

2008-2009 Parent Guide



**FAMILIES AND SCHOOLS:
BUILDING THE FUTURE TOGETHER
~ ALL CHILDREN LEARNING ~**

SUPERINTENDENT

Jackie Pons

SCHOOL BOARD

DEE CRUMPLER, CHAIR ~ GEORGIA "JOY" BOWEN, VICE CHAIR ~
MAGGIE B. LEWIS-BUTLER ~ SHEILA COSTIGAN ~

Leon County Schools is proud to be an Equal Opportunity Employer

Jackie Pons
Superintendent
Leon County Schools



Dear Friends,

The partnership between community and schools is a key component in the success of a public school system. In Leon County, we are fortunate to have great schools, innovative principals, teachers and support staff, and a strong commitment from parents, citizens, and business partners. These key members of our team combine their efforts to ensure a quality education for our students. As your superintendent, I am committed to building upon these strengths and paving the way for new endeavors.

The schools and offices of the Leon County School District are staffed with talented employees at all levels. Principals and teachers hold the key to learning, but support staff plays a vital role in the safety, operation and maintenance of the learning environment. District staff continually supports schools and helps promote the best interests of students throughout our community. This team of dedicated professionals consistently strives to meet our primary goal of putting students first.

With all of us working together – students, parents, staff and community – we can continue to reach new heights and create a model education system for the rest of the country to follow. As your superintendent, I am committed to lead and facilitate this process. Let's keep the good things going strong, take a fresh look at those that really aren't working as well as we would like, and have the courage to envision different ways of doing them.

I am honored and excited to serve as your superintendent in this wonderful community of educators and citizens. Working together, we will do whatever it takes to meet the needs of all children and to prepare them for the challenges of tomorrow.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jackie Pons". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jackie Pons
Superintendent

VISION

Leon County Schools will be an engaging, safe and respectful learning environment that embraces change and produces high academic achievers who appreciate diversity and become conscientious contributors to our society.

2008-2009

LEON COUNTY SCHOOL PRIORITIES

Priority #1 – Maximizing Resources for Students

In this time of revenue shortfalls and budget cuts, Leon County Schools is committed to reducing budget expenditures in a way that allows us to focus on our students: their safety, their achievements, their interests and goals. Our top priority for the 2008-2009 school year is to maximize resources for students by reducing expenditures and implementing cost-saving measures while building the support mechanisms and programs that students need most.

Priority #2 – Safety and Security

Leon County Schools will create, maintain, and enhance the physical and emotional safety of all students and staff and will ensure the security of all facilities.

Priority #3 – Student Achievement

Leon County Schools is committed to student learning. We will ensure first-rate teachers and administrators at all schools who will work together to establish high expectations and build an environment where all students achieve.

Priority #4 – Innovative Solutions

Leon County Schools is committed to meeting the changing needs of our students through innovative ideas that address the problems of *our* community and use the unique resources available to us.

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LEON COUNTY SCHOOLS—A QUICK OVERVIEW

Leon County sits in the Big Bend area of northern Florida's panhandle, about halfway between Pensacola and Jacksonville. To the north, Leon County borders the State of Georgia, and the county line sits just 25 miles north of the Gulf of Mexico. There are 272,000 residents within the 702 square miles of the county. Tallahassee is our main city and the capital for the state. Two major universities, Florida A & M University and Florida State University, are within the city limits as is Tallahassee Community College. Students also have access to certification and four-year degree programs through Flagler College, Barry University, and Keiser University.

There are 52 school sites in the district, including five charter schools, serving over 34,000 students. Our elementary schools serve students in pre-kindergarten or kindergarten through fifth grades. Middle schools serve grades six through eight, and high schools serve grades nine through twelve.

Leon County elects its school superintendent every four years. Five elected school board members serve staggered terms. Everyone who works with students must have cleared a background check and fingerprint review. There are over 4,500 employees in the district, including over 2,300 teachers. The majority of teachers in our schools have 12 or more years of teaching experience and almost half hold an advanced degree. Currently, more than 200 teachers hold National Board Teaching Certification.

