

INDEPENDENTS

The Newsletter of the Florida Council of Independent Schools

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Upcoming FCIS Events

March 25, 2011
JoAnn Deak
Brain Research Wksp
Miami

April 28, 2011
Bill Krizner
Legal Workshop
Ft. Lauderdale

May 12, 2011
Bill Krizner
Legal Workshop
Winter Haven

June 13-15, 2011
Heads' Retreat
The Colony
Palm Beach

from the executive director...

ECONOMY. In the independent school world, we find ourselves in one of the busiest times of the year – re-enrollment and new enrollment. Over the past school year, despite the challenging economy, our FCIS schools saw a decrease in student population statewide of only 1.17%, unlike many other private school organizations in the state. I believe that we were able to retain our students and to attract new students due to our attention to the top five factors identified by Independent School Management (ISM) as the reasons that parents enroll and re-enroll in independent schools – *safety, caring faculty, character education, faculty expertise, and academic rigor.*

WASHINGTON. According to the February newsletter from CAPE, new tax law will preserve for at least two more years the **Coverdell Education Savings Account (ESA)** signed in 2001, which permits families to earn tax exempt interest on educational savings accounts up to \$2000 which may be applied to tuition for elementary, secondary, and post-secondary public and private schools. Also included in the new law is an extension for two years of the **deduction of up to \$250** for educators who use out-of-pocket resources to fund books, computer equipment and software, as well as other materials used in the classroom. This same law allows employees to use up to **\$5,250 tax-free assistance** from their employers for graduate and undergraduate studies.

OTHER NEWS. Validation of **Transfer of Credits** for Florida: According to the updated policy released by SACS CASI / Advanced this week to all Florida Superintendents

and Principals, credits from FCIS schools will continue to be recognized by receiving public schools within the state.

On a national level, a recent study indicates that 2009-10 college freshmen who had attended private schools had **higher ACT scores** than their public school counterparts. The average ACT score for public school graduates was 22.1, graduates of Catholic schools had an average of 23.5, and private school graduates had an average of 24.1. The full report may be found at: http://www.act.org/ressearch/services/pdf/Class_Profile_Norma_Reprot.pdf

On the state level, the **mean SAT scores** for students in FCIS schools in 2010 were 554 in critical reading, 570 in mathematics, and 550 in writing. As a comparison, the mean scores for the state for Florida were 496 in critical reading, 498 in mathematics, and 479 in writing.

A new report on school safety has been released by the National Center for Education Statistics entitled **Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2010**. The report indicates that students avoid areas within the school where they feel unsafe. Six percent of public school students reported avoiding one or more areas within the school due to fear for their safety, as opposed to one percent of private school students.

Barbara H Hodges, Ed.D.
Executive Director



Legislative Update By Barbara Hodges, Ed.D.

These are the bills that FCIS is watching. Those without numbers have not been filed yet, but will be filed before the deadline of March 4.

