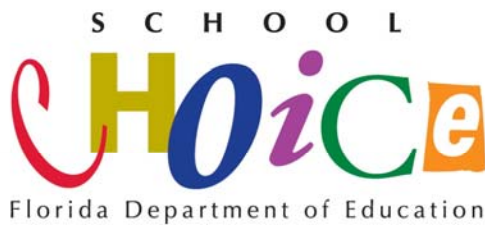


September 2009



Office of Independent Education & Parental Choice
325 West Gaines Street • Suite 522 • Tallahassee, FL • 32399-0400 • 1-800-447-1636 • www.floridaschoolchoice.org

Private School Newsletter

Private School Annual Survey

The new Private School Annual Survey for the 2009-2010 school year will be available September 1, 2009 on the School Choice Web site at www.floridaschoolchoice.org. Completing the Annual Survey is one of the requirements outlined in Section 1002.42, Florida Statutes, which states in part:

“Each private school shall annually execute and file a database survey form on a date designated by the Department of Education.”

We encourage you to complete the Annual Survey as soon as possible and take advantage of benefits such as:

- Being listed in the Directory of Private Schools, where parents can access and view your school's information;
- Serving as the first step in applying to participate in the McKay and Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship Programs;
- Receiving timely updates on federal initiatives or changes affecting private schools;
- Allowing eligible students in your school to qualify for a Bright Future's Scholarship; and
- Receiving information from the Florida Department of Education on issues or requirements affecting private schools including IDEA, Title I, attendance requirements, records retention, and student immunizations.

Please note that there have been changes in the Annual Survey. The changes are in the “Student Information” and “Graduate Information” sections. The “Race and Ethnicity” section under “Student Information” has been updated to reflect recent changes in the federal reporting guidelines. Additionally, the “Student Information” and “Graduate Information” sections should only reflect information and numbers for students residing in Florida.

Please visit the School Choice Web site at www.floridaschoolchoice.org, click on "Private School Annual Survey," log-in using your four-digit school code and password, and complete your Annual Survey. Your completed survey must be printed, signed, notarized, and mailed to the Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact our toll-free School Choice Information Hotline at (800) 447-1636.

Private School Closure

When a private school closes, or has no students, it is required to transfer all permanent student records to the superintendent of the public school district in which it was located. If a member of a private school system or association, the school may transfer records to the principal office of the system or association. The school should then notify the Department of Education of the date of transfer of student records, the location of storage, the custodian of such records, and the number of records to be stored. The department acts as a clearinghouse and maintains a registry of transfers of student records.

It is not the intent of the Legislature to limit or restrict the use or possession of any student records while a school is operational, but to facilitate access to academic records by former students seeking to continue their education or training after a private school has become defunct. **(Section 1002.42, F.S.)**

Emergency Planning

Practical tools for school emergency planning are available on the U.S. Department of Education's Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) Technical Assistance Center Web site at: <http://rems.ed.gov/>. The site has links to publications and resources such as "Emergency Management Opportunities and Challenges for Non-Public Schools" (http://rems.ed.gov/views/documents/ERMgmtOppts_Challngs4N_PS.pdf). The site is updated regularly and includes a wealth of information on emergency preparedness for the education community.

Preparing for the Flu

Please be advised about the new guidance for our nation's public and private schools: "Preparing for the Flu - Communication Toolkit for Schools (Grades K-12)" released by the CDC on August 7, 2009. You can find it online at: <http://www.flu.gov/plan/school/schoolflu toolkit.pdf>.

Secretaries Kathleen Sebelius (HHS), Duncan (DOE) and Napolitano (DHS) along with Thomas Frieden (Director, CDC) hosted a press briefing to announce the updated school guidance for the Fall 2009 influenza season. Key strategies include: 1) keep sick kids and staff home, 2) the importance of washing hands and 3) the importance of covering a cough. Two major changes from the Spring 2009 guidance include: 1) the period of exclusion should be 24 hours after the fever is gone and 2) school closures need to be a local decision. The guidance also includes considerations should the virus become more virulent. They stressed 1) the importance of remaining flexible because this continues to be an evolving situation and 2) vaccine is the strongest defense.