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), an independent accreditation group that sets national standards of excellence for schools, reviews our schools every five years and measures performance in such areas as teacher certification, library and resource materials, parent and community involvement, and student performance. Every elementary, middle, and high school has achieved and maintained full accreditation status.

Lively Technical Center has received and maintained accreditation by the prestigious Council on Occupational Education (COE), an agency that sets standards for post-secondary schools and measures performance in areas such as media resources, business and industrial involvement, teacher certification, and student completion and placement.

Currently, our district is working toward achieving district-wide accreditation by AdvancED, a coalition of accrediting agencies and the world's largest educational community. This internationally-recognized, higher level of accreditation is a powerful systems approach and measures how all parts of our school system work together to ensure high-quality, continuous improvement. We are scheduled to receive our visit from the accrediting review team in January, 2009.

According to the State of Florida's school accountability system, 70% of Leon County's schools received a grade of "A" or "B" during 2008. School grades are based on the combined student achievement of the school as measured by the state's assessments in reading, writing, science, and math. Federal standards for student performance, as set out in the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, are also used to rate schools across the country, including those in Florida.

Additional information is available on the school district's website at <http://www.leon.k12.fl.us>. Use the *Site Index* link to see an alphabetical listing of everything the site has to offer—including pages that are just for parents. Families can also write or visit the Leon County School Board office, located at 2757 West Pensacola Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32304-2998, or call the district operator at (850) 487-7100.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

ADMINISTRATION

Jackie Pons, Superintendent	487-7147
Marvin Henderson, Associate Superintendent	487-7193
Shannon Lynch, Assistant Superintendent – Teaching and Learning	487-7219
Barbara Wills, Assistant Superintendent – Professional and Community Services	487-7177
Paul Byrd, Assistant Superintendent – Maintenance, Facilities, and Construction	617-1800

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Dee Crumpler, Chair	942-0730
Georgia M. "Joy" Bowen, Vice Chair	575-5114
Sheila Costigan	386-8502
Maggie B. Lewis-Butler	576-3308
Jeff Wahlen, School Board Attorney	425-5471

DISTRICT DEPARTMENTS

Community Information	487-7240
Curriculum Services	487-7893
District Media Center	922-0199
Elementary Schools	487-7106
Equity and Diversity	487-7105
Exceptional Student Education	487-7158
Facilities	617-1800
FDLRS (Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resource Center)	487-2630
Finance	487-7142
Food Services	488-7426
Home Education	413-0441
Human Resources	487-7197
Information	487-7100
Intervention Services	487-7306
Juvenile Justice Programs	488-2087
Labor Relations	487-7103
Policy and Planning	487-7546
Pre-K Programs	922-2099

Safety and Security	487-7117
School Choice	487-7257
School Improvement	922-0199
Secondary Schools	487-7139
Special Programs	487-7139
Student Activities	487-7364
Student Records	487-7374
Student Services	488-2275
Technology and Information	487-7363
Testing	488-0093
Textbooks	922-0199
Title I	413-0441
Transportation	488-2636
Volunteers	487-7800

HELPFUL WEBSITES

Leon County School District
<http://www.leon.k12.fl.us>

Leon County School Board Policies &
 Procedures
<http://www.planning.leon.k12.fl.us/>

Bullying Prevention
www.stopbullyingnow.org

FCAT Explorer
<http://www.fcatexplorer.com/>

Just Read, Florida!
<http://www.justreadflorida.com/>

Florida Department of Education Parent
 Resources
<http://www.fldoe.org/parent/>

Florida Healthy Kids
<https://www.healthykids.org/>

Florida Partnership for Family Involvement
 in Education
<http://www.floridapartnership.usf.edu/>

Florida Parental Information Resource
 Center (PIRC) of FND
<http://www.fndfl.org/projects/pirc/>

SCHOOL INFORMATION

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Apalachee Tapestry

Magnet School of the Arts

Principal: Ross Witherspoon

Phone: 488-7110

School Hours: 7:30 a.m.-1:50 p.m.

650 Trojan Trail 32311

www.apalachee.leon.k12.fl.us

Astoria Park

Principal: Joan K. Hays

Principal in Transition:

Desmond Cole

Phone: 488-4673

School Hours: 8:35 a.m.-2:55 p.m.

