduating seniors having taken the ACT – a 12% increase compared to 2008.

Florida has the highest percentage of students in the nation who took an Advanced Placement (AP) exam in high school, and is tied for 5th in the percent of those students earning a 3 or higher on an AP exam. Florida had the greatest one-year increase in the percentage of students in the class of 2009 receiving a 3 or higher on an AP exam. Seven Florida public schools were recognized in the AP report as leading the nation in increasing access to AP courses among traditionally underserved students – no other state has as many public schools recognized.

State Assessments: The 2010 FCAT results for grades 4-10 reading, mathematics and science showed increases in the percent of students scoring proficient and above in almost every middle and high school grade level in reading and mathematics. Science achievement also showed positive momentum with gains in all tested grade levels. In Writing, approximately 95% of students in grades 4, 8, and 10 scored at or above 3 on the six-point grading scale.

School Grades: In 2010, 74% of elementary schools earned an "A" or a "B" school grade; an increase from 62% in 2002 but a decrease from the highest percentage of 87% in 2009. Only 5% of elementary schools earned a "D" or an "F" school grade in 2010; a decrease from 10% in 2002. In 2010, 78% of middle schools earned an "A" or a "B" school grade; an increase from 70% since 2002. Only 5% earned a "D" or an "F". **High School Grades:** The performance of Florida's high schools reached record levels in 2009-10 under a new expanded high school grading system. Nearly three-quarters (71%) of the state's high schools achieved either an "A" or "B" grade during the 2009-10 school year.

Florida's high school graduation rate soared to new heights this year, continuing a five-year trend of increases. The state's graduation rate climbed more than two-and-a-half percentage points to 79 percent. Included in this increases was a 3.5 percentage point increase for African-American students, a 3.2 percentage point increase for Hispanic students and a 2.3 percentage point increase for White students. **Florida's dropout rate** declined for a fifth-straight year to a record low of 2 percent.

Florida's Public Schools

Quick Facts

Students

In 2010-11; total PreK through 12th grade student membership is 2,638,795 (3rd Calculation) for Florida's public schools. Miami-Dade County has the largest membership (344,441 students) while Lafayette County has the smallest membership (1,010 students).

During last 30 years, **minority student populations** have grown substantially in Florida's public schools. Beginning in the 2003-04 school year, enrollment for minority students exceeded white student enrollment. From 1979 to 2009, the number of minority students in Florida's public schools grew from 464,206 to 1,467,080, an increase of 216.04 percent. This compares with an increase of 74.90% for the overall student population and a 12.02% increase for the white student population during the same period.

Except for slight decreases in two years, the percentage of **English Language Learners (ELL) students has continued on a gradual, long-term upward trend for the last decade** – a cumulative increase of 21.1% in ten years. In 2009-10, Liberty County had the lowest percentage of ELL students (0.07%) and Osceola County had the highest percentage (18%). Among racial groups in 2009-10, the Hispanic population had the largest percentage of ELL Students (25.0%), followed by the Asian population with 15.2 percent.

The number of Florida public school students served in programs for **exceptional students decreased from 521,257 in fall 2005 to 507,838 in fall 2009; a decrease of 2.57 percent.** For the same period, the total membership of all students decreased 1.27 percent.

Eligibility for free/reduced-price lunch in Florida's schools has continued on a long-term upward trend for several years. The ten-year numerical increase during this period amounts to 339,279 students, a cumulative increase of 31.70 percent. Forty-nine districts reported 50% or more of their enrollment eligible for free/reduced-price lunch in 2009, as compared to only 27 districts ten years prior. In 2009-10, St. Johns County had the lowest percentage of students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch (20.38%), and Franklin County had the highest percentage (100%). In 2009-10, a student from a four-person household in Florida with annual household income less than \$28,665 is eligible for free lunches.

Teachers/Staff/Administration

In the fall of 2009, there were **166,724 teachers in Florida's public schools** – 71,781 elementary teachers, 63,914 secondary teachers, 25,320 exceptional education teachers and 5,709 classified as permanent substitutes or adult education. Instructional staff comprised almost 60% of the labor force in public schools. Almost 27% of the teachers are **minority teachers**. Years of experience is not available for all teachers, but **almost 30,000 had under 3 years of experience**, 57,000 had between 3 to 9 years of experience, almost 42,000 had from 10 to 20 years of experience, and almost 34,000 had over 20 years of experience.

Almost 7% of the teachers left teaching positions in 2008-09 – a slight decrease since 2007-08. In the last nine years, the percentages of teachers who left teaching have fluctuated from 4.9% to 7.0 percent. Of the age groups reported, **the 25-29 age group had the largest number of teachers leaving the profession**; followed by the 60-64 age group. Departing teachers had an average of 10.3 years of teaching experience. **In 2008-09, 64% exited voluntarily, 32% resigned involuntarily, and 5% left for other reasons.** Teachers who left voluntarily listed the following reasons: inadequate salary, lack of

opportunity for advancement, dissatisfaction with supervisor, dislike of or unsuitable for assigned duties, resignation in lieu of termination, family/personal reasons, return for continuing education, relocation, retirement, etc. For 2008-09, most teachers separated from teaching for retirement, relocation, and family/personal reasons.

Salary – The average teacher salary in 2009-10 was \$46,696; a decrease of \$242 or 0.52 percent. The highest percent increase over the previous year occurred in 2006-07 at 6.07 percent.

Experience/Degrees – For all degree levels, Florida teachers currently average 12.37 years of teaching experience. For 2009-10, almost 60% of the teachers held bachelor’s degrees, 37% held master’s degrees, and 3% held a specialist or doctorate degree.

Support Staff – Support staff comprised almost 40% of full-time employees in the fall of 2009. Support staff includes other professional staff (accountants, auditors, research/evaluation/testing and personnel), school-level aides or paraprofessionals, computer programmers, nurses, dietitians, science assistants, engineers, skilled crafts workers, clerical and secretarial staff, service workers including cafeteria/transportation, skilled crafts workers, and unskilled laborers. **Administrative Staff** – Administrative staff made up 3.5% of full-time employees in the fall of 2009. Of these staff, 70% were principals or assistant principals. **The bulk of the reductions in staff over the past year (7%) were taken in administration, excluding school-based administrators.** Other areas of reduction included deans/curriculum coordinators, librarians, guidance, school social workers, aides, and service workers.

Schools

Number of Schools as of 11/03/10

Elementary	1,908
Middle	582
Senior High	562
Combo	293

Florida public elementary schools have the highest average enrollment in the nation. For the 2007-08 school year, Florida averaged 646.3 students per elementary school, slightly higher than the second ranked state, Georgia. Average enrollment for Florida’s **middle schools is also the highest in the nation** at 911.3 student per school followed by Nevada. At 1,716.3 students per school, average enrollment for Florida’s public **high schools was nearly twice the national average**, which was 881.2.

For more information on Florida’s public schools, please see the Department of Education’s website: <http://www.fldoe.org/eias/eiaspubs/default.asp>

Florida's Public Schools

Students Are Our Success

Florida's students are successful. Student achievement is rising in the public school system. Please take a look at the work being accomplished every day our Florida's public schools.

Florida's School Superintendents are the chief executive officers and education leaders in the 67 school districts. Of the 67 School Superintendents, 42 are elected and 25 are appointed. Districts range in size from Lafayette County School District with under 1,050 students to Miami Dade County School District with approximately 350,000 students.

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Alachua County School District
Institute of Biotechnology

Alachua County Public Schools will be expanding a current elective program in biotechnology into a countywide magnet program located at Santa Fe High School in Alachua. The Institute of Biotechnology will provide students with experiences in biotechnology and genetic engineering through the use of hands-on laboratory training, preparing them for lucrative careers as biological scientists.

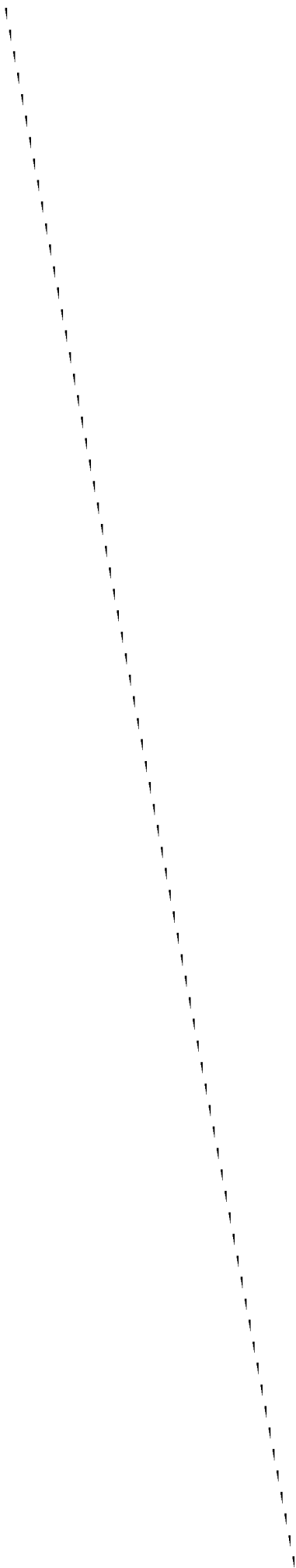
The program is already taking advantage of powerful partnerships with the University of Florida, Santa Fe College, and a number of science and technology firms, many of which are located nearby Alachua Progress Park. It has been visited by educators from throughout the state including officials from the U.S. Department of Education. Santa Fe High has also been recognized as a model school for biotechnology education in the state of Florida.

Biotechnology is now and will continue to be a growing field, with applications in agriculture, pharmacology, bioinformatics, environmental and many other sciences.

Beginning in the 2011-12 school year, students will be able to attend the Institute from anywhere in the district with transportation provided. As a result, the Institute will be able to offer more students the opportunity to prepare for careers, articulation in Santa Fe College or entry into a university.

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Baker County School District
Florida Reading Initiative
Students Using Math and Science

The Florida Reading Initiative has transformed the reading instruction and professional development plans throughout the **Baker County School District**. Our reading instruction and district reading plans and goals are driven by the training and research developed through the Florida Reading Initiative. Our instructional reading coaches utilize the Florida Reading Initiative strategies to develop, lead and evaluate school core content standards/programs and use scientifically based curriculum to drive instruction. This initiative has been instrumental in improving reading instruction and reading performance for our students at all levels.

Students' using Math and Science (SUMS) is another initiative that our district has participated in and has been very successful in our classrooms. Students begin using SUMS in kindergarten and the initiative has now been expanded into our middle school curriculum. SUMS uses hands on instruction and manipulatives to build mathematical concepts from the developmental and concrete levels and moves to more abstract math. This initiative has revolutionized our mathematics instruction in the elementary setting. It encourages multiple ways to solve problems and opportunities for students to share their thinking and problem solving skills.

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Bay County School District ***Career and Technical Education***

In 2009, Superintendent Bill Husfelt and Dr. Kerley, President of Gulf Coast Community College, convened a task force to address career education in the local school district and community college. The Career and Technical Education Task Force conducted research, visited area school and college career education programs, surveyed local business and industry leaders, and traveled to a national model for career and technical education. The survey of local business and industry leaders indicated satisfaction with career and technical education in the community. An extensive study of student enrollment and completion data at the local technical school and community college was reviewed as well as program relevance to industry needs. Based on the data compiled by the task force, Dr. Kerley and Superintendent Husfelt established a Career and Technical Education Council made up of representatives from the chambers of commerce, the Economic Development Alliance, local industries, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board, colleges and **Bay District Schools**. The director's position was jointly funded by Gulf Coast Community College, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board and Bay District Schools and will report directly to the Career and Technical Education Council. The employment of a director to serve the needs of the K-20 system as well as the workforce needs of our community is truly a unique model that is being watched carefully by other districts across the state.

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Bay County School District

Use Data to Improve Instruction

The **Bay County School District** is committed to providing parents with immediate access to student information. This commitment has led to the creation of an online Parent Portal located on the district website that offers parents real time data through a secure window into all relevant student data including FCAT scores, daily attendance/tardies, grades, assignments, graduation status and discipline referrals, etc. Another means of communication is the Immediate Response Information System (IRIS). This system is used to communicate with parents regarding health and safety issues as well as general information.

A primary goal of the district is to improve assessment practices by using academic data-driven research. In 2009-2010, the district established a year-long professional development academy for administrators to review best practices for assessment techniques that inform instruction and improve student performance. As a result, grading practices were revised and implemented in the 2010-2011 school year. The elementary report card was revised to reflect the changes in grading practices. Another policy initiative for the 2010-2011 school year is the mandatory use of a district-developed online grade book aligned to the District's Classroom Assessment Principles that also interfaces with the online Parent Portal.

The district is expanding the capability of its central database student information system. This system is used to support all district, state, and federal reporting requirements. The district is introducing the FOCUS web-based system to provide web delivery of student database content. This system will augment the district's Parent Portal and Gradebook system by providing online reporting components for ad-hoc reporting. The goal is to have data immediately available which is so important in reacting to changes introduced daily due to the high mobility rate in our district. Teachers will not lose valuable instructional time reassessing and gathering data to determine student needs. This will help to ensure timely intervention strategies based on individual learning needs. The FOCUS system will provide a secure online reporting capability to staff for assessments and other data.

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Bay County School District
***Bolster Technology for Improved Instruction
and Assessment***
Improve Access to State Data
Use Data to Improve Instruction

On August 24, 2010, the citizens of **Bay County** voted to support the half-cent sales tax to support the school district in updating facilities and providing equitable technology services to all schools. The half-cent sales tax will generate approximately \$130 million dollars over the next 10 years. The passing of any tax in today's economy is a testament to the respect and trust our community has for our educational leaders. School district leaders went to great lengths to communicate past successes with a prior half-cent sales tax and to articulate a vision for the new tax over the next ten years. In addition to the facilities renovation plan, the revenue generated will be used to introduce a standard level of technology in all schools in order to provide access and equity for all students and teachers. The infusion of this money will allow teachers to more readily deliver instruction in a technology-rich environment as well as ensure a safe and secure classroom environment for our students. To ensure that all stakeholders will have a place at the decision-making table, the district expanded the responsibilities of the Citizen Oversight Committee.

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Bradford County School District
Gaining Proficiency in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM): The Gaining Proficiency in STEM (GPS) Project

Gaining Proficiency in STEM: The GPS Project focuses on instructional reform that empowers teachers to integrate technology into instruction. Through this project teachers are being transformed into supportive instructional facilitators and students into actively engaged learners. The GPS Project is targeting Bradford High School, Bradford Middle School, Southside Elementary, Starke Elementary and Lawtey Community School science and math classrooms with four specific goals that directly align with the Florida Technology Plan priority and purpose of Enhancing Education through Technology. Those goals are listed below.

- ◆ Prepare **Bradford's** district and school leaders to guide reform in mathematics and science instruction that is aligned with the challenging Next Generation Sunshine State Standards.
- ◆ Empower teachers with the skills necessary to integrate technology to improve student engagement and achievement in math and science.
- ◆ Expand access to innovative digital technologies for teachers and students.
- ◆ Design and develop digital-age science and math learning experiences and assessments.

The GPS Project is a reform initiative designed to develop an effective model for enhancing student achievement through the use of technology tools in science and math classrooms. The GPS Project will facilitate systemic change to transform the learning environment and culture of the school so that students will successfully compete in a global, digital economy.

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Brevard County School District
DaVinci Academy of Aerospace Engineering

Attracting students to actively pursue Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) careers is a significant challenge, even in Brevard County, home to the Kennedy Space Center. One way that **Brevard Public Schools** plans to meet that challenge is by establishing the DaVinci Academy of Aerospace Engineering at Merritt Island High School, literally located in the shadows of the Kennedy Space Center. The DaVinci Career Academy is a Project Lead the Way nationally certified program that incorporates an interdisciplinary teacher team, integrated curriculum and state of the art technology, such flight simulators. The design of this career academy allows students to focus on the skills and knowledge necessary for success in STEM-related business and industry.

Critical to the success of this career academy are partnerships with postsecondary institutions, businesses, industry, employers, economic development organizations, and other appropriate partners from the local community, many of whom work directly with the Kennedy Space Center. Assisted by an actively engaged advisory committee, the DaVinci Career Academy has been successful in attracting both male and female students into the STEM career academy. To date females comprise 28% of the DaVinci Career Academy enrollment.

In its second year of operation, the DaVinci Career Academy is the newest of Brevard's three STEM-related career academies. Students in Brevard's career academies have the opportunity to earn nationally recognized industry certifications and benefit from articulation agreements with postsecondary education institutions located across the country. Brevard Public Schools' career academies are open to students of all abilities and achievement levels.

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Broward County School District ***Enterprise Education Portal***

The **Broward** Enterprise Education Portal provides a single sign on system to instructional and curriculum content for teachers, students and administrators. It includes lesson plans aligned to state standards, instructional applications and research databases for teaching and learning. The goal is to provide a single entry point via a web-based portal to the instructional materials and resources needed by students, teachers and administrators as part of the learning process.

The following instructional resources are available in the portal:

- ◆ For teachers
 - 10,900 lesson plans aligned to standards
 - 10 instructional applications (such as Atomic Learning, Discovery Learning, Virtual Counselor of Student Achievement Data)
 - 58 elementary and secondary eTextbooks with teacher editions
- ◆ For students
 - 5 instructional applications
 - 58 eTextbooks
 - 12 research databases and instructional resources

Summary Data:

- ◆ The Broward Enterprise Education Portal continues to show high usage among teachers and students.
- ◆ The student portal usage statistics for October 1, 2010 showed a 37% increase in use among students from October 2009.
- ◆ Access to eTextbooks increased by over 50%.

Other important data points:

- ◆ The Teacher Portal was accessed 1,700 times more in September 2010 than it was for all of 2006-07 (first full year of implementation).
- ◆ For period of September 1, 2009 through August 31, 2010, the student portal main page had more than one million visitors (1,010,438).
- ◆ Since the district started tracking usage of the student portal page on September 08, 2008, it has had more than two million visitors (2,048,739).
- ◆ eTextbook access in September 2010 totals is 60% higher than all of 2008.

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Broward County School District ***Graduation Rate Task Force***

The **Broward County School District** established a Graduation Rate Task Force, which has been meeting and focusing on improving academic achievement, as measured by the graduation rate, in consistently low-performing schools. Emphasis has been placed on the academic achievement of African American males. The goal of the task force is to both decrease the drop out rate and increase the graduation rate in identified low achieving schools.

The district has implemented “Mentoring Tomorrow’s Leaders,” a practice model, that includes five key pillars of support:

- ◆ Academic Emphasis – academic enrichment and individual coaching.
- ◆ Mentoring – peer and adult mentoring.
- ◆ Family Involvement – active involvement of parents in students’ education.
- ◆ Community Support – building home, school, community collaboration to promote academic success.
- ◆ Incentives – the judicious use of incentives to entice and encourage academic achievement.

The program, operational in one high school in 2009-2010, showed improved attendance rates, decreased suspension rate and a marked increase in semester grade point averages.

The task force is recommending that the program to be utilized in high schools with consistently low graduation rates.

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Broward County School District
Project Bridge Safe Schools/Healthy Students

The Safe Schools/Healthy Students Program currently being implemented in the **Broward County School District** is dedicated to implementing through Project Bridge a comprehensive, integrated, community-wide substance abuse and violence prevention program for students, parents, and educators aimed at promoting school safety and healthy youth development.

The Project Bridge Safe Schools/Healthy Students Program utilizes proven research-based strategies that establish safe school environments (Get Real About Violence curriculum), drug-free environments (Too Good for Drugs), and supports students emotionally, behaviorally and socially (CHAMPs classroom management and Behavioral and Academic Support Information System).

The following data highlights the success of this program:

- ◆ For Year Two, 461 out of 4,250 students (10.8%) reported missing one or more days of school exceeding the target of 14.8% by 4.0%.
- ◆ For Year Two, 448 out of 4250 students (10.5%) reported being involved in a fight on school property exceeding the target of 24.0% by 13.5%.
- ◆ For Year Two, 438 out of 4,250 students (10.3%) reported marijuana use. The target (9.8%) was not met by a measure of 0.5%. However, it should be noted that this represents a significant decrease from baseline and year one data.
- ◆ For Year Two, 2, 866 out of 4,250 students (20.4%) reported alcohol use. The target (17.4%) was not met by a measure of 3.0%. Again, this represents a significant decrease from baseline to year one data.

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Broward County School District
Title I – Arts in Education

A special component of Student Enrichment in the Arts (SEAS) is the Reading Residency Program. This program is designed to improve reading and verbal understanding for economically disadvantaged students. All Title I second and fourth grade students read either Stone Soup (grade 2) or Charlotte’s Web (grade 4) and attend a performance of the same titled book. Reading Residency Program focuses on story sequencing, plot development, and inferences. Study guides aligned with these three areas are designed to make connections for students between the performance and the book. Approximately 20,000 Title I students participate in the Reading Residency program.

