

INDEPENDENTS

The Newsletter of the Florida Council of Independent Schools

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Upcoming FCIS Events

July 31-Aug 2, 2011
Administrators' Retreat
Jupiter Beach Resort
Jupiter

October 2-4, 2011
New Teacher Institute
Oviedo

November 17-18 2011
Convention
Hyatt Regency
Weston

January 12, 2012
Evaluation Academy
@ Parkway Christian
Davie

from the executive director...

It is hard to believe that at the writing of this newsletter, I am finishing my first year as the Executive Director of the Florida Council of Independent Schools (FCIS). It has been an interesting and rewarding year! I was able to welcome 14 new heads of school to our association as I chaired change of head visits for this past year; I traveled the state and had the opportunity to see the incredible learning experiences that are taking place in our member schools. I have always believed that FCIS schools provide the finest of independent education to the students of Florida, and now, I have seen it firsthand. I had the opportunity to present at various board meetings on current trends in our state and nation, and I worked with other boards on governance and finance. The work has been stimulating and has me looking forward to next year for more opportunities to help our member schools.

FCIS hosted various professional events during the year, and last week, we held our 19th annual Heads' Retreat in Palm Beach. We had a record registration of 54 current and 2 retired heads of school. Will Richardson, an international speaker and author on technology, set the tone for a thought provoking retreat centered around "schools of the future". I want to thank our FCIS Heads who presented on the final day of the retreat and showcased the innovative programs that are happening in our FCIS schools: David Mahler, Head of The Out-of-Door Academy; Bob Fine, Admiral Farragut Academy; Richard Gehman, Oak Hall School; Joan Lutton, The Cushman School; and Jackie Westerfield, Grandview Preparatory School. Craig Wilson, the Head of University of Miami Global Academy which is a New School Candidate, also was a presenter. A new dimension was added to our retreat with the launching of our new family support program, "Focusing on FCIS Families" (F³). The addition of heads' families to our retreat programming and events brought a whole new dynamic, making the retreat a richer experience for all. Mark your calendar for June 11-13 for the next Heads' Retreat – an event not to be missed!

TALLAHASSEE. The state Board of Education has endorsed Gerard Robinson as **Florida's next Commissioner of Education**. Mr. Robinson is the former Secretary of Education of Virginia.

The McKay Scholarship/Students with Disabilities (CS.HB 1329) has been expanded to include students with disabilities who have 504 accommodation plans issued under federal law. This bill allows parents of such students to enroll in private schools if they have previously attended public schools. A recent report of the Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice indicates that the number of private schools accepting McKay Scholarships has risen from 846 in 2007-08 to 1,013 in 2010-11. In this past year, the state awarded \$148,566,367.77 in scholarship to 22,198 students.

CAPE. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) has just released a **report on private school enrollment**. According to the report, the number of students attending private schools dropped nearly 9% in the past decade. In 1999, statistics indicate that 6.0 million students were attending private schools, as compared to 5.5 million in 2009. The percentage of students in private schools was 11.4% of the school-age population in 1999, as compared to 10.0% in 2009. Those percentages may be disaggregated to indicate percentages per region: Northeast, 14%; Midwest, 11%; South, 9%; and West, 8%. The numbers are shifting according to the type of schools, as well. In 1999, 44.2% of private school students were in Catholic schools, as compared to 39.4% in 2009. Conservative Christian schools have declined in enrollment, while other religious schools have increased from 21.9% to 24.4%. Enrollment in schools without a religious affiliation has increased from 19.3% to 22.8%.

NAIS. The Stats Online Survey to input school data will officially open on July 1. In order for FCIS to have the most accurate data and statistics, it is very important for all of our schools to complete this survey. More information will be provided in the month to come.

FCIS. Mark your calendars now:
July 1-Begin completing NAIS *Stats Online Survey*
September 15-Annual Reports Due to the FCIS Office

Barbara H Hodges, Ed.D.
Executive Director

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

Surrounded by the lush tropical setting of Palm Beach, fifty-three of our school heads gathered at The Colony Hotel for this annual event. It was very rewarding to see so many heads who were attending for the first time, as well as those who have become "regulars". After a welcome reception and dinner on Monday evening, the retreat began on Tuesday morning with a workshop led by Will Richardson. Will is the "Learner in Chief" at Connective Learning and the author of "*Blogs, Wikis, Podcasts and Other Powerful Web Tools for Classrooms*". His workshop, "Learning in a Networked World" highlighted many interesting facts, and challenges about the tools that are available to students today, and those coming in the near future.