2009-2010 School Entry Requirements

Prior to entry, attendance, or transfer to Florida schools (kindergarten through 12th grade), each child shall have on file a Florida Certification of Immunization, DH 680, documenting the following:

Public/Non-Public Schools Kindergarten through 12th Grade:

Four or five doses of diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (DTaP) vaccine

Two or three doses of hepatitis B (hep B) vaccine

Three or four doses of polio vaccine

Two doses of measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine

Two doses of varicella vaccine* for kindergarten and grade one

One dose of varicella vaccine* for grades two through eight

**Varicella vaccine is not required if there is a history of varicella disease documented by the healthcare provider.*

Additional Seventh Grade Requirement:

In addition to compliance with all other required immunizations, children entering, attending, or transferring to the seventh grade in Florida schools must complete the following:

Effective 2009-2010 One tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis (Tdap) vaccine

Need health insurance for your child? Apply online at www.floridakidcare.org or call 1-888-540-5437 for an application.

For more information, Call (850) 245-4342 or Visit www.ImmunizeFlorida.org.

Providing Services to Eligible Private School Children

Summary: Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) that receive Title I, Part A, funds must ensure that private school students receive equitable services. This document describes the funding process, services that LEAs must provide, the process LEAs must follow, and the documentation LEAs must keep.

The Department of Education has issued the following technical assistance paper DPS: 2009-060 regarding the Providing Services to Eligible Private School Children. The technical assistance paper may be viewed at: <http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-5461/dps-2009-060.pdf>.

Supplemental Educational Services (SES)

SES is a part of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. SES providers offer high-quality, research-based instruction designed to increase academic achievement for eligible students who are enrolled in Title I schools that have not made Adequate Yearly Progress for three consecutive years in reading or math.

Eligible students are public school students from low income families, as determined by the school district for the purpose of allocating funds under Title I. Students attending private schools are not eligible to receive funding for SES.

Private schools are eligible to be SES providers. Private schools that are approved as providers of SES may only receive funding for supplemental educational services provided to public school students.

Information for potential providers: http://www.fldoe.org/flbpso/nclbchoice/ses/ses_providerinfo.asp

The application deadline for the 2009-2010 school year has passed. For information related to applications for 2010-2011, please contact Samantha Love at (850) 245-9947.

Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program

The Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) will provide the Bright Futures 2009-10 initial eligibility brochure in downloadable format (which may be printed) on our Web site this year. (We will not be printing Bright Futures 2009-10 initial eligibility brochures and the brochures will not be included in Florida Trend's NEXT magazine.) We remain committed to providing you, students, and parents with Bright Futures Scholarship Program information and found some creative ways to provide this information.

Bright Futures Security

In order for private school students to earn a Florida Bright Futures Scholarship, your high school must be registered as a private high school with the Florida Department of Education and request, from OSFA, secured access to the Bright Futures Scholarship Program's Evaluation System to submit your high school students' transcripts online for evaluation for a Florida Bright Futures Scholarship. Contact Beverly Lahtinen via e-mail at Beverly.Lahtinen@fldoe.org or (850) 245-1898 or toll-free at 1-888-827-2004 to obtain access to the Bright Futures Evaluation System.

New FASTER Capability for Private High School Transcript Submission

We now have a process that allows private schools to send transcript data to Bright Futures via spreadsheet templates which can be converted by the FDOE to FASTER files. Please contact our Office of Application (OAS) technical support staff via e-mail at FSTR@fldoe.org or telephone (850) 245-9775 if you are interested in implementing this new FASTER process for private high schools.

Legislative Updates

The 2009 Legislature made changes to Bright Futures funding and renewal requirements, but **not to initial eligibility requirements**. These changes are outlined on our Web site at <http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/SSFAD/bf/newsrenew.htm>. 2010 graduates may view award amounts at www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf/awardamt.htm.

Curriculum Guides/Publications/Newsletters

We greatly appreciate your including information about the Bright Futures Scholarship Program in your communications to students. For your convenience, we have posted a template of Bright Futures information to include in your communications. **Please be sure to refer students and parents to our Web site** www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf

Contact Information: OSFA@fldoe.org or toll-free 1-888-827-2004

Read for the Record

The Florida Department of Education encourages you to take part in this year's **Read for the Record** campaign. This international campaign encourages children to read the same book, on the same day, in communities all over the world. Sponsored by Jumpstart, the campaign began in 2006. Last year, nearly 700,000 readers shared the classic children's tale, *Corduroy*. This year, the selected book is *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle, and the chosen date is **October 8, 2009**.

Here's how you can participate:

1. Before October 8, 2009, go to the Read for the Record Web site at <http://www.readfortherecord.org/> to register your participation.
2. On October 8, 2009, read the book with your child or offer to read the book at a local school.

3. Visit a local museum that may have insects such as caterpillars or butterflies to learn more about them.
4. Have a child read *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* to you – at any setting.
5. Create a crafts project involving caterpillars at home or school.

It's that simple. Encourage the love of reading by participating in Read for Record. For more information, contact Kristina Luna at (850)245-9646.

Sunshine State Young Reader's Award Program

Important! For the 2009-2010 school year, the letter previously mailed to all public and private schools from the Florida DOE, School Library Media Services office, will be distributed electronically. Private school library media specialists will need to send an email from their school email account and include: school name, county name and media specialist name to the [SSYRA volunteer webmaster](mailto:myssyra@gmail.com) at myssyra@gmail.com to get a pdf of the letter.

If after the first two weeks of the new school year, you have not received the letter via email from either your district media contact, or FAME, contact the [SSYRA volunteer webmaster](mailto:myssyra@gmail.com) at myssyra@gmail.com. Include your name, school name, district, and please send the email from your school email account. Make sure that email from myssyra@gmail.com is not blocked so you can receive the response.

The SSYRA Program is co-sponsored by the Florida Department of Education's Library Media Services and the Florida Association for Media in Education (FAME). As in past years, the School Participation Form is located on the SSYRA Program Internet site at <http://myssyra.org/>.

Throughout the year, please visit the SSYRA Program site for further information concerning voting procedures, curriculum activities, and promotional ideas. At the end of the year, a voting participation certificate, winning book posters, and SSYRA labels will be sent to the participating voting schools.

If you have any questions, please contact the Bureau of Curriculum and Instruction at (850) 245-0874.

"Grow Healthy" School Garden Project

Did you know that many schools in Florida are using gardens as a tool for hands-on, student-centered learning? Research has shown that children who participated in garden based nutrition interventions led to an increase in their servings of fruit and vegetables. Teachers perceive school gardens to be an effective way of enhancing the academic performance, physical activity level, and healthful eating habits of their students.

In partnership with the Florida Department of Education's Food and Nutrition Management, Office of Healthy Schools, and the Florida Department of Health's Comprehensive Cancer Control Program, 32 schools have been selected to participate in the "Grow Healthy" School Garden Project. Each garden kit contains:

- A supply of green beans, lettuce, basil, radish, tomato, and carrots seeds (approximately 200 seed packets)
- A supply of sunscreen SPF 15
- One-page fact sheet with helpful websites
- Gardening Angels How-to-Manual
- *Plate Full of Color*, a 36-page children's book, the third in *The Eagle Book Series*, developed by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Indian Health Service
- *Plate Full of Color* Classroom Activities (Pre-K – 4th Grade)
- Nutrition-related brochures

Each school that receives a school garden kit has been asked to send a brief narrative and picture of the harvest by December 31, 2009. Pictures and narratives will be featured on the Florida Department of Education's web site.

For more information on resources and funding opportunities for school gardens, please visit:

<http://www.kidsgardening.com/healthysprouts.asp>.

"The Core"

"The Core" is a Department of Education electronic publication providing education-related news, and is distributed via e-mail biweekly. It also contains information about conferences and conventions. You can sign up for the e-mail subscription at <http://data.fldoe.org/listserv/thecore/default.cfm>. Archived editions are available at <http://www.fldoe.org/newsletter/>.