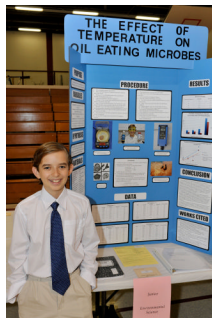
- **Reorganization of state agencies** will affect the Dept of Children and Families and Agency for Workforce Innovation and is a big issue for child care and VPK providers. Discussions are taking place at this time and committee staffs are beginning to put together a plan.
- **Educational Savings Account (ESA) Bill** is in draft form at this time. The bill will provide parents of public school students state funds to pay tuition at a private school, private virtual school or in other specified programs. Parents who choose a private school would be responsible for the amount of tuition not covered by the ESA. At this time the bill sponsor is trying to include students currently enrolled in private schools through a lottery. Details on this bill have not been made public at this time.
- **Virtual Education Bill** which has not been filed yet was worked on over the summer by many stakeholders in the educational choice movement. The bill will lift the mandate on school districts to provide a virtual education program and will create a new state level virtual choice program.
- **HB 797 / SB 1000** Interscholastic Extracurricular Bill for Private School Students: Establishes a statewide program for middle and high school students attending non-FHSAA private schools which do not have an athletic program and have less than 125 students to participate in athletics at their zoned public school.
- **SB 448 / HB 213** Bullying of School Children: Prohibits bullying or harassment of a student or school employee by use of any computer, computer system, or computer network that is physically located on school property, regardless of ownership. Requires that each school district include in its district-wide policy instruction to students, parents, teachers, school administrators, counseling staff, and school volunteers on how to recognize behaviors that lead to bullying and harassment and how to take appropriate preventative action based on each of those individual's observations
- **SB 564 / HB 519** Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program: Provides that prekindergarten instructors in school-year prekindergarten programs delivered by private providers and public schools meet new professional credentialing requirements beginning July 1, 2014. Deletes provisions relating to alternate educational credentials, to conform. Repeals provisions relating to aspirational goals for the professional credentials of prekindergarten instructors.
- **SB 906 / HB 627** Background Screening Requirements/School Districts: Authorizes the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, rather than the Department of Law Enforcement, to take fingerprints, conduct background checks through the Department of Law Enforcement, and issue statewide certificates signifying that a person has met the uniform, statewide qualifications necessary for non-instructional school district employees or contractual personnel to have access to school grounds when students are present, have direct contact with students, or have access to or control of school funds.
- **SB 1140** Child Care Facilities: Requires vehicles used by child care facilities and large family child care homes to be equipped with an alarm system that prompts the driver to inspect the vehicle for children before exiting the vehicle. Requires the Department of Children and Family Services to adopt rules and maintain a list of approved alarm systems.

School News

The Cornerstone School and Forest High School EMIT Program hosted "Robopalooza" Robotics Tournament on January 8th. "Robopalooza" was the largest FLL Robotics Tournament ever offered in Florida.



Six **Saint Paul's School** students were big winners at the Pinellas County Regional Science & Engineering Fair. **Pinellas County Best of Fair** & 1st Place, Environmental Science - Evan Miller—1st Place, Behavioral Science - Caroline Hobson—1st Place, Biochemistry - Nicholas Caron—1st Place, Chemistry - Madison Jones—1st Place Team Project - Kristi Bears & Caroline Beck. On Feb. 11th, Saint Paul's third grader Marissa Streng was the Grand Prize winner in the Elementary division at USF's National Academy of



Evan Miller

Marissa Streng



Inventors competition for her Puff-N-Fluff invention. Saint Paul's School seventh grader, **Madison Jones** won 1st Place for **Creative Writing** in the "What Does Peace Look Like?" Creative

Expression Contest at St. Timothy's School in Maryland.

All five of the **Bolles School** students who were named Semifinalists in the 2011 National Merit Scholarship program have been named Finalists-William Leeser, Daniel Leichus, Scott Rice, Ajay Shroff and Ryan Smith. Bolles senior Ashley Irven has been named a National Achievement Scholarship Finalist. This marks the fourth consecutive year that at least one Bolles student has been named a National Achievement Finalist.

For the sixth-consecutive year, the **Berkeley Preparatory School** Debate Team earned first place at the regional competition. The team of Andrew Goldfield '13 and Xunhan Xu '13 posted a perfect record

at the event. Berkeley Preparatory student-athlete Bryane Heaberlin was selected the Florida winner for the NFHS Spirit of Sport Award.

Congratulations to **The Weiss School's** 7th grade student, Maria Elena Grimmert for placing first at the Palm Beach County Science Fair. Maria Elena also took home the Pollution Prevention Coalition award and the American Society of Mechanical Engineers award. Over 10,000 high school and middle school projects were submitted with 1,100 making it to regionals. Maria Elena was one of 14 first place winners with 11 of those going on to compete at the state level.