Tuesday evening, everyone enjoyed a family bar-b-que under a tent on the hotel patio. Many stayed late to enjoy the evening and the good conversation! Wednesday morning, David Mahler from The Out-of-Door Academy and Rob DiMartino, Director of finalsite, presented an interesting workshop on "Change". 21st century schools will need to address the new ways we can market our schools, communicate with our parents, train our teachers and utilize the tools of technology that surround our students. We also heard from a panel of our own FCIS heads about a variety of interesting programs and strategies that are happening in their schools. Programs that involved innovation, collaboration, distance learning, cloud computing, exchange/travel programs, and global education were presented by: Dr. Craig Wilson, University of Miami Global Academy, Dr. Joan Lutton, The Cushman School, Robert Fine, Admiral Farragut Academy, Jackie Westerfield, Grandview Preparatory School, and Richard Gehman, Oak Hall School.

Following the Heads' Retreat, six Heads of School completed the Evaluation Academy training and will serve as co-chairs during next year's accreditation visits. A dynamic combination of established FCIS schools heads, recently appointed heads of schools and heads who are new to FL provided lively discussions and valuable input for our accreditation process. Robert Stephens, The Heritage School and Cathy Hardage, St. Mark's Episcopal Day School, current FCIS Board members and Evaluation Academy graduates, offered valuable insight as well.

This was also the first year of our new initiative, "Focusing on FCIS Families" (F3). A field trip to the Flagler Museum was planned for spouses on Tuesday and an informal cracker barrel session was held on Wednesday morning. We look forward to continuing this initiative next year, so mark your calendars for June 11-13, 2012. The location will be announced very soon!



Legislative Update

By Barbara Hodges, Ed.D.

SB 2156—Reorganization of AWI: (Office of Early Learning)

Transfer the Office of Early Learning from the Agency of Workforce Innovation to the Department of Education as a separate, independent entity, effective July 1, 2011. Director of the Office appointed by the Governor, confirmed by the Senate. DOE may not impose requirements or standards on Early Learning programs beyond what is authorized currently in law for VPK. Auditor General review of the programs and delivery systems (including Early Learning Coalitions).

SB 2120 K-12 Education Funding—VPK Ratios: A private prekindergarten provider must have an instructor with the approved credential for each class of 11 children or fewer. Each of the private prekindergarten provider's prekindergarten classes must be composed of at least 4 students but may not exceed 20 students (an increase of 2 per class) with an appropriate adult supervisor in a class of 12 or more. **Budget:** **VPK Funding,** School year program \$2,383 per child Summer program \$2,026 per child

CS/CS/HB 1255 Education Accountability: Allows private schools to administer the kindergarten screening.

"Nonpublic schools may administer the statewide kindergarten screening to each kindergarten student in a nonpublic school who was enrolled in the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program." Provides clarifying language on McKay Scholarship for Students with Disability. "A scholarship student who enrolls in a public school or public school program is considered to have returned to a public school for the purpose of determining the end of the scholarship's term." New language to require that a middle school student must pass an end-of-course exam in civics to be promoted from middle school in the 2014-2015 school year. Specifies the procedure for a VPK provider to seeking a good cause exemption in regard to the administration of assessments.

SB 2150 Postsecondary Education Funding: Bright Futures Scholarships, Increases Medallion Scholars SAT test scores for students graduating in 2013-14 from 1050 to 1170 and ACT score from 23 to 26. Increases Community service hours from 75 to 100 hours for Academic Scholars and adds a requirement of 75 hours for Medallion scholars for students graduating in 2011-2012. To be eligible for an award under the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, a student must submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid which is complete and error free prior to disbursement. **Bright Futures Scholarship Awards,** The award per credit hour for the 2011-2012 academic year shall be as follows:

Four year institutions: Academic Scholars Award \$101, Medallion Scholars Award \$ 76

Two year Institutions: Academic Scholars Award \$ 62, Medallion Scholars Award \$ 62

Upper Div. Programs offered by Florida Colleges, Academic Scholars Award \$ 70, Medallion Scholars Award \$ 52

Bright Future Scholarship recipients will be required to meet diploma requirements and therefore must adhere to the new mandate requiring **one on-line class prior to graduation,** beginning with this year's freshman class.

HB 797 Interscholastic Extracurricular Bill for Private School Students

Establishes a statewide program for middle and high school students attending non-FHSAA private schools that do not have an interscholastic or intrascholastic athletic program and have less than 125 students to participate in athletics at their zoned public school.

