



School Matters

A Parent's Resource Guide
to Successful Student
Achievement



Nassau County Public Schools
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School Matters is a guide designed to help parents who have children in the Nassau County Schools understand what is required for students to progress through grade levels and to earn a high school diploma. This resource book includes important information concerning skills and subjects that children will be taught in elementary, middle, and high school.

In this guide, specific emphasis has been placed on reading. As educators, we believe that this is the most important skill that a child can master. His or her future success in school and throughout life depends upon the ability to read fluently and with comprehension.

Also included are the assessments that your child will be given throughout the school year, along with a discussion of what to do should your child fall behind. There is a glossary of terms that educators use that you will want to be familiar with, as well as a list of various publications that are available to you.

Most importantly, you will find the names and numbers of individuals that you can call if you need assistance beyond that which you receive at your child's school. I trust this guide will be helpful to you as we work together to ensure that your child is successful in school.

In Education,



Dr. Kathy K. Burns, Superintendent



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SCHOOL MATTERS

2017-2018

Florida's Accountability Program

The **Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS)** and **Florida State Standards (FSS)** provide expectations for student achievement in Florida. These standards were developed by teachers, curriculum experts, and business and community leaders to make sure that the children in Florida's schools benefit from their classroom experience. The purpose of the Standards is to specify important skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, innovation, collaboration and communication that students should have as they move from grade to grade and later as they move from the educational system to careers in the workplace.

The **Florida Accountability Program** is made up of a series of standardized tests given each year to students in Florida's

public schools. These tests measure student achievement in reading, writing, mathematics, and science. All public school students in grades 3-10 are required to take part in the Florida Accountability Program. This includes students with disabilities (ESE) and Limited English Proficient Students (LEP) who are working toward a standard high school diploma. Accommodations are made for these students if necessary.

The Florida School Grades Web page, which includes links to School Accountability Reports, downloadable files on school and district performance outcomes, technical assistance guides, and additional resources on school performance, can be accessed at <http://schoolgrades.fldoe.org/>



What are Standards?

Every child in the state of Florida should be learning the same skills in the same grades. The Florida Department of Education created a list of standards called the **Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS)**, for students in every grade. However, in addition, the State Board of Education adopted both the **Mathematics Florida Standards (MAFS)** and **Language Arts Florida Standards (LAFS)** better known as the **New Florida State Standards (FSS)**. These were approved by the Florida State Board of Education on February 18, 2014.

The major design goals of the Florida Standards:

- align with best evidence on college and career readiness and expectations
- build on the best standards work of the states
- maintain focus on what matters most for readiness

There are three main sections for **English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects**:

- K-5 (cross disciplinary)
- 6-12 English Language Arts
- 6-12 Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

The integration of literacy includes:

- reading
- writing (arguments, informative/explanatory and narrative)
- speaking and listening
- language



The **Mathematics** Florida Standards (MAFS) focus on preparation for careers and college and include STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) standards for students planning careers in science, technology, engineering, and/or mathematics. In addition, students at all levels should develop expertise in eight Standards for Mathematical Practice.

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
4. Model with mathematics.
5. Use appropriate tools strategically.
6. Attend to precision.
7. Look for and make use of structure
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

You can view the **Florida State Standards** and **Next Generation State Standards** at:

[FLDOE Bureau of Standards and Instructional Support or CPALMS](#)

There are specific standards for grades K-8 and standards for high school which are listed in conceptual categories.

What is Exceptional Student Education?

In Florida, children who have special learning needs because of a disability are called exceptional students. The special help they are given at school is called Exceptional Student Education (ESE). The purpose of this program is to help each child with a disability to progress in school and to prepare for life after school. ESE services may include special teaching methods and materials, technology devices, therapy, special transportation, or other supports. Children are referred, evaluated, and staffed according to their eligibility because of specific disabilities. A team works together to make the best decision for the student. The child's parents are an important part of the team. If a child is eligible for ESE services, an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) is written and the team decides what kind of classes, and/or supports the child will receive. Most children stay in the general education classroom and receive services through, Support Facilitation, Co-teaching or inclusive services. A few children spend all day in a special class.

Test Accommodations Made for Students with Disabilities

The following test accommodations are available for any student with a disability and a current IEP:

- Presentation: this includes enlargement of regular print versions, large print versions, Braille versions, methods to provide visual attention, signed or oral presentation.
- Responding: includes writing on the test booklet, writing on separate paper, signing answers, Brailing answers on separate paper, verbally providing the answers.
- Scheduling: includes the use of extended time for any section of the test, several brief sessions, and in some cases being able to continue to test into the second day.
- Setting: includes small groups, individually, in a specially designed classroom to accommodate special lighting or equipment needs.