2465 Atlas Road 32303

www.astoriapark.leon.k12.fl.us

Bond

Principal: Pam Hightower, Ph.D.

Phone: 488-7676

School Hours: 7:40 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

2204 Saxon Street 32301

www.wesson.leon.k12.fl.us

Buck Lake

Principal: Claire Frick

Phone: 488-6133

School Hours: 8:30 a.m. - 2:50 p.m.

1600 Pedrick Road 32317

www.bucklake.leon.k12.fl.us

Canopy Oaks

Principal: Carol Barineau

Phone: 488-3301

School Hours: 8:05 a.m. – 2:25 p.m.

3250 Point View Drive 32303

www.canopyoaks.leon.k12.fl.us

Chaires

Principal: Michelle Prescott

Phone: 878-8534

School Hours: 7:30 a.m. - 1:50 p.m.

4774 Chaires Crossroads 32317

www.chaires.leon.k12.fl.us

Conley

Principal: Ray King

Phone: 922-6012

School Hours: 7:40 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

2400 East Orange Avenue 32311

www.conley.leon.k12.fl.us

DeSoto Trail

Principal: Michelle Keltner

Phone: 488-4511

School Hours: 7:40 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

5200 Treadington Park Drive 32309

www.desoto-trail.k12.fl.us

Ft. Braden K-8

Principal: Jim Jackson

Phone: 488-9374

School Hours: 8:00 a.m. - 2:20 p.m.

15100 Blountstown Hwy. 32301

www.ft-braden.leon.k12.fl.us

Gilchrist

Principal: Jonathan Grantham, Ph.D.

Phone: 893-4310

School Hours: 8:10 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

1301 Timberlane Road 32312

www.gilchrist.leon.k12.fl.us

Hartsfield

Principal: Cora Franklin

Phone: 488-7322

School Hours: 7:40 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

1414 Chowkeebin Nene 32301

www.hartsfield.leon.k12.fl.us

Hawks Rise

Principal: Penny Brinson

Phone: 487-4733

School Hours: 8:40 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

205 Meadow Ridge Road 32312

www.hawksrise.leon.k12.fl.us

Killearn Lakes

Principal: Brenda McGalliard

Phone: 893-1265

School Hours: 8:15 a.m. - 2:35 p.m.

8037 Deerlake East 32312

www.killearn-lakes.leon.k12.fl.us

W.T. Moore

Principal: Sue Kraul

Phone: 877-6158

School Hours: 8:45 a.m. - 3:05 p.m.

1706 Dempsey Mayo Road 32308

www.moore.leon.k12.fl.us

Oak Ridge

Principal: D. J. Wright

Phone: 488-3124

School Hours: 7:40 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

4530 Shelfer Road 32304

www.oak-ridge.leon.k12.fl.us

Pineview

Principal: Marilyn Rahming, Ph.D.

Phone: 488-2819

School Hours: 7:40 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

2230 Lake Bradford Road 32310

www.pineview.leon.k12.fl.us

Riley

Principal: Karwynn Paul

Phone: 488-5840

School Hours: 8:55 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.

1400 Indiana Street 32304

www.leon.k12.fl.us/Public/Riley

Roberts

Principal: Kim McFarland

Phone: 488-0923

School Hours: 7:40 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

5777 Centerville Road 32309

www.roberts.leon.k12.fl.us

Ruediger

Principal: Melissa Fullmore

Phone: 488-1074

School Hours: 7:50 a.m. - 2:10 p.m.

526 W. 10th Avenue 32303

www.ruediger.leon.k12.fl.us

Sabal Palm

Principal: Ann Johnson, Ed.D.

Phone: 488-0167

School Hours: 8:15 a.m. - 2:35 p.m.

2813 Ridgeway Street 32304

www.sabalpalm.leon.k12.fl.us

Sealey

Principal: Demetria Clemons

Phone: 488-5640

School Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 3:20 p.m.

2815 Allen Road 32312

www.sealey.leon.k12.fl.us

Springwood

Principal: Joseph Burgess

Phone: 488-6225

School Hours: 8:30 a.m. - 2:50 p.m.