CS/CS/HB 647 Protection of Volunteers: 768.1355 Florida Volunteer Protection Act.—(1) Any person who volunteers to perform any service for any nonprofit organization, including an officer or director of such organization, without compensation from the nonprofit organization, regardless of whether the person is receiving compensation from another source, except reimbursement for actual expenses, shall be considered an agent of such nonprofit organization when acting within the scope of any official duties performed under such volunteer services. Such person, and the source of any such compensation, if the volunteer is not acting as an agent of the source, shall incur no civil liability for any act or omission by such person which results in personal injury or property damage if.....

CS/CS/HB 7197 Digital Learning: Expands virtual education in the public schools. It requires school districts to establish virtual instruction options; authorizes establishment of virtual charter schools & provides requirements; authorizes blended learning courses; provides additional requirements for Florida Virtual School; requires full-time & part-time school district virtual instruction program options. It requires at least one online learning course for high school graduation beginning with students entering grade 9 in the 2011-2012 school year. Allows student to enter a full-time virtual program at home in kindergarten and ^{1st} grade (This may affect private school enrollment).

CS/HB1329 McKay Scholarships/Students with Disabilities: Expands the McKay Scholarship program to include students with disabilities who have 504 accommodation plan issued under federal law; allows parent to request and receive scholarship for student to enroll in and attend private school if student has 504 accommodation plan; provides that students with certain temporary 504 accommodation plans are ineligible for scholarship; provides that parent may choose to enroll student in public school in adjacent district under certain conditions; provides for scholarship amounts.

CS/CS/HB 139 Child Care Facilities: Clarifies the time frame on Class III Violations for maintaining Gold Seal Quality Care: 402.281 Gold Seal Quality Care program.

(4) In order to obtain and maintain a designation as a Gold Seal Quality Care provider, a child care facility, large family child care home, or family day care home must meet the following additional criteria:

(c) The child care provider must not have been cited for the same class III violation, as defined by rule, three or more times and failed to correct the violation within 1 year after the date of each citation, within the 2 years preceding its application for designation as a Gold Seal Quality Care provider. Commission of the same class III violation three or more times and failure to correct within the required time during a 2-year period may shall be grounds for termination of the designation as a Gold Seal Quality Care provider until the provider has no class III violations for a period of 1 year.

School News

Lakeland Christian School was named the first-ever FHSAA Overall Academic Team Champions, 2A. This means LCS athletic teams posted the highest cumulative GPAs of any team in the 2A classification in the state of Florida. Congratulations!

Holy Trinity Episcopal Academy's seventh grade student, Stuti Mishra, competed in the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, DC on June 2. At the end of round five, she was one of only 26 semifinalists remaining from 275 spellers. Stuti tied for 19th place. Congratulations Stuti!



Creative Learning Academy and the University of West Florida signed a formal "Alliance Agreement" that initiates a historic partnership between the two schools to develop a model technology classroom at Creative Learning Academy.

Saint Paul's School alumna, Mackenzie Logan signed a National Letter of Intent with The University of Tampa's women's soccer program; she will begin this fall, 2011. Mackenzie also received an academic scholarship to UT on top of the soccer scholarship! In conjunction with Saint Paul's Schools effort to reduce, reuse and recycle, St. Paul's kindergarten garden class, along with their teacher/mentor, Ms. Zilhaber, was selected as one of the finalists in the Siemens *We Can Change the World Challenge*.

On June 5, **St. Mark's Episcopal Church and Day**



School in Jacksonville broke ground on a \$5 million renovation and construction project to connect the church and school campuses plus expand and create facilities.

Tampa Preparatory School's sophomore Xan Peters received *Best of Show* award for his sculpture in the Eleventh Annual Hillsborough Community College Annual High School Art Exhibit. Senior Elyssa Edelman received Third Place for a self-portrait in conte crayon in the drawing category and Chelsea Carnes received Honorable Mention in sculpture. Sixteen Tampa Prep students qualified for the exhibition that included the work of 300 area art students.

Bayshore Christian School instructor, Mr. Larry Grimes, was "honored and humbled" when the *Jewish Foundation for the Righteous* named him as a national

recipient of the Robert L. Goldman Award for Excellence in Holocaust Education.

As part of the 8th grade humanities curriculum at **Carrollwood Day School**, students explore and analyze markets using the Stock Market Simulation Game. CDS's 8th grade students invested in the markets and won! On April 21, fifth graders at CDS held their International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme. This years central idea was "*interests drive a generation to take actions in the world.*"

On April 29, **St. Stephen's Episcopal Day School's** new Main Highway Pavilion was awarded Gold LEED certification by the US Green Building Council. St. Stephen's is only the second school in Miami-Dade County awarded this distinction, and the first independent school in Miami-Dade.