State Board Rule 6A-1.0943 gives a thorough explanation of the various accommodations that are available and the limitations of those accommodations.



McKay Scholarships

John M. McKay Program for Students with Disabilities:

Florida's school choice programs ensure that No Child Left Behind by allowing parents to choose the best educational setting – public or private – for their child. The McKay Scholarships Program also offers parents public school choices. A parent of a special needs child who wished to may choose to transfer the student to another public school if that school is not closed or otherwise at capacity. For more information, visit:

<http://www.fldoe.org/schools/schoolchoice/k-12-scholarship-programs/mckay/>

Parent Involvement

Parents who are informed and involved in their child's school often find that their students take learning more seriously. There are many opportunities for parents to learn about and get involved in their child's school including:

- Becoming a member of the School Advisory Council (SAC)
- Attending the school's Open House and PTO/PTA meetings
- Attending special events at school during the day and after school
- Visiting and volunteering at the school and in your child's classroom
- Chaperoning a field trip
- Reading the school's newsletter
- Viewing the school's website



Checking My Child's Progress in School

Certainly, the best way to know how your child is doing in school is to keep the lines of communication open and to ask how things are going. Other methods of keeping up include:

- Checking your child's grades and attendance using the parent portal on the Focus Student Information System. (<https://focus.nassau.k12.fl.us/focus/> – contact your child's school for more information or to obtain an account)
- Checking homework assignments regularly and asking to see a sample of graded work.
- Becoming familiar with the books that your child brings home, knowing which ones are class texts and which are from the library.
- Asking your child to read to you on a regular basis.
- Asking your child's teacher for an outline of the course and her expectations.
- Checking progress reports and report cards carefully for grades in each subject, attendance, and conduct.
- Making an appointment with your child's teacher when you have questions.

Parent-Teacher Conferences Make the Most Out of Them

The Parent-Teacher conference: One of the best ways to find out how your child is doing in school is through a parent-teacher conference. Your child's teacher may request to schedule a conference with you; however, if you would like to schedule a conference yourself, call or email your child's teacher to set one up.

Before you attend the conference, spend a few minutes preparing. Talk to your child. Make a list of questions or concerns you might have.

At the conference, keep an open mind. Remember that the conference is an opportunity for you to work with the teacher as a team. If the teacher points out areas where your child needs additional help, ask your child's teacher what his/her plan is to help your child make these improvements and then ask how you can help at home.

Information You Will Receive About Your Child's Progress

Progress Reports: Students in Nassau County receive progress reports every 4 ½ weeks. Teachers often make comments about students' academic and classroom behavior, effort, and attitude.

Report Cards: Students receive report cards at the end of each nine-weeks grading period. Grades are given according to the following grading scales:

Elementary Schools

A: 90-100 Outstanding Progress
B: 80-89 Above Average Progress
C: 70-79 Average Progress
D: 60-69 Lowest Acceptable Progress
F: 0-59 Failure
I: 0 Incomplete
E: 90-100 Excellent
S: 70-89 Satisfactory
N: 60-69 Needs Improvement
U: 0-59 Unsatisfactory

Secondary Schools

A: 90-100 Outstanding Progress
B: 80-89 Above Average Progress
C: 70-79 Average Progress
D: 60-69 Lowest Acceptable Progress
F: 0-59 Failure
I: 0 Incomplete

Grades are based on academic achievement measured by the State Standards, not on behavior, effort, or attitude. You, as a parent, are encouraged to make an appointment for a conference with your student's teacher if you have any questions concerning grades.



Home Education

Home Education is a parent -directed education alternative. Home Education allows the freedom to explore and learn at a pace of the individual student. A Home Education Program as defined in Section 1002.01(1), F.S., is the “sequentially progressive instruction of a student directed by his or her parent or guardian.” The Department of Education provides technical assistance, information and materials on home education to school districts and parents.

Tutoring and After School Programs

Extended School Day: After school tutoring and reading programs for students are offered in the elementary schools in Nassau County. Contact your child’s school for information concerning this activity and your child’s eligibility.

Tutoring/Mentoring: There are many opportunities for students to receive tutoring and mentoring in the secondary schools in Nassau County. After school tutoring is provided by teachers, parent volunteers, student members of National Honor Society and Beta Club as well as organizations such as Communities and Schools, Take Stock in Children, and Boys and Girls Club. Contact your child’s school for additional information.



Academic Opportunities for High School Students

High school students may take advantage of several academic opportunities in Nassau County Schools. These include, but are not limited to:

Honors Classes: In high school this means that the courses are more challenging than standard courses. No college credit is earned.

