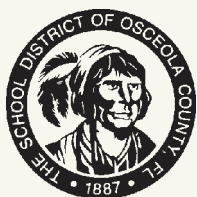


2007- 2008

Imagine!



Osceola
School District's

Annual Report



Student Achievement: Our #1 Priority!

Preparing For A Bright Future

The quality of a school district can be measured in many ways -- by an experienced teaching staff, modern facilities, or the amount of per-pupil spending. But none of these factors really matter unless students achieve.

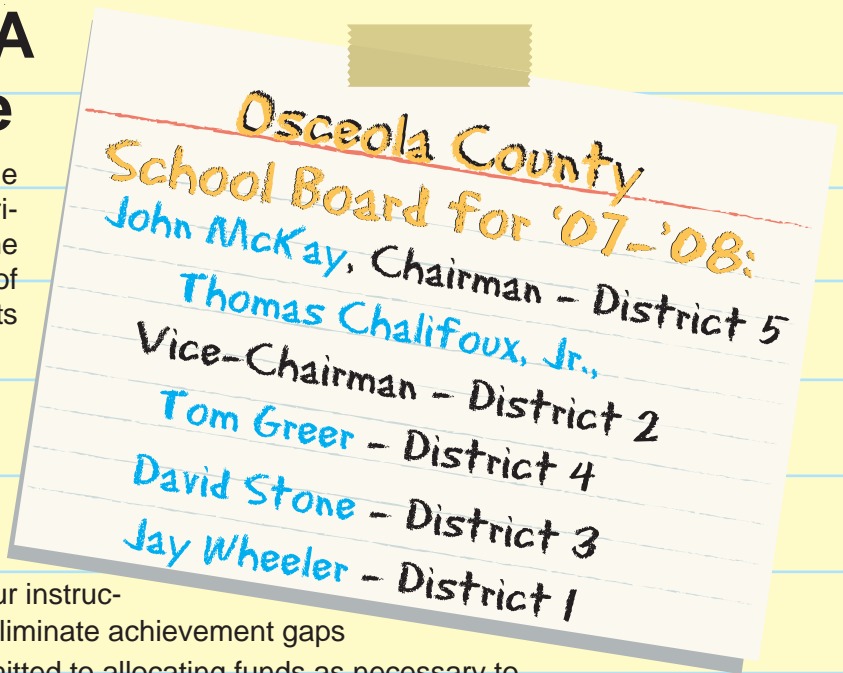
The Osceola County School District focuses on improving instruction and enhancing the day-to-day interaction between teachers and students in order to raise student outcomes. By

analyzing performance data, as well as our instructional strategies, we continue to work to eliminate achievement gaps

among groups of students. We are committed to allocating funds as necessary to

support student performance. We also hold high expectations for all students, academically and behaviorally. Although our emphases are on classroom instruction and student results, we also insist that schools promote a climate of respect for all, just as we help our students and staff develop an appreciation of diversity.

"Student achievement" is the rallying cry for the Osceola School District. We've made great progress as this annual report will show. However, if we are to sustain these gains and make further progress, we must continue to evaluate and revise our programs and make the best decisions in the interests of each and every child. On behalf of our students, we accept this challenge.



Osceola School District's 2008 Education Award Winners:

- **2009 Osceola School District Teacher of the Year:**



David Kane

Winner: **David Kane**,
Kissimmee Elementary
First Runner-Up: **Heather Thomson**, Reedy Creek Elementary
Second Runner-Up: **Mike Meechin**, Celebration High

- **School-Related Employee of the Year:**

Winner: **Demetrius Chappell**, Lakeview Elementary
Runner-Up: **John Boyd**, Research, Evaluation and Accountability Department

- **District-level Administrator of the Year:**
Beverly Brizendine, Prek and Elem. Education

- **School-level Administrator of the Year:**
Jim Hendrix, Deerwood Elementary

- **Distinguished Minority Educator of the Year:**
Winner: **Marvin DeVaughn** - Canoe Creek Charter
Runner-Up: **Karen Gill** - Highlands Elementary

- **Elementary Counselor of the Year:**
Kelly Gray, St. Cloud Elementary

- **Secondary Counselor of the Year:**
James MacGregor, Gateway High

- **Student Services Professional of the Year:**
Amanda Kraft

- **M. Dean Cherry Memorial Coach of the Year:**
Jeff Rolson, Osceola High



2007 - 2008 At A Glance

Students

- Enrollment: **51,480**
- Elementary School Students: **24,119**
- Middle School Students: **12,365**
- High School Students: **15,312**
- Exceptional Education (ESE) **8,255 (15%)**
- Limited English Proficient: **13,672 (27%)**
- Free & Reduced Lunch: **30,416 (58%)**
- Countries Represented By Osceola Students: **91**
- Languages Spoken By Osceola Students: **116**



Schools:

- Number of Public Schools: **57**
 - Elementary Schools: **22**
 - Middle Schools: **7**
 - High Schools: **8**
 - Alternative Schools: **10**
 - Multi-level Schools: **3**
 - Charter Schools: **7**
- Osceola is a **fully-accredited** School District