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Calhoun County School District
Family Reading Nights

Blountstown Elementary School, the **Calhoun County School District's** only Title I elementary school, believes parent involvement is essential to student achievement. Blountstown Elementary faculty and staff encourage parental involvement with the goal of a strong partnership with families. They believe involving parents in school activities by educating them and giving them tools and strategies to work with their children, are essential to strong parental involvement and academic success. One of the strategies used to build parental involvement is their Family Reading Night program.

Blountstown Elementary School has four Family Reading Nights a year. On Family Reading & Science Night, stations are set up where parents rotate with their children and do science experiments and activities. Math centers are conducted using hands-on activities which allow parents to see how everyday activities can be used as excellent learning tools at Family Reading & Math Night. On Family Reading & Writing Night, an author speaks to parents on the importance of writing skills and how to work with their children on the various skills. Breakout sessions allow parents and students to do writing activities together. In the spring of the year, the final Family Reading Night is done in conjunction with the Scholastic Book Fair. Families browse the book fair together and then "build a book" together creating their own special family book. Not only does this provide time for parent involvement, it also nurtures creativity and a love for books and reading, which is the school's main goal. On each Family Reading Night, parents and students have the opportunity to visit the media center, check out books, and read them together. All of these nights have been very successful at Blountstown Elementary School as they strive for excellence.

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Charlotte County School District
***Evaluation of Teachers and School-based Administrators Based
on Student Performance***

The **Charlotte County School District** completed the design of a new teacher performance appraisal system which includes a portion that addresses student achievement. It also includes a self-reflection component for each teacher which we believe will be very powerful.

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Charlotte County School District
Differentiated Pay

The **Charlotte Count School District** added an innovative program of professional development that is a tuition-based approach with the accumulation of credit. After the accumulation of 15 credit units (equivalent to 300 hours of professional development), the teacher earns an annual \$1,000 bonus for as long as he/she works in the district. A teacher can earn up to four tiers of 15 credit units over the length of his/her career. Contact Mr. Chuck Bradley, Executive Director of Learning for more information: chuck_bradley@ccps.k12.fl.us

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Citrus County School District
Academy of Environment Science

The **Citrus County School District** has one charter school, the Academy of Environmental Science (AES). This is a public charter school that was initiated by the district. This charter school has expressed interest in being integrated into the Final Scope of Work for the district's Race to the Top application, including the budget and sustainability plan.

The charter school is currently aligned and included in district staff development, curriculum, teacher evaluations, teacher salary scale, data systems, teacher preparation programs and other areas. The district's goal for the charter school as it pertains to Race to the Top is to include the school in all of the activities, strategies and goals that is part of the districts Final Scope of Work.

Summary Data Indicating Success

The Academy of Environmental Science:

- ◆ Is ranked one of the best high schools in the country for its size by USA Today (Bronze Medal).
- ◆ Has made 100% AYP the last 2 years.
- ◆ 9th graders scored above average on standardized tests for the 2009-10 school years. Students scoring a level 3 or above: Reading (84%), Math (95%), and Writing (100%).
- ◆ Focuses on hands on and real life learning experiences by partnering with community agencies for student internships and curriculum such as: Florida Department of Environmental Protections, Homosassa Wildlife Park, Southwest Florida Water Management District , St. Martins and Chassahowitzka Wildlife Refuges.

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Citrus County School District
Achievement Via Individual Determination
AVID Program

The **Citrus County School District** has initiated planning for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)-related career and technical programs by working with community members to analyze employer needs. The district will identify at least one additional career and technical program for STEM occupations and will implement that program. The district offers and enrolls student in career and technical program for STEM occupations

Summary Data Indicating Success

The three high schools in Citrus County have worked very hard to add additional STEM programs, including having one high school become an authorized International Baccalaureate Program World School. In addition, all of the high schools have added Advance Placement courses in all core course areas in the last 3 to 5 years and will exceed the requirements of Senate Bill 4. In order to add any additional courses, the schools are working to move the “middle of the road” student into more rigorous coursework. One of the high schools began using the AVID program with these students three years ago. Currently, those students, with the AVID support system and tutors, have been able to take and pass more rigorous coursework. Last year, the AVID program expanded to an additional high school. Through this initiative, AVID could be expanded into the other middle and high schools. This would build rigor in the students’ schedule while having the needed support system for success.

Data to Reflect Success

A review of district data indicated success. In 2007 the district administered 667 Advanced Placement tests. In 2010 the district administered 1,656 Advanced Placement tests. That is an increase of 148%. Also the high school graduation rate for Citrus County is 92%.

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Citrus County School District
***Career Academies, Horizon Center: Alternative School, Citrus
Virtual School***

It is a goal of the **Citrus County School District** to provide alternative high school environments, schedules and strategies to assist at-risk and potential drop-out students

Below are some successful alternative programs the district is implementing:

- ◆ Horizon Center Recently the Horizon Center was restructured to better meet student needs. This option is for high school students who have already or plan to drop-out, are not successful in the traditional high school, or have employment/family obligations and cannot commit to the traditional school day hours.
- ◆ Supportive Instructional Programs
 - PLATO: Individualized, web-accessed learning for credit recovery or at-risk students.
 - Penn Foster: Long distance/virtual learning for students who have not passed FCAT.
- ◆ Career Academies The district has 12 career academies. For some students, career academies can be an alternative which will motivate them to stay in school. These academies can help to reduce dropout rates, increase student performance, and students gain skills for college and careers.
- ◆ Citrus Virtual School Students are enrolled full time in classes for a more flexible learning schedule.

Summary Data Indicating Success

The district's graduation rate has improved significantly from 77% in 2006 to 92% in 2010. Also, the drop-out rate went from 4.7% in 2006 to .9% in 2010.

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Citrus County School District
Performance Matters: Electronic Data Management
Web Tool
Electronic Student Response System

The **Citrus County School District** has implemented a tool/resource to access data that is easy for students, teachers, parents, and principals to use and that shows growth of students, teachers, schools, and districts disaggregated by subject and demographics. The data warehouse district web tool and progress monitoring process has been in place for five years. Performance Matters is Citrus County's student achievement data warehouse system.

Individual training and refresher courses are provided to all instructional and administrative personal each year. District benchmark assessment tests are administered throughout the school year based on instructional timeline/pacing charts for math, reading and science. Once the tests are returned to the district office they are scored and processed so that there is a 24-hour turnaround. The student data can be viewed through a number of reports in Performance Matters that provide student results down to the benchmark level as well as an overall category report in math, reading or science. No matter what subject a teacher may teach, if they have a student in their classroom they have access to the data.

The district has also implemented a paperless student response system to monitor academic progress. Pilot programs at some schools using Electronic Response Systems have enabled a paperless assessment tool with frequent, immediate feedback.

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Clay County School District
Academy of Aerospace Technology

The **Clay County School District** will implement the Academy of Aerospace Technology which will provide training for occupations requiring science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). The academy will provide students with a foundation of knowledge and technically oriented experiences in the study of aerospace technology, its effects upon our lives and the choosing of an occupation. The program focuses on transferable skills and stresses understanding and demonstration of the technological tools, machines, instruments, materials, processes and systems in business and industry. The curriculum will ensure that course work will include significant integration of math and/or science that will satisfy core credit requirements with the passing of the course and end of course exams. Appropriate industry certification exams will be made available to students participating in the academy and utilized as a measure of career readiness.

The program will be developed in conjunction with the regional Workforce Board and an Advisory Committee including regional industry representatives, business partners, and mentors. The business community will provide opportunities for career shadowing and internships. The Advisory Committee will assist in monitoring and providing ongoing review of STEM program activities, end of course success, and industry certification. The program will be sustained through Perkins funds, district funds, and Industry Certification funds. The program will leverage funds through the Employ Florida Banner Center for Aviation and Aerospace and grant opportunities.

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Collier County School District
iPods Used to Increase Rigor

While iPods may be most well known as a popular multimedia device, **Collier County School District** has been using them to increase rigor in our instruction. All administrators in our district have been issued iPod touch mobile devices in order to perform classroom observations and gather data on instructional practices. The district has deployed over 150 devices to date and the data we are collecting has been an invaluable tool for providing authentic feedback to teachers and district staff members. The iPod device has proven to be incredibly reliable and downtime is very rarely a concern. Collier County is the only district in the State of Florida that is modifying classroom templates to meet the specific and individual needs of our administrators. A required item on our templates requires administrators to assess the level of Bloom's taxonomy when performing a classroom observation. We feel this data is essential in continuing professional development and guiding staff toward more rigorous instructional methods. Our administrators have entered over 4,050 surveys to date, with more being added daily. All of the data is collected in a central database for collaboration amongst district staff. In addition to classroom observations, the iPod device has empowered our administrators as a mobile communication platform. As we have integrated email and calendars, administrators are free to complete these tasks away from their desks. Administrators also have access to an entire professional library, literally at their fingertips. The raw data indicates an increased visibility inside classrooms but, also a true collaboration among all levels of staff to deliver more meaningful content to students.

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Columbia County School District ***Global Logistics***

The **Columbia County School District** is implementing Global Logistics which is a four-year program designed to prepare students for entry-level employment in the fields of global logistics, materials handling and distribution. Businesses engaged in manufacturing, transportation, wholesaling, and retailing goods are searching for good, entry-level employees from this area.

Students who enjoy a fast-paced, hands-on, physical workplace would be successful here. This course provides instruction in purchasing procedures, stock-control systems, storage methods, use of material handling equipment, inventory control, receiving and stock handling, stock-keeping, shipping, human relations, job interview skills, merchandising math, entrepreneurship, computerized inventory systems and computer-assisted instruction.

Our projects for the 2010-2011 school year are as follows: We are working with the North East Florida Educational Consortium (NEFEC) in refurbishing the districts SUMS (Students Using Math & Science) kits. The students will pick-up, order, refurbish, purchase, and deliver the SUMS kits to every elementary school (k-5 teachers) in our district. Our second project is working with First Book, a non-profit organization, we house and distribute children's books to Title I schools. First Book provides new books to children in need, addressing one of the most important factors affecting literacy – access to books. An innovative leader in social enterprise, First Book has distributed more than 70 million free and low cost books in thousands of communities. In addition we are also working with our local Rotary Club to distribute dictionaries to every 3rd grader in our county and the Daughters of the American Revolutionary War (DAR) to distribute the constitution to every 8th grader in our county (Columbia) and Suwannee County.

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DeSoto County School District
Increase Advanced STEM Coursework

The **DeSoto County School District** is working with the College Board, Florida Partnership to develop Advanced Placement courses that will include science, engineering and math courses. The district currently has a strong agreement with South Florida Community College and a growing partnership with Edison Community College to provide students with dual enrollment options. Advanced Placement courses will provide students with an additional option for Advanced Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Coursework.

For the 2010-2011 school year, DeSoto County High School has 775 students enrolled in the academic and vocational dual enrollment programs.

DeSoto County School District
Increase Student Achievement through Use of Assessments

The **DeSoto County School District** implemented Compass Learning in the 2010-2011 school year. This system provides access to student performance data, prescribes appropriate curriculum activities and reports the progress of students individually or in groups to the teacher, school-level administrators, district-level administrators and parents. Compass Learning aligns the instruction with standards and expectations. It also assists the teacher with prescribed differentiated instruction.

Funding for Compass Learning came from local district sources.

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DeSoto County School District
Use Data to Improve Instruction

Performance Matters is the **DeSoto County School District's** newly adopted platform for assessment and data management services. This platform is a foundational component for all four areas of Race to the Top reform:

- ◆ Standards and Assessment
- ◆ Data Systems to Support Instruction
- ◆ Great Teachers and Leaders
- ◆ Turning Around Lowest Achieving Schools

The DeSoto County School District adopted this platform through the use of local funds. The district incorporated *Performance Matters* in the final scope of work for Race to the Top. The system will allow all stakeholders to use local, state and trend data to make decisions regarding the academic needs of each student.

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Dixie County School District
Industry Certification Courses

Dixie County High School - Technology Education Program

- ◆ The 2009-2010 school year brought industry certification opportunities for students in the Dixie County High School Business Technology Education Program with unqualified success.
- ◆ 100% of the 30 students enrolled in Digital Design 1 obtained the Adobe Certified Associate, Photoshop CS4 industry certification. Also, 23 of the 33 students, or 70% enrolled in Computing for Colleges and Careers, successfully completed the Microsoft Office 2007 certification exams for Word, Excel and PowerPoint, awarding the Microsoft Office 2007 Master industry certification. The 10 students who did not obtain this certification either joined the program after the Word test was given or left prior to the PowerPoint test due to graduation from high school.
- ◆ Dixie County High School is excited to expand the industry certification offering this year to include the Adobe Certified Associate Flash CS4 and Adobe Certified Associate Dreamweaver CS4 industry certifications.

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Dixie County School District ***Industry Certification Courses***

The **Dixie County** High School Health Science Program has been serving the students of Dixie County since 1994.

The following data highlights the success of the Health Science Program:
Number of Students in the Program – 265

- ◆ 2010-2011 Senior class has 14 students.
- ◆ 8 students will take state Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) exam in December 2010.
- ◆ 6 students will take state Certified Nursing Assistant exam in May 2011.
- ◆ 223 students have passed the Certified Nursing Assistant exam.
- ◆ **The program has a passing rate of 84%.**

Graduates of the Health Science Program include the following:

- ◆ Nurse Practitioner - 1
- ◆ Physical Therapist – 1
- ◆ Physical Therapist Assistant 4
- ◆ Registered Nurse – 20
- ◆ Licensed Practical Nurses – 9
- ◆ Radiology Technician – 5
- ◆ Respiratory Therapist - 1
- ◆ Paramedic – 4
- ◆ Surgical Technologist – 2
- ◆ Teachers – 11 (3 Teach for Dixie Schools)
- ◆ Completing Bachelor Programs – 5
- ◆ Military – 4

Additional program results:

- ◆ Number of Students still in College – 30
- ◆ Registered Nurses Graduating in 2011 - 6
- ◆ 62 of the 265 students completing college – 23%

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Duval County School District ***Building Civic Capacity***

The **Duval County School Board** has consistently strived to communicate effectively with the community, including seizing opportunities for feedback through a variety of community meetings. The Strategic Plan process has kept the district aligned with our core mission and focus even through a time where we are struggling with inadequate funding for education. Over the past several years, major efforts including community meetings for budget, high school acceleration programs, high school scheduling, magnet programs, and boundary changes were initiated to engage with students, parents, employees and the public to craft plans and ideas that meet the needs and expectations of the community.

Duval County Public Schools has worked to create new partnerships with local non-profit organizations to improve student engagement and performance. Achievers for Life is a community initiative focused on dropout prevention, which targets sixth and ninth grade students who are at risk for academic failure. The Achievers for Life strategy addresses all five dropout predictors through family advocates, mentors and parent engagement activities. Another collaboration with the City, The Jacksonville Journey, has focused on reducing crime by providing after school programs and out-of-school suspension centers resulting in a 49% reduction in suspensions this past year.

In October 2008, Duval County Public Schools received district accreditation, “without reservation,” by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI). The Review Team’s report commended the district for its establishment and articulation of the vision, mission, goals and strategic plan that laid the foundation for the district’s continuous improvement efforts. The report highlighted several major strengths, foremost of which were our efforts to reach out to the community.

Demonstrated Success of Academic Excellence

Four years ago the School Board adopted the National ACHIEVE Standards, which are well beyond the minimum requirements set by the State of Florida. The Board has shown strong support for students to be post-secondary ready when they graduate from high school by requiring this higher level of achievement of all students. In addition, the School Board added a requirement of two-years of World Language in order to meet all college entrance requirements.

The district was given a grade of “B” by the state of Florida four out of the last five years, and our graduation rate has risen to 64.5% (NGA rate), more than three percentage points over last year, and up 7.1 percentage points since 2005-06. In fact, the graduation rate for every NCLB ethnicity has risen from 2007 to 2009 and the drop-out rate declined from 2005 to 2009 for Black, White, Hispanic, Asian and multi-racial students.

Graduation Criteria

The percentage of students in Duval completing a post-secondary ready curriculum was 4th in the state - 66.2% of DCPS 2008 graduates completed a college prep curriculum. This percent will increase to nearly 100% when 2010 data is available.

- 1st in the state in graduates completing Chemistry I or Physics I – 97% in Duval.
- 61% of 12th graders took the SAT in 2010, only four other counties in Florida had a higher percentage of SAT test takers.
- From 2006 to 2010 - AP Exam-takers increased 213%.
- African American Exam-takers has increased 429% since 2006.
- The number of AP Grades 3-5 received by public school students in Duval increased 38.2% since 2006.

Acceleration Programs

The vision of Duval County Public Schools is for every student to graduate with the knowledge and skills to be successful in postsecondary education and or the workforce. This includes developing a district-wide system that enables all students' access to advanced coursework and career related experience while in high school. All high schools offer a wide selection of Advanced Placement (AP) courses with an "open-door" policy for taking the course.

Beginning with the 2009-2010 school year, the district implemented a process that will ensure accessibility to acceleration programs in all high schools throughout the district. Student accessibility is defined as having access to at least one of four acceleration programs including Cambridge Advanced International Certificate Education (AICE), International Baccalaureate (IB), Early College or Advanced Placement (AP) Honors Program. All high schools offer one of the above mentioned acceleration programs. Students who successfully complete required courses earn college credit while still in high school and receive advanced standing in the college admissions process. Program implementation includes a student progress review every nine weeks. A conference with the student and parent with recommendations for intervention strategies is required for students at risk of failure. Additionally, district-wide AP Prep sessions are offered to all AP students and teachers and all acceleration programs described offer school and district support to students taking the rigorous courses.

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Duval County School District ***Performance-Based Compensation***

Since 2003, **Duval County Public Schools (DCPS)** has been a state leader in implementing a performance-based compensation system that rewards educators for improved student achievement. By rewarding teachers and school-based administrators for student performances, DCPS recognizes the impact of recruitment, development and retention of highly-effective and qualified educators on student achievement. Following are examples of Duval County's current performance based compensation offerings:

- **Merit Award Program (MAP)** – Duval County is one of a few districts in Florida that participates in the state program, pursuant to Florida Statute 1012.225. This is the third year that MAP bonuses have been provided to Duval County teachers and school based administrators. The district awards a performance bonus equal to 5 percent of the average teacher salary (\$46,607) to the top 25 percent of teachers and school-based administrators, regardless of years of experience, according to the terms of the program (The state's average teacher salary is \$46,267). Identification of the top 25 percent of educators is determined from improved student performance ratings provided by the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT), district data (60 percent), and from their performance ratings on the teacher and administrator assessment systems (40 percent). Just over 2,000 educators received MAP bonuses during 2008-2009.

- **Turnaround/Differentiated Accountability Bonuses** – Duval County currently implements a Turnaround/Differentiated Accountability Incentive Program which began with the 2009-2010 school year. Incentive bonuses and performance pay bonuses are currently paid to teachers and school-based administrators in 34 Turnaround and Differentiated Accountability schools. Turnaround schools are defined as those with the most critical academic needs as determined by state assessment results, those who have failed to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), those in a Restructuring Plan, or deemed critical by the superintendent (feeder patterns, other conditions, etc.). Incentive bonuses are paid to teachers and school-based administrators in Turnaround schools who commit to three years of efforts to improve student achievement. These commitment incentives can range from \$1,000-\$3,000 per year, as determined by the school's grade, restructuring status or needs. The performance bonuses for student achievement, ranging from \$1,000-\$5,000 a year, are paid to teachers and school-based administrators whose school accountability grade improves to a higher letter grade.

- **Principals and Assistant Principals (AP)** in Duval County are currently paid from a differentiated compensation plan. Each principal and assistant principal is assessed annually using the Duval County school-based administrators' performance assessment system. This assessment includes four target areas in which principals and assistant principals are measured. The administrators are expected to write strategies and actions to meet specified targets that correlate with the Strategic Plan and are assessed on written plans. The target areas include Improved Student Academic Performance, Increased Promotion Rate, Decreased Code of Conduct Violations, and Personal Professional

Development Plans. The assessment system has four ratings in which school based administrators are rated- Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, and Distinguished. Their overall final rating is determined by the extent to which administrators have met specified targets. The final rating, along with student achievement data, determines if the administrator receives performance pay. Principals and APs are paid a base pay with add-ons for school type, population, experience (capped at \$12,000) and percentage of free/reduced lunch students.

Teacher Incentive Fund Grant

Duval County Public Schools was recently awarded a \$9,598,092 Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant. The district plans to utilize the funds through a program called G.R.E.A.T (Gaining Rewards with Effective & Accountable Teachers) Expectations. The program includes the development and implementation of an integrated compensation system, a comprehensive professional development plan to increase student achievement based on the recruitment, development and retention of high-quality teachers, and an integrated data management system that links student achievement data with human resource systems. By the end of the five-year program, G.R.E.A.T Expectations will include more than 2,600 teachers and principals in 36 of the district's highest-need schools, affecting nearly 30,000 students.

G.R.E.A.T. Expectations builds on the district's existing Merit Award Program (MAP) plan and includes additional bonuses to be awarded to G.R.E.A.T. school teachers who are also eligible under new TIF performance bonus criteria that will be finalized during the planning year.