Advanced Placement (AP) Courses: AP courses offer motivated high school students the opportunity to take college-level courses while in high school. Students who pass the AP tests receive college credit for the courses.

Dual Enrollment Opportunities: Nassau County high school students have several choices of dual enrollment programs that enable students to earn both high school credit and college credit for the courses.

Nassau Virtual School: (NVS) provides the opportunity for high school students to access course work through the Internet. The program provides instruction using online and distance learning technology in a nontraditional classroom. All NVS course curriculum and content are aligned to the Sunshine State Standards, and are designed to enable a student to gain proficiency in each virtually delivered course of study.

Industry Certification: A process by which individuals are assessed by an independent, third-party certifying entity using predetermined standards for knowledge, skills, and competencies, resulting in the award of a time-limited credential that is nationally recognized and applicable to an occupation that is included in the workforce system’s targeted occupation list or determined to be an occupation that is critical, emerging, or addresses a local need. These credentials are industry-recognized and portable within Florida and, in most cases, to other states. Many Industry Certifications earn articulated college credit when students continue their studies at the post-secondary level.

How Does My Child Apply to College?

Deciding to go to college is a big step. If your child wants to attend a college or university after graduation, it's best to start your research early in your child's high school career. You and your child will want plenty of time to explore what kind of college will be the best match for them, what college entrance exams they will need to take, and what kind of financial aid or scholarships are available. One of the best places to start learning more about applying to college is through the counselor at your child's school.

Academic and Career Planning

The Florida Virtual Campus (FLVS) provides a variety of online services for students from Florida's public schools, colleges, and universities. The FLVC's academic advising services make it easy for high school students to prepare for college or a career

after graduation. Students can monitor their progress by running evaluations against their transcript information and the requirements for high school graduation, college and career readiness, and Bright Futures scholarships. For more information, visit <http://www.flvc.org>.

Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program

The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program establishes three lottery-funded scholarships for Florida high school graduates who demonstrate high academic achievement and enroll in eligible Florida public or private postsecondary institutions.

For more information visit:

<http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/ssfad/bf/>

Take Stock in Children

Take Stock in Children is a comprehensive program that helps low-income children succeed by providing college and vocational scholarships, volunteer mentors, student advocates/case managers, tutoring, early intervention and long-term support. High standards, parental involvement, and community support are crucial to the program's success. For more information on this program visit <http://www.takestockinchildren.org/> or contact Nassau County representative, Sharon Collins, Executive Director at 904-548-4464. www.takestocknassau.org



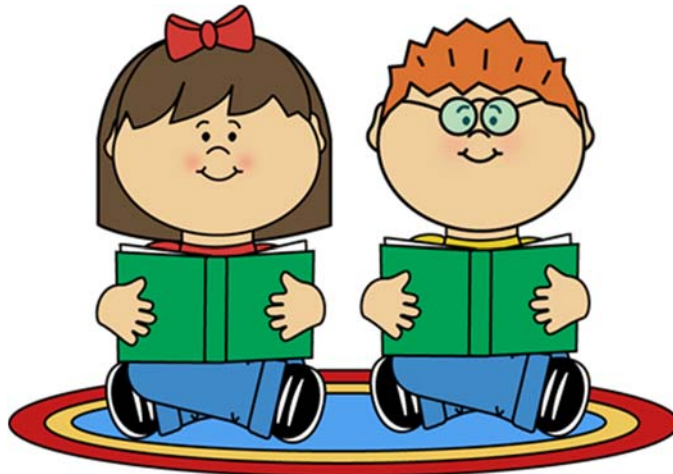
Reading: The Most Important Skill

Research tells us a student's family support system is the number one predictor of success in school. When parents are involved in their children's reading at home, children do better in school. The schools they attend do better, too. When Florida families do at-home literacy activities, increasing time spent reading outside of school, students are more successful in school and life. Before you know it, they are establishing a lifelong love of literacy, and building a brighter future.

Reading is the most important skill that your child will learn in school. The ability to read and to comprehend is necessary for students to achieve in every subject in school and to become a life-long learner. There are five components of reading that children must learn in order to read effectively. To be able to help your child in reading, it is necessary for parents to know and understand the following five components.