On January 13th, Charlie Belcher's report on Fox

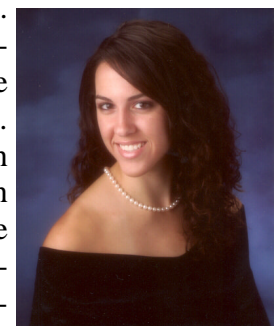
New's Good Day Tampa Bay was filmed at The **Montessori House Day School's** Ehrlich Road Campus. Charlie participated in several science projects involving



friction, air, water, etc. as part of the Elementary Science Fair.

Carrollwood Day School held a new Elementary School groundbreaking ceremony on Friday, Jan 21.

CDS student, Stephanie St. John, has been named a semifinalist for the 2011 Class of the Coca-Cola Scholars Program. Stephanie St. John ranks with approximately 2,100 high school seniors who are in the running for \$3 million in college scholarships that Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation will award in spring 2011.



Stephanie St. John

Palmer Trinity Boys Basketball Team won District Championship! Congratulations on a great season.

All ten **Episcopal High School** students earned a category place award, and several were also awarded special awards and cash prizes, at the Regional Science and Engineering Fair.



Accreditation Corner

By Karen Mathews, Associate Director for Accreditation

For Heads of School: FCIS will offer two accreditation workshops this summer:

Following the Head's Retreat – June 15-16 at the Colony Hotel in Palm Beach

- For current FCIS Heads of School only
- To prepare to serve as a Chair of an FCIS evaluation team

During the Administrator's Retreat – July 31-August 2 at Jupiter Beach Resort in Jupiter

- For FCIS administrators and Steering Committee Chairs
- Review of all evaluation procedures and standards in preparation for accreditation visit

Standard Clarification

At the February FCIS Board meeting, the Board of Directors approved the following changes.

Business and Finance

3.8.7 The school must demonstrate its financial health by maintaining an asset-to-~~debt~~ liabilities ratio of 1.5:1 or better.

3.8.10 All funds should be under the control of the head or board.

Development

3.9.1 If the school is nonprofit, the school must follow fundraising procedures appropriate to its needs, which include capital gift campaigns, annual fund drives, alumni development initiatives, and deferred gift efforts. ~~All funds should be under the control of the head or board.~~

Effective 2011-12 school year



Florida Kindergarten Council Corner

Standard Reminder!

The FKC Professional Staff standard requiring teachers of PreKindergarten Four must hold a bachelor's degree and be teaching in field by the conclusion of the 2012-13 year.

FKC 3.5.8 Grade Prekindergarten Four: The teacher of the four-year-old program (teachers hired after January 1, 2007) shall have a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution. If the academic preparation is out of the field of early childhood education, a minimum of 12 relevant semester hours or their in-service equivalents shall be obtained. **Those teachers of the four-year-old program (hired before January 1, 2007) that are grandfathered in must have a bachelor's degree by the year 2012.**

(Conclusion of the 2012-13 academic year)

FCIS Presents

Brain Research with JoAnn Deak

March 25, 2011

JoAnn Deak, Ph. D., has spent more than thirty years as an educator and psychologist, helping children develop into confident and competent adults. The latter half of that period has focused on working with adults, parents and teachers in their roles as guides or ‘neurosculptors’ of children. Recently a speaker at the FCIS Administrators’ Retreat, JoAnn was hailed as one of the most significant and interesting speakers in the history of the event. JoAnn has presented at the National Association of School Psychologists, the National Association of Independent Schools, the Association of International Schools, the American Montessori Society and the International Baccalaureate Association.

Topics:

“Current Brain Research and How it Informs Teaching”

The last five years have provided an onslaught of knowledge about the functioning of the human brain, this work has confirmed some long standing theories and totally disproved others. Because of the significant steps in scanning techniques that can image a brain while it is working, more than ever before, we can make more informed and accurate recommendations for anyone involved in working with the owners of the human brain. This workshop will provide a comprehensive understanding of how to understand and work with the approximately 100 billion neurons that form an individual's brain.