School Improvement Grant

DCPS has eleven schools that have been identified as Tier I schools according to the designated requirements of the grant. Six schools are implementing the Turnaround Intervention Model and five schools are implementing the Transformation Model. The non-negotiable components within the DCPS proposal include:

1. Identification of highly qualified effective reading and mathematics teachers for schools by using both State and district data to determine if they demonstrate an average learning gain of 65% over the past three years.
2. Extending the time on task by increasing the elementary daily schedule by 60 minutes per day and secondary schedule by 45 minutes per day.
3. Extensive Professional Development (PD) through common planning for one hour per week to accommodate lesson study and face-to-face PD for up to 90 hours for teachers.
4. Implementation of the Florida Continuous Improvement Model (FCIM) and Response to Intervention (RtI) through continuous access to student data to assist schools in instructional planning and decisions to meet the academic needs of individual students.
5. Assigning site-based coaches in Reading, Mathematics, and Science to provide support of rigorous content focusing on the State standards; data analysis training to enable effective instruction and intervention; and facilitate the lesson study process.
6. Use of research-based instructional programs that support the District's aligned instructional system by providing alignment to the standards and rigorous content. Incentive and performance pay for teachers through signing bonuses for two-year

commitments to stay at the school and performance pay are based on the learning gains of students. The projected additional categorical and operating funding in 2010-2011 for the eleven schools is approximately \$3,685,681.

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Duval County School District ***Turnaround Schools***

Turnaround schools are defined as those with the highest needs based upon the following criteria: a school FCAT total point score of 430 or below or by Superintendent's Designation. Schools may be added or removed as a Turnaround School at the discretion of the Superintendent, based on unique circumstances (i.e. academic issues, highest needs schools feeder patterns, etc.) In 2008-2009, 31 schools were identified as "Turnaround Schools" and in 2009-2010, 34 schools were identified as Turnaround Schools and 39 schools were identified this school year based on the above criteria.

Of the 15 elementary schools for the 2009-2010 school year:

- **8 improved their grade**
- **4 maintained their current grade**
- **2 declined by a letter grade**
- **1 declined two letter grades**

Rutledge H. Pearson Elementary School has maintained three consecutive years of improvement of a "C" or greater, with the last two years remaining as an "A."

Resources and Support for Turnaround Schools:

- **Additional Professional Development** – Three days of professional development held a week earlier than the normal district teacher return to school for only the Turnaround Schools core content areas teachers in Reading, English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. Additional time is allocated during the year for Professional Learning Communities and lesson study.
- **Before and/or After School Tutoring** – Funds to cover the cost of tutorial services that will be available to students during the school year in either the before and/or after school hours
- **Saturday School** – Funds to cover the cost of providing tutorial services over 12 Saturdays during the school year
- **Business Partner Volunteer Liaison** – Funds to cover the cost of a member of their school-based staff acting as a dedicated contact person for all the Business and Faith based Partnerships, volunteers and student mentors and other entities on a part-time basis
- **School Based Instructional Coaches** – Reading and Math coaches to build teacher capacity
- **Additional Funding and/or Services** – The projected additional categorical and operating funding for 2010-2011 for the eleven schools is approximately \$3,685,681.00.
- **Recruitment and Performance Incentive** – Teachers receive additional funds for teaching in turnaround schools and creating performance gains in students.

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Escambia County School District ***Innovative Solutions***

Expanding the Flight Academy to Escambia County High School

Expanding the Flight Academy to Escambia High School. The district currently has a career academy at Warrington Middle that is based on flight and the math and sciences inherent to flight. This program was developed in cooperation with the National Museum of Naval Aviation located at Pensacola Naval Air Station. The Navy is currently working to open a Flight Academy on the base which will give students from across the nation an opportunity to experience flight in a similar manner to the space camps in Huntsville, Alabama.

New teacher evaluation system that focuses on providing support to improve instruction

New teacher evaluation system that focuses on providing support to improve instruction. We will modify the new teacher mentoring and evaluation program used in Toledo, Ohio. Each new teacher will have a Consulting Teacher to work with them for at least one year. The Consulting teacher will have no more than twelve assigned mentees and will spend hours in training, modeling, coaching, and evaluating the beginning teacher. The Charlotte Danielson frameworks will be adapted to support the process.

New administrative evaluation system that focuses on outcomes

New administrative evaluation system that focuses on outcomes. Working with the Studer Group the district will implement the outcomes based evaluation system adapted from the healthcare field. This system was developed by former hospital CEO Quint Studer.

Pre-K initiatives that incorporate - Teachscape early Learning, and Waterford/Pearson

Pre-K initiatives that will incorporate the videotaping then reflection on the instruction as packaged from Teachscape along with the Waterford Early Learning program purchased from Pearson Digital

Turnaround school initiatives at Montclair Elementary and Warrington Middle schools

Turnaround school initiatives used at our Challenged elementary and middle school. Applying the differentiated accountability techniques initiated by Dr. Nicolai Vitti, curriculum reviews, coaching strategies, CIM implementation, incentive pay for transferring in to the schools as well as bonuses for performance. Varying amounts aligned to test scores.

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Flagler County School District
Phoenix Academy
A Magnet Program for At-risk Fourth Grade Students

An amazing learning experience awaits fourth grade students in **Flagler County School District!** Students of promise were selected to participate in an inaugural class at Phoenix Academy where teachers are the instructional leaders. The school is a 21st Century learning environment where all lessons will be delivered through a 1-to-1 laptop initiative. Students were invited to attend the school based on their SAT 10 scores (50th percentile and below) and recommendations from the home zoned school. The Academy opened its' doors on August 23rd to eighty-eight 4th grade students, who will loop with their teachers until the end of their 6th grade school year. Students will return to the traditional middle school in their 7th grade year. Our goal is for these students to perform above expectation on state and local assessments.

The Phoenix Academy's belief is that students learn best when they have control over their learning and are held accountable for it. Students are guided to make good choices about their academic progress, their attendance, consideration for others, service to the community and their ability to follow the rules in all aspects of school. Parents are required to attend monthly meetings and actively participate in their child's progress. If parents are not able to attend parent meetings at the school, they receive a regular home visit by the team of teachers where data is reviewed.

Four current Flagler County School District instructors with a proven track record of helping students find success were selected as the teaching team. Emphasis is on reading, writing, science and math with a service learning focus. Teachers work with the same students for *three years*. Students rotate to the *four classrooms* in their cluster. All students will participate in daily PE activities and receive music education through a performance choir.

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Franklin County School District
Expand Lesson Study
Expand Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
(STEM) Offerings
Effective Professional Development

The teachers in the **Franklin County School District** will serve as the foundation for supporting Florida's Race to the Top Theory of Action, and as we have already begun through other initiatives, we are building a student-centered school environment where all teachers are engaged in peer collaboration to improve teaching and learning. Franklin County will use Race to the Top funding for core teachers in grades 4 through 12 at Franklin K-12 and ABC schools to have extended school days during the week to implement lesson study training. Through this and other related efforts, the teachers in our school and educational programs will (1) set high expectations and provide a "culture of rigor" for their students; (2) differentiate instruction through rich learning experiences informed by results from aligned formative and interim assessments; (3) continuously improve their practice by engaging with other teachers in lesson study and other job-embedded, data-driven professional development; and (4) access compensation and career opportunities that reflect the value of effective teaching and leadership.

Through our current Title II-D "Enhancing Education Through Technology" initiative, we have already begun to address a number of pressing needs. Through 2010-2011 grant funds, Franklin County will be able to (1) fully upgrade the ABC school's technology infrastructure (as a new facility, Franklin County School's technology infrastructure is fully updated and in place); (2) equip all 22 fixed science classrooms at Franklin K-12 and ABC Schools with Mimio classroom interactive technology, classroom response systems, digital microscopes and camera, and sufficient Thin Client classroom terminals for use by every student; (3) equip all 22 fixed science classrooms with water proof digital cameras, microscopes with digital cameras, and Flip video cameras to produce student and teacher-created media; (4) create 11 mobile science/technology labs (3 elementary, 4 middle school, and 4 high school) with Black Box 30 Unity Netbook storage carts and Dell Netbooks, and; (5) equip each science classroom with Problem-Based Learning Science Kits, and site licenses for each school for the Virtual On-Line Science Lab and Discovery Ed Streaming Plus. More importantly, by June 2011, all of our science teachers will have successfully completed Digital Educator training and an additional 5 to 10 teachers will complete the Master Digital Educator training as well.

Despite the difficulties inherent to recruiting teachers to a remote rural community, Franklin County will realize its goal of 100% of all our teachers and paraprofessionals achieving highly qualified teachers status by the end of the 2010-2011 school year. Furthermore, the district now has in place an effective process for (1) the recruitment and selection of the most highly qualified candidates for available teaching position, (2) supervisory support at both the school and district-level for teachers, and (3) the provision of additional training and professional development for teachers to attain highly qualified teacher status.

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Gadsden County School District
Drop Out Prevention Task Force

Superintendent Reginald James formed a Drop Out Prevention Task Force for the **Gadsden County School District** to help decrease the number of students who were dropping out rather than completing high school. The Task Force focused on students who were from homes of parents who didn't obtain high school diplomas, students with excessive absences/tardies and any students one or more years behind upon entry to ninth grade.

The district's drop-out rate for 2010 was 1.6% and a significant improvement over 2009's dropout rate of 4.2%. "The lower drop-out rate is also a positive sign because it reflects that the large majority of students who did not graduate on time, within four years after entering 9th grade, are still in school and not on the streets and therefore are also likely to graduate," stated Superintendent James.

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Gilchrist County School District *Teacher Performance Appraisal*

The teacher performance appraisal currently used in the **Gilchrist County School District** has been in effect for approximately five years. It includes nine categories all of which include a six category scale:

Categories on Evaluation Instrument & corresponding maximum points

Student Gains	Planning / Preparation	Classroom Management	Assessment / Evaluation	Intervention / Direct Services	Technology	Collaboration	Professional Development	Professional Responsibilities	Total Points
60	4	4	4	4	8	4	8	4	100

Scale range used to evaluate each of the above & used for the over-all rating

Unsatisfactory	Needs Improvement	Effective	Very Effective	Highly Effective	Outstanding
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Data collected locally indicates an increase in the number of teachers who obtain an outstanding evaluation to be on the increase since implementing this evaluation instrument in conjunction with performance pay.

Performance Pay Results

(Performance Pay is received for local outstanding, highly effective & very effective overall ratings)

2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
5% Rule	5% Rule	5% Rule	5% Rule	STAR	MAP	MAP
11 Instructors Outstanding	12 Instructors Outstanding	12 Instructors Outstanding	12 Instructors Outstanding	44 Instructors Outstanding	63 Instructors Outstanding	69 Instructors Outstanding

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Glades County School District

The Florida Continuous Improvement Model

The Florida Continuous Improvement Model is implemented with fidelity district wide. This quality, research-based approach tracks student performance, helps close the achievement gap among racial and socioeconomic sub-groups, and is data-driven. The Continuous Improvement Model treats students individually, assessing how much they learn at regular intervals. Based on assessments, students achieving mastery level receive enrichment to challenge them, while low achievers receive remediation to improve their skills to meet standards. Continuous Improvement Model strategies identify areas of need for students who score Level 1 or 2 on reading, mathematics, and/or science FCAT.

An outside consultant skilled in the use of the Continuous Improvement Model has focused administrators and teachers on subgroups and individual students at-risk. The consultant guides program review and progress monitoring through data analysis to improve the academic achievement of all students not yet proficient in core content areas. Ongoing, continuous professional development is provided to principals, assistant principals, and staff by the consultant skilled in the analysis of data and how to use it to inform instruction using the Continuous Improvement Model. Initial and on-going professional development is also being provided to ensure implementation with fidelity of the new Performance Matters data and assessment management system. Staff members receive scheduled instruction on how to gather and use data such as formative and summative assessments, charts, graphs, and established electronic capabilities at each school site, to make sure the data is reliable and valid. An assessment calendar has been developed to provide direction and address those skills that are particularly troublesome for students.

Data analysis is an ongoing process over the course of the year for all schools in the district. Utilizing assessment information, data chats at all levels provide guidance to assist schools in monitoring growth. Teachers use formative assessments to determine the effectiveness of their instructional strategies and the impact on student performance. Faculties meet after each assessment period for data chats to review baseline assessment results and to determine changes that may be necessary.

FCAT data for 2009 and 2010 showed the following gains.

School Year	% Meeting High Standards in Reading	% Meeting High Standards in Math	% Meeting High Standards in Writing*	% Meeting High Standards in Science	% Making Learning Gains in Reading
2009-2010	66	75	78	38	61
2008-2009	64	74	82	32	61

* Scoring for writing changed in 2009-2010.

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Gulf County School District
Increased Dual Enrollment Participation and Advanced Course Offerings

Gulf County is rural and our students have had limited access to dual enrollment courses. The district made it a priority to increase dual enrollment opportunities at each high school and to increase participation. By developing and implementing four dual enrollment models to provide on-site courses, our dual enrollment participation increased from 24 students in the 2008-2009 school year to 141 students during the 2009-2010 school year. In addition, the number of courses on our high school campuses increased from zero at one school to six and at the other high school from two to eight.

The articulation agreement with Gulf Coast Community College ensures multiple opportunities for dual enrollment participation. By utilizing two-way interactive distance learning, online courses, a hybrid model and our certified teachers who are also certified by Gulf Coast Community College, our students can graduate with as many as 24 college credits and never leave their home campus.

Gulf County School District
High Graduation Rate and Low Dropout Rate

The **Gulf County School District** ranked number one in the graduation rate of public non-college affiliated schools for the 2009-2010 school year. Gulf's Florida Graduation Rate was 96.2% while the national average as determined by the National Governors Association was 95.5%. The minority graduation rate for the district was 96.3%.

Gulf's Dropout Rate for 2009-10 was a low 0.3%. The minority dropout rate was 0.0%. These rates demonstrate a consistent effort to decrease dropouts as Gulf's all-time high was 2.9% in 2005-2006.

The high graduation rate and low dropout rate are due to the collaborative efforts of parents, teachers, administrators, and support personnel to keep students in school and to provide the curriculum, staff development, and instructional strategies that meet the needs of each student.

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Hamilton County School District
Creation of Transformational Office
Extended Instructional Day for At-risk Students

The **Hamilton County School District** used School Improvement Grant (SIG) funds to hire a Transformational Specialist who bridges the gap between the District Office and our low performing schools and the Department of Education. This is the single most important initiative we have experienced

The district also used SIG funds to add 45 minutes of instructional time for all students in the two low-performing schools. This allows for targeted instruction for low-performing students and enrichment time for on target students.

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Hardee County School District ***High School Culinary Program***

The **Hardee** Senior High School Culinary program began in the 2008-2009 school year with one class of 18 students. With limited equipment, Mrs. Elaine Pearce taught the students basic knife skills and cooking methods. Their big culminating event was a mock wedding reception served to teachers participating in a BUILD professional development workshop.

Eleven of these students continued with the program and, with the addition of two Culinary 1 classes, worked diligently to share their knowledge and skills through monthly teacher cafes, catering special events like the Teacher of the Year banquet, a spaghetti dinner, and providing students with cookies and other treats in after school bake sales. Students earned enough to purchase stainless steel tables and stools for use in their "soon to be remodeled commercial kitchen." The school district remodeled the classroom to include a new hood to meet state fire suppression requirements, a new commercial range, new restaurant sinks, and new storage.

The 2010-2011 school year began with the new commercial equipment in place and with *three* Culinary 1 classes and a combination Culinary 2/3 class. There are now 92 students in the program. Activities have included teacher cafes, catering for College Day guests, student sales, a holiday bake sale, a Chicken Teriyaki dinner, the Hardee Education Association Open House and the ROTC Military Ball. Mrs. Pearce and her students are very pleased to be a recipient of a Florida Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc. grant for their project "Preserving Florida's Bounty." They are purchasing equipment for pressure canning and vacuum freezing and are establishing relationships with area produce growers to contribute products for use in the program.

Mrs. Pearce uses the National Restaurant Association ProStart curriculum and attends teacher training at Johnson & Wales University in Miami for a week each summer. She also attends a ProStart training session at Keiser University in Sarasota.

Because of the success of this culinary program, Hardee Senior High School has already had one 2010 graduate receive a \$1000 renewable scholarship to attend Keiser University.

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Hendry County School District ***College Board Partnership***

The **Hendry County School District** plans to continue their partnership with the College Board for the implementation of rigorous courses and to provide equity and access to underrepresented populations in advanced placement classes and in programs such as Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID). Currently, the College Board Partnership assists our district in following ways:

- ◆ Implementation of AVID in both district middle schools and both district high schools.
- ◆ Providing high quality, sustainable professional development opportunities for all Advanced Placement and AVID teachers.
- ◆ Increasing Advanced Placement offerings, especially for underrepresented populations at both high schools.
- ◆ Purchasing Advanced Placement testing materials for all students.
- ◆ Providing immediate technical assistance with implementation issues by regional College Board support staff.

These services are especially needed in a small, rural district with limited resources such as Hendry County. Programs offered by the College Board such as AVID, have provided support for the district to serve 100+ underrepresented students at the secondary level with mentoring and support for participation in rigorous coursework during the 2010-2011 school year. The support that the district has received with training and implementation of Advanced Placement courses has provided opportunities for the district to offer 31 Advanced Placement courses during the 2010-2011 school year, which is an increase from 15 Advanced Placement courses offered during the 2009-2010 school year.

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Hernando County School District
Office of Title I – 9th Annual Parent Institute

The Parent Institute, in **Hernando County School District**, is a district –wide parental involvement initiative, was created to assist students, parents and teachers in promoting parent involvement BEST practices to increase student achievement. Participants include parents, students and educators from Title I schools, district and school-level parent involvement staff, district/school/community agency administrators, and other interested parties. The 2010-2011 theme was “**Better Schools Begin with You!**”

Dedicated teachers, district staff, and community partners voluntarily conduct the presentations. The institute is 3 hours in length and it provides participants with over 22 educational activities (parental workshops) designed to enhance parental practices and to provide families, schools, and communities with successful strategies to facilitate improved student academic achievement, at home and school. Student workshops are provided in the areas of reading and mathematics for students aged 6 through 12. Additionally, child care is provided for children ages 3 through 5. The parent institute is well attended and all costs are covered through our Title I Department.

Informational Data	Numerical Data
For the purpose of this report the word Families is defined by (mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, and other)	
Total number of families that attended the Parent Institute	165
Total number of families and children that attended the Parent Institute	406
Total number of families that registered online	216
Total number of children at student sessions and child care	122
Total number of exhibitors/ nonprofit organizations	26
Total number of families that signed in at the workshop session	150
Total number of rooms used for parent workshops	20
Total number of rooms used for student sessions and child care	10
Total numbers of rooms used to host the Parent Institute	32 Includes cafeteria

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Highlands County School District ***Career Academy***

The Career Academy at South Florida Community College was established in 2008. Located on South Florida Community College's Highlands Campus, the Career Academy at South Florida Community College is a joint venture of the School Board of Highlands County and the college's Division of Applied Sciences and Technologies. Students spend a half day in standard high school academic classes, taught by **Highlands County School District** teachers, and a half day in college level technical courses taught by South Florida Community College instructors.

Programs available to students include: Air Conditioning, Refrigeration and Heating; Automotive Collision Repair; Automotive Service Technology; Computer Electronics Technology; Cosmetology; Drafting; Food Management, Production, and Services (Culinary); Medical Assistant; Medical Secretary; Networking Support Services; and Secretarial/Administrative Assistant. By undergoing technical training while in high school, students can earn a high school diploma while completing the requirements for an occupation certificate. There are currently 103 students, in grades 10-12, enrolled in the Career Academy at South Florida Community College.

Highlands County School District ***International Baccalaureate Diploma Program***

Sebring High School received authorization for the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program in April 2010. The International Baccalaureate Diploma Program is an academically challenging and balanced program of education with final examinations that prepare students for success at a university and in life beyond.

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Program emphasizes trans-disciplinary learning and requires students to study course across six disciplines:

- ◆ Native language
- ◆ Second language
- ◆ Individuals and societies
- ◆ Mathematics and computer science
- ◆ Experimental sciences
- ◆ The arts

There are twenty-one student enrolled in the Sebring High School International Baccalaureate Diploma Program for the 2010-2011 school year.

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Hillsborough County School District ***High Stakes Assessment Labs***

Hillsborough County Public Schools is aligning infrastructure to bolster the success of assessment reform initiatives. With collaborative planning, training, and cross division cooperative effort, High Stakes Assessment Labs are being created in all schools. The Facilities, Information and Technology, and Administration divisions planned together to enable completion with minimal disruption. Criteria for room selection were determined including size, location, proximity to electrical infrastructure, and capacity to install the additional air conditioning necessary to accommodate the amount of planned computer stations. A presentation with selection criteria and a proposed timeline was provided to school-based personnel. The school selected potential rooms. Architects, district air conditioning, and electrical personnel visited the rooms. Planning and Construction staff met with the principal to determine the final room selection. Responding to a need to maximize classroom space, computer furniture has locking, hideaway storage for monitors, keyboards, mice and headphones. When stored, a flat desk space is available for other classes. When used for testing, the monitor works hydraulically and pops up out of the storage bay. Single station desks, located at the ends of the rows, look the same but are American with Disabilities Act (ADA) compatible.

Lab construction is occurring in three phases. The first phase included Title I schools and is completed. All elementary Title I schools have at least one lab with middle and high schools receiving two labs. Phases two and three address schools within the seven district regions that are not Title I schools. As assessment labs become a reality, professional development and communication with all stakeholders accompanies the technological innovation to ensure enhanced assessment impacts student achievement.

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Hillsborough County School District *Focus Effective Professional Development*

The professional development process has evolved over time and is one of the major strengths of the **School District of Hillsborough County**. Planning is data driven and moves from the classroom level with the teacher's Individualized Professional Development Plan, to the school level where these plans are compiled and training offered, to the district level where course planning responds to district-wide data trends. All professional development aligns with the Florida Professional Development System Evaluation Protocol Standards. Multiple formats are offered including traditional class settings, online courses, model classroom visitation and summer institutes. The many courses and formats are brought together under the Professional Development System. Within this online system, participants can view all opportunities for training, enroll or withdraw from classes, complete course evaluations, and view their in-service records. While the system enables independent action, support from a staff of professionals is only a phone call away.

While the Hillsborough County Public Schools Professional Development System is responsive, it is also proactive. Communication across departments and divisions enables training to occur in advance of systemic change, the implementation of updated instructional tools, or new curriculum standards. All teachers and administrators received training prior to the advent of the new evaluation instrument that was launched during the current school year. As the district moves forward with reform initiatives, the Professional Development system sustains the movement. Working with an enhanced data infrastructure, the Professional Development System begins the journey to prescriptive professional development that is tied to evaluative data. As part of the district's initiatives, professional development will be closely tied to both evaluation data and results, and Individual Professional Development Plans so that each teacher receives an individualized prescriptive staff development plan tailored to their individual needs. This prescriptive information will allow teachers to make the most informed decisions possible when choosing from a wide variety of professional development opportunities.

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Hillsborough County School District

Focus on Low Performing Schools

School improvement is a key element in the reform process in **Hillsborough County Public Schools**. There is a commitment to strategically allocate adequate resources in order to substantially raise the achievement of students in low performing schools. The resource integral to success for students is effective educators. The district has worked to leverage funds to support reform initiatives in low performing schools that increase the capacity to attract and retain effective personnel. Performance rewards area of support. To reward effective performance, Florida's Merit Award Program awards up to 5% of a beginning teacher's salary and the Salary Differential Program (highly qualified teachers at 90%+ Free and Reduced Price Meals schools earn a 5% bonus and an additional performance bonus awarded on the basis of school performance). Hillsborough County Public Schools enhanced the differentiated pay system in high needs schools with Teacher Incentive Fund grant dollars for an additional incentive of up to 5% for teachers who successfully achieved recognition from the Merit Award Program. Enhanced access to data is another support. The Instructional Planning Tool provides desktop access to individual student data. Focused professional development is a third and critical support provided for both teachers and principals to examine data and strategically address the needs of struggling students.

With two schools identified as persistently low achieving, Hillsborough County Public Schools has a designated District Managed Turnaround Team that will work with the school administrative team. The challenge is to propel the district reform initiatives within these schools while carefully monitoring and meeting the unique needs of the schools. The Turnaround Team provides additional support for a coordinated improvement plan. The district has embedded Professional Learning Communities in school culture. Lesson Study is a focus of the learning communities for these schools. Individual Professional Development Plans are data driven and allow teachers and leaders to analyze needs based on student achievement. Numerous accelerated courses are in place. AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) classes and tutors support skills for students working within a rigorous curriculum designed for college readiness. A School-wide Positive Behavior Support Program has been selected for 2010 implementation. FCAT data from 2009/2010 compared to 2008/2009 data indicate progress in both schools. The middle school increased the percentage of Adequate Yearly Progress indicators met by 8% (74%-82%) and the high school by 23% (64%-87%).

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Hillsborough County School District
Improve Teacher and Principal Evaluation Systems

Beginning in 2010-2011, **Hillsborough County Public Schools** will use a new and different evaluation tool for instructional personnel. The new evaluation tool is more comprehensive than the model the district has been using. A district committee comprised of teachers, Classroom Teachers Association leadership, district leadership, and school-based administrators, worked for several months to create a new evaluation model for instructional personnel. In addition to the principal, teachers in their first two years of teaching will be evaluated multiple times by mentor evaluators, and experienced teachers will be evaluated a variable number of times by peer evaluators. Both mentor and peer evaluators are subject to a rigorous selection process and must have a history as highly effective teachers.

Included in the instructional and classroom teacher evaluation are 22 components in four domains, all of which are weighted. The domains are: Planning and Preparation (20%), The Classroom Environment (20%), Instruction (40%), and Professional Responsibilities (20%). Each of the components will be rated based on a rubric with four performance levels, ranging from 0-3 points. The rubric will help guide and ensure more accurate evaluations. In the new model, 30% of the evaluation will be based on mentor or peer rating, 30% on principal rating, and 40% on student learning gains. With the assistance of the University of Wisconsin's Value Added Research Center, Hillsborough County Public Schools is creating a new value-added measure that will be based on state assessments and semester exams. Teacher committees have been formed to provide feedback on current assessments. Because there are some areas in which a peer or mentor may be unable to rate a teacher, not all domains will be rated by all evaluators. Principals will evaluate teachers on all four domains; mentors and peers will evaluate domains 1, 2, and 3 only. Administrators, mentor evaluators, peer evaluators, and district staff received extensive training on the new evaluation model this summer.

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Holmes County School District
Increased Student Achievement through Use of Assessments
Use Data to Improve Instruction

Technology has been utilized extensively in the **Holmes County School District** as an instructional and management tool for teachers including monitoring student progress. Teachers have increased their usage of data through Dashboard, Snapshot, ThinkLink, and electronic grade books. The capabilities for using technology for instruction and management have increased with the purchase of teacher desktop stations, eInstruction Tools, smartboards, and LCD projectors. Technology is also considered an essential skill for students. Significant progress has been made in the addition of hardware during the past 2 years with over 300 computers purchased and installed. This provides the means for increased student usage of online research tools, student assessment, and access to online instruction and distance learning both within and outside the district.

Through cooperation with Panhandle Area Educational Consortium, Holmes County is working toward the use of data and technology to improve instruction and to improve parental involvement and access. The following two goals have been targeted to help us meet this initiative:

- ◆ Increase access to technology for instruction and assessment.
- ◆ Improve access to state data by students, parents, teachers and administration, implementing access through a single sign-on.

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Jackson County School District ***Credit Recovery***

The **Jackson County School District** is excited about the positive results that have been obtained through the Jackson County Credit Recovery Program. This program was designed for students in sixth, seventh, or eighth grade, who are two or more years behind their original graduating class, to get caught up with the goal of graduating on time with their age-level peers. The curriculum is computer-based using two different programs: Compass Learning Odyssey Curriculum from Educational Solutions and A Plus Any Where Learning System from American Education Corporation. Instructors are assigned to assist students in staying on task and motivated, and to assist them with instruction and understanding. The student teacher ratio is kept at a minimum, preferably 1:6. The curriculum is just as rigorous as a traditional classroom and is based on state standards. The secret to the students' progress is time management. The computer-based program allows students to work on a lesson at their own pace. They are able to complete beyond what could be done in a normal class period.

The program provides motivation to students, who in the past would have given up and become potential drop-outs. Students now know that with hard work, they have a chance to catch up with their friends. The boost in students' self-esteem has been tremendous. The A+ curriculum is used primarily at Jackson Alternative School, where students may have additional learning needs. Odyssey Curriculum is used both at Jackson Alternative and the district middle schools. Since its implementation in 2008, 126 students have been able to complete the program and receive credit for previously failed courses.

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Jefferson County School District
Advanced Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
(STEM) Coursework

By the 2011-2012 school year, **Jefferson County Schools** will have at least four courses in dual enrollment, including one course each in English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. By aligning Race to the Top objectives with those of Title I School Improvement, the percentage of students completing advanced coursework will increase from the current 9% to 24% during the next three years.

Advanced coursework teachers will receive continued training, funded through Title II. Students enrolled in Dual Enrollment courses will be issued an iPad computer for use in all their coursework, with iPads funded through a School Improvement Grant.

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Lafayette County School District
Mentoring Program for Troubled Teens

The **Lafayette County School District** set up a volunteer mentoring program for troubled teens. Once per week, adult volunteers come and meet with identified youth and bring them lunch. This program is modeled after the Big Brother/Big sister Program.

There has been a 20% reduction in referrals for the target group thus far for the 2010-11 school year.

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Lake County School District
Innovative Learning Specialists

The goal of the Innovative Learning Specialist initiative in the **Lake County School District** is to help teachers become confident and proficient users of technology. The Innovative Learning Specialists are former classroom teachers with technology expertise who serve as site-based mentors and facilitators of technology integration.

The Learning Specialists provide on-site training at the teachers' convenience and on the teachers' equipment. Whether it's one-on-one, in small groups or with the entire faculty, the Learning Specialists are in the schools providing training to teachers, administrators, and staff members. Innovative Learning specialists model technology applications within the classroom and act as a "guide-on-the-side" while a teacher uses a new technology for the first time. The targeted, sustained support helps teachers learn technology applications in the context of actual projects they are implementing in their classrooms

As a result of this initiative, teaching is being transformed and students are learning *with* technology, not just *from* technology.

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Lake County School District ***Instructional Coaches***

The goal of the Instructional Coach initiative in **the Lake County School District** is to support new educators in acquiring the skills, knowledge and confidence to become effective in their teaching. Coaches assist individual teachers according to the teacher's schedule and at an intensity level suitable to the teacher's need.

Instructional Coaches are based outside the schools and do not have classroom teaching responsibilities. The Coaches provide new teachers with embedded support in the day-to-day work of teaching. They help new teachers in whatever way is needed: bringing resources, setting up the room, modeling lessons, observing classes and giving feedback, and providing emotional support and advice about working in the system.

Third-party evaluation results indicate that the consistent support provided by Coaches has played a key role in boosting new teacher retention. The program started in 2005-06 with a district pilot and third-party evaluation. New teachers were asked a set of questions aimed at gaining insight into their perceptions of the quality and effectiveness of the instructional coaching they received. Key responses included:

- ◆ 88.3% of participants believed their classroom skills improved as a result of having a Coach.
- ◆ Participants reported that they most benefited from having constructive feedback on a regular basis from a neutral observer and having someone to talk to without the fear of being judged.
- ◆ The continual support from the Instructional Coaches was viewed by many of the teachers as a "life line" that helped them survive the challenges of being a first-year teacher.
- ◆ 82% of participants recommended that the district continue to provide new teachers with Coaches.

Based on positive results, the district moved forward with expanding instructional coaching using multiple district funding streams.

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Lake County School District ***Drive Improvement in Low-Achieving Schools***

District Learning Zone Director

The goal of the District Learning Zone Director in the **Lake County School District** is to implement Florida's Continuous Improvement Model of School Reform and Improvement. To implement this model, the district has established a schedule to monitor and support schools based on the Differentiated Accountability categories.

There are three levels of support which correspond to schools' needs. These levels include the following:

- *Level 1 schools* include those not required to participate in Differentiated Accountability strategies. Levels of support for these schools include ongoing Dashboard data reports and targeted support.
- *Level 2 schools* include Differentiated Accountability schools in Prevent I, II and Correct I status. Support for these schools includes targeted support and an action plan, ongoing Dashboard data reports, classroom and instructional reviews once per semester, and semester action plan meetings.
- *Level 3 schools* include those in the Differentiated Accountability Correct II status, with concentrated focus on "D" schools. The level of focus and support is most intense for these schools and includes ongoing Dashboard data reports, targeted support and action plans, plus classroom instructional reviews and action plans on a monthly basis.

Resources and specialized Program Specialist Services (Teachers on Special Assignment) are used to support schools based on their level of need. An electronic "Dashboard" data system tracks all support efforts and helps to coordinate services.

This system provides the district with a methodical way to organize support for schools and monitor progress. This system set-up has provided much clarification of expectations and levels of support available to schools for support.

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Lee County School District
Use Data to Improve Instruction

The **School District of Lee County** has provided monthly leadership training for all school principals in the use of data to influence instruction and student achievement. Dr. Mark Rolewski, formerly with Johns Hopkins University, has provided the training to better understand how to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP) for all subgroups. In addition to the training sessions, he conducts site visits to targeted schools that are in need of improvement through the Differentiated Accountability system. Lee County currently does not have any schools in the lowest 5% in the state, nor do we have any “D” or “F” schools in the state accountability system.

Lee County School District
Improve Teacher and Principal Evaluation Systems

The **School District of Lee County** has utilized Interest-Based Bargaining successfully for the last decade. A study by Cornell University (2005) found that agreements reached using the Interest-Based Bargaining process are cost neutral, longer lasting, more durable and more innovative than agreements reached using traditional negotiation strategies. The Teachers Association of Lee County and district staff have used Interest-Based Bargaining to implement innovative evaluation systems which include linking pay to student achievement and growth data as a part of the district’s Merit Award Program. Most recently the parties implemented an on-line ePerformance evaluation system which also included a new instrument based on Danielson’s Frameworks of Teaching. The teacher evaluation committee continues to meet to revise the current instrument to meet the needs of the Race To The Top initiatives to include the development of a multifaceted system with multiple rating tiers.

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Lee County School District
***Increase Advanced Science, Technology, Engineering and
Mathematics (STEM) Coursework/Focus Effective Professional
Development***

The **School District of Lee County** has offered targeted professional development for middle and high school teachers in the areas of English, math, and science. The training is being provided through the *Laying the Foundation* organization. All trainers are current or former advanced placement teachers and the training focuses on scaffolding instruction starting in grade six to better prepare students to take more rigorous courses as part of their high school program of studies. The training consists of 12 days of training over a three year-period. This provides for a more consistent, long-term training and follow-through approach rather than a single isolated training effort.

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Leon County School District

Increased High School Graduation Requirements and Other Standards

Historically, 9th grade students struggle with the transition from middle school to high school. Local data support this issue. In 2009-10, 54% of the ninth grade students in the **Leon County School District** failed one or more courses. During March an external evaluator provided the district additional data regarding the need for a support mechanism for students transitioning to high school. In 2010-11, Lincoln High School initiated a 9th grade transition program, the Paideia.

This “school within a school” employs a multi-faceted approach to support student success. These institutional changes include:

- ◆ Dedicated guidance counselor
- ◆ Targeted teachers for participation
- ◆ Relocated 9th grade teacher classrooms to a central, common location
(This represents a shift from a departmental instructional approach to a team approach to instruction.)
- ◆ Common curriculum aligned within grade level
- ◆ Dedicated teacher planning space for professional development

Current data indicate that these programmatic changes have been successful with our students.

- ◆ Increased student-teacher engagement
- ◆ Reduce 9th grade failure rate by 43% (student with one or more F’s)
 - 2009-10: 54%
 - 2010-11: 11%
- ◆ Improved Algebra I scores on end of course exam progress monitoring
- ◆ Decreased student referral rate 52% as compared to 2009-10
- ◆ Improved communication between student and school
 - Each 9th grader met with guidance counselor
 - All students with one or more F’s receive guidance contact
- ◆ Fostered teacher led best practice implementation
 - Instructional shift to student mastery (i.e. test corrections)
 - Curricular alignment across and within grade level
 - Data points used to drive conversations between teachers, students, parents, guidance, and administration to improve instruction
 - Target group of students- low performing (Data Director) Algebra 1 students (9th grade cohort)
 - Target instruction practices for low performing, high skill and high performing, low skill students
 - Best Practices” collaboration between teachers (TEC)
- ◆ 2010-11, second semester
 - Support and maintain current action steps
 - Data driving technology implementation (Camtasia, Qwizdom, Turning Technologies) to improve student engagement and performance on standardized assessments

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Leon County School District
Increasing STEM Opportunities for Students of Promise

In an effort to provide more equitable programs for high performers in underrepresented populations, **Leon County Schools** instituted a gifted and talented Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) program that focuses on providing more rigorous STEM instruction for students of promise. Currently, 70 teachers at all 24 elementary schools are being trained not just in STEM topics, but also in how to identify students with aptitude in science and mathematics.

One of the goals of the program is to increase the number of gifted endorsed teachers in each school, providing for more equitable options for schools. Thirty-nine elementary teachers will complete the 2010-2011 school year with the gifted endorsement. As a result, Leon County Schools will begin the 2011-2012 school year with more opportunities for minority students of promise across all socio-economic groups.

The gifted and talented STEM grant also funds stipends and materials for after-school STEM Clubs for interested students at all school sites.

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Levy County School District ***College and Career Readiness***

It is the goal of the **Levy County School District** to increase the rigor in secondary language arts program and prepare students for advanced placement courses. To accomplish this, the district instructional team focused on multiple initiatives, including the following:

- ◆ Implement College Board Springboard Language Arts Curriculum grades 6-10.
- ◆ Pilot AVID at Chiefland High School.
- ◆ Increase the number of teachers attending Advanced Placement Summer Institutes.
- ◆ Increase the number of Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment offerings in the high school master schedule.

The district has doubled the number of Advanced Placement courses offer from the 2008-2009 school year to the 2009-2010 school year.

Levy County School District ***Use Data to Improve Instruction***

To achieve the goal of using data to improve instruction, the **Levy County School District** has implemented an instructional improvement system to warehouse and report FCAT and interim assessment results. Develop and implement curriculum maps in reading/math/and science and interim assessments to be scored and integrated into our system is another strategy the district is using to accomplish this goal. This initiative includes the following:

- ◆ Contract with Performance Matters as the instructional improvement system.
- ◆ Train teachers on the NGSSS reading and math and develop curriculum maps.
- ◆ Develop interim assessments in reading/math and science (including Algebra 1 and Geometry).
- ◆ Build the infrastructure to administer/scan/score/report interim and mini-assessment results in Performance matters.

Currently, Performance Matters is fully integrated into the district. It assists schools and the district in student achievement reporting features. For example, the Differentiated Accountability reporting requirements are automated through a report that Performance Matters provides their clients. Through a consultant, the district developed an Algebra I interim assessment that is required by DOE for the first time this year. The district administered the assessment and it was scanned/scored/reported in Performance Matters. The district's high schools have the infrastructure in place at this time with Lexmark multi-function machines that will upload the data to Performance Matters and will assist with interim assessment administration.

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Liberty County School District
Expanded Dual Enrollment
Advanced Course Offerings

The **Liberty County School District** has expanded its dual enrollment offerings through on-line courses offered through Chipola College and Tallahassee Community College. The district provides a class period, computers, enrollment support and teacher support throughout the course to increase the success rate of the students. This has been very successful this first semester and the number of students enrolling next semester is increasing.

The goal of this program is to have first generation college students be successful and continue their education at a post-secondary institution after graduation. If we can have them be successful now, we hope to increase the likelihood they will continue after graduation.

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Madison County School District
Driving Improvement in Persistently Low Achieving Schools

In the **Madison County School District**, the District-based Leadership Team, made up of the Superintendent, Director of Teaching and Learning, Reading/RTI Specialist, School Improvement Coordinator, Director of Personnel, Director of Federal Projects, ESE Coordinator, developed a bi-weekly scheduled visit to the district's low achieving schools for the purpose of conducting classroom walk-throughs and data analysis. The District-based Leadership Team meets with the School Based Leadership Team to discuss observations and review data to identify improvements or needs. The District-based Leadership Team and School-based Leadership Team operate on the Plan, Do, Check, Act model of school improvement.

Our Region I team from the Florida Department of Education affirms that our efforts will yield positive results in the upcoming release of high school grades and our preliminary assessments show improvement.

Instructional coaches provided to each school in Reading, Math and Science deliver job-embedded professional development and participate in book studies on effective instructional methodology. The Enhancing Education Through Technology grant has provided integrated technology in the classrooms and Southern Regional Education Board provides shoulder to shoulder professional development through coaching teachers and school leaders. Principals and district staff are engaged in a book study, Results Now! for professional development in specific strategies for improving low achieving schools.

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Manatee County School District
Use Data to Improve Instruction

Quick Query is a district developed data management tool that is available to school administrators and teachers in the **Manatee County School District**. Quick Query provides data reports on a variety of data elements. These data reports are used by schools and district personnel to inform decision making and to inform instruction. This tool is easily accessible to staff through the student database. Benchmark assessment data are entered into the system and teachers and others are able to readily access the data.

Since the inception of this tool, schools in Manatee County have been able to gather data for presentations, parent conferencing and other needs in lieu of having to contact the Technology and Information Services staff for reports on specific data elements they need.