3801 Fred George Road 32303

www.leon.k12.fl.us/Public/springwood

Sullivan

Principal: Pam Stephens

Phone: 487-1216

School Hours: 8:00 a.m. - 2:20 p.m.

927 Miccosukee Road 32308

www.sullivan.leon.k12.fl.us

Woodville

Principal: Nancy Stokely

Phone: 487-7043

School Hours: 7:30 a.m. - 1:50 p.m.

9373 Woodville Hwy. 32305

www.woodville.leon.k12.fl.us

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Belle Vue

Principal: Kathleen Rodgers

Phone: 488-4467

School Hours: 7:30 a.m. - 1:50 p.m.

2214 Belle Vue Way 32304

www.bellevue.leon.k12.fl.us

Cobb

Principal: Shelly Bell

Phone: 488-3364

School Hours: 7:20 a.m. - 1:40 p.m.

915 Hillcrest 32308

www.cobb.leon.k12.fl.us

Deerlake

Principal: Shane Syfrett
 Phone: 922-6545
 School Hours: 9:25 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.
 9902 Deerlake West 32312
www.deerlake.leon.k12.fl.us

Fairview

Principal: Roger Pinholster, Ph.D.
 Phone: 488-6880
 School Hours: 8:30 a.m. - 2:50 p.m.
 3415 Zillah Road 32305
www.fairview.leon.k12.fl.us

Griffin

Principal: Gwendolyn Lynn
 Phone: 488-8436
 School Hours: 7:30 a.m. - 1:50 p.m.
 800 Alabama Street 32304
www.griffin.leon.k12.fl.us

Montford

Principal: Scotty Crowe
 Phone: 922-6011
 School Hours: 9:30 a.m. - 3:50 p.m.
 5789 Pimlico Drive 32309
www.montford.leon.k12.fl.us

Nims

Principal: Kay Collins
 Phone: 488-5960
 School Hours: 8:30 a.m. - 2:50 p.m.
 723 W. Orange Avenue 32305
www.leon.k12.fl.us/public/nims

Raa

Principal: Donna Callaway
 Phone: 488-6287
 School Hours: 9:30 a.m. - 3:50 p.m.
 401 W. Tharpe Street 32303
www.raa.leon.k12.fl.us

Swift Creek

Principal: Allen Burch
 Phone: 487-4868
 School Hours: 9:30 a.m. - 3:50 p.m.
 2100 Pedrick Road 32311
www.swiftcreek.leon.k12.fl.us

HIGH SCHOOLS**Chiles**

Principal: Alan Cox, Ph.D.
 Phone: 488-1756
 School Hours: 7:55 a.m. - 3:05 p.m.
 7200 Lawton Chiles Lane 32312
www.chiles.leon.k12.fl.us

Godby

Principal: Jean Ferguson
 Phone: 488-1325
 School Hours: 7:45 a.m. - 2:55 p.m.
 1717 W. Tharpe Street 32304
www.godby.leon.k12.fl.us

Leon

Principal: Rocky Hanna
 Phone: 488-1971
 School Hours: 8:00 a.m. - 3:10 p.m.
 550 E. Tennessee Street 32308
www.leon.leon.k12.fl.us

Lincoln

Principal: Merry Ortega
 Phone: 487-2110
 School Hours: 8:00 a.m. - 3:10 p.m.
 3838 Trojan Trail 32311
www.lincoln.leon.k12.fl.us

Rickards

Principal: Michelle Gayle, Ph.D.
 Phone: 488-1783
 School Hours: 8:00 a.m. - 3:10 p.m.
 3013 Jim Lee Road 32301
www.rickards.leon.k12.fl.us

SAIL

Principal: Rosanne Wood
 Phone: 488-2468
 School Hours: 7:50 a.m. - 2:40 p.m.
 2006 Jackson Bluff Rd. 32304
www.sail.leon.k12.fl.us

SPECIAL PROGRAMS**Academic Resource Center**

Principal: Ward Spisso
 Coordinator: Susan Barnes
 Phone: 487-1957
 526 N. Appleyard Drive 32304
www.arc.leon.k12.fl.us