Personnel:

- Total School District Personnel: **6,870**
 - Administrators: **158**
 - Instructional: **3,483**
 - Professional Support Staff: **3,229**
 - Part-time Positions: **988** substitute employees
- District-level employees: **1,153** (includes depts)
- School-level employees: **5,717**
- Among Osceola County school teachers:
 - 1,226** have advanced degrees;
 - 1,121** have master's degrees; and
 - 105** have specialist and/or doctorate degrees



Other:

- Dropout Rate: **4.4%**
- District Grade Based On Accountability Report: **B**
- Class Size Average (PK - 3): **16.53**
- Class Size Average (4-8): **18.32**
- Class Size Average (9-12): **22.58**
- Amount of Competitive Grants Received: **Over \$35 Million**
- Number of School Volunteers: **11,935**
- Number of School Volunteer Hours: **147,300**
- Number of School Business Partners: **230**

Student Achievement: Our #1 Priority!

Student Achievement Report Card

School Name	2008 Grade	2007 Grade
• Boggy Creek Elementary	C	D
• Central Avenue Elementary	C	C
• Chestnut Elementary	A	C
• Cypress Elementary	B	B
• Deerwood Elementary	A	A
• Flora Ridge Elementary	D	N/A
• Hickory Tree Elementary	A	A
• Highlands Elementary	C	C
• Kissimmee Elementary	B	C
• Lakeview Elementary	A	A
• Michigan Avenue Elementary	A	A
• Mill Creek Elementary	A	A
• Neptune Elementary	C	N/A
• Partin Settlement Elementary	A	A
• Pleasant Hill Elementary	B	A
• Poinciana Elementary	C	C
• Reedy Creek Elementary	A	A
• St. Cloud Elementary	A	A
• Sunrise Elementary	B	B
• Thacker Avenue Elementary	D	C
• Ventura Elementary	C	C
• Denn John Middle	C	C
• Discovery Intermediate	C	C
• Horizon Middle	B	B
• Kissimmee Middle	C	C
• Neptune Middle	B	B
• Parkway Middle	C	C
• St. Cloud Middle	A	B
• Celebration High	D	C
• Gateway High	D	D
• Harmony High	B	D
• Liberty High	D	N/A
• Osceola High	C	C
• Poinciana High	D	F
• Professional & Technical High (PATHS)	A	A
• St. Cloud High	D	D
• Celebration School	A	A
• Narcoossee Community School	A	A
• New Beginnings Education Complex	N/A	P
• Osceola County School for the Arts	A	A
• Bellalago Academy	A	C
• Canoe Creek Charter Academy	C	D
• Four Corners Charter Elementary	A	B
• Kissimmee Charter Academy	C	A
• New Dimensions High	D	D
• P.M. Wells Charter Academy	B	D

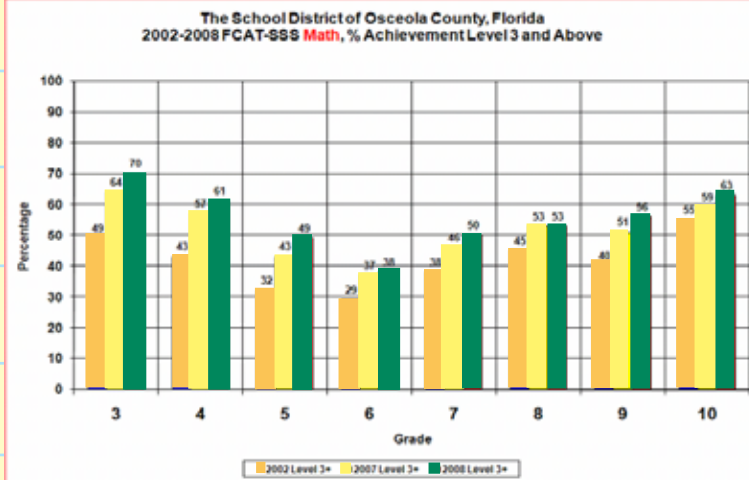
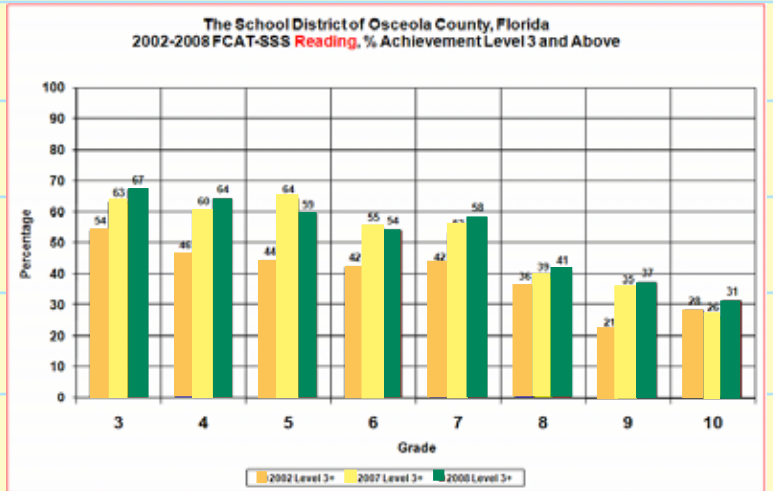


Student Achievement Report Card

Osceola Students Making Year-To-Year Increases In FCAT Reading, Math, and Science

The 2008 FCAT scores show Osceola County students continue to make learning gains in both reading and math. This year's scores show large year-to-year increases in reading and math since 2002.