Manatee County School District
Excellence in Adult, Career and Technical Education

The **Manatee County School District** has embarked on a seamless K-20 Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) initiative that starts at the elementary level with our nationally recognized Engineering by Design Program that was created in conjunction with the National Science Foundation. Students rotate through a hands-on engineering lab applying content area math and science knowledge to solve real world problems. At the middle school and then again at the high school level, students are engaged in a higher level of STEM as they work with such software programs as SolidWorks, and CAMWorks, in addition to Computer Numerical Control machines, to produce products and solutions for everyday real world challenges. Manatee County is home to the four-time National Technology Student Association Champions (who have won more medals than any other school district in the United States four years running), and the Formula One World Champions (held in September in Singapore). Students from these programs are fortunate to have their programs linking to a wide offering of programs at the postsecondary level from our very own Manatee Technical Institute, where we provide education in over 50 technical areas that lead to industry certification and a start on a successful high tech career. Manatee Technical Institute is also home to the seven-time National Skills USA Champions. STEM is alive and well in Manatee County and paving the way for future success for our students.

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Manatee County School District
Increased High School Graduation Requirements
and Other Standards

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) has been implemented in three high schools and their feeder middle schools in the **Manatee County school District**. The purpose has been to prepare students for advanced level coursework and greater preparation for post secondary education.

The targeted population was students who were in the middle and may have not taken advanced level courses in the past. Most of the students enrolled in AVID at the middle and high school level have shown improvement in achievement and greater participation in advanced placement and other upper level courses.

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Marion County School District
***Implementation of Electronic Textbooks/Live@edu/Engaged
Classrooms for a Technology Rich Learning Environment***

Lake Weir High School in **Marion County** was the first high school in the nation to implement Microsoft's Live@EDU email application along with a web-base storage device. This application provides a free and safe email system for students and teachers to collaborate with each other.

The purpose was to provide students with the ability to purchase inexpensive net books and other laptops so they could use electronic textbooks, research, email assignments and other classroom needs on our wireless campus without the additional cost to the schools.

The hope was to also increase student engagement, have more student work turned in, increase test scores, graduation rates, and prepare students for the work place in this technology rich world of work/high education.

Our FCAT results reflects a B grade, and graduation rate is 82%, an increase of 10 % after one year of implementation.

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Marion County School District
Marion Technical Institute
A "Technical" High School of Choice for Marion County Students

Students choose the **Marion** Technical Institute to be part of a small learning community (400 students) that offers unique and high-quality learning experiences resulting in College Preparedness and National Industry Certifications. The Marion Technical Institute offers a variety of Academies specifically selected to align with career opportunities in our area. Business partners are the cornerstone for the curriculum resulting in a relevant curriculum infused with opportunities for hands-on learning, field trips to successful businesses, career coaches for students in the various fields of study and both paid and unpaid internship opportunities for all students. Advisory meetings are held regularly with business partners, teachers and other stakeholders to ensure that the curriculum remains highly relevant in preparing student for post high school success. Highly qualified and passionate teachers set high expectations for students, incorporating a dynamic, rigorous curriculum with a career focus and technology integrated into all subjects.

Research shows that smaller schools, like the Marion Technical Institute, allow students and teachers to develop intensive, long-term relationships that maximize teaching and learning. With a maximum enrollment of 400 students who may have been lost in larger high schools find ways to shine in our small close-knit community with the Marion Technical Institute earning more Industry Certifications than schools three times its size. The Marion Technical Institute reports some of the highest FCAT Retake pass rates in the district for 11th and 12th grade students due to a higher level of engagement in areas of personal interest for students. Classroom instruction is connected with real-world experience, where students apply learning through projects and classroom assignments that lead to internships and employment while completing coursework for graduation and national industry/business certification. The Marion Technical Institute integrates technical methodology into all subjects and students take career information into all classes - this focus engages students in active learning.

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Martin County School District
Focus Effective Professional Development

A new professional development focus was initiated in the 2009-2010 school year and is being expanded this school year to improve training for principals and all K-2 teachers. To expand school administrators' skill and knowledge to effectively observe and support primary grade levels' literacy instruction, an introductory seminar and walk-through of model classrooms was conducted for all elementary administrators. To build teachers' leadership capacity in K-2 literacy, the elementary reading coaches provided district wide staff development in the area of balanced literacy. The focus of this professional learning has been on the components of Interactive Read Aloud and Differentiated Word Study in the K-2 classrooms. The reading coaches trained a cadre of teachers from all elementary schools across the district in balanced literacy components in order to provide a starting point for balanced literacy instruction at all school sites with the grade-level teams of teachers.

The goals of the professional development are 1) to expand administrators' awareness and knowledge of balanced literacy instruction; 2) to build teacher leadership capacity in literacy; and 3) to support individual teacher literacy instructional skill across schools. Included in the professional development is a one-day training that incorporates classroom observations at a model school, pedagogical information regarding the practices being studied and time for coach-teacher teams to prepare for the implementation in the representative teachers' classrooms. Once teachers are trained and classroom implementation is underway, coaches and administrators support the teachers at the school site to ensure fidelity of implementation. The teachers trained in Interactive Read Aloud and Differentiated Word Study then serve as models for the other teachers at their grade level. In this framework, trained teachers open their classrooms for observations by their peers and participate in school-based professional learning along with further coaching and administrative support in order to build capacity.

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Martin County School District
***Focus Effective Professional Development – New
Teacher Mentoring***

Jensen Beach High School implemented a new teacher mentoring program to acclimate not only experienced teachers who have been recently hired but teachers who are new to the profession. The program consists of three components: (1) mentoring, (2) *New Teacher Handbook*, and (3) professional development workshops. Research (Aubrecht, 2010) has determined that “Mentoring/coaching is a continuum designed to help an emerging teacher develop into an innovative member of a school community.”

Each new teacher assigned to Jensen Beach High School is paired with a mentor, for which a differentiated approach is employed. Experienced teachers need a mentor who will simply assist them in learning the policies and procedures of Jensen Beach High School. Conversely, teachers new to the profession require a lot more assistance. In either case, the mentor serves as a coach, cheerleader, and confidant, as well as assists the mentee with instructional strategies and classroom management. The *New Teacher Handbook*, which is an addendum to the *Faculty Handbook*, serves as a one-source, ready reference for new teachers. It also assists mentors by standardizing the mentor/mentee relationship and expectations. Some of the topics addressed in the 30-page handbook include instructional strategies, lesson planning, and interacting with parents.

In addition to the established professional development program underway for faculty and staff, professional development workshops have been implemented for new teachers, which are conducted after school, once a month on a volunteer basis. Although initial topics are planned (e.g., classroom management, data analysis, lesson planning, project-based learning), teachers are surveyed as to topics that they would like incorporated into the workshops. Teachers also are surveyed at the end of the year to determine how successful the program was in helping them transition to Jensen Beach High School and ways to improve the program.

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Martin County School District
Use Data to Improve Instruction and
Increasing Graduation Requirements and Other Standards

Bring It 180! is an initiative in **Martin County** that emphasizes the importance of being in school. There are only 180 school days each year and everyday plays a crucial role in a student's overall academic achievement. Parents are encouraged to make regular school attendance a priority. The emphasis is on the parents guiding their child to make responsible decisions so that they are on time and ready to learn each day of school. Martin County has partnered with local government departments and agencies to promote and enforce the district's attendance policy as a means of improving student performance.

The goal of Bring It 180! is to increase the daily student attendance throughout the school year. In Martin County, the 2010 data shows that higher attendance does result in higher student achievement. For example, students who attend school (missing less than 10 days of school) showed +29 scale points on the grade 3 FCAT Math assessment. This initiative was launched during the 2009-10 school year which resulted in 17 of the 22 school sites showing an improvement in attendance. Schools are encouraged to contact and meet with parents and students who are not attending school regularly. The attendance rate for each school is calculated every 20 school days and shared with all stakeholders. Schools may be asked to develop an action plan to target student non-attendance. During the school year, a short survey is administered to a random sampling of students to determine what motivates a student to attend school and what factors hinder regular attendance. Looking at the 2010-11 school year, the 60-day count has provided promise with 8 of the 12 elementary, all 5 of the middle schools, and 2 of the 3 high schools increasing the percentage of students who are on target for meeting the requirement of the district's attendance policy.

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Miami-Dade County School District
Intensive Communication Autism Academies

Intensive Communication Autism Academies serving Pre-K – 2 students were launched at Blue Lakes Elementary School in the **Miami Dade County School District** during 2009-2010 and expanded during 2010-2011 at Redondo and Gratigny Elementary Schools. The overarching objective is to provide a curriculum focused on the communication needs of non-communicative students with Autism by utilizing state of the art technology and research-based best practices. Each Academy will provide a supportive setting for students with ASD and their families by training all school site personnel and establishing a menu of on-going parent workshops and support groups. Lastly, the sites will serve as professional development demonstration sites that are connected to research and development studies at local universities.

Last year, 95% of the kindergarten students enrolled in the academy who were uncommunicative upon entry into the program, made dramatic progress in communication skills by the end of the year, enabling them to be promoted to a regular general education first grade classroom.

Miami-Dade County School District
International Studies Preparatory Academy at Gables
(ISPA@Gables)

The International Studies program (IS) offers students the opportunity to pursue world language studies in addition to an academic curriculum with an international focus that addresses rigorous standards of both the United States (US) and European Union (EU) educational systems. In addition to the study of standard subject areas in English, students receive up to three hours of instruction in and through the language of choice: French, Italian, or Spanish. Students pursue studies in literature, mathematics, history, and geography taught in the target language, and are encouraged to work at the highest levels in Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) courses taught in the English language. This program offers students the opportunity to receive dual recognition of their studies, a US high school diploma and the equivalent diploma from the European country.

All schools implementing the IS program at the elementary and middle school levels have achieved the highest levels in the Florida accountability system and are among the top performing schools in students' academic achievement.

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Miami-Dade County School District
Secondary Student Success Center (S3C)

The Secondary Student Success Center (S3C) is a grade 6-12 secondary program designed to provide an accelerated educational experience for over-age students. S3C is a self-contained academic program designed to help middle school students who are behind two or more grade levels to catch up with their same age peers.

The high school component of the program is a three-year accelerated graduation option. The focus is on career preparation providing students with the opportunity to earn industry certification(s) in area(s) of interest in preparation to enter the workforce. Students will participate in internships to provide them with the types of experiences required to learn job related skills. Mentoring and career counseling are strong components of this program.

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Monroe County School District
Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)

AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) is a college-readiness system designed to increase the number of student who enroll in four-year colleges. Although AVID serves all students, it focuses on the least served students in the academic middle. The formula is simple – raise expectation of students and, with AVID support system in place, they will rise to the challenge. Today, AVID has been adopted by nearly 4,500 schools in 45 states, The District of Columbia and 16 countries/territories, and serves approximately 400,000 students, and grades 4-12. Schools and districts have taken methodologies and strategies from the elective course and implemented them school wide and district wide to impact their entire communities and create articulated programs for college success.

The **Monroe County School District** is implementing the AVID Program. At the high school and middle school level, AVID students are enrolled in their school's toughest classes, such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, concurrent or dual enrollment college courses, and Algebra 1 and High School Physical Science Honors in 8th grade. Students who take Algebra 1 and High School Physical Science Honors in the 8th grade are prepared for more advanced STEM coursework once they reach high school. They are also more likely to attend and graduate from college than eighth-graders who do not take Algebra and/or Physical Science. In an accelerated elective class – called AVID – taught within the school day by a trained AVID teacher, students receive support through a rigorous curriculum and ongoing, structured tutorials. AVID elective teachers support AVID students by providing academic training, managing their tutorials, working with faculty and parents, and by helping student develop long-range academic and personal plans. Use of AVID methodologies, such as Cornell note-taking and group collaboration, in all classes helps create a college-going culture across the campus. School wide achievement results from the professional development received by subject area teachers, counselors, administrators, district administrators, and especially through the success of the students targeted for the AVID elective. For example, at Horace O' Bryant Middle School, AVID students made truly noteworthy Learning Gains (as measured by the 2010 Spring FCAT administration) of 76% in Reading, 86% in Math and 100% in Writing! As further evidence of the program's success, the district grew the number of AVID sections in the four AVID schools from six to 16 this year due to increased student interest.

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Monroe County School District
Increased High School Graduation Requirements
and Other Standards

Take Stock in Children is a non-profit organization operating in nine Monroe County schools. The program provides a unique opportunity for low-income and at-risk students, many from minority families, to escape the cycle of poverty through education. Mentoring and support services begin in seventh grade when students sign a contract and agree to earn good grades, attend school regularly, follow the code of conduct, remain crime and drug free, and attend weekly meetings with their mentors. Students are counseled by their mentors and school staff to enroll in the most rigorous academic tracks as they matriculate through middle and high schools qualifying them to seek enrollment in the best colleges and universities.

The addition, a recent i3 development grant will enable the Take Stock in Children organization, mentors and students: to increase utilization of student data to increase academic success, increase the high school graduation rate for low-income and minority students, and increase college access and success for low-income and at-risk students.

In the last ten years, Monroe County's Take Stock in Children program has 301 graduates who have successfully completed the program and entered college.

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Nassau County School District
Increased Student Achievement through
Use of Assessments

The **Nassau County School District** has utilized Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Co-Teachers in all high schools to support these schools with increased achievement levels and to facilitate a reduction in their dropout rates. This has resulted in the Department of Education notification of reaching state exemplary status with regards to the number of students with disabilities who were proficient in both reading and math on the 2010 FCAT.

Nassau County School District
College Readiness and Acceleration

In response to Senate Bill 1908 addressing College Readiness and Acceleration courses for the students in the four high schools in the **Nassau County School District**. We are proud to report a 135% increase in dual enrollment referrals at Florida State College for the 2009-2010 academic year. The district had 416 student participants earning 3377 college credits. Ninety-six percent of the students earned a grade of "C" or better last year.

This achievement reflected the hard work of the superintendent, district staff, our high school administrators and teachers, and the outstanding students and parents of Nassau County.

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Nassau County School District
Increased Student Achievement through
Use of Assessments

Hilliard Elementary School in the **Nassau County School District** has the highest percentage of lower socio economic students in the district's grade K-5 population at 58.54%. This school has achieved remarkable success as a result of the baseline, mid year, and progress monitoring assessments, both formal and informal. The systems and resources utilized include FAIR, iCORE, Thinkgate, Lexia Learning Systems, and state-adopted basal materials.

The instructional fidelity is monitored, differentiated instruction is required, and student results are utilized fully in staff evaluations.

The substantive results of this focus are as follows:

07-08 Academic Year

- ◆ % meeting high standards in reading=73%
- ◆ % meeting high standards in math= 69%
- ◆ % meeting high standards in writing=93%
- ◆ % meeting high standards in science=55%
- ◆ % of lowest 25% making learning gains in reading=67%
- ◆ % of lowest 25% making learning gains in math= 77%

09-10 Academic Year

- ◆ % meeting high standards in reading=88%
- ◆ % meeting high standards in math= 93%
- ◆ % meeting high standards in writing=94%
- ◆ % meeting high standards in science=61%
- ◆ % of lowest 25% making learning gains in reading=59%
- ◆ % of lowest 25% making learning gains in math= 90%
- ◆

These results are proof that high expectations produce results, regardless of the socio economic status of the population.

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Nassau County School District ***RtI/Teacher Mentor Program***

RtI/Teacher Mentor Program 2009-2010 at Fernandina Beach High School in the **Nassau County School District** was designed to improve the academic achievement, attendance, and behavior of the lowest quartile of students in grades 9 and 10. Students scoring Level 1 and Level 2 on FCAT in Grades 9 and 10 are assigned a teacher mentor who:

- ◆ Conferences monthly with students and parents.
- ◆ Monitors students' progress.
- ◆ Identifies appropriate services or interventions.

That same RtI/Mentor Team will:

- ◆ Review student referrals.
- ◆ Collect and analyze baseline data.
- ◆ Support and facilitate the RtI process.

An analysis of FCAT Math and Reading scores, out-of-school suspensions, failures, and the number of students enrolled in the Community In Schools tutoring program reflects an increase in student achievement for participating students.

Comparing the Data from 2009 to 2010

- ◆ The number of Grade 10 students participating in the RtI/Mentoring Program and scoring in the school's lowest quartile in Math dropped by 69%.
- ◆ The mean developmental scale score of the students participating in the RtI/Mentoring Program increased by 78 points in Math.
- ◆ The number of Grade 10 students participating in the RtI/Mentoring Program and scoring in the school's lowest quartile in Reading dropped by 42%.
- ◆ The mean developmental scale score of the students participating in the RtI/Mentoring Program increased by 57 points in Reading.
- ◆ The number of Grade 9 students participating in the RtI/Mentoring Program and scoring in the school's lowest quartile in Math dropped by 49%.
- ◆ The mean developmental scale score of the students participating in the RtI/Mentoring Program increased by 78 points in Math.
- ◆ The number of Grade 10 students participating in the RtI/Mentoring Program and scoring in the school's lowest quartile in Reading dropped by 35%.
- ◆ The mean developmental scale score of the students participating in the RtI/Mentoring Program increased by 115 points in Reading.
- ◆ The number of out-of-school suspensions for students in Grades 9 and 10 decreased by 41%.
- ◆ The number classes failed by 9th Grade students decreased by 86%.
- ◆ The number of classes failed by 10th Grade students decreased by 44%.
- ◆ The number of students voluntarily participating in the Community in Schools Tutoring Program has nearly doubled (08-09: 26 students, 09-10: 44 students, 10-11: 50 students).

Twenty-two teachers and 136 students are participating in the RtI Teacher Mentor program in 2010-2011. New components for 2010-11 include adding school administrators, counselors and dean as mentors for:

- ◆ Students who are over-age and behind their cohort group.
- ◆ Students with more than 3 unexcused absences (attendance meetings are held with students and parents are contacted).
- ◆ Students with failures in 2 or more subjects.

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Okaloosa County School District
***Increase Advanced Science, Technology, Engineering and
Mathematics (STEM) Coursework***

One important STEM initiative is to increase the rigor and relevance of the K-12 math and science programs with a focus on preparing students for college and career readiness. Every student should graduate with the scientific and mathematical prowess to be successful in their college or career choices. The district course mappings for math and science have been carefully designed to help students reach this goal. The regular middle school math curriculum prepares students for Algebra 1 in the ninth grade; however, district pacing guides for the third through fifth grade math curriculum provide for enrichment and depth so that more students enter middle school at the advanced mathematics level thus placing them on track for Algebra 1 as early as 7th or 8th grade. Both Algebra 1 Honors and Geometry Honors are offered at each middle school. Also offered at middle school for the accelerated students are honors-level high school science courses. By beginning these courses in middle school these students have the opportunity to engage in more advanced math and science coursework such as Advanced Placement, Dual Enrollment, AICE, and International Baccalaureate program prior to graduation.

Multiple training opportunities for teachers including AIMS, Florida PROMiSE, and district developed workshops targeting specific areas of need. For example, to empower elementary teachers with increased math content knowledge and expertise, monthly Math Focus trainings develop “math specialists” for each elementary school. In addition, vertical alignment teams meet in elementary-middle-high school feeder patterns to align math and science programs and to ensure progress towards district goals.

Supportive Strategies:

- ◆ Streamlining of math course options for grades 6 through 12 providing course mappings that progress students to at least the Algebra 2 level by their senior year.
- ◆ Streamlining of science course options for grades 6 through 12 providing course mappings that progress students to at least the Chemistry or Physics level by their junior year.
- ◆ Vertical Alignment Trainings for Elementary to Middle and Middle to High transition.
- ◆ Professional Development for Algebra, Geometry, and Biology teachers on curriculum, effective instructional strategies, and EOC Assessment requirements
- ◆ Implementation of Math for College Readiness at each district high school for high school seniors
- ◆ National Defense Education Program provides funding for:
 - Summer Math Camp for minority and struggling students entering Algebra 1
 - Professional development for teachers of Math for College Readiness
 - Graphing calculators and online homework assistance for Math for College Readiness classes
 - Math Counts program
 - Science Fair Success training and materials for increasing participation of minority and low socio-economic students

- The addition of a Robotics sortie for the Engineers for America elementary and middle school program
- ◆ Math tutoring for middle and high school students
- ◆ Class sets of graphing calculators provided for every high school
- ◆ Professional development for secondary math teachers on the effective use of graphing technology
- ◆ Monthly Math Focus trainings for elementary “math specialists” from each elementary school in the district

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Okaloosa County School District
Expand Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
(STEM) Offerings

In an effort to expand STEM offerings, the **Okaloosa County School District** has actively sought partnerships with the STEM community. Partnerships bring innovative programs into the schools which help to develop strong relevance and increase experiential learning opportunities. Partnerships also create a platform for teachers to develop a relationship with engineers and scientists for informal learning and resource opportunities.

Engineers for America (EFA) is a program resulting from a partnership with the U.S. Air Force Armament Museum Foundation. Teachers attend summer Lead Teacher Workshops to enrich their background knowledge of Next Generation Standards, experience first-hand the inquiry-based learning activities (“sorties”), and interact with engineers from the local STEM community. Each sortie includes background information, student activities, and follow-up activities. The district provides busses for students to visit the museum. Student visits are always initiated by a volunteer engineer taking them on a tour to help them see the displays through the eyes of an engineer. Recently the 5th grade program has been expanded to include middle school sorties. Parent chaperones have commented that the students have more fun and learn more than on any other fieldtrip.

Another successful partnership has been with the National Defense Industry Association (NDIA). An ACCErator Grant program supports teachers with \$1000 for activities which develop interest in STEM. As a result of the partnership, students have participated in projects such as: Tom Bayou Study; Let’s Go NANO; NaGISA; Minds in Motion; Kids at the Beach; Going Deep; Planting Big Ideas; To Infinity and Beyond, Young Science Scholars Summer Lab; Turtle Tracking; Robot City; Probing in Science; and a Digital View. Many of these projects included partnerships with additional community STEM volunteers.

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Okaloosa County School District

Improve Access to State Data

In an effort to improve end-user productivity and access to the school district's legacy database, Information Systems has developed a single-sign on system entitled Portal to Access Web-based Services (PAWS). The portal model provides end users with a "one stop shop" that allows them to access the various applications that are necessary to complete day-to-day operations. Access to the various PAWS applications is dependent upon security profiles which are determined by job responsibilities of the end user. Below is a brief description of the various applications that are accessible through the portal:

- ◆ Student Dashboard – This application provides user friendly, graphical interface access to student information housed on the school district's legacy database. In years past end users would have to request "green bar" reports and sort through the data by hand. The Student Dashboard application is accessible through the internet which allows teachers and principals to have instant access to data sets which in turn allows them to focus their curriculum and differentiate instruction for continued improvement in student achievement.
- ◆ Grade Reporting, Assessment, Distribution and Entry System (GRADES) - The GRADES application is a web-based gradebook that was developed "in house" by the district's programming staff. GRADES is utilized by teachers to record grades, generate progress reports and provide parents with feedback on student performance. The GRADES application includes a parent portal which allows parents to have real-time access to their students' grades and attendance. Additionally, there are various reports that administrators and teachers can generate to view students' progress throughout the nine week period.
- ◆ Online Applicant Services and Inquiry System (OASIS) – OASIS is a web-based tool that allows administrators to efficiently track the process of hiring employees from the initial advertisement through selection.
- ◆ Work Order, Labor and Facilities System (WOLF) – WOLF is a web-based work order system that allows end users to process and track work orders that are submitted to maintenance. This application has assisted in expediting the work order process for school site and district locations.

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Okaloosa County School District
Focus Effective Professional Development

A new professional development initiative that began in the 2009-2010 school year has been to improve training and support for all beginning teachers in the **Okaloosa County School District**. In order to do this effectively, the New Teacher Induction Program was reviewed and revised this year and last year, extra evening classes were added, and peer mentors assigned to all new teachers. The training covers the Accomplished Teacher Practices focusing on assessment, communication, classroom management, and knowledge of subject matter. Formative Mentor/mentee assessments are conducted three times during the school year to ascertain that the mentor/mentee relationship is working and where support is needed. Exit interviews will be conducted in May 2011.

Peer mentors are assigned to a new teacher after receiving Clinical Educator training. In addition, peer mentors received training on the requirements of peer mentors, conducting formative observations, and completing required district paperwork. As of this school year, the Program Director of Professional Development and the district literacy coaches are providing additional support through scheduled school visits to all beginning teachers. In the 2009-2010 school year, the district retained all beginning teachers except for three.

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Okeechobee County School District
Use Data to Improve Instruction

Although 2010 FCAT data did not bear out the academic progress made within the school system of Okeechobee, Florida, in 2009, our school district was graded "A" for the first time, and we will continue to implement what we believe are successful initiatives which helped us to achieve that designation. To name a few, within the past 5 years, this district has invested over \$12 million dollars in hardware and software to initiate student progress monitoring. To enhance the capability of our teachers and administrators in utilizing these tools, the district has also spent over \$1 million in professional development, utilizing Title funds, state dollars and opportunities provided through our Heartland Education Consortium.

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Orange County School District
Drive Improvement in Persistently Low-Achieving Schools

Orange County Public Schools is prepared to fully support and sustain the Transformation Model for Memorial Middle School, Evans High School, and Oak Ridge High School. Assigned staff members have extensive background and expertise in school operations; Florida Continuous Improvement Model; Professional Learning Communities; instructional calendars; lesson study; Response to Intervention; content area expertise in reading, math, writing, and science; and the best instructional practices, such as Marzano's High Yield and the AVID strategies. This cadre of experts is dedicated to pushing forward educational reform and includes the Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, two Associate Superintendents of Curriculum and Student Services, three Area Superintendents, the Director of Curriculum Services, in addition to district resource staff, and school leadership teams consisting of principals, assistant principals for instruction, deans, department lead teachers, and learning resource teachers at each of the schools.

Professional development to help create enduring school cultures of positive relationships will be supported through the School Improvement funds during the first year of the grant and Race to the Top funding of training provided by the Flippen Group: Capturing Kids' Hearts, a nationally endorsed training to enhance teacher capacity in promoting positive student-teacher relationships.

The feeder pattern schools of these three Transformation Model schools, all Title I, will participate in the transformation activities sponsored by the three targeted schools. These feeder schools will benefit from collaboration for vertical articulation in curriculum planning and professional development, including the expansion of AVID training to the feeder elementary schools.

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Orange County School District
Expand Lesson Study (low achieving schools)

The three persistently low-achieving schools in **Orange County**---Evans and Oak Ridge high schools and Memorial Middle School---will modify their school schedules to devote a minimum of one lesson study per month for each grade level or subject area. This will support teacher content knowledge with a focus on the common core standards. Supported by the Orange County Public Schools One Vision, One Voice Teaching and Learning Framework, lesson study will improve instruction through building the capacity of all teachers. The ability to monitor implementation and provide sustained support is evidenced through the district's Plan of Involvement process which is an intense, sustained support system of targeted school actions of data analysis, monitoring, progress accountability, professional development, coaching, and implementation of interventions. This plan has been recognized as an effective process by the Florida Department of Education's regional director. The district intervention of the Plan of Involvement process will be maintained for each school.

Orange County School District
School Leadership Program

In 2009, the **Orange County School District** was awarded a five-year federal School Leadership Program grant. The district is implementing a system-wide structure of mentoring and professional development opportunities entitled *The BRIDGE Leadership Program - Building Rigor into Developing Great Educational Leadership*. This project is designed to recruit, train and retain assistant principals and principals, especially in high need schools. The program identifies three tiers of leadership development: teachers participating in the Aspiring Leaders Program, assistant principals participating in the Preparing New Principals Program and newly appointed principals participating in the Principal Induction Program. The grant funds support mentoring financial incentives for assistant principals to mentor teacher leaders, for principals to mentor assistant principals and for contracted coaches (retired qualified principals) to mentor newly appointed principals. Funds also support comprehensive online, on site, workshop, graduate, and conference professional development.

There is an emphasis on diversity and minority representation in recruitment of new leadership to help meet the challenges of working in high need schools. Professional development includes two track options for the Aspiring Leaders Program, one of which will include the opportunity to earn a Master's Degree in Education from Stetson University and Educational Leadership certification from the Florida Department of Education and the implementation of a structured, district-wide system of mentoring new principals in the Principal Induction Program. To help expand rigor, The BRIDGE Leadership Program also funds training opportunities for leaders in the form of summer institutes and professional leadership dialogues.

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Orange County School District
Provide Support for Educator Prep Programs

Orange County Public Schools has had a district developed Alternative Certification Program for eight years, which is formally covered in Rule 6A – 5.066, F.A.C. Orange County has always been at the forefront of alternative pathways for teachers through partnerships with American Board and the local Education Preparation Institute. The district program’s student achievement scores rank Orange County Public Schools in the top five statewide in reading and math gains as compared to other districts. The district also has a Transition to Teaching grant that support ESE, math and science teachers to enter teaching and complete the Alternative Certification Program. As a part of this grant teachers receive free program tuition and a completion bonus for teaching in the district for three or more years.

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Orange County School District ***Improve Access to State Data***

Since school year 2004-2005, **Orange County Public Schools** has been developing a data warehouse. This initiative will set the stage for comprehensive enterprise-wide business intelligence and the prodigious return on investment. The following goals will be supported:

- ◆ **Goal 1** To implement the tools required to effectively manage the complexities of this district's Information.
- ◆ **Goal 2** To build the foundation for sharing data across the district in a controlled and managed environment.
- ◆ **Goal 3** To provide a consistent enterprise-wide view to the end user ensuring data integrity and reliability.
- ◆ **Goal 4** To facilitate end user self sufficiency including teachers, students and parents.
- ◆ **Goal 5** To cultivate a well-trained staff.
- ◆ **Goal 6** To execute a well-managed district.

The Enterprise Data Warehouse thus far can be described as a suite of tools housing data in two main areas: (1) business (i.e. SAP, facilities, etc.) and (2) student and teacher data (i.e. FCAT performance, progression toward graduation, highly qualified staff, etc.). Selected groups of district personnel can view this data; however, the warehouse is not fully implemented at the district, learning community, schools, teacher, and student levels. Some historical data is available to allow for trend analyses and certain statistical data can be viewed for grades 3 – 10 only. Demographic, enrollment, schedules, academic history, discipline, attendance, sub groups, test scores, and staff information have been loaded for school years 2004-2005 to present.

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Orange County School District ***Teacher Incentive Fund***

Orange County Public Schools developed a compensation system proposal which ties teacher performance to placement on a "step range." If a teacher reaches set performance goals, the teacher is eligible for a full step increase. If the teacher exceeds performance goals, the teacher can receive an enhanced step, up to 25% more than the target step. If the teacher falls short of set goals, the teacher would only earn a partial step, possibly 50% of the target step. The measures include "Teacher Assessment," which has emphasis on student learning gains and a "Teacher Pick," which is selected by the teacher from a pre-approved list of measures compiled by the district in collaboration with the Classroom Teachers Association.

The plan also has a bonus opportunity for teachers working in a high need school or teaching a critical subject. The bonus amount can also increase based on performance. Orange County Public Schools was awarded the Teacher Incentive Fund grant and is currently in the planning year and is collaborating with the union on plan details.

TEACHER INCENTIVE FUND I (TIF I):

In 2007, Orange County Public Schools was awarded a five-year federal Teacher Incentive Fund grant to implement a performance-based compensation system in Evans, Jones and Oak Ridge high schools and seven Title I feeder pattern middle schools. This grant will continue through the second year of the Race to the Top four-year project period. In Year 3 of Race to the Top, these schools will transition to and pilot the compensation system for secondary schools, aligned with the Race to the Top requirements.

TEACHER INCENTIVE FUND II (TIF II):

Teacher Incentive Fund II: One Vision, One Voice will support implementation of a performance-based compensation system in 15 high need elementary schools which feed into the district's three highest need, low income, high minority high schools and their seven feeder Title I middle schools. This proposal focuses on the following target populations: (1) teachers, principals, paraprofessionals and other school-based certified educators in the 15 targeted elementary schools; and (2) other certified teachers working in the secondary schools targeted in the 2007 Teacher Incentive Fund I program, but who were not served (legislation did not allow until recent changes), including guidance counselors, deans, resource teachers, media specialists, academic coaches and other certified teachers. Building on the first grant, the proposed Teacher Incentive Fund II: One Vision, One Voice will potentially serve 715 classroom teachers, 30 principals and assistant principals, 59 other certified educators, and 139 paraprofessionals per year.

The objectives are to increase the number of highly effective teachers and administrators in high need schools through implementation of a performance-based compensation system that rewards educators primarily based on student growth; offer high quality professional development to teachers, principals and paraprofessionals; recruit and retain highly effective teachers and principals; and develop a data system that links student achievement data with the performance-based compensation system, professional development, and evaluation of teachers and administrators. The result of the One Vision, One Voice initiative, aligned with Race to the Top standards, will be a comprehensive performance-based compensation system in the district's highest need K-12 schools that supports effective teaching and improved student achievement.

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Osceola County School District
Drive Improvement in Persistently
Low-Achieving Schools

The **Osceola County School District** has initiated extended time for students and for teachers in order to improve student achievement in our lowest-performing schools. A seventh-period class was added to the regular instructional day for students in 2009/2010, resulting in an increase of 11.7 percent in the district graduation rate of 67.5 percent in 2007/2009 to 79.2 percent for 2008/2009. The three striving schools showed an average increase in their graduation rate of 16.6 percent.

In 2010/2011, the work day for teachers has been increased by 1 hour per week to provide time for lesson study and common instructional planning. The work day has also been extended an additional 2.5 hours per week for Content-Area Specialists/Department Chairs at each of three striving schools, to allow for increased teacher leadership. Teachers are also improving instructional practice through the district partnership with Learning Focused Solutions, Inc., a model built on research and evidence-based exemplary practice.

Osceola County School District
Development of a Seamless Pathway for Science, Technology,
Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Focused Programs

In the **Osceola County School District**, the STEM pathway begins at Chestnut Elementary School for Science and Engineering with students in Grades K-5 participating in STEMOLOGY four days per week. STEMOLOGY is an introduction to applied science and mathematics through the use of technology and engineering fundamentals.

With their STEM interest peaked, Chestnut students will matriculate to their natural feeder school, Discovery Intermediate, where they will begin to focus their STEM knowledge to Engineering, Aerospace, and Bio-Technology themes. Through theme experience, students will begin to establish some life goals and look toward a STEM major at Poinciana High School.

The final stage of the STEM pathway at Poinciana High School brings students to a STEM major in either the Engineering or Health Occupations Academies. From here, students will have a clear direction and preparation for a postsecondary education and career in STEM.

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Palm Beach County School District ***Educational Data Warehouse***

The purpose of the Educational Data Warehouse is to provide student and school assessment, demographic, academic, and behavioral information to teachers and administrators throughout the school year to facilitate instructional and organizational decision making that leads to improved student outcomes.

The Educational Data Warehouse develops customer-driven, user-friendly reporting solutions (student listings, graphs, dashboards, and scorecards) on student and school assessment, demographic, academic, and behavioral information for the **School District of Palm Beach County's** school, area, and district personnel. Some of these reports help measure the progress of each student and school toward the standards defined by federal (No Child Left Behind - NCLB), state (A+ Plan), and district criteria. Other Educational Data Warehouse reports enable administrators to monitor historical school performance, evaluate current student performance on Next Generation Sunshine State Standards, and compare schools to each other and to the district to determine the schools' return on investment. Teachers are able to monitor the progress of their students' academic achievement and performance as well as their attendance and behavior. As a result, teachers and administrators can make timely changes in their instructional and organizational practices to ensure that all of our students receive the best possible education.

Over one million reports were accessed by teachers and administrators last year. Since the beginning of this school year, users have already accessed 33% more reports compared to the same time period last year.

The Educational Data Warehouse team also provides over 400 professional development sessions each year to teachers and school, area, and district administrators, through workshops and presentations on accessing, interpreting, and applying the information in the Educational Data Warehouse.

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Palm Beach County School District

Learning Team Meetings

The **School District of Palm Beach County** utilizes a Learning Team Meeting (LTM) Model. This model is an exceptional approach using the Learning Team Meeting as the innovation to improve the use of data to increase achievement for high-need students.

LTM Model Protocols - The Model relies on three evidence-based protocols that serve as the vehicle to drive the agenda of the Learning Team Meeting. These protocols include: **1) Data-Feedback-Strategy (D-F-S)** - This method uses the results of formative and interim assessments in CORE K12 education and the Educational Data Warehouse to review data to determine the student strengths or weaknesses on which to focus during the Learning Team Meeting. The Data-Feedback-Strategy method (research of The Efficacy Institute) enables teams to analyze, evaluate, and use data obtained from the assessments, so that informed decisions about instruction can be made to improve student achievement and growth as well as teacher performance and productivity. Teachers and parents use the Data-Feedback-Strategy method so students become cognizant of their strengths and weaknesses and learn to formulate their own strategies for improvement. **2) Standards in Practice (SiP)** is the second protocol used in the Learning Team Meetings. Developed by The Education Trust, Standards in Practice is comprised of six steps that help teachers develop rigorous standards-based assignments. The unique characteristic of Standards in Practice is that teachers create rigorous assignments for students, gauge their performance, and then verify that performance on formative and interim assessments in CORE K12 education or the Educational Data Warehouse. The district's Educational Data Warehouse contains student writing performance data on the state testing program and the district's fall and winter benchmark assessments. **3) Unpacking Standards** is the third evidence-based protocol, adapted from the Assessment Literacy work of Dr. Richard Stiggins, helps teachers focus on developing clear learning targets for students. Using this regularly, teams ensure that academic targets are not only clear to the teachers but are also stated in student-friendly language and therefore clear to students and parents.

The Learning Team Meeting Model will demonstrate that the systematic use of high quality assessment data with structured, coherent, and well-defined protocols will result in increases in the percentage of students being proficient and the rate of increase for students not proficient becoming proficient. Even where high quality data exists, if it is not analyzed, understood and utilized in a meaningful way by teachers to improve instruction so that their students (especially those with high-needs) can achieve, then the data is not useful and teachers could still look at students as the "problem" rather than their instructional practices. The Learning Team Meeting Model creates confidence for skillful use; it builds teacher efficacy; is usable; meaningful; and empowering. Research, local experience, and data show that the Learning Team Meeting Model with its three evidence-based protocols improves instruction and leads to improved achievement.

The district has shown substantial improvements in reading and math according to the FCAT since fiscal year 05 and in science since the first year of implementation in fiscal year 06. Table 1 shows the increasing percentage of proficient students and the decreasing percentage of students at the lowest level (1).

Table 1	Reading % Proficient	Math % Proficient	% Level 1 Reading	% Level 1 Math
	53.4	61.5	25.4	18.5
FY06	56.4	62.7	22.8	17.1
FY07	57.8	63.4	21.7	15.5
FY08	59.6	68.1	20.7	14.3
FY09	61.6	70.2	18.4	12.7

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Pasco County School District
Increased Student Achievement through
Use of Assessments

As part of the **Pasco County School District's** commitment to the use of data, the district continues to seek ways to enhance the assessment resources available to teachers and administrators. The district has enhanced its data warehouse system, Pasco Star, to make it more user-friendly and to accommodate additional sources of data. This customized version enables teachers and administrators to more easily analyze disaggregated data. In addition to FCAT and No Child Left Behind (NBCLB) data, Pasco STAR now contains data about interventions for at-risk students, benchmark assessments, grade point average, attendance and behavior. As new district-wide assessments are developed, they will be uploaded into Pasco STAR. Classroom data is also shared with the parents of secondary students via our electronic grade book, e-sembler.

Pasco has acquired Core K-12 Assessments for grades 2-11 in mathematics and science. These assessments have been blueprinted and aligned to Pasco's curriculum. They will be administered this year along with FAIR assessments (reading). Pasco had also blueprinted end-of-semester assessments, but is waiting as the Department of Education implements end-of-course assessment before moving forward with this initiative. Curriculum maps have been revised to reflect the new standards and are aligned to the benchmark assessments. These are provided to all teachers. In addition to the new assessments, Pasco has provided comprehensive training to teachers and administrators so they better understand how to use assessment data to drive instructional decision-making. This concept is reinforced through the coaching model, as all schools have a coach that is focused on helping educators how to maximize data to make decisions about the needs of students and assign resources based upon those needs.

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Pasco County School District ***Use Data to Improve Instruction***

The **Pasco County School District** has won national and state recognition for its implementation of the Problem-Solving/Response to Instruction-Intervention (PS/RtI) framework. Pasco was selected as a Problem-Solving/Response to Instruction-Intervention pilot project district in a partnership with the University of South Florida. Problem-Solving/Response to Instruction-Intervention coaches have been trained to utilize data to determine the behavioral and instructional needs of students and to devise appropriate support and intervention strategies.

Problem-Solving/Response to Instruction-Intervention coaches work with School-Based Leadership Teams to:

- ◆ Conduct needs assessment to understand the current reality in their school.
- ◆ Assess practices and programs of the school on the basis of their impact on learning.
- ◆ Promote sustainability of improvement efforts by increasing capacity for data analysis and problem solving.
- ◆ Align systems (For example, practices with school priorities).
- ◆ Create structures to support the goals and align resources in direct proportion to needs.
- ◆ Develop systems to provide more time and support for struggling students.
- ◆ Work with teachers to enhance their effectiveness in helping all students through data.
- ◆ Provide technical assistance, coaching, and professional development on implementing Problem-Solving/Response to Instruction-Intervention.