Adult and Community Ed

Principal: Barbara Van Camp
 Phone: 922-5343
 School Hours: M-Th
 8:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.
 283 Trojan Trail 32311
www.ace-leon.org

Early Childhood Programs Pre-K

Principal: Martha Fletcher
 Phone: 922-2099
 School Hours:
 8:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.
 500 N. Appleyard Drive 32304

Everhart School

Principal: Jane Floyd Bullen
 Phone: 488-5785
 School Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
 2750 Mission Road 32304
www.everhart.leon.k12.fl.us

Lively Technical Center

Principal: Woody Hildebrandt
 Phone: 487-7555
 School Hours:
 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (4 day schedule)
 8:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. (5 day schedule)
 500 N. Appleyard Drive 32304
www.livelytech.com

Pace Secondary School

Principal: Jane Floyd Bullen
 Phone: 488-8927
 School Hours: 9:15 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.
 3413 Zillah Street 32305
www.pace.leon.k12.fl.us

Ghazvini Learning Center

Principal: Joe Pons
 Phone: 488-2087
 School Hours: 7:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
 860 Blountstown HWY 32304
www.2ndchance.leon.k12.fl.us

CHARTER SCHOOLS**Arts & Sciences Charter (Grades K - 8)**

Principal: Debo Powers
 Phone: 386-6566
 School Hours: 9:30 a.m. - 3:50 p.m.
 3208 Thomasville Road 32312
www.artsandsciences.leon.k12.fl.us

Imagine Charter School (Grades K - 6)

Principal: Suezan P Turknnett, M. Ed.
 Phone: 877-5187
 School Hours: 8:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
 3611 Austin Davis Avenue 32308
www.imagineschoolsleon.com

Life Skills Center of Leon County (Ages 16 - 21)

Principal: Shellonda Rucker
 Phone: 599-9190
 School Hours: 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
 324 N. Adams Street 32304
www.lifeskillscenters.com

STARS Middle School

Principal: A. Semet Kul
 Phone: 681-7827
 School Hours: 7:40 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
 1234 Blountstown Hwy 32304
www.starsmiddleschool.org

Steele-Collins Charter Middle

Principal: Kim Ardley
 Phone: 681-1929
 School Hours: 8:30 a.m. - 2:50 p.m.
 428 W. Tennessee Street 32301
www.steelecollins.leon.k12.fl.us

2008-2009 REGULAR SCHOOL CALENDAR

2008

August	11-15	Teacher Planning/Inservice Days
	18	Students Report
September	1	Labor Day Holiday (Districtwide)
October	6-10	FCAT Retakes
	16	End of First Nine Weeks (43 day nine weeks)
	17	District/Statewide Inservice Day (Students Out)
November	11	Veterans Day Holiday (Districtwide)
	26	Thanksgiving Holiday (Students & Teachers Out)
	27-28	Thanksgiving Holidays (Districtwide)
December	17-19	High School Exams Days/Middle and Elementary Early Release
	19	End of Semester (41 day nine weeks/84 day semester)
	22-31	Winter Holidays (Districtwide)

2009

January	1-2	Winter Holidays (Districtwide)
	5	District Staff and Teachers Return
	6	Students Return
	19	Martin Luther King Holiday (Districtwide)
February	10-13	FCAT Writing + (Grades 4, 8 and 10)
	16	Teacher Planning/Inservice Day (Students Out)
March	10-19	FCAT SSS/NRT Reading and Math (Grades 3-10)
		FCAT SSS Science (Grades 5, 8, and 11)
		FCAT SSS Reading & Math Retakes (Grades 11-Adult)
	13	End of Third Nine Weeks (47 day nine weeks)
	30-31	Spring Break (Students & Teachers Out)
April	1-3	Spring Break (Students & Teachers Out)
May	25	Memorial Day Holiday (Districtwide)
	27-29	Middle and High School Exams Days/Elementary Early Release
	29	Last Day for Students (49 day nine weeks/96 day semester)
	27-30	Graduation
June	1-2	Teacher Planning/Inservice Days/End of Regