

INDEPENDENTS

The Newsletter of the Florida Council of Independent Schools

Volume 01-10

Jan/Feb 2010

Inside this issue

Page 1

Executive Director Letter

Page 2

Executive Director Letter, con't
Ads/Workshops
Teachers

Page 3

DeWitt & Vera
Hooker Grant
In Memoriam

Page 4

School News

Page 5

MISC
Cooperate Sponsors
McKay Scholarship

Upcoming FCIS Events

June 14 -16, 2010

Heads' Retreat
Don Cesar, St. Pete
Beach

July 25 - 27, 2010

Administrators' Retreat
Naples Beach Club

Nov. 11 - 12, 2010

Convention
Hyatt Riverfront,
Jacksonville

from the executive director...

ECONOMY –Economic advisors in banking and brokerages are talking about a steady upward recovery. Anecdotal comments from FCIS Heads indicate a better reenrollment picture in February, 2010 than in February, 2009

WASHINGTON – The February newsletter from CAPE, *OUTLOOK*, gives a good analysis of the recent elections in New Jersey, Virginia, and Massachusetts. Chris Christie of New Jersey indicated “broken schools and broken streets”. He talked about “a new era” and parental choice. Rob McDowell in Virginia has made strategic appointments in education and advocates for school choice. The recent upset in Massachusetts also bodes well for school choice. Newly elected Senator Scott Brown is also an advocate for school choice.

-About the time we think the Federal government is not concerned with independent education, a new concern pops up. The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 and Private School Disclosure comes along. The Act is basically a guideline for truth in lending in education. This Act addresses payment plans in schools and colleges. Plans in schools appear to be exempt if they are one year or less and there are no interest charges. Schools appear to be on safe ground if plans call for no more than four payments.

TALLAHASSEE – The Department of Education has issued the “John M. McKay

Scholarship November Quarterly Report.” The Scholarship program allows students with disabilities to choose another public school or apply for a scholarship to attend an eligible private school. The report shows that almost 20,000 students in 920 schools received nearly 68 million in scholarships. Current budgetary problems have reduced funding in all programs.

-The Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program November Quarterly Report indicates this year Florida has allocated funds to about 27,000 students in 1,003 schools. A proposed bill in the Florida house would raise the amount a student would receive over the next year. Any school that receives \$250,000 in scholarship funds must submit a financial review. This scholarship was established to encourage contributions from corporate donors to non-profit organizations to award scholarships to children from low-income families. Corporations receive a tax credit of up to 75% of their state income tax liability. The maximum amount the state can award is \$118 million.

-Funding for the Florida Virtual School (FLVS) continues to be in doubt. All counties must offer virtual education to students. The students are considered full-time and state funding of \$5,500-\$6,000 goes to the district, which in turn contracts with the FLVS or a private contractor. The school district programs are free to students.

→

from the executive director...con't

The Department of Children & Families (DCF) is meeting with the FAANS accrediting agencies. They are reminding schools of the regulations for schools with programs for students ages 3 & 4. Administrators are reminded that background screening (level 2 fingerprinting) must be updated every five years for employees in direct contact with children under five years old. There are several DOE VPK initiatives in the works. DOE/OEL provides a network of VPK Regional Facilitators working with early learning coalitions and public and private providers throughout the state. Facilitators conduct training on various topics to include the VPK education Standards. For more information, training materials and courses go to <https://training01-dcf.myflorida.com/dcf/cct/reg/courseselector>.

FHSAA – There does not appear to be any legislation affecting the FHSAA this year. There was concern that the series of meetings by the urban/rural committee of the FHSAA held around the state would lead to legislature that would impact private schools adversely. The FHSAA has announced a proposal where grade 6-12 schools would have to count middle school students in the student count for clarification purposes. At first glance, this appears to be aimed at private schools. Data released by the FHSAA State Office in Gainesville show there are 242 schools in Florida with grades 6-12 that are members of the FHSAA. Fifty-seven of the schools are public schools. Heads of private and public schools with these grades have been encouraged to contact the FHSAA to explain their opposition. Go to www.fhsaa.org for more information.

C. Skardon Bliss
Executive Director

WORKSHOPS

FCIS

Heads' Retreat 2010	June 14 - 16	St. Petersburg
Administrators' Retreat 2010	July 25 - 27	Naples
Annual Convention 2010	Nov. 11 - 12	Jacksonville

www.fcis.org

ISACS

Creating Success with Diversity	April 26	Chicago
---------------------------------	----------	---------

www.isacs.org

ISM

Summer Institute	June 20 - July 24	DE, PA, UT
------------------	-------------------	------------

www.isminc.com/si

NAES

Leadership & Governance	April 7	Ft. Lauderdale
Institute for Aspiring Heads	Apr 8-10	Ft. Lauderdale
Biennial Conference 2010	Nov 18-20	San Antonio

www.episcopalschools.org

NAIS

Summer Diversity Institute	June 23-28	Virginia
Institute for New Heads	July 6-12	Atlanta
School Leadership Institute	Aug 3-6	Virginia

www.nais.org

NBOA

Summer Institute	June 14 - 18	Easthampton
------------------	--------------	-------------

www.nboa.org

Student Art Wanted

Southern Teachers Agency works with the BEST SCHOOLS in the South.