For the past three years, Pasco has focused on supporting schools in the implementation of Problem-Solving/Response to Instruction-Intervention to improve systemic, educator, and student outcomes. Implementation of the framework has expanded to schools throughout the district and the results have been powerful. Pasco has been identified as a Model for Problem-Solving/Response to Instruction-Intervention implementation and has been recruited to participate on a national study on the impact of Response to Intervention conducted by the USDOE. This success is representative of the amazing work that is being done throughout the district with the implementation. Districts across the nation are visiting Pasco to learn about Problem-Solving/Response to Instruction-Intervention. The district's Problem-Solving/Response to Instruction-Intervention implementation was independently evaluated by the University of South Florida to determine its impact on student achievement. At its core, the framework is about the use of data-based decision making to help understand the needs of students. The district then allocates resources to match those needs. This is a successful strategy for improving student achievement throughout the district.

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Pasco County School District
Implement Proven Programs for School Improvement

The graduation rate for the **Pasco County School District** is currently 83.5% and continues to improve each year, while exceeding the state average of 78.6%. Additionally, Pasco's drop-out rate continues to plummet each year, reaching an all time low of 1.2% (the state average is 2.3%). These impressive results are achieved through a culmination of efforts. Pasco's secondary schools have developed and implemented the Early Warning System. This system is used to identify at-risk students based on a variety of data collected at regular intervals such as attendance, academic performance and behavior. Targeted interventions are provided within a multi-tiered system of support in accordance with the students' needs. The use of data to identify needs and better align support services is part of our district's focus on implementing the Problem-Solving/Response to Intervention framework. Through the Early Warning System, Graduation Enhancement Teachers are assigned to work with at-risk students. These teachers work directly with students and a team of educators and support staff (guidance counselors, social workers, etc) to identify and remove barriers to student success. They ensure that students remain on track for graduation and help establish post-secondary or career planning with students. Through the development of meaningful relationships with at-risk students, these Graduation Enhancement Teachers are able to establish a positive rapport with students and provide the individualized case management that some students need to reach their educational goals.

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Pinellas County School District
Bolster Technology for Improved Instruction
and Assessment

Surveys from faculty, staff, students and parents from Clearwater High School indicate the need for more technology integration. Students today think differently and technology is an integral part of their lives. The 21st Century learner needs to be engaged through technology. We have seen a positive increase in test scores and class grades when a greater emphasis is placed on the use of technology.

It is our goal for the 2010-2011 school year to have a Kindle in the hands of every one of our students and to utilize the device to increase a love for literacy. Our students and staff are utilizing the Kindle for reading textbooks, classroom novels, and library books; highlighting and taking notes; and accessing internet resources for research, email grades, attendance date, and wiki/Moodle discussions. This year, we are placing our math textbooks, English textbooks, *The St. Petersburg Times*, *The Tampa Tribune*, numerous novels, and supplemental math and science books on the Kindle. Eventually, 100% of our students' textbooks will be on the Kindle. We believe that Clearwater High School is the only public school in the nation to implement a Kindle initiative school wide.

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Pinellas County School District
Drive Improvement in Persistently
Low-Achieving Schools

The mission of the University of Florida's Lastinger Center for Learning is to develop master teachers who ignite student learning in highest needs schools -- with an intentional focus on improving teacher learning and practice. The goal is to help schools and districts develop structures, conditions, and supports to facilitate continuous teacher learning. The Lastinger Center for Learning has a comprehensive school reform model based on enhancing teaching practice and student achievement through the development of professional learning communities and offering a job-embedded graduate program for practicing educators. A unique feature of the program is the professor in residence – a University of Florida faculty member who lives in the school district and works side by side with teachers in partner schools.

At present in the district's 34 partner schools, a total of 57 elementary teachers and 22 secondary math and science teachers are enrolled in the graduate degree program and more than six hundred teachers will participate in the inquiry-focused professional development program in 2010-11. The Lastinger team in **Pinellas** includes three professors in residence, two program coordinators and one part-time administrative support person. There are numerous published studies that report on the positive impact that the Lastinger model has on student academic performance.

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Pinellas County School District
Improve Access to State Data
Use Data to Improve Instruction

Pinellas County Schools currently employs a technology known as Microsoft Active Directory Federated Services to provide single sign-on access to state reports and resources such as Sunshine Connections and the Portal for Exceptional Education Resources. This technology allows teachers and staff members to use the same login credentials they use every day to access their computer, email, gradebook, and a plethora of local school district resources to access the state resources. The district has heard loud and clear from teachers and others that having to remember a different password for new systems is a huge barrier.

The district has responded by setting up the necessary hardware and software connections needed to ensure there is a convenient link in the PCS Portal, which most teachers and other staff members use for work such as attendance, grades, and to access local student data. Staff members are now able to use the same username and password with which they are already familiar. Whether teachers are researching FCAT scores or updating an Individualized Education Plan for a student by using the Portal for Exceptional Education Resources system, they can get online in a matter of seconds without the frustration of scrambling for a different set of login credentials that they don't already have memorized.

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Polk County School District
Expand Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
(STEM) Offerings
Increase Advanced STEM Coursework

The **Polk County School District** has received an Advanced Placement Incentive Programs grant through which it has established the Department of Academic Rigor to support the district's goals in continuing its impressive expansion of Advanced Placement courses and student participation. This department is focusing efforts to improve student performance on Advanced Placement exams through the continuance of an Advanced Placement Summit for all current and prospective Advanced Placement teachers to analyze data and share best practices; initiation of a district Advanced Placement endorsement for all disciplines requiring all Advanced Placement teachers to complete a locally sponsored Advanced Placement institute during each five-year validity period; and implementation of STEM academies in nine of the district's traditional middle schools to promote these academic areas and enhance the Advanced Placement pipeline of students matriculating to feeder pattern high schools. Additional expansion efforts include articulation with local colleges to bring dual enrollment courses to the high school campuses and Advanced Placement offerings made available through virtual education.

In 2010 the district opened a Biotechnology Academy at Lake Gibson High School to add to the other STEM-related career academies established prior to the baseline 2009-2010 school year which are listed below.

- ◆ Power – Tenoroc High School
- ◆ Pathways to Engineering (PLTW) – George Jenkins High School
- ◆ Aerospace Technologies – Kathleen High School
- ◆ Engineering Technology – Ridge Community High School
- ◆ Drafting/Illustrative Design Technology – George Jenkins, Kathleen, Lake Region, Winter Haven, Tenoroc, Lake Gibson, Frostproof High Schools
- ◆ Engineering Technology – Bartow, Ridge Community High Schools
- ◆ Construction Technology – Frostproof High School

Future proposed academies include Pathways to Engineering (PLTW) at Frostproof Middle Sr. in 2011-2012, Environmental Resources at Haines City High School in 2012-2013 and a second Environmental Resources Academy at Fort Meade Middle Senior High School in 2013-2014.

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Polk County School District
Focus on Low Performing Schools

Oscar J. Pope Elementary scored a school grade of F on the 2008 – 2009 FCAT. As an Exceptional Student Education (ESE) cluster school, the ESE student achievement was very low and was negatively impacting their AYP status. With extensive district support and professional development, the school initiated a school-wide inclusion model for all but the most significantly, cognitively challenged students. For the first time ESE students were provided grade-level instruction in the general education setting with supports and scaffolding from newly trained ESE teachers. Using co-teaching and a focus on high-yield instructional strategies, under the direction of new administrators Angela Gordon (principal) and Qvonda Birdsong (assistant principal), the 2009 – 2010 FCAT scores soared. The students scoring in the lowest 25% increased their learning gains from 33% in reading to 60%. While these students raised their math scores from 37% to 83%. In addition, the students in the ESE cells also had proficiency gains in both reading (22% to 29%) and math (28% to 34%).

Oscar J. Pope Elementary was afforded the opportunity to apply for and receive the federal School Improvement Grant for the 2010 – 2013 school years. As part of that grant, the school day has been extended to provide extra math, writing, and reading instruction for all students during an extended day. The student day is now 30 minutes longer for a total of 7.5 hours (450 minutes). The final half hour of the day is spent with all students reading at their independent reading level and conferencing with teachers as part of the Action 100 Reading Program. All staff members are supporting small groups of students to read and respond to text at their grade level. The parents and staff are very impressed with the amount of reading that is taking place, followed by meaningful student summaries and responses. Once again the ESE students are leading the way.

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Putnam County School District
Learning Gains Index- A Data Analysis of Teacher Effectiveness

In the **Putnam County School District**, the learning gains index allows the district to take an historical look at teacher effectiveness. We are able to group core area teachers in math and reading by quintiles. This comparison to other teachers in the same field and class allows an ability to clearly point out the most successful when it comes to student growth. This has led to a sharing of best practices as well as a much needed personal ownership of an individual teacher's results. It also allows us to look at individual student growth and set clear expectations taking into account many variables. The data makes us address the fact, not all teachers are the same, and ask ourselves, what are we going to do about it.

Putnam County School District
Post-Secondary Readiness

All 8th grade students in the **Putnam County School District** take the Explore[ACT] and all 11th grade students take the ACT. This will allow the district to put incoming freshman on a graduating track relative to their interest as well as ability. The results from the 11th grade exam should enhance the district's ability to provide necessary remedial courses for seniors to reduce the college remediation rate as well provide more opportunity for industry certification.

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Putnam County School District
Southern Region Education Board (SREB) Initiative

The **Putnam County School Board** has partnered with the Southern Region Education Board (SREB) in an effort to turn around the district's middle and high schools. This partnership has led to the establishment of professional learning communities throughout our district. These interactive discussions have led to school faculties reallocating resources for student achievement. We have increased the number of meaningful relationships between responsible adults and students. We implemented a student to student orientation/mentoring program, and are currently adopting a no fail policy, requiring all work to be completed at a passing level. These are just a few of the measurable initiatives being implemented by the SREB. We are also preparing to implement Project Lead The Way in all our middle and high schools, a STEM approved curriculum. This individual ownership by the teachers and administrators has played a key role in our attaining the highest increase in graduation rates in Putnam County over the last 10 years.

Putnam County School District
Energy Management Plan

Even though the **Putnam County School District** was ranked as one of the most efficient districts when it came to energy consumption, the district developed a very aggressive energy plan. It required all facilities to be monitored on a daily basis. This monitoring combined with a schedule to keep us out of peak demand times led to an immediate reduction in usage of over 20%. This translated into a cash savings of over \$400,000.00. The posting of our energy results on the web has made all employees more aware of the roles they can play at their individual sites and has us continuing to look for ways to reduce costs.

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St. Johns County School District
***Bolster Technology for Improved Instruction
and Assessment***

The **St. Johns County School District** expects to continue its efforts to expand technology in the following ways:

- ◆ Expand the use of Teacher computers by providing each teacher with a new standard Windows computer every three (3) years. The District has completed 2 full cycles of the Computer Refresh Plan in 2006 and again in 2009. The next distribution of new teacher and key school administrator computers is scheduled for spring 2012.
- ◆ Expand the use of technology in the classroom. The District's standard classroom includes: Teacher Sound Enhancement, Digital projectors, Document Cameras, Student Computers and Teacher computers. Other technology in use at various levels include: Smart Boards, Student Response systems, digital calculators and more.
- ◆ Expand access to technology resources and the Internet. The District continues to increase its Internet bandwidth each year. For 2010-2011 the District has expanded its connection to the Internet from 65Mbps to 100Mbps. In addition, the District continues to expand the internal site-to-site infrastructure speed throughout our Wide Area Network (WAN). All of these improvements will aid in expanding access to instructional content and online assessments.
 - The District also uses a Student Information System called eSIS that incorporates a Teacher specific module called Teacher Assistant (TA). Teacher Assistant gives teachers an instant look at a student's academic progress and history. In addition, custom reports were developed within eSIS to provide teachers specific data on areas that students scored below goals based on test and assessment data.
 - The District uses multiple forms of assessment data to improve instruction. The following assessments are used: ThinkLink, FAIR, Discovery Education and more. This data is provided to teachers and school staff.
 - The District also uses an analysis tool called SnapShot. This tool provides teachers and school administrators with academic analysis based on multiple factors of each student to highlight strengths and weaknesses. SnapShot is being used by all schools starting in the 2010-2011 school year.

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St. Johns County School District
Expand Lesson Study

Lesson Study is being implemented in two of **St. Johns County Schools** (it is on-going in St. Johns County's low-performing school and has begun in one of the comprehensive high schools) in order to improve student achievement and improve the instructional practice. The intention is to develop this and replicate throughout the district. These lesson studies are being implemented with the original intent whereby teachers research the content collaboratively and develop the best lesson possible, observe one teacher deliver the lesson gathering evidence on student learning and then debriefing regarding the evidence gathered using it to improve the lesson.

St. Johns County School District
Use Data to Improve Instruction

The **St. Johns County School District** currently uses several instructional tools to improve instruction. One of those tools is our parent portal called Parent Assistant. Parent Assistant allows parents to view a host of academic data on their child. This tool is currently in use at all middle and high schools. The district plans to expand Parent Assistant to elementary schools during the 2010-2011 school year.

Parent Assistant data includes the following:

- ◆ Academic history (grades/courses/GPA)
- ◆ State testing results
- ◆ ACT and SAT test results
- ◆ Current schedule, grades, courses, teachers assigned
- ◆ Current assignments and scores
- ◆ Incident data, demographic data
- ◆ Attendance
- ◆ And much more

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St. Johns County School District ***Focus Effective Professional Development***

St. Johns County School District's Professional Development goal is to focus on the knowledge, skills, dispositions and character traits required of all employees so that all students experience quality instruction to improve their performance through sustained learning opportunities. Each school year begins with a Superintendent-directed Leadership Retreat for all principals, assistant principals, directors and key leaders setting the tone for delivery of academic excellence for the year. This year the focus for leadership training is centered on trust and leadership through character. The focus for academics is centered on differentiating instruction. To garner information of school staff development needs, the Senior Director for Professional Development and Innovation and the Director for Professional Development have met with the administrative teams of each of the 33 schools to discuss and plan delivery strategies for specific training needs for all staff. This information is used to implement training in the four core education reform areas of:

- ◆ Understanding the new Common Core State Standards and related assessments.
- ◆ Accessing data to support instruction.
- ◆ Turning around the lowest-achieving schools.
- ◆ Supporting and improving teacher and principal effectiveness.

Professional development is ongoing within the schools on weekly Early Release days including department and vertical team training, curriculum map training, , data analysis training using SnapShot, FAIR and ThinkLink data, opportunities based on teachers' needs, Lesson Study, Professional Learning Communities, endorsement trainings for ESOL, Gifted, and Reading, on-line trainings including access to PD360 and over 17 moodle offerings. October 22 was our first in-service day with over 78 different trainings with an attendance of 1,473 registered staff members. There were a myriad of professional development offerings in a variety of venues including Larry Bell's "Close the Achievement Gap", Capturing Kids Hearts, Clinical Education, Secretary/Bookkeepers training, Odysseyware, Cyber-bullying, Technology, Discovery Education Science, Parapro training, ESE, Math, Science, Writing Gifted, ESOL, Music, Foreign Language, Art, P.E. and 43 school based Professional Learning Communities. Offered additionally was Lead/Associate Teacher Training, an innovative approach in St. Johns County to manage classroom size. St. Johns County has trained over 65% of teachers in Capturing Kids Hearts with all the schools trained in the Positive Behavior Model. The professional development department has amassed exemplary differentiation experts to help train teachers in every subject and every grade level using district teachers and staff. The new and updated St. Johns County Professional Development website, plus a monthly emailed Professional Development Blast of highlighted activities, gives the schools access to what professional development is available within the district.

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St. Johns County School District
Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)
Academy

St. Johns County School District currently has fourteen career academies all of which have a STEM connection. St. Augustine High School offers three career tracks through the Aerospace Academy, in partnership with Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Students may earn up to 24 dual enrollment credits in Aviation, Aerospace Engineering, or Aviation Maintenance Science in classes taught by college instructors. By working in cohort teams in their math and sciences classes, students integrate key academic concepts into real-world projects. Students will build and fly model airplanes, fly on flight simulators, learn air traffic control methodologies and design rocket launch systems. Business partners are integral in the academy and offer field trips, job shadowing, student internships, and teacher work-experiences. Florida State College at Jacksonville partners with the Academy's air traffic control center at SAHS where students receive hands-on training on state-of-the-art simulators and earn free college credit. Currently, the Academy has more than 190 students enrolled in grades 9-12. In 2009- 2010, St. Johns County Aerospace Academy received "model" status, the highest designation achievable from the National Career Academy coalition.

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St. Lucie County School District
Freshman Learning Academies
(and Beyond)

The loss of children from high school graduation stems from unsuccessful transition from 8th grade through 9th grade and the feeling of being alone by teens. To make these transitions successful, each high school in the **St. Lucie County School District** has fully planned, staffed and scheduled operating Freshman Academies. Planning is nearing completion of Small Learning Communities through grade 12 for implementation in the 2011-12 school year. All programs of study are being reorganized.

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St. Lucie County School District
Mentoring New Principals

In the **St. Lucie County School District**, cadres of newly or recently appointed principals are mentored in a risk-free environment as a learning community. The Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent along with a small number of highly effective practicing principals facilitate mentoring for the new principals. The agenda is created by the new principals around needs. Resources are brought to them as needed. All subjects and topics are available including surviving the principalship, America's toughest profession.

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St. Lucie County School District ***Collaborative Bargaining***

The **St. Lucie County School District** has implemented Collaborative Bargaining. The union, district staff and Board members share costs of formalized training and train together. Collaborating is the district's approach to school reform through transparent governance.

Bargaining is year round, informal within a formalized (trained) structure, not time or subject limited and founded in the belief that we are all in this for children and, therefore, we are in this together and jointly share responsibility for solutions within resource provision.

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Santa Rosa County School District

Drop Out Prevention

The **Santa Rosa County District Schools** Drop Out Prevention initiative since the 2009-2010 has had a three pronged focus: 1) accelerated curriculum enabling students two or more years behind to “catch-up” with their peer group, 2) course recovery to enable students less than two years behind to make up courses enabling them to catch up with their peer group that are not to keep up with their peer group, and 3) grade recovery which enables a student to recover a nine weeks grade which enables the student to remain with his/her peer group. The initiative began at one high school in 09-10 and has been expanded to two additional middle schools for the 10-11 school year. The success experienced by our students indicated our desire to expand to all high schools (6) and all middle schools (7) for the 11-12 school year pending availability of funds. The Santa Rosa County School District has been able to implement this program through the purchase of the following products and services:

Curriculum: Use of software which allowed for development of custom core academic courses for Middle and High Schools that allow students to 1) work at their own pace, 2) complete a pre-test which determines the skills the student needs remediation/ assistance with to be successful and creates a custom “learning path” for the student, 3) complete an ‘End of Course’ exam to ensure the learning objectives of the course have been met, 4) have access to the program at home so they can continue working on their learning path outside of the regular school day.

Services: In-service for teachers and school facilitators to enable sustainability of the program with regard to custom core course design which aligns with the state standards and district pacing guides by quarter.

Materials/ Equipment: A part of the Drop Out Prevention initiative and realizing the need for computers and internet access to engage with the curriculum we chose district purchased Computers on Wheels to enable students to use this portable computer lab to adapt their environment to a computer classroom as the schools’ existing computer labs were fully scheduled already. The Drop Out Prevention initiative is not the only beneficiary of this equipment in that with the advent of more demand on computer based assessment, this has provided schools more computer accessibility that is not constrained to a lab (any classroom can become a computer lab).

Results:

2009-2010 (1 high school):

- Credits recovered- 263 credits.
- Students gaining enough credits to catch up to their peer group – 57 increased by one year and 2 by two years.

2010-2011 (1 high school and 2 middle schools)

- Credits recovers 23
- Students gaining enough credits or completion of courses to catch up to their peer group- 13 by one year
- 90 students currently enrolled and on target to recover credits allowing them to remain with peer group.

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Sarasota County School District
Bolster Technology for Improved Instruction
and Assessment

As part of an ongoing initiative to ready our schools for online assessment and equitable access to technology across the district, the **Sarasota County School District** has developed a model for technology deployments for all elementary, middle and high schools. Approximately two and a half years ago, a complete analysis was done to determine the correct model for providing students ample time for testing AND access to technology in the classroom for curriculum and enrichment. The district defined the model to determine the ideal ratio of computers to students that could be sustained in our current budget.

In partnership with Hewlett Packard, the district developed a 5-year computer roll-out strategy that provides 4 computers in every elementary classroom; and 1 cart of 30 computers for every 4 teachers in middle and high schools. For each school in the district, 1 lab for every 240 students has been provided. The district has expanded wireless capabilities in middle and high schools to enable anytime, anywhere testing and achievement.

The district has deployed this model to 22 of our schools in the past 2 years. The district is currently in year 3 of a 5 year rollout strategy. Computers that still have computer-life have been redeployed to schools not part of earlier phases whereby providing the entire district access to technology in an equitable manner. Key success has been identified by the Department of Education with our district's readiness for Computer-Based Assessment now and in the future.