1. **Phonemic Awareness** – the ability to hear and work with the sounds of spoken language. Phonological awareness is the understanding that spoken language is made up of individual and separate sounds. Children need to be taught to hear sounds in words and those words are made up of small parts of sounds.
2. **Phonics** – the ability to understand the connection between letters and sounds. Children need to be taught the sounds that individual letters and groups of letters make. Knowing the connection between letters and sounds helps children decode and “sound out” words.
3. **Fluency** – the ability to read text correctly and quickly. Children must learn to read words quickly and correctly in order to understand what is read. Fluent readers recognize words instantly. If a child reads slowly, word by word, he/she works to sound out words and does not comprehend what is read.
4. **Vocabulary Development**– learning the meaning and pronunciation of words. Children need to have knowledge of written and spoken words, know what they mean, and how to use them.
5. **Reading Comprehension** – the ability to understand, remember, and tell what is read. Children need to be taught the steps good readers use before, during, and after reading to make sure they understand the text. For more information about this check:

<http://www.justreadflorida.com>



Studies Show the Benefits of Reading Every Day

Why do reading experts recommend students read 20 minutes outside of school hours every day?

- Every-day reading increases fluency and confidence.
- Increased time spent reading increases vocabulary, comprehension, and writing skills.
- Reading outside the classroom helps students experience the world around them and understand how literacy leads to college, career, and beyond.
- Reading every day helps students form a positive habit, increasing the likelihood they will establish the value of lifelong literacy.



What is Just Take 20?

The Florida Department of Education created the Just Take 20 campaign to provide K-12 Florida families with practical, easy-to-implement reading activities that establish literacy as a lifelong value. Just Take 20 encourages families to seize everyday teachable moments by using 20 minutes a day to integrate reading into their busy lives. Families are invited to create their own custom literacy plans and have fun while learning!

Just Take 20 events will be held across the state, including family workshops, community events, and professional development opportunities to support literacy education among educators and the families they support. <http://justtake20.org/>



What is Accreditation?

All Nassau County Schools have been fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools since 1997.

The benefits of Accreditation for School Districts include:

- Unite with a global network committed to standards of educational excellence.
- Earn the distinction of quality through the recognized seal of AdvancED accreditation.
- Experience a unified, clear, and powerful accreditation process with a scalable and sustainable evaluation of education quality.
- Receive external and objective validation of the areas in which they're doing well, and the areas for continuous improvement.
- Benefit from AdvancED research that shapes educational policy and improves learning practices.
- Experience a state-of-the-art web-based accreditation system that is continuously being upgraded and improved.
- Hear the best available ideas and thinking on education practices and trends through innovative products, educational technologies, and the collective knowledge of peers.
- Benefit from shared expertise and powerful professional learning through local and global workshops, training, conferences, and personalized service.

The benefits of Accreditation for Students and Parents

- Experience ease in transferring credits from one school to another.
- Gain greater access to federal loans, scholarships, postsecondary education and military programs that require students attend an accredited institution.
- Benefit from their institution or educational system's commitment to raising student performance and accountability.

SACS CASI District Accreditation Standards are available at <http://www.advanc-ed.org>

What are the benefits to my children attending an accredited school?

Students who attend a school accredited by SACS CASI can rest assured that the school is committed to raising student performance and held accountable for improving student learning on a continual basis.

Accreditation means that students have:

- Qualified teachers who are continually working to improve their practices and teaching methods in order to increase student performance
- Access to a rich, diverse, and sound curriculum
- Access to a range of student activities and support services
- Transferability of credits from school to school
- Greater access to federal loans, scholarships, post-secondary education, and military programs that require accreditation

The school credits that students earn at a SACS CASI accredited school are recognized by schools, colleges, and universities globally. Through AdvancED's reciprocal agreements with sister accrediting organizations, students can continue their educational goals in the United States or around the world.

Parent Assessment Checklist

- I model a positive attitude and respect for learning.
- I express belief in my child's ability to be successful.
- I help my child set short and long term educational goals.
- I celebrate my child's academic accomplishments.
- I respect and support my child's school as an educational institution.

Focus on Academics:

- I model the behavior of an engaged life-long learner in front of my child.
- My child and I read together at least once a week.
- I encourage my child's reading with age appropriate activities at home.
- I help my child develop responsible study habits.
- I regularly discuss and ask to see work my child is doing at school.
- I make sure my child has adequate materials to complete school and homework assignments.
- I make sure that my child has a consistent time and place to do homework.
- I encourage my child to talk to the teacher if he or she does not understand an assignment.
- I seek assistance from my child's school when needed.

Focus on Behavior:

- I teach and reinforce positive behavior such as respect for others, hard work and responsibility.
- I encourage assertive rather than aggressive behavior and utilize community resources as needed.
- I am aware of and enforce school behavioral expectations.
- I support the school's discipline policy.
- I monitor my child's exposure to TV and entertainment content (music, video games, internet)

Focus on Building Responsibility:

- I allow my child to experience consequences to his or her actions.
- I make sure that my child is in attendance and on time to school each day.
- I monitor and promote my child's participation in extra-curricular and after school activities, as well as unstructured time.
- I stress the fact that academics come before extracurricular and after school learning.

Focus on School/Home Connections:

- I communicate regularly with my child's teacher in person, on the phone, by email, or through writing.
- I work as a member of a team with my child and the school's staff.
- I support school administration and teacher decisions.
- I prepare for and attend teacher conferences, Individualized Educational Plans, Progress Monitoring Plans, or other student meetings.
- I attend open house, science fairs, plays, musical events, class trips, sporting events, curriculum nights, or other school activities.
- I volunteer in the school setting when possible. I prioritize family time.
- I will communicate to the school any concerns that impact my child's education.

Meningococcal Disease

Meningococcal disease can refer to any illness that is caused by the type of bacteria called *Neisseria meningitidis*, also known as meningococcus [muh-ning-goh-KOK-us]. These illnesses are often severe and include infections of the lining of the brain and spinal cord (meningitis) and bloodstream infections (bacteremia or septicemia).

Meningococcus bacteria are spread through the exchange of respiratory and throat secretions like spit (e.g., by living in close quarters, kissing). Meningococcal disease can be treated with antibiotics, but quick medical attention is extremely important. Keeping up to date with recommended vaccines is the best defense against meningococcal disease.

Meningococcal Septicemia (aka Meningococcemia)

Another common outcome of meningococcal infection is bloodstream infection, either septicemia or bacteremia. The more serious of the two is septicemia. When caused by *Neisseria meningitidis* bacteria it is known as meningococcal septicemia or meningococcemia. This is the more dangerous and deadly illness caused by *Neisseria meningitidis* bacteria. When someone has meningococcal septicemia, the bacteria enter the bloodstream and multiply, damaging the walls of the blood vessels and causing bleeding into the skin and organs.

Symptoms may include:

- Fatigue vomiting
- Cold hands and feet
- Cold chills
- Rapid breathing
- Diarrhea
- In the labor stages, a dark purple rash
- Severe aches or pain in the muscles, joints, chest or abdomen (belly)



If you think you or your infant or child has any of these symptoms, call the doctor right away. Meningococcal septicemia is very serious and can be fatal. In fatal cases, deaths can occur in as little as a few hours. In non-fatal cases, permanent disabilities can include amputation of toes, fingers, or limbs or severe scarring as a result of skin grafts.

The symptoms of meningococcal meningitis can appear quickly or over several days. Typically they develop within 3-7 days after exposure. In newborns and infants, the classic symptoms of fever, headache, and neck stiffness may be absent or difficult to notice. The infant may appear to be slow or inactive, irritable, vomiting or feeding poorly. In young children, doctors may also look at the child's reflexes, which can also be a sign of meningitis.

If you think you or your infant or child has any of these symptoms, call the doctor right away. Meningococcal meningitis is very serious and can be fatal. In fatal cases, deaths can occur in as little as a few hours. In non-fatal cases, permanent disabilities can include hearing loss and brain damage.

Signs and Symptoms

A common outcome of meningococcal infection is meningitis. When caused by *Neisseria meningitidis* bacteria it is known as meningococcal meningitis. When someone has meningococcal meningitis, the protective membranes covering their brain and spinal cord, known as the meninges, become infected and swell.

The symptoms include sudden onset of fever, headache, and stiff neck. There are often additional symptoms, such as nausea, vomiting, photophobia (increased sensitivity to light), or altered mental status (confusion).

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Keeping Your Child Drug Free

Did You Know?

Teens who learn anti-drug messages at home are 42% less likely to use drugs. Two-thirds of kids say that losing their parents' respect and pride is one of the main reasons they don't smoke marijuana or use other drugs. Your words and actions matter.

Monitor your Children:

- Know where your child is when he or she is away from home.
- Have your child check in with you regularly.
- Know your child's friends. Have a party or get-together at your house and invite his or her friends to your home.
- Make a point of meeting your child's friend's parents.
- Work with other parents to get a list of everyone's addresses, e-mails, and phone numbers so you can keep in touch with your child.
- Show up a little early to pick up your child and observe his or her behavior.
- Make sure your child is doing something positive with an adult around right after school from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.
- If your children are home alone make sure they are doing homework or chores and not hanging out with friends.
- Eat dinner together as a family and talk about the dangers of drug use.

Signs and Symptoms of Drug Use

- Drop in school attendance or academic performance
- Lack of interest in personal appearance
- Physical changes (e.g., persistent runny nose, red eyes, coughing, wheezing, bruises, needle marks)
- Uncharacteristic withdrawal from family, friends, or interests
- Isolation, depression, fatigue
- Unaccounted-for cash, especially in small denominations
- Change in eating/sleeping habits
- Evidence of drugs or drug paraphernalia (e.g., rolling papers, eye drops, butane lighters, pipes)

Equity and Non-Discrimination

The Nassau County School Board does not discriminate in admission, access, treatment or employment in its programs and educational or extracurricular school activities, on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, marital status, disability, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other reason prohibited by law. The School Board also provides equal access to facilities for the Boy Scouts of America and other patriotic youth groups. The following district contacts have been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination and harassment policies, reports of alleged violations, concerns about compliance and/or the grievance procedure(s):

CONTACTS:

Equity/Non-Discrimination Policies and Procedures

Mark Durham

Executive Director of Curriculum, Instruction and School Improvement or

Joyce Menz

Director of Staff and Program Development

1201 Atlantic Ave., Fernandina Beach, FL 32034

(904) 491-9888

Harassment:

Mark Durham

Executive Director of Curriculum, Instruction and School Improvement

1201 Atlantic Ave., Fernandina Beach, FL 32034

(904) 491-9905

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Kevin Burnette

Director of Facilities

86334 Goodbread Rd., Yulee, FL 32097

(904) 225-5343

Section 504:

Misty Mathis

Director, Exceptional Student Education

1201 Atlantic Ave., Fernandina Beach, FL 32034

(904) 491-9881

Title IX:

Dr. Cynthia Grooms

Director of Secondary Education

1201 Atlantic Ave., Fernandina Beach, FL 32034

(904) 491-9918

Publications Available To You

There are several informative publications available to parents concerning policies and programs that affect students who attend school in Nassau County. Copies of these publications can be found at each school, at the school board offices in Fernandina Beach, or on the district web site at www.nassau.k12.fl.us

Student Handbook: published by each school and received by each student at the beginning of the school year. The handbook contains a great deal of information about the individual school, as well as information that pertains to students throughout the county.

Nassau Sounds: provides information and a calendar for the upcoming school year. The *Back to School Nassau Sounds* is an informative newsletter that is mailed to all postal customers in the county each year.

Student Progression Plan: presents the School Board adopted policies for implementation of pupil progression as required by the state and Nassau County. There is a different plan for grades K-5, 6-8, and 9- 12.

High School Education Guide: informs students, parents, and teachers of the courses and programs available in the four Nassau County high schools. www.flvc.org

Student Code of Conduct: outlines the expected behavior of students in Nassau County and gives information concerning consequences for those who do not follow those guidelines. The Student Code of Conduct is included in the Student Handbook of each individual school.

Nassau County Title I Services Handbook: explains the eligibility requirements for Title I and identifies the schools offering Title I services in Nassau County.

Safeguards: identifies the rights of parents of children in the Exceptional Student Education program.

School Volunteer Handbook: answers questions about being a volunteer. Application included.

Student Progression Annual Report: the district annually publishes information regarding student promotion and changes to the Student Progression Plan.

AVID: AVID, which stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination, is a college readiness program designed to help students develop the skills they need to be successful in college. The program places special emphasis on growing writing, critical thinking, teamwork, organization and reading skills.

Publications Available to You

504 Plan: The "504" in "504 plan" refers to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, which specifies that no one with a disability can be excluded from participating in federally funded programs or activities, including elementary, secondary or postsecondary schooling. "Disability" in this context refers to a "physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities." This can include physical impairments; illnesses or injuries; communicable diseases; chronic conditions like asthma, allergies and diabetes; and learning problems. A 504 plan spells out the modifications and accommodations that will be needed for these students to have an opportunity perform at the same level as their peers, and might include such things as wheelchair ramps, blood sugar monitoring, an extra set of textbooks, a peanut-free lunch environment, home instruction, or a tape recorder or keyboard for taking notes.

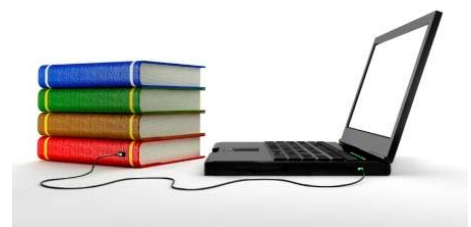
Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program: Provides scholarships based on high school academic achievement and are Florida's largest merit-based scholarship program. To be considered, students **must submit** a completed (error free) *Initial Student Florida Financial Aid Application* during their senior year of high school **(after December 1st and prior to graduation)**. Additionally, eligible students **must submit** a completed (error free) *Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)* prior to their first disbursement each academic year.

Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test EOC: measures student success in Biology I, Civics, U.S. History

Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT 2.0): measures student success with the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards in Science, and FCAT 2.0 retakes.