We want to see what they LOOK LIKE.

Enter STA's Calendar Contest.

Your school could appear in our 2010-11 Calendar.

Deadline: Friday, March 30, 2010

www.SouthernTeachers.com/calendar.pdf

Teachers

Nature and Needs of the Gifted Curriculum Development for the Gifted

When: March 5-7, 2010

Where: The Weiss School,
4176 Burns Road

Palm Beach Gardens, Florida

Contact: Dr. Denise Spirou 561-627-0740

dspirou@weisschool.com

**It's time to apply for the 2010
DeWitt E. & Vera Hooker Grant
Fellowship Grant Valued
at up to \$3,000**

The purpose of the award is to encourage the development of projects which will benefit the council's member schools, in particular, and private schools, in general.

- *Entry open to faculty, staff and administration of FCIS member schools
- *No limit to number of applications per school
- *Applications must be postmarked by March 5, 2010

For more information and an application go to www.fcis.org, school resources.

**2009 DeWitt E. & Vera Hooker Grant
Fellowship Winners**

Debra Nixon and Mary Ann Ewert
Smile and Breathe! Yoga-Based Activities for the
K-8Classroom
Saint Stephen's Episcopal, Bradenton

Joyce Barclay and Alysa Nolen
Cool Tools for Techie Teachers
All Saints' Academy

Lorie Wacaster
Independent Schools Honor Chorus
Holy Trinity Episcopal Academy

Joanne Barrett and Alysa Nolen
PD Made EZ
The Out-of-Door Academy and All Saints' Academy

**Post a Job
www.fcis.org**

Do you have a position that needs to be posted on the FCIS web site? Email Tam at tnguyen@fcis.org to get the password to complete the job posting form.

**Tampa Bay History
Center**

The Tampa Bay History Center is looking for volunteer docents who have a passion for local history, want to learn more about the Tampa Bay region, and are willing to share their knowledge and enthusiasm with others. The Center's staff provide ongoing training and education. New docents are welcomed throughout the year. No experience is necessary-the only prerequisites are enthusiasm, commitment, and a willingness to learn! For more information, please e-mail historycentervolunteers@gmail.com or call Ellen Robinson at (813) 831-2635.

**In Memoriam
Karen George**



Karen George of Trinity passed away on Friday, Jan. 8. Karen was the Assistant Principal at Westlake Christian School in Palm Harbor and a member of Palm Harbor United Methodist Church. Karen was born and raised in Columbus, OH and moved to Florida to attend college at the University of South Florida, where she received her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Education. Karen is survived by her husband, Bo George of Trinity; three daughters, Kristen Blake of Tampa, Hollie Blake of Gainesville, and Jillian George of Trinity. Karen's zest for life and her genuine love of God and his children will be remembered by all who knew her. In lieu of flowers, donations to Karen's favorite charity, The Sun-coast Hospice, would be appreciated.

School News

Community School of Naples' Academic Teams, varsity and junior varsity, finished in 1st place at both Collier County practice events. The team then went on to capture 1st in the state in the 2009 Fall KMO, 4th in the nation among schools of student population between 201-500, and 59th in the nation among a total of 678 schools.

Mr. Fred Scott, Associate Head for Lower Schools and Principal, has announced he will be leaving **The Bolles School** (Ponte Vedra Campus) at the end of the school year after 27 years.

Carrollwood Day School held its 2nd Annual Political Assembly on Thursday, January 28, 2010. Mr. Kenneth Grodd, CDS's Diploma Program Coordinator and IB History teacher, hosted an elite panel of faculty, parents and students. Each spoke for 5 minutes and provided President Obama with a grade A-F. *** Carrollwood Day School partnered with USF's teaching English as a foreign language program. Korean teachers visited and observed various classes at CDS on Feb. 1st. The mission of this program is to provide an opportunity for the Korean teachers to prepare a lesson after having talked to the grade level teacher and to deliver that lesson in English.

Congratulations to **Tampa Preparatory** boys hoops coach Joe Fenlon, who earned career win No. 550 against Bishop McLaughlin, 88-20.

Congratulations to **The Weiss School's** Maria Elena Grimmett, pictured with her science teacher, Dr. Beth Quartell, who was chosen #1 in her category at the Palm Beach County Science Fair. She will be advancing to the state competition in Orlando in April.



Canterbury School of Florida head coach Jody Moore was recently named the state's best softball coach for the 2009 season by the National Federation of State High School Associations. Moore, the St. Petersburg Times Pinellas County coach of the year, led Canterbury to its fourth straight district title and second regional title. After winning the district competition earlier this year, Nico Leeper, senior, represented Canterbury School of Florida in the state finals of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Voice of Democracy Speech and Essay Contest on January 16. Nico won the state competition and will represent Canterbury and the state of Florida in the national finals in Washington, D.C. on March 6.