Photo Credit: Jenifer Briley & Assoc., architectural firm

Episcopal High School's Head of School Dale Regan, one of four finalists, won the prestigious **EVE Award for Education** at *The Florida Times Union's* 42nd EVE Awards celebration luncheon on June 3rd. The award is given based on the recipient's accomplishments in the field of education in the past year. Congratulations!

The Bolles School's Scott Rice, Ryan Smith and Daniel Leichus have been announced as winners in the National Merit Scholarship program.



D. Leichus



R. Smith



S. Rice

Independent Day School teachers and administrators recently completed a major milestone in their professional development effort to achieve endorsement in gifted education. Thanks to a partnership grant from USF College of Education Gifted Endorsement Program!

Canterbury School of Florida's softball team won the state title. This is the first state championship for Canterbury, and the first time in 9 years that a school in Pinellas County has won at state. Congratulations!!





Accreditation Corner

By Karen Mathews, Associate Director for Accreditation

If your school is scheduled for an accreditation visit in 2011-12 or 2012-13, FCIS recommends that an administrator attend the Administrator's Retreat. Register on FCIS website today!

What? A session entitled, "Preparing Your School for an FCIS Evaluation"

When? Monday afternoon during the Administrator's Retreat - July 31-August 2

Where? Jupiter Beach Resort in Jupiter

In addition, if you would like to schedule an on-campus session with Karen Mathews, Associate Director for Accreditation, please e-mail Karen at kmathews@fcis.org. (Travel expenses are paid by the school.)

Addenda to FCIS Standards

The following edits to standards were approved at the June Board of Directors meeting.

3.5.1(c) – All teachers in kindergarten through grade 12 must have a bachelor's degree or foreign equivalent (not including art and music). **Administrators with authority over students and/or teachers must also have a bachelor's degree.**

3.8.4 – The school must maintain a three-to-five year financial plan, **including provisions for replacement, repair and maintenance of facilities**, either as part of its strategic plan or as a separate document.

The following new standards were also approved:

3.8.10 – When awarding financial aid the school must have published procedures and criteria.

Current 3.8.10 standard, moves to 3.8.11.

5.1.6 – The school must have a policy for responding to challenged materials.

Five Year Review Self-study Addendum

The FCIS Board of Directors voted to add an analysis area on technology to the self-study for the Five Year Review, "Technology: Planning and Implementation". As many schools continue to expand programs, integrate technology into the classroom and embrace 21st Century learning and teaching techniques, it is essential that schools review these programs every five years to ensure continued success. This analysis section has been added to the on-line templates.

Annual Report

The deadline to submit the FCIS Annual report will be September 15, 2011. There will be two additional questions to complete:

To the best of your knowledge, is there any change in standards compliance? If so, please explain.

The most recent financial review/audit was completed by _____
and was completed on _____.

Name of independent CPA

Date received

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!

Certification Renewal

Florida Professional Certificates
expiring June 30, 2011

- Renew online at www.fldoe.org/edcert
- Contact Keara Danger, kdanger@fcis.org, to submit your master inservice to the DOE on the CT-111.

WORKSHOPS

FCIS

Administrators' Retreat	July 31-Aug 2	Jupiter
New Teacher Institute	Oct. 2-4	Oviedo
Convention 2011	Nov. 17-18	Weston
Evaluation Academy	Jan. 12, 2012	Davie

@ Parkway Christian

www.fcis.org

ISM

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

NAIS

Institute for New Heads	July 6-11	Atlanta
School Leadership Institute II	Aug 2-5	Alexandria

www.nais.org

Master Inservice Coordinator

All master inservice must be
submitted by July 31, 2011



Florida Kindergarten Council Corner

Addendum to FKC Standards

In an effort to clarify standard 3.5.9, the following edit was approved at the May Board of Directors meeting.

3.5.9 - 18 months through Prekindergarten Three: Instructional personnel of the 18 month, two and three year-old children will comply with ONE (1) of the following:

- A valid teaching certificate in early childhood or elementary education.
- A bachelor's degree; if the degree is out of field, 12 semester hours and/or its equivalent* in early childhood education must be obtained.
- **An associate of arts degree in early childhood/child development or at least a CDA credential.
- An associate of arts degree with a valid Montessori teaching certificate.

*Equivalent is the following ratio: 20 inservice or workshop hours = one semester hour

By July 1, 2014 a CDA credential will no longer meet the standard; a **minimum of an associate of arts degree will be required.

Don't forget that **Standard 3.5.8**, which requires teachers of Prekindergarten Four to hold a Bachelor's Degree, goes into effect by the conclusion of the **2012-13** academic year.