Florida State Standards: The Florida Standards reflect our foundational expectations of what ALL students should know and be able to do in each grade from kindergarten through 12th grade.

Florida Standards Assessments (FSA): Florida's K-12 assessment system measures students' achievement of Florida's education standards, which were developed and implemented to ensure that all students graduate from high school ready for success in college, career, and life. Assessment supports instruction and student learning, and test results help Florida's educational leadership and stakeholders determine whether the goals of the education system are being met.



Terms You Should Know

Individual Education Plan (IEP): This is a plan that is developed by a team of parents and educators for students with disabilities who are in the Exceptional Student Education Program (ESE). The plan lists accommodations the student needs as well as academic goals and appropriate teaching methods. ESE students seeking regular diplomas take the same tests and are graded on the same scale as other students.

Next Generation Sunshine State Standards: In Florida, these standards are what your child is expected to be able to do at each grade level in Science, Biology, Civics, and U.S. History.

Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT): The PSAT serves as an excellent introduction to the SAT because the questions are similar. In the fall of 2015, students will take a redesigned PSAT. The new test will be aligned with the redesigned SAT debuting in 2016. It will include three tests: 1) Reading, 2) Writing and Language, and 3) Mathematics. The new PSAT is still shorter than the SAT, clocking in at two hours and 45 minutes.

Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (P.E.R.T.): The Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (P.E.R.T.) is Florida's customized common placement test. The purpose of the P.E.R.T. is accurate course placement based on the student's skills and abilities. The P.E.R.T. is aligned with the Postsecondary Readiness Competencies identified by Florida faculty as necessary for success in entry-level college credit coursework. The P.E.R.T. assessment system includes Placement and Diagnostic tests in mathematics, reading and writing. P.E.R.T.

Retention: This means that a student does not move on to the next grade level at the end of the year due to poor academic performance.

School Advisory Council (SAC): The school advisory council is an organization made up of parents, teachers, school staff, and members of the business community. The SAC helps write the School Improvement Plan and assists in budget decisions; this is a great organization for parents who want to stay informed about what's going on in their child's school.

Stanford 10 (SAT 10): The Stanford 10 multiple-choice assessment will help educators find out what students know and are able to do. This technically excellent instrument provides the valid and reliable tool needed for objective measurement of achievement. Administrators will obtain reliable data to evaluate progress toward meeting the challenges set forth by the No Child Left Behind Act and national and state standards and high expectations.

STEM: The acronym STEM refers to science, technology, engineering and mathematics; however, the concept of STEM encompasses much more than the sum of its parts. Workers in STEM occupations use science and math to solve problems and drive our nation's innovation and competitiveness by generating new ideas, new companies and new industries. STEM programs of study are typically classified based upon four occupational clusters: computer technology; mathematical sciences, engineering and surveying; and natural, physical and life sciences.

Additional Resources for Parents

Choice Office <http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org> Toll Free Parent Information: (800)447-1636 This office is focused on ensuring that students of all ages have access to learning - regardless of what their educational needs are or where they live.

Family.com is a monthly e-magazine with articles and information on family related issues. Topics include activities, computing, family ties, and travel. The site also features a search engine with recipes, activities, and schools.

Family Education Network: <http://www.familyeducation.com> Family Education, where millions of parents find school solutions, homework help, parenting tips, and expert advice.

Fastweb <http://Fastweb.com> This website is for college preparation.

Florida Students: <http://www.floridastudents.org/> This is a resource for parents and teachers to help students learn about and practice the skills tested on the FCAT 2.0. From this web site you may sign into FCAT Explorer or FOCUS.

Florida Standards Assessment Portal <http://fsassessments.org/> This portal is your source for information about the Florida Standards Assessments and measuring student success in ELA, Math, Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry.

Just Read, Florida! <http://www.fldoe.org/academics/standards/just-read-fl/parents.stml>
Suggestions to help build your child's reading skills

Florida PTA <http://www.floridapta.org> Florida PTA is the largest statewide volunteer organization working exclusively on behalf of children and youth.

Florida State Standards: will equip our students with the knowledge and skills they need to be ready for careers and college-level coursework. Having the best and highest academic standards for our students today will prepare them for the jobs of tomorrow. <http://www.fldoe.org/academics/standards/florida-standards/>

Florida Student and Scholarship and Grant Program: The Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) State Programs, within the Florida Department of Education, administers a variety of postsecondary educational state-funded grants and scholarships, and provides information to students, parents, and high school and postsecondary professionals. <http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/ssfad/home/uamain.htm>

No Child Left Behind: <http://www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml> The US Department of Education site offers much information for parents with easy to access links.