“Beyond Learning Styles: Diagnosing Types of Learners and Teaching Strategies with the Brain Research in Mind”

There are so many learning style inventories, personality tests and ways of looking at multiple intelligences. What seems to be needed is a way of combining the brain research with a way of looking at how an individual brain works, and then combining that with pedagogic techniques in the classroom that will fit most learners. That's what the IPO model does: looking at input, processing and output differences in students and designing teaching strategies around them.

When: Friday, March 25, 2011

Where: Pine Crest School 1501 N. E. 62 Street, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Time: 9:00-2:45

Workshop will benefit: Teachers, Department Chairs, Administrators and Heads

Cost: \$95/person - Early Bird Special

\$115/Person - After March 4, 2011

\$125/person - Nonmember Fee

Deadline is Friday, March 18.

Toyota International Teacher Program

The Toyota International Teacher Program is a **fully-funded** international professional development program for U.S. educators. Funded by Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc., and administered by the Institute of International Education, the program advances environmental stewardship and global connectedness in U.S. schools and communities. The **deadline to apply is May 4, 2011**. The inaugural Toyota International Teacher Program to South Africa will provide teachers first-hand exposure to the social and environmental complexity of South Africa, focusing on sustainable development and emphasizing the links between history, culture, power, and the environment.

The program will take place **November 19-December 3, 2011**. Full-time classroom teachers of all subjects and librarians, grades 7 - 12, are now invited to apply online.

For more information and an application go to www.iie.org/toyota.

WORKSHOPS

FCIS

JoAnn Deak	Mar. 25	Ft. Lauderdale
Heads' Retreat	June 13-15	Palm Beach
Administrators' Retreat	July 31-Aug 2	Jupiter
www.fcis.org		

ISM

Summer Institute	June 19-July 29	DE, CO, UT
www.isminc.com/si		

NAES

Institute for Aspiring Heads	Apr. 7-9	Portland
www.episcopalschools.org		

NAIS

School Leadership Institute I	June 14-17	Alexandria
Summer Diversity Institute	June 24-29	Alexandria
Institute for New Heads	July 6-11	Atlanta
School Leadership Institute II	Aug 2-5	Alexandria
www.nais.org		

NBOA

Business Officer Institute	June 19-23	San Diego
www.nboa.net		

FCIS Presents

Legal Workshop—Bill Krizner

April 28—Miami Country Day School

May 12, 2011—Central Florida

William T. Krizner, owner and operating partner of The Krizner Group, was a speaker at the Jacksonville Conference last November. The Krizner Group is a full service law firm specializing in employment law. Bill will be holding two workshops for FCIS schools this year. The first one will be held in South Florida on April 28 at Miami Country Day School. The second will be held in Central Florida on May 12. Feedback from Bill's session at our November conference was extremely positive and we are fortunate to have him on our spring calendar!

More detailed information will be coming!



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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.

TEACHERS Singapore Math Institute

What is the Singapore Math Institute? It is an institute, not a workshop, where teachers are taught how to teach math, learning the concrete-pictorial-abstract approach to teaching all mathematical concepts.

Where: The Bolles School
7400 San Jose Blvd, Jacksonville

When: June 20-24, 2011 (8am—4pm)

Institute Fee: \$795

For more information and an application go to www.fcis.org, other workshops.

It's time to apply for the 2011 DeWitt E. & Vera Hooker Grant

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 Florida Council of Independent Schools member schools.
- No limit to number of applications per school
- Applications must be postmarked by March 4, 2011

For more information and an application go to www.fcis.org, "news".

2010 DeWitt E. & Vera Hooker Grant Fellowship Winners

- **Sally Tappert, Delia Zepeda and Felix Jacomino, \$500**
What's All the Buzz About Family Math, Science & Technology Night?
St. Stephen's Episcopal Day School
- **Robert Egley, Ph.D., Marion Primmer and James Teets, \$2,500**
Synchronous Distance Learning for Independent Schools
Glades Day School

FCIS News

FCIS has a Facebook page!

To become an FCIS Facebook fan, log on to your account and become a fan of "Florida Council of Independent Schools" where you will find articles of interest, links, FCIS photos and news and announcements!