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Sarasota County School District
Expand Science, Technology, Engineering
and Mathematics (STEM) Offerings

As a requirement for Race to the Top as well as a community-supported initiative, The **Sarasota County School District** has worked to implement STEM-focused CAPE Academies at all of our comprehensive high schools. Riverview High School's Aquaculture program is one example of this. Strong local partnerships with organizations like MOTE Marine, collaboration between Science and CTE teachers, strong teacher and student participation in co-curricular Career and Technical Student Organization activities, and district funding to support facility construction have allowed this program to serve a variety of high school students through hands-on projects that engage students in integrated and applied science concepts and challenge students to take advanced academic coursework.

Students participate in fish farming, aqua-plant cultivation, ecology, environmental design and analysis, market analysis, and career exploration activities, among others. Currently 103 students are enrolled in the Aquaculture academy, with 30 of those same students enrolled in advanced science coursework through the Marine Biology Honors course alone.

Sarasota County School District
Increase Advanced Science, Technology, Engineering and
Mathematics (STEM) Coursework

The **Sarasota County School District** has worked to increase advanced STEM coursework at all of high schools to ensure adequate access to challenging and rigorous coursework and to prepare students for success in both college and careers. In addition to our dual enrollment partnership with State College of Florida, the number of sections of Science advanced and honors courses has increased by 4 this past year, despite budget and class size challenges.

The district has also increased the number of sections of STEM Career and Technical Education courses leading to industry certification for students, with plans for implementing two additional STEM Engineering Academies next school year, to include collaborative planning and development between Engineering Technology, Algebra 1, and Physical Science teachers. Students completing these academies will earn Florida Ready to Work certification as well as industry certification as a Certified Solid Works Associate.

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Sarasota County School District
Increase Advanced Science, Technology, Engineering and
Mathematics (STEM) Course Work

Seminole County Public Schools is dedicated to supporting the STEM fields. Across the district emphasis is directed towards providing students with an A+ education in the content areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. At both the elementary and secondary levels students are offered opportunities to enroll in academic programs of emphasis to support the acquisition of advanced knowledge.

While we have several STEM initiatives in process through Race to the Top, we are very excited about the development of a program of emphasis for advanced STEM at Idyllwilde Elementary which is one of our Title I schools. To engage and equip students with the skills necessary for accelerated coursework at an early age, the program of emphasis for advanced STEM at Idyllwilde will center on the use of mobile learning devices and the infusion of other appropriate technologies in the learning process. By employing these devices in the teaching arena, teachers will have the ability to provide accelerated learning opportunities allowing students ubiquitous access to information. This will permit teachers to step aside and facilitate the building of understanding rather than “stand and deliver” static information. Through the use of such mobile learning devices and other similar technologies, students will have access to powerful, interactive sources of information allowing for engagement to increase, understanding to deepen, and the ability to research, question and demonstrate knowledge expand. With this, our students truly can become prepared for the world in which they live.

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Seminole County School District
Increase Advanced STEM Course Work

Seminole County Public Schools is dedicated to supporting the STEM fields. Across the district emphasis is directed towards providing students with an A+ education in the content areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. At both the elementary and secondary levels students are offered opportunities to enroll in academic programs of emphasis to support the acquisition of advanced knowledge.

While we have several STEM initiatives in process through Race to the Top, we are very excited about the development of a program of emphasis for advanced STEM at Idyllwilde Elementary which is one of our Title I schools. To engage and equip students with the skills necessary for accelerated coursework at an early age, the program of emphasis for advanced STEM at Idyllwilde will center on the use of mobile learning devices and the infusion of other appropriate technologies in the learning process. By employing these devices in the teaching arena, teachers will have the ability to provide accelerated learning opportunities allowing students ubiquitous access to information. This will permit teachers to step aside and facilitate the building of understanding rather than “stand and deliver” static information. Through the use of such mobile learning devices and other similar technologies, students will have access to powerful, interactive sources of information allowing for engagement to increase, understanding to deepen, and the ability to research, question and demonstrate knowledge expand. With this, our students truly can become prepared for the world in which they live.

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Sumter County School District

Proven Programs for School Improvement

The **Sumter County School District** implements *Learning Focused Solutions* for curriculum mapping and *Learning Focused Strategies* (LFS) training, to ensure that all students are afforded equal opportunities to achieve at high levels. This was made possible through the implementation of a balanced achievement model. The model focuses on the **curriculum** which is mapped and prioritized by state standards, **instruction** involving the use of research-based instructional strategies placed strategically throughout lessons to achieve the most impact with students, and **assessments** that are aligned to the curriculum maps and used to guide instruction.

The magnitude of positive change in student achievement in Sumter County Schools is impressive. Sumter County has the highest percentage of gain scores from 2001 to 2009 in Florida in both reading (24%) and mathematics (27%). Most significantly, 41% of the reading gains and 33% of the math gains have been accomplished since the inception of the Learning Focused Solutions initiative. In addition, with the exception of 8th Grade Science, Sumter County's improvement surpassed the average gains for the State in all subject areas at all grade levels in the last three years.

A growing body of evidence revealed the positive impact resulting from an alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment as well as a district-wide common assessment program to increase accountability right down to the classroom level. All core subjects were required to utilize curriculum maps and assessments and every subject area K-12 was required to use Learning Focused Strategies in lesson planning and during instruction.

Including the 2009-2010 school year, costs involved in providing training, materials and professional support for this initiative have totaled approximately \$300,000. The district contracts with teachers for an added day to the calendar school year for the purpose of professional development. This initiative included paying teacher salaries for participation in two of the added days for an estimated cost of \$210,000. The four-day strategies training was completed on other professional days included in the calendar year while teachers were salaried employees for which there is no estimate of cost given.

In addition, each year the curriculum mapping teams are brought together in the spring and again in the summer to make revisions to the curriculum maps and common assessments. Including the 2009-2010 school year, costs for teacher substitutes and stipends have totaled approximately \$138,828 for secondary and \$105,000 for elementary. This practice has become a "way of work" in Sumter County Schools.

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Suwannee County School District
iCare Initiative / Faith Based Initiative

iCare Program

“iCare” is a ninth grade initiative in the **Suwannee County School District** designed to help improve the district’s graduation rate, by reducing the dropout rate, which was the highest in the state two years ago. Through the iCare Program, the community and the secondary schools are working together to show students we REALLY CARE about them, and we have high expectations for them. The primary focus of iCare is dropout prevention. Through iCare, ninth grade students receive extra academic support and academic coaching. Participating students are enrolled in technology-rich courses designed to increase engagement in academic achievements. Since implementing iCare, the district’s dropout rate has decreased from 6.8% in 2007-08 to 2.7% in 2009-10. Local data indicate that the iCare Program has contributed significantly to this reduction of 4.1%.

Faith Based Initiative

The purpose of the Faith Based Initiative in the Suwannee County School District is to become partners with local churches who are committed to improving student achievement. The parent liaison and school/church liaisons work collaboratively to provide ongoing, two-way communication between the schools and their respective church families. This communication system is intended to help the district increase its delivery of mentoring services, tutoring programs and other educational initiatives available within our schools, churches, and community. Currently, this initiative is in the pilot stage with 12 active churches meeting regularly to plan and develop the program, which is scheduled to launch for all the churches in our community in the 2011-12 school year. Feedback is favorable and ongoing.

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Taylor County School District
The Academic Career Education Program
Bolster Technology for Improved Instruction and Assessment

The Academic Career Education (ACE) Program is a multi-purpose program serving Drop-out Prevention, High School Completion, Second Chance, and Alternative Placement students. These students represent a diverse cross section of the educational spectrums of both behavior and ability. This program is unique to the **Taylor County** school system and presents a wide range of problems that are not addressable under a generic Student Progression Plan. The program uses a full-time virtual instructional program with teachers assigned to facilitate learning. A vocational component is part of the instructional day to introduce the students to vocational career opportunities available at our vocational school leading to industry certifications.

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Taylor County School District
***Increased Number of Advanced Placement Courses at Taylor
County High School***

A high priority of **Taylor County School District** has been to increase the number of Advanced Placement courses offered to our students, and we've been quite successful. In 08-09, Taylor County High School offered only one Advanced Placement (AP) course – AP Calculus and 10 students were enrolled. In 09-10, AP Chemistry was added to the curriculum and 23 students enrolled. Then, in 10-11 Taylor County High School added four new AP courses:

- ◆ AP Biology I with 65 students enrolled,
- ◆ AP English Composition with 59 students enrolled,
- ◆ AP American History with 40 students enrolled,
- ◆ AP Psychology with 23 students enrolled

This school year, 2010-AP Chemistry has 9 student enrolled and AP Calculus has 18 student enrolled.

The Taylor County School District is very pleased that in only three years our high school AP enrolled has grown from 1 to 6 classes with over 214 students enrolled in AP courses, close to 1/3 of the TCHS student body. In 2011-12, Taylor County High School plans to add two more AP courses, including Human Geography.

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Taylor County School District
***On-Line EdOptions Curriculum for Students at “High Risk” for
Drop-Out at Taylor County Middle School***

There are approximately 30 students at **Taylor County** Middle School who meet the criteria the district has established to identify students who are at “high risk” for drop out or failure to graduate from traditional high school. Criteria includes, but not limited to the following: two or more school years behind cohort group; inability to pass FCAT; long-term homebound students; multi-grade EDB class; ESE students who have a shortened school day; high referral for discipline issues, and high absenteeism rate.

It is a priority of the district to provide this population of students with an alternate middle and high school curriculum and progression route to enable them be successful and graduate with their cohort group. In 09-10, the district established a web-based curricular program, EdOptions, to help approximately 23 students become more successful with their academics, attitude, behavior, and attendance. When these students graduate from eighth grade, they have first-choice at enrollment in the ACE program, the district’s high school drop-out prevention program, which also uses EdOptions and the Blue Ridge programs.

The benefits of this program, in just one year, have been quite amazing. Students enrolled in the program have less discipline referrals, improved attendance, can access the curriculum outside the classroom, and can work at their own pace, including dual enrollment for students who are over aged.

In addition, students are provided with FCAT Test preparation and suspended students can continue their course work at home on their own computer without disruption. Administrators anticipate that approximately 28 students will leave this program in 2010-11 and go directly to the ACE program where there are several options for them to choose from which best suits their individual needs and provides the greatest chance of success and earning a graduation diploma.

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Taylor County School District
LEADERSHIP TAYLOR!

Leadership Taylor! is the leadership development program that the **Taylor County School District** has developed and adopted to assist its teacher leaders as they aspire to become the administrative leaders of tomorrow. Over 25 district instructional and administrative employees are enrolled in either the Aspiring Leaders Development Program or the Developing School Principals Program.

The school district has provided district-specific leadership training in addition to providing the opportunity for Aspiring and Developing School Leaders to attend core leadership trainings with the Panhandle Area Educational Consortium and with the Florida Department of Education.

Leadership Taylor! has as its two major goals to provide resources to support and enhance the principal's role as the instructional leader at the school site and to build the capacity to increase the quality of programs for pre-service education for aspiring principals.

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Taylor County School District
Positive Behavior Support (PBS) at Taylor County Elementary School

In 2003-2004, **Taylor County** Elementary School implemented the Positive Behavior Support (PBS) system. Since that time, referrals have decreased dramatically and overall behavior on the campus has improved tremendously. Specifically, in 2003-2004, students at Taylor County Elementary School averaged 6.8 Office Discipline Referrals per day, for a total of 1,222. Since that time, office discipline referrals have decreased by 51%. In the 2009-2010 school year, there was a total of 589 Office Discipline Referrals with an average of 3.3 per day.

Taylor County Elementary School has implemented the Positive Behavior Support system with fidelity and consistency. Students are rewarded for their positive choices and actions. Taylor County Elementary School has universal expectations that all students are expected to follow and examples of how to meet those expectations. There is buy-in and support from staff, students, administration, and parents. The aim is to build effective an environment where acknowledging the positive is more effective than simply punishing the negative.

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Taylor County School District
***Bolster Technology for Improved Instruction
and Assessment***

The **Taylor County School District** has received over \$4 million in competitive Enhancing Education Through Technology grant funds with the core goal to improve student achievement through the use of technology.

Every classroom in Taylor's middle and high schools is equipped with a digital projector, an interactive whiteboard, a document camera and a laptop for the teacher. Mobile laptops carts are available for classroom use. The grants have enabled the district to deploy computer labs for computer-based state mandated assessments and for extensive technology training for staff and students.

The district has seen progress in the following areas due to the increased technology in our schools:

- ◆ Enhancing teacher effectiveness through professional development
- ◆ Using data to shape learning, teaching, and leadership
- ◆ Driving innovation and new educational models
- ◆ Increasing academic achievement

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Union County School District ***Discovery Education Science***

In lieu of using textbooks for daily instruction, a 6th grade science teacher at Lake Butler Middle School in **Union County** has put Discovery Education Science into place so that the curriculum is driven by Sunshine State Standards. It has standard-based virtual labs, vocabulary simulations, and non-fiction reading passages which are used to supplement the FCAT strategies. Discovery Education Science is designed to encourage exploration, stimulate critical thinking, and deepen understanding of science for students. It has the students investigate real-life situations through a variety of media such as videos, virtual labs, integrated science simulation, and exploration. Students learn process skills by designing and conducting virtual lab investigations and solving open-ended Science Sleuths mysteries.

Union County School District ***Team READ***

Lake Butler Elementary School in **Union County** is participating in Team READ, an initiative sponsored by Just Read Florida and the Northeast Florida Educational Consortium (NEFEC). The initiative focuses on training in strategies for intensive intervention, enrichment, vocabulary development, comprehension and the reading/writing connection. An additional part of this initiative is Failure Free Reading, a program sponsored by Dr. Joseph Lockavitch to help non-phonemic readers.

Our teachers have also worked diligently for the past year to develop core curricula in math and science based on the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards. To do this they have used numerous resources from the schools participating in a state science grant, another NEFEC math and science initiative and published core curricula.

Union County School District ***Addressing Childhood Obesity***

In an effort to address childhood obesity and its propensity for causing juvenile diabetes, the Lake Butler Elementary School is in the second year of providing a morning walking program that occurs before the first bell. With staff and parent volunteers, support from the **Union County** Health Department and University of Florida, the school is able to offer the walking program each morning for twenty to twenty-five minutes. An added bonus to the program has been the ability to offer breakfast near the walking site to make it convenient for students to eat breakfast before walking. Food service personnel wrote a grant which funded a breakfast cart to make it easier to offer breakfast at the alternative site.

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Union County School District
Learning Showcase

In the spring of 2010, Lake Butler Middle School in **Union County** held a learning showcase which included teacher inquiry projects and best practices. There were over 30 presenters and teachers attending three breakout sessions of their choice. All Union County teachers attended this professional development during our monthly early release day. The breakout sessions were focused on data-driven instruction, targeting students in the lowest quartile, and the latest advances in technology.

Union County School District
Summer Training Institute

A summer training institute was conducted by Lake Butler Middle School in **Union County** on June 15-17, 2010. Eighty percent of the teachers were in attendance. Professional development topics during this training included: lesson study, RTI, and data analysis. Teachers explored the latest research and resources for providing intervention.

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Volusia County School District
Bolster Technology for Improved Instruction
and Assessment

The **Volusia County School District** utilizes a technology-based credit recovery program which is available to all students attending one of the ten high schools. Students who do not receive a passing grade in a course needed for graduation are assigned to an on-campus computer center, where courses are retaken via an online learning environment. This web-based initiative enables students to continue to meet graduation requirements in the regular classroom setting while earning credit for courses that initially were not passed.

By working at their own pace, students are empowered to take responsibility for their academic progress. Credits are earned based on a competency-based model. A fully certified teacher is present at all times and assists students as they complete courses in all core subject areas. Over 33 courses are offered and 2,602 courses were completed during the 2009-2010 school year.

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Volusia County School District
Expanded School Day
Implement Proven Programs for School Improvement

Plus One is an additional hour added to the regular school day designed to increase academic time spent on the core curricular areas (not additional curriculum). This project is currently under further study by Dr. David Farbman with the National Center on Time and Learning.

There are nine schools in the **Volusia County School District** participating in the Plus One Project serving 435 teachers and 48 para-professionals. While adding the equivalent of 7 weeks of instruction to the student school year, the teachers receive an average of a 13% pay differential. It allows the teacher to "stretch" the time needed to cover the Sunshine State Standards in an in depth and focused format. This additional time may be used as needed throughout the school day and may be adjusted by curricular area as needed.

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Volusia County School District
Using Data to Improve Instruction
Increasing Student Achievement through
Use of Assessments

Many Voices, One Coach: A Collaborative Instructional Coaching Initiative

Based on five major research studies on the impact of coaching on teacher effectiveness, the **Volusia County School District** has implemented a district-wide structure for training, supporting and monitoring approximately 120 school-based instructional coaches. Coaches receive continuous specialized professional development, follow-up and coaching in data analysis, curriculum-based measurement and ongoing progress monitoring to help teachers improve their classroom practice and student learning.

The district's coaching initiative has created the following structures to ensure the success of this initiative:

- ◆ Established policies and procedures regarding performance expectations.
- ◆ Initial and ongoing professional learning.
- ◆ District leaders who assist, intervene and provide personal support.
- ◆ Online tools for measuring quantity and quality of coaching activities as they relate to teacher satisfaction, teacher performance and student learning.

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Wakulla County School District Increase Advanced Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Offerings

Advanced Placement courses and dual enrollment STEM courses are strongly supported in the small, rural district of Wakulla. Advanced Placement offerings have grown from one course to ten in eight years, which is substantial for one high school of less than 1,200 students. Participation has grown from 25 students to 260 students with more being encouraged each year due to an “open access” policy of taking Advanced Placement courses. Current STEM offerings include Advanced Placement Biology, Advanced Placement Calculus, Advanced Placement Statistics, and Advanced Placement Environmental Science. A culture of college readiness is being fostered through accelerated course offerings. Support for underrepresented groups in college prep courses through the national Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program addresses the achievement gap.

The **Wakulla County School District** is already planning to add more Advanced Placement STEM-related courses such as Advanced Placement Chemistry. The Race to the Top Grant will highlight the importance of students being prepared not only to get admitted to college, but also to be successful once they get there. Taking accelerated courses in high school opens the door for students to excel in STEM-related careers they might not have considered otherwise. Rural students are just as capable as their urban counterparts who may have more access to accelerated coursework because of proximity to colleges. Wakulla’s participation in the Florida Partnership with the College Board Grant (including AVID), plus the state funding for students who pass the Advanced Placement exams, have been immeasurable in increasing advanced opportunities for students in small rural communities.

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Wakulla County School District
Wakulla High School Medical Academy

Wakulla High School Medical Academy has exceeded its goals in its third year since beginning in 2008-2009. The CTE Academy has grown from 60 students to 190 in three years and now encompasses close to 18% of the school's population. This four-year Medical Academy includes a 9th grade Project Lead the Way STEM course of Biomedical Research. Students then go on to take Health Science courses in 10th, 11th, and 12th grade that include weeks of clinical rotations at a hospital working under their teacher's license (an RN). Students also have their academics integrated into the program, including math, science, and social studies.

An Articulation Agreement is in effect with Tallahassee Community College for students who successfully complete the Wakulla High School Medical Academy course of study to earn 6 college credits upon enrollment. The credits are in HSC 2531 (3 credits towards the Medical Terminology program) and EMS 1059C (3 credits towards the First Responder Credential). Completers of the Wakulla High School Medical Academy also get rubric points added to their application to the TCC Nursing Program. In addition, the Agreement lets students dual enroll in college classes. Several Medical Academy students took Anatomy and Physiology for college credit while they were in high school.

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Walton County School District ***Career Academies***

Career academies are being established in all **Walton County School District** high schools. These academies have been designed as small learning communities integrating core academic instruction with career specific skills and providing a focused learning environment with college preparatory academic and technical courses. Career academies link education to the real world while offering industry certifications for those entering the workforce directly following high school. The mission of Career Education in the Walton County School District is to provide students with academic and career/technical education that responds to local and regional workforce needs and targets high wage and high demand occupations.

In 2009, Walton High School established building science and health science career academies. In 2010, South Walton High School established the Institute of Medical and Health Sciences. Freeport High School is currently working to establish career academies in Information Technology and Sciences. Paxton will provide career academies in Information Technology, Early Childhood, and Turf Management. The Walton Career Development Center provides many different career academies including Information Technology, Automotive, Cosmetology, and nursing.

Increased enrollment in these academies demonstrates their success and Race to the Top will provide the opportunity to add one or more STEM Center Academies to enhance the programs already in place.

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Washington County School District
Increased High School Graduation Requirements
and Other Standards

Washington County School District is committed to providing high quality, appropriate and rigorous programs to all students. The district will use Race to the Top funding to focus on the common core standards to close the achievement gaps in all sub-groups. Middle school students (grades 5-8) who are potential candidates for enrollment in Advanced Placement, dual enrollment/honors, STEM related courses and industry certified programs upon entry into the district high schools will be identified. A mentoring/advisement program will be implemented in middle schools to provide information to the students and parents. The goal of our program will be to increase the percentage of high school freshmen who will graduate from high school, go on to college or vocational program and achieve at least a year's worth of credit. Data will be compiled during the grant period and analyzed to determine the success of the programs.

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