Boys Town: <http://www.boystown.org/> Boys Town offers a vast library of parenting information and articles developed over many decades by child behavior experts.

SchoolFamily.com <http://schoolfamily.com> is the only website focused exclusively on helping parents help their kids make the most of their school year. SchoolFamily.com provides parents with expert insight, information, and resources to help them set up their 5 to 14 year old children for success at school.

Who Can You Call?

Often parents need to talk with someone concerning their child's education. It is important to know that the first person to call is the child's teacher. If there are still questions and concerns, a call to the school's dean, guidance counselor, assistant principal, or principal may be in order depending upon the circumstances. Other sources of help include:



Mark Durham, Executive Director of Curriculum, Instruction & School Improvement
(904) 491-9905

Serves as a resource to parents, teachers, administrators and members of the community in curriculum, family involvement, school improvement, accountability, and district accreditation.

Kari Burgess-Watkins, Director of Instructional Technology and Information Services
(904) 491-9941

Oversees the Focus Student Information System, Nassau Virtual School programs, provides support for instructional technology, serves as a resource for the school media centers and administers the School Climate Survey.



Cynthia Grooms, Director of Secondary Education
(904) 491-9944

Provides leadership, coordination, and support for secondary education; as well as activities to provide high quality curriculum and instruction to students throughout the district. Student Services also administers the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program, coordinates the guidance and counseling program and the Bright Futures Scholarship

Adam Henderson, Director of Technology Systems
(904) 491-9935

Aligns the District technology to support instruction and student achievement as well as maintenance and support of the districts network infrastructure, datacenter operations and data security. Serves as a resource to parents for digital citizenship.



Brent Lemond, Director of Career and Adult Education
(904) 548-4474

Aligns the district's career education programs with targeted industries to ensure that students are learning relevant skills and obtaining valuable credentials. He also directs the district's adult education programs while serving as the principal of the Nassau County Adult High School.



Misty Mathis, Director of Exceptional Student Education
(904) 491-9880

Provides instructional materials, training, and support to teachers, schools and families of students who have been identified with a disability. Also, supervises psychological services, social worker services, and assistive technology.

Andreu Powell, Coordinator of Intervention and Prevention Services
(904) 491-9883

Serves as a contact for various student needs such as the Teen Parent Program, Homeless Program, Foster Care, Juvenile Justice, Drug Testing, Student Health, Abstinence Education, the CARRT Program and the Full-Service School.



Kristi Simpkins, Director of Elementary Education
(904) 491-9885

Available to help regarding elementary curriculum, instructional materials, academic programs, and promotion requirements. Also directs our volunteer program, School Business Partnership programs, mentoring and home education program (K-5).

Katie Cubbal, Title I Program Coordinator
(904) 491-9885

Meets compliance and monitoring requirements of the Title I grant. Collaborates with the Elementary Education Department, Principals, Staff Development, and Technology Systems to ensure Title I students' needs are being met. Also, supports and trains teachers at each of our Title I schools.



Jean Lamar, Instructional Strategies Coach, Professional and Staff Development
(904) 491-9893

Serves as the district's *Great Beginnings* New Teacher Program coordinator for new teachers and school-site mentors; coordinates the district's Teacher of the Year program; provides professional learning in English/language arts and in teaching pedagogy, including the Marzano evaluation model.



Diane Romon, Program Compliance Manager Program Manager for Assessment and Accountability
(904) 491-9873

Coordinates all phases of implementation, administration, analysis and reporting of results related to federal, state, and district assessment and accountability programs; Manages the District's testing programs, including training for the administration of state and district assessments. Secondary Home School Education, district EOC testing, teacher value added calculations.

Sue Winters, Curriculum Resource Teacher (6-12 Reading & AVID)
(904) 491-9904

Offers support and information to reading coaches, teachers, students, and parents concerning reading, and implementation of the AVI D Program.



Monica Wright, Science Curriculum Resource Teacher
(904) 491-9900

Serves as a resource to science and technology teachers, parents and students regarding science education.



Our Mission

The mission of the Nassau County School District is to develop each student as an inspired life-long learner and problem-solver with the strength of character to serve as a productive member of society.

The Nassau County School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, disability or marital status in its educational programs, services or activities, or in its hiring or employment practices.

The district also provides equal access to its facilities to the Boy Scouts and other patriotic youth groups, as required by the Boys Scout of America Equal Access Act.

Questions, complaints, or requests for additional information regarding discrimination or harassment may be sent to:

Equity Contacts Nassau County School District
1201 Atlantic Ave.
Fernandina Beach, FL 32034
(904) 491-9906
(904) 491-9888
Fax: (904) 277-9044