Admiral Farragut's Josh Burch has accepted an appointment to the Naval Academy to play football. Admiral Farragut Sophomore Johnny Russek and Senior Eduardo Andonie organized a "Music for Haiti" even on Jan. 20th. All proceeds went to the American Red Cross to support earthquake victims of Haiti.

Saint Paul's Lower School student council held a "PJ" day to raise money for Haiti. Any Student in grades 2 - 5 that donated \$1.00 or more could wear his or her pajamas to school on Friday, January 29, 2010. The students raiser over \$2,300.00!! Great job!! Stephen Anthony, Evan Miller, and Brandon Luckwaldt took 1st place while Caroline Beck and Krisit Bears took 2nd place in their divisions at the Regional Science Fair. Congratulations!

The Benjamin School boys' varsity gold team captured the school's first state golf team title in 26 years on Nov. 4th at the Class 1A state tournament at Juliette Falls in Dunnellon.



Greenfield Day School students are committed volunteers for the Friendship Circle of Miami. The work they do help children with special needs. Staci Berry from Greenfield Day will participate in the *Friendship Walk*, a 3K walk-a-thon on March 14th to benefit this program and these very special kids.

Highpoint Academy dad, Alonzo Mourning, arrived in Haiti in January with a large cargo of much needed supplies and medicine. Alonzo, NBA Legend, and Miami Heat's Dwyane Wade have started the Athletes Relief Fund For Haiti. All donations made will go directly to Project Medishare. For more information go to, www.amcharities.org

Berkeley Preparatory Head of School, Joe Merluzzi, has announced his retirement, June 2011. Berkeley is very thankful for Joe's leadership over the last 20-plus years. Hillsborough County Commissioner Kevin Beckner recognized the 2009 Berkeley Girls Volleyball team Feb. 17. The Girls Volleyball team won their 13th State Championship this season.

Trinity Preparatory placed first in Congressional Debate and JV Public forum at the Harvard University Invitational Forensics Tournament. Trinity Prep brought home first place in the Lockheed Engineering ROCKS High School Challenge.

MISC

Order Your Subscription Today! **HEAD to HEAD Newsletter**, edited by Mr. Charlie Clark.

One Year Subscription \$59.00

clarkcf47@gmail.com or

www.independentschoolleadership.com

Seven Secrets of the Savvy School Leader: A Guide to Surviving and Thriving by Robert Evans is now available (Amazon.com). Rob Evans will be making a presentation at the NAIS Convention on his new book.

In their January 2010 newsletter, The National Association of Episcopal Schools thanked **Laura Walker**, Retired Head of School for St. Thomas Episcopal and Senior Associate Consultant to NAES, for her work fielding the many calls and resource inquires they received over the last four and one-half years. Laura will serve as an Independent Consultant to schools, as well as the NAES Chief Independent Consultant as of Jan.1, 2010.

According to *Private Education Law Report*, Sept 2009, the Michigan High School Athletic Association must continue to accommodate a religious school's athletes by scheduling tournament games around their Sabbath and religious holidays.

According to *Private Education Law Report*, Sept 2009, there is some good news on the **school choice** front. Thanks to a measure added to the state's budget, Indiana has joined the states that provide tax credits for donations to private school scholarship funds.

Ideas & Perspectives (An ISM Publication), Vol. 35 No. 2, outlines a sample **Strategic Plan** including a capital campaign. For more information go to www.isminc.com, publications, *Ideas & Perspectives*, current issue.

The **Internal Revenue Service** believes that a well-governed charity is more likely to obey the tax laws, safeguard charitable assets, and service charitable interests than one with poor or lax governance. An excellent source for **governance and related topics to 501 (c)(3) organizations** is available at http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-tege/governance_practices.pdf.

Thank You FCIS Corporate Sponsors

A.W.G Dewar, Inc.

ClassBook.com

Dennis Uniform Manufacturing Company

Dwight Darby and Company, CPA's

FACTS Management Company

ForeverLawn of Florida, Inc.

Independent Colleges and Universities Benefits

Association (ICUBA)

IOA Insurance Office of America

Kaufman Lynn General Contractors

Rediker Software

Ren Web School Management Systems

SAGE Dining Services

School and Student Services (SSS by NAIS)

Selden Beattie Benefit Advisors, Inc.

Spectrum Tours

Tuition Management Systems

US Tuition, LLC

USTA Florida

Organizations that provide professional services to schools or otherwise promote the well-being of independent schools are eligible to become FCIS Corporate Subscribers. For more information contact the FCIS Office at Tnguyen@fcis.org or 813-287-2820.

McKay Scholarship Program 2009-2010 Important Dates

Payment Period—Mar 1—June 30

Payment—April 1

Parental Intent Deadline—January 31

Private School Enrollment Deadline—March 2

Attendance Verification Avail. Online—March 3

Attendance Verification Deadline—March 16

Accreditation Corner

Preparing your school for a FCIS evaluation

A workshop for schools undergoing accreditation visits next year will be offered at this summer's

Administrators' Retreat.

Make plans now to attend!

Naples Beach Club

July 25-27, 2010