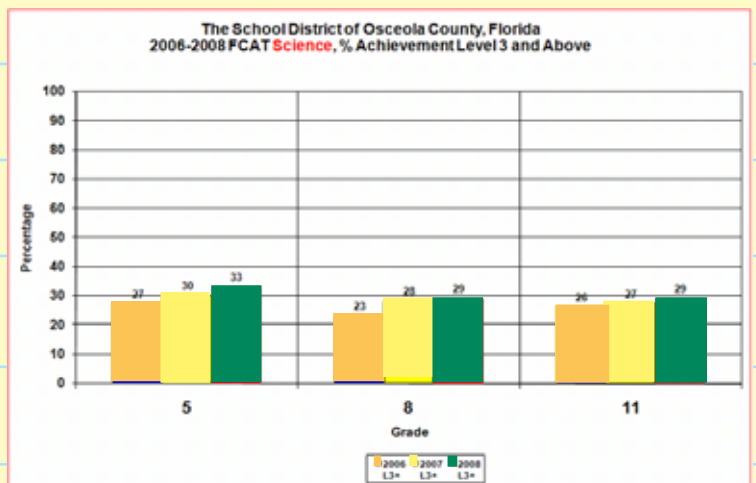
Reading



Math

The 2008 FCAT scores show Osceola County students continue to make learning gains in science. This year's scores show year-to-year increases in science since 2006.

Science



Student Achievement Report Card

2008 Osceola County Student Achievement Profile For FCAT-SSS Reading and Math, and FCAT Science

(The following summaries compare student performance between 2007 and 2008.)

2008 FCAT Mean Scale Score Summary

READING

The percentage of Osceola County students who scored in Achievement Level 3 or higher on FCAT-SSS Reading in:

- Grade 3 increased by 4 percentage points over the prior year, while the state as a whole increased by 3 percentage points.
- Grade 4 increased by 4 percentage points over the prior year, while the state as a whole increased by 2 percentage points.
- Grade 5 decreased by 5 percentage points over the prior year, while the state as a whole increased by 5 percentage points.
- Grade 6 decreased by 1 percentage point over the prior year, while the state as a whole increased by 1 percentage point.
- Grade 7 increased by 5 percentage points over the prior year, while the state as a whole increased by 2 percentage points.
- Grade 8 increased by 2 percentage points over the prior year, while the state as a whole increased by 4 percentage points.
- Grade 9 increased by 2 percentage points over the prior year, while the state as a whole increased by 5 percentage points.
- Grade 10 increased by 5 percentage points over the prior year, while the state as a whole increased by 4 percentage points.



MATH

The percentage of Osceola County students who scored in Achievement Level 3 or higher on FCAT-SSS Mathematics in:

- Grade 3 increased by 6 percentage points over the prior year, while the state as a whole increased by 2 percentage points.
- Grade 4 increased by 4 percentage points over the prior year, while the state as a whole increased by 2 percentage points.
- Grade 5 increased by 6 percentage points over the prior year, while the state as a whole increased by 2 percentage points.
- Grade 6 increased by 1 percentage point over the prior year, while the state as a whole increased by 3 percentage points.
- Grade 7 increased by 4 percentage points over the prior year, while the state as a whole increased by 2 percentage points.
- Grade 8 remained unchanged from the prior year, while the state as a whole increased by 4 percentage points.
- Grade 9 increased by 5 percentage points over the prior year, while the state as a whole increased by 5 percentage points.
- Grade 10 increased by 4 percentage points over the prior year, while the state as a whole increased by 4 percentage points.

SCIENCE

Overall, the percentage of Osceola County students who scored in Achievement Level 3 or higher on FCAT Science in:

- Grade 5 increased by 3 percentage points over the prior year, while the state as a whole increased by 1 percentage point.
- Grade 8 increased by 1 percentage point over the prior year, while the state as a whole increased by 2 percentage points.
- Grade 11 increased by 2 percentage points over the prior year, while the state as a whole increased by 1 percentage point.



Student Achievement Report Card

2008 Grade 3 FCAT-SSS Reading and Mathematics Summary for Osceola Schools

The following summary compares student performance between 2007 and 2008.

Overall, the percentage of Osceola County students who scored in Achievement Level 3 or higher on:

- FCAT-SSS Reading increased by 4 percentage points over the prior year, while the state's students as a whole increased by 3 percentage points.
- FCAT-SSS Mathematics increased by 6 percentage points over the prior year, while the state's students as a whole increased by 2 percentage points.
- 79% (23) Osceola County elementary schools increased their percentage of students scoring in Achievement Level 3 or higher on FCAT-SSS Reading.
- 52% (15) Osceola County elementary schools equaled or exceeded the state's FCAT-SSS Reading, Mean Scale Score gains.
- 55% (16) Osceola County elementary schools reduced the percentage of Grade 3 students in FCAT-SSS Reading, Achievement Level 1.
- 90% (26) of Osceola County elementary schools increased their percentage of students scoring in Achievement Level 3 or higher on FCAT-SSS Math.
- 72% (21) of Osceola County elementary schools equaled or exceeded the state's FCAT-SSS Math, Mean Scale Score gains.



Osceola County Students Score Well On FCAT High School Retakes

In regards to the scores of the FCAT high school retakes, Osceola County students surpassed the state average in all areas except Grade 11 Math.

Summary of Scores:

● **Percent Passing Grade 11 Reading Retakes**

Osceola School District = 23%
(a 7% increase over last year)
State = 22% (a 2% increase over last year)

● **Percent Passing Grade 12 Reading Retakes**

Osceola School District = 17%
(a 1% decrease over last year)
State = 16% (a 1% increase over last year)

● **Percent Passing Grade 11 Math Retakes**

Osceola School District = 38%
(an 8% increase over last year)
State = 39% (a 6% increase over last year)

● **Percent Passing Grade 12 Math Retakes**

Osceola School District = 39%
(a 7% increase over last year)
State = 32% (a 6% increase over last year)

Student Achievement Report Card

2008 FCAT Writing+ Mean Combined Essay Score Summary

- Essays are graded on a six-point scale.
- An essay score of 3.5 is the standard used in the grading of schools.
- This year, Osceola's average writing essay score declined for Grade 4 (from 3.6 last year to 3.5 this year), remained the same for Grade 8 (3.9), and declined for Grade 10 (from 3.8 last year to 3.7 this year).
- Although state scores also show a decline in Grade 4 Writing results from the previous year, staff will continue to analyze the decline in Osceola County's Grade 4 and Grade 10 Writing scores to understand these results.
- The results indicate the percent of students scoring 3.5 and above increased for grade 8 and decreased for grades 4 and 10.

Grade 4 – 61 percent of students scored 3.5 and above, a significant decrease from 68 percent last year and an increase of 37 percentage points since 1999 reflecting a positive 10-year data trend.

Grade 8 – 82 percent of students scored 3.5 and above, a one percentage point increase from 81 percent last year and an increase of 45 percentage points since 1999 reflecting a positive 10-year data trend.

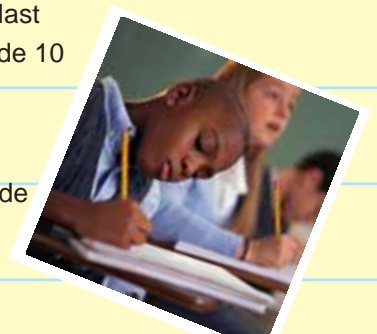
Grade 10 – 73 percent of students scored 3.5 and above, a slight decrease from 75 percent last year and an increase of 23 percentage points since 1999 reflecting a positive 10-year data trend.

- Thirty-three (33) Osceola County schools achieved scores of 3.5 or higher on FCAT Writing+.

72% of all Osceola County schools achieved mean essay scores of 3.5 or higher on FCAT Writing+.

89% of Osceola County middle and high schools achieved mean essay scores of 3.5 or higher on FCAT Writing+.

- Twenty-eight (28) Osceola County schools maintained or increased their FCAT Writing+ mean essay scores.



Parents may view their students' scores via the FCAT Parent Network (www.fcaptoparentnetwork.com) using the secure login and password provided by their school.

Student Achievement Report Card

Osceola County Students Score Above The National Average

The Stanford 10 is the national Norm-Referenced Test used by Florida. Norm-Referenced Tests compare a student's score against the scores of a group of students who have taken the same exam, called the "norming group." The scores range from the first percentile to the 99th percentile, with the average student's score at the 50th percentile.

For example, in third grade reading this year, Osceola's national percentile rank remained at the 55th percentile compared to last year's score. This means that, on average, third graders scored better than 55 percent of the national comparison sample.

2008 Norm-Referenced Test Scores for Reading for Osceola County Students

- Third graders scored at the **55th** percentile — **5** percentage points higher than the national average.
- Fourth graders scored at the **65th** percentile — **15** percentage points higher than the national average.
- Fifth graders scored at the **66th** percentile — **16** percentage points higher than the national average.
- Sixth graders scored at the **55th** percentile — **5** percentage points higher than the national average.
- Seventh graders scored at the **63rd** percentile — **13** percentage points higher than the national average.
- Eighth graders scored at the **56th** percentile — **6** percentage points higher than the national average.
- Ninth graders scored at the **58th** percentile — **8** percentage points higher than the national average.
- Tenth graders scored at the **63rd** percentile — **13** percentage points higher than the national average.

2008 Norm-Referenced Test Scores for Mathematics for Osceola County Students

- Third graders scored at the **53rd** percentile — **3** percentage points higher than the national average.
- Fourth graders scored at the **63rd** percentile — **13** percentage points higher than the national average.
- Fifth graders scored at the **66th** percentile — **16** percentage points higher than the national average.
- Sixth graders scored at the **60th** percentile — **10** percentage points higher than the national average.
- Seventh graders scored at the **64th** percentile — **14** percentage points higher than the national average.
- Eighth graders scored at the **62nd** percentile — **12** percentage points higher than the national average.
- Ninth graders scored at the **65th** percentile — **15** percentage points higher than the national average.
- Tenth graders scored at the **57th** percentile — **7** percentage points higher than the national average.



Accreditation As Quality System

District accreditation recognizes and validates the improvement efforts of our schools, the district, and the support we continue to receive from our community.

As part of the District Accreditation process by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement, an Accreditation Quality Assurance Team visited the Osceola School District in October 2007. In the Oral Exit Report, The Quality Assurance Review Team recommended, without reservation, that the Osceola School District be awarded district accreditation as a quality school system.

The Team cited the following strengths of the district after reviewing documentation, conducting the on-site review, and interviewing over 300 individuals, including School Board Members, district and school administrators and staff, teachers, parents, community and business partners and students:

- Leadership ability of the Superintendent;
- Sound fiscal management;
- Use of data to drive decisions related to instruction;
- Implementation of the district Curriculum Achievement Plan;
- Focus on academic achievement as the number one goal and passion of every educator;
- Provision of a free breakfast for all students;
- Utilization of Florida's Continuous Improvement Model throughout the district;
- Creation of a Customer Service Model for the district;
- Exceptional parent, business, and community support and involvement;
- Support from The Education Foundation - Osceola County;
 - Quality professional development;
 - Open communication between schools and home;
 - Students' respect for teachers and administrators;
- Commitment to continually see stakeholders perspectives through surveys and community forums; and
- Highly-effective district leadership in the recruitment of teachers.

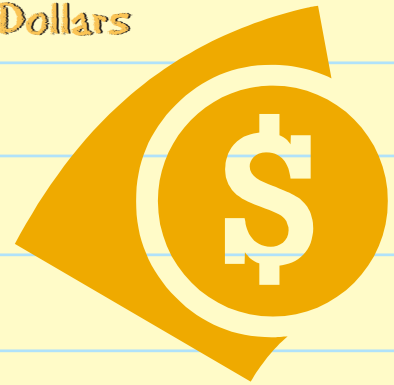
Finance and Facilities Overview

Making The Best Use Of Taxpayer Dollars

Where the money came from ... REVENUES

General Fund:

Federal:	\$538,065	0.14%
State:	\$224,301,617	58.80%
Local:	\$156,628,268	41.06%
Total:	\$381,467,950	100.00%



How the money was spent ... EXPENDITURES

General Fund:

● Instructional & Instructional Support	\$290,315,838	73.58%
● General Administration & Board	\$3,927,008	1.00%
● School Administration	\$21,535,297	5.46%
● General Support	\$21,045,321	5.33%
● Transportation	\$17,513,338	4.44%
● Plant Operation & Maintenance	\$39,309,313	9.96%
● Community Service & Debt Service	\$928,416	0.24%
Total	\$394,574,531	100.00%

Notes:

Revenues do not include other financing sources of \$12,769,251.

Looking For Business And Finance Info?

www.osceola.k12.fl.us/depts/Finance

- District And Capital Budgets
- District Financial Audits
- Charter School Audits
- Internal Audits
- Purchasing Department Information And More!

Looking For Facilities Info?

www.osceola.k12.fl.us/depts/Facilities

- Upcoming Construction Workshops
- 2007-2008 Capital Project List
- District's Five-Year Work Program
- 20-Year Maps - New Schools
- RFQ/Bid Advertisements
- RFQ/Bid Awards
- Maintenance Department

To Open In 2008-2009: ● Harmony Community School

Opened In 2007-2008: ● Flora Ridge Elem.
● Neptune Elem.
● Liberty High

To Open In 2009-2010:
● Middle School "CC" (Four Corners Area)
● Elementary "L" (Poinciana Area)
● Elementary "M" (Narcoossee Area)

Student Achievement: Our #1 Priority!

Education Which Inspires All To Their Highest Potential



2007-2008 OASIS School Volunteers of the Year

The outstanding School Volunteer award is presented annually by the Florida Department of Education to school volunteers who have shown outstanding dedication and commitment to quality education in Florida. Volunteers are selected based on the number of hours, years of service, type of contribution, and characteristic of service.

Osceola County Ranks Best In State On Administrative Expenditures Per Student

The Osceola County School District has been recognized by the Florida Department of Education for spending taxpayers' money where it best impacts children. In notification the district received from the Florida Department of Education on March 26, 2008, the Osceola School District ranked 67th out of 67 Florida school districts in administrative expenditures per student in a recent summary of the 2006-2007 school year as part of the Educational Funding Accountability Act. While the state average was \$525.63 per student for administrative costs, which includes school administration and district support functions among other things, Osceola spent only \$375.87 per student. The percentage of school and district administrators made up only 2.8% of the district's workforce.

Safe Schools and Healthy Students

The Osceola School District and its community partners have been awarded over \$8 million for a four-year grant from the Federal Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative to reduce youth violence, to increase mental health services, and to create a safe environment for all children in Osceola County's schools.

By reaching out to students and families in our community through Safe Schools/Healthy Students programs, Osceola County is working collaboratively to spread the word that violence prevention works and that it can make a difference in the lives of our children.

Because they inspire others to serve by their dedication and commitment to our students, the Osceola School District has selected the following volunteers to represent all OASIS volunteers as The Osceola County School District's 2007-2008 Volunteers of the Year:

- Senior Category: Katherine Papsodero, Pleasant Hill Elementary
- Adult Category: Jose Nieves, Cypress Elementary
- Youth Category: Cassandra Dispensa, St. Cloud Middle School

Osceola School District's 2008 Partners of the Year Honored by Commissioner of Education

Business involvement plays a significant role in education in the Osceola School District. Through tutoring, mentoring, speaking presentations, academic incentives and rewards, and program sponsorships, over 240 businesses help our schools provide an environment in which all children can reach their full potential. The Commissioner's Business Recognition Award is presented each year to the district's two most outstanding partners. For 2008, the Radisson Worldgate Resort and Centra Care-Florida Hospital Urgent Care were selected. The efforts of both organizations positively impact the entire district. They were recognized by the Commissioner of Education in Jacksonville in April 2008.



District Receives Over \$1.5 Million to Support Language Acquisition

Osceola School District's Multicultural Education Department and Grant Management Office developed and submitted the District's application for 2007-2008 federal funding through Title III, Part A. The District received \$1,548,243 in entitlement funding (passed through the Florida Department of Education) for enhancing English Language Acquisition programs. Funding assists school districts by enhancing their capacity to provide high-quality programs that improve the proficiency of all English Language Learners (ELLs).



Osceola School District Earns Five State Awards For Outstanding Communication

The Osceola School District's Community Relations Department was awarded five first place state awards from the Sunshine State School Public Relations Association in recognition of excellence in communications that strengthens public support for schools throughout Florida. The department took home top honors in the state with 2008 Sunshine Medallion Awards for medium-size school districts.

Education Which Inspires All To Their Highest Potential

Osceola School District's Food Service Department Earns High Marks From the State

Every five years, the State of Florida conducts a Coordinated Review Effort Audit to see how school districts are complying with the guidelines and procedures of the National School Lunch program. The Osceola School District was audited for the month of February 2008, with team members reviewing documentation in the district office and at six schools: Central Avenue Elementary, Ventura Elementary, Professional/Technical High School, Michigan Avenue Elementary, Chestnut Elementary, and Celebration High. In the exit conference held recently on April 25, 2008, reviewers praised the district in many areas, and informed Jean Palmore, Director of Campus Grille, that the district passed the Administrative Food Service Review. State Audit Team Members also noted that the school cafeterias and kitchens were extremely clean, school food service staff were well trained, and the food was prepared and served in a manner that was very appealing to the students. The district was also commended for its various Wellness Policy initiatives, and for having an appropriate Food Safety Plan in place.



State Recognizes Osceola Schools For Outstanding Volunteer and Community Involvement

The Florida Department of Education's Golden School Award is presented annually to those schools with exemplary volunteer programs. Each school must have a designated volunteer coordinator to provide leadership at the school level for volunteers and staff. Schools must also provide training for all faculty on working with volunteers, and have a total number of volunteer hours that equals twice the school's student population. The Osceola County School District is proud to recognize its 28 Golden School Award winners:

Golden School Award Winners:

- Bellalago Charter Academy
- Boggy Creek Elementary
- Celebration School K-8
- Chestnut Elementary
- Cypress Elementary
- Flora Ridge Elementary
 - Harmony High
- Hickory Tree Elementary
- Highlands Elementary
- Horizon Middle
- Kissimmee Charter Academy
- Kissimmee Elementary
- Lakeview Elementary
- Michigan Avenue Elementary
 - Mill Creek Elementary
- Narcoossee Community School
 - Neptune Elementary
 - Osceola High
- Partin Settlement Elementary
- Pleasant Hill Elementary
- Poinciana Elementary
- Reedy Creek Elementary
- St. Cloud Elementary
 - St. Cloud High
 - St. Cloud Middle
- Sunrise Elementary
- Thacker Avenue Elementary
- Ventura Elementary

The Silver School Award is presented annually by the Florida Department of Education to recognize secondary schools whose students provide exemplary volunteer services to elementary and secondary schools.

The award is presented to middle and high schools that have half the number of student volunteer hours as the school's student population, and meet other designated criteria. Congratulations to Osceola's Silver School Award winners.

Silver School Award Winners:

- Denn John Middle
- Kissimmee Middle
- Narcoossee Community
 - Harmony High
 - Osceola High
- Bellalago Charter Academy
 - Poinciana High

During this school year, more than 11,500 parents, senior citizens, business leaders, concerned adults, and students have donated well over 160,000 hours to Osceola County schools. Likewise, over 244 businesses joined with Osceola schools in win-win partnerships through the Partners in Education Program. As society continues to increase its demand on the role of teachers, and with a limitation of funds at issue, OASIS volunteers extend teachers' and staffs' professional skills and assist in the effort to meet the unique needs of each student.



PATHS Recognized As One Of America's Best High Schools

The Professional and Technical High School in Osceola County earned a place in the Bronze Medal category of the 2008 U.S. News & World Report's Best High Schools ranking.

Education Which Inspires All To Their Highest Potential

Osceola County Students Win National Business-Related Awards

Thirteen outstanding Osceola County School District business students competed in the 2008 Business Professionals of America (BPA) National Leadership Conference.

After intense competition in the Middle-Level Extemporaneous Speech event, where contestants were given a topic with ten minutes to prepare and then deliver a three-to five-minute speech, Richard Belleville from St. Cloud Middle School was awarded National First Place. Also from St. Cloud Middle School, Elizabeth Saunders earned a National Fourth Place award in the Middle-Level Business Math Event. To the team's credit, this is the very first year St. Cloud Middle School participated in BPA. In addition, competing in the difficult area of Web Design, the team representing Denn John Middle won Middle-Level National Second Place. Jessica Etter, a senior at Gateway High School, was a finalist in the Secondary Advanced Word Processing competition.



Nineteen Osceola Teachers Achieve National Board Certification

Nineteen Osceola educators achieved National Board Certification in 2007 by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, bringing Osceola County's total of National Board Certified Teachers to 120.



Grant Provides Equality-Themed Books for School Library Shelves in Osceola County

In January, the Osceola School District's Grant Management Office submitted an application for the We the People (WTP) "Created Equal" Bookshelf Program, a project of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) "We the People" Program, through collaboration with media specialists at interested schools. These eleven Osceola school libraries are among the 3,000 libraries that have been selected to receive the award, which is given in cooperation with the American Library Association (ALA) Public Programs Office: Central Avenue Elementary, Harmony High, Kissimmee Charter Academy, Michigan Avenue Elementary, Neptune Elementary, Neptune Middle, New Beginnings, New Dimensions High, Professional and Technical High, Sunrise Elementary, and Thacker Avenue Elementary. The program will provide hardcover editions of 17 classic books on the theme of "Created Equal," Spanish translations of four of the titles, and supporting materials to the participating libraries.

Enhanced Background Checks For School Volunteers

To enhance student safety on campuses, the OASIS School Volunteer Program tightened its background check policy significantly at the beginning of the 2007-2008 school year by conducting national criminal background checks on everyone who applies to become a school volunteer.

Osceola County Agencies Issue First Cooperative Bid

The Osceola County Board of County Commissioners, The School District of Osceola County, Osceola County Sheriff's Department, City of Kissimmee, City of St. Cloud, Kissimmee Utility Authority, and Toho Water Authority recognize the extreme volatility of today's fuel market. In response, representatives of the agencies mentioned above met in February 2008 to develop a multi-year solicitation for fuel. On June 18, 2008, an "Invitation to Bid" was issued, with The School District of Osceola County as the lead agency. By combining resources and through volume purchasing, it is anticipated that the participating agencies will receive better pricing and gain efficiency, as duplication of effort is minimized.

Grant To Improve Emergency Communications

To further develop the district's Emergency Management Plan and enhance the safety of students, Osceola County schools received grant funding from the Florida Department of Education to expand its alert capabilities. The innovative solutions system, Immediate Response Information System (IRIS), will disseminate vital information to parents and staff via e-mail, landline phones, cell phones, TTY/TDD receiving devices, and other communication devices.



Education Which Inspires All To Their Highest Potential



Senator Mel Martinez Dedicates Liberty High School

Principal Gary Preisser and the students and staff at Osceola County's newest high school held a special dedication ceremony in November 2007 with guest speaker U.S. Senator Mel Martinez. Liberty High School officially open its doors in August 2007.

Two Osceola Schools Named As CHILD National Sites For Innovative Methods For School Improvement

The Institute for School Innovation in Tallahassee, Florida, selected two Osceola schools as CHILD national sites for the 2007-2008 school year. Partin Settlement Elementary was named one of two CHILD National Demonstration Sites, and Reedy Creek Elementary was named as one of six Exemplary Visitation Sites throughout the nation.

Project CHILD is a research-based teaching and learning system for K-5. Three teachers form cluster teams -- one teacher for reading, one for writing, and one for mathematics. Clusters work across three grade levels, and teachers work with the same students for three years.

Highest Teacher Increases in Central Florida

Osceola County's agreement between the Osceola Classroom Teachers Association and the School Board of Osceola County for 2007-2008 provided the largest salary increase among all contracts settled in Central Florida school districts. The agreement put 6% new dollars onto the salary schedule, including increases for advanced degrees and supplements. The School Board once again agreed to cover the increase in the cost of insurance for each employee.

School District Kicks Off New Customer Service Initiative

All Osceola public schools and district departments joined together this year for a new customer service plan called M.A.G.I.C. (*Making A Great Impression on the Customer*). The plan was developed by a committee of 40 parents, business leaders, administrators and employees, to focus on every employee providing excellent service to all school and district customers including parents, students, and community residents. In July 2007, the School Board unanimously approved the plan by acknowledging that a major part of improving student achievement is making sure that Osceola schools are places where visitors feel welcomed, valued, and respected.

As part of this initiative, the school district adopted a customer service mission statement, outlined organizational values, developed employee standards and guidelines for Model Customer Service, and created action plans to reach its goals.



Support For 21st Century Community Learning Centers

The Florida Department of Education awarded the Osceola School District \$2,554,894 in 2007-2008 federal funding for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers. The program targets low-income families and students, low-performing schools, and schools designated as in need of improvement under Title 1. The purpose of the project is to provide before and after-school or summer programs that increase student achievement by allowing more time on task, extending learning opportunities, improving parents' involvement in their children's education, and collaborating to make more resources available.

Osceola Schools Awarded Over \$1.6 Million In State's School Recognition Program

The Osceola School District was awarded a total of \$1,688,699 in funding from the Florida Department of Education in recognition of the academic achievement and improvement during the 2006-2007 school year of the following 17 schools:

- Narcoossee Community School
 - St. Cloud Elementary
- Michigan Avenue Elementary
- Reedy Creek Elementary
- Hickory Tree Elementary
- Mill Creek Elementary
 - Celebration School
 - Lakeview Elementary
- Pleasant Hill Elementary
- Deerwood Elementary
- Cypress Elementary
 - PATHS
 - Four Corners Charter
 - Kissimmee Charter Academy
 - Partin Settlement Elementary
- Osceola County School for the Arts
 - Chestnut Elementary

Education Which Inspires All To Their Highest Potential

District Named A Top 100 Company For Working Families

The Osceola School District earned a prestigious spot on the Orlando Sentinel's 2007 list of Top 100 Companies For Working Families, in recognition of its programs, policies, and practices put into place to promote a family-friendly workplace. Osceola was the only Central Florida school district that earned a spot on this year's list based on benefits that are provided to its employees in the following categories: Core Benefits, Family-Related Benefits, Work Environment, Communication, and Training and Planning.

Grant To Improve Teaching Of American History

The U.S. Department of Education awarded the Osceola School District a \$1 million "Teaching American History" grant. Osceola's project called "A History of Us" provides content-centered traditional American history professional development for elementary, middle, and high school teachers. Annual Summer Institutes, Saturday Seminars, modeling of best practices in history, and extensive technology training will make connections for up to 120 teachers over three years, enriching their knowledge of American history content, and providing them with the tools to inspire and improve student achievement.



Five Star Schools Named For Outstanding Community Involvement

Twenty Osceola schools began the 2007-2008 school year with the distinction of being named as Five Star Schools by the Florida Department of Education in recognition of their outstanding community involvement efforts:

- Bellalago Academy
- Central Avenue Elementary
- Celebration School K-8
- Highlands Elementary
- Kissimmee Elementary
- Lakeview Elementary
- Michigan Avenue Elementary
- Mill Creek Elementary
- Narcoossee Community School
- Partin Settlement Elementary
- Pleasant Hill Elementary
- Reedy Creek Elementary
- St. Cloud Elementary
- Sunrise Elementary
- Thacker Avenue Elementary
- Ventura Elementary
- Discovery Middle
- Neptune Middle
- Osceola High
- Osceola School for the Arts

The Five Star designation is the highest honor awarded schools by the Florida Department of Education for community involvement. In order to qualify for this award, schools must have achieved 100 percent of the required criteria in the categories of family involvement, business partnerships, volunteers, student community service, and School Advisory Councils.

Enhanced Science Education

The Osceola School District was one of only eight Florida school districts to share \$10.9 million in grants from the U.S. Department of Education for K-12 science education. The Osceola School District's "I MUST" Partnership will develop long-term collaboration between high school science, mathematics, and career and technical education teachers to promote exemplary science instruction and increase student achievement.



St. Cloud High Students Earn Gold Medals In National Competition

Seven students from St. Cloud High School brought home Gold Medals from the 2007 National Family Career and Community Leaders of America Leadership Meeting in California in July 2007 in the following categories: Chapter Service Project Manual, Chapter Showcase Display, and Chapter Showcase Manual. These are all team events that recognize chapters that develop and implement a well-balanced program of work and promote FCCLA and Family and Consumer Sciences and/or related occupations and skills to the community.

Positive Behavior Support Model Schools

Five Osceola schools were named as Florida Positive Behavior (PBS) Model Schools by the Florida Positive Behavior Support Project for decreasing behavior problems and increasing academic performance for students:

- Central Avenue Elementary
- Neptune Middle
- Parkway Middle
- St. Cloud Middle
- Thacker Avenue Elementary

These PBS schools were recognized for demonstrating consistent methods of utilizing discipline data to better serve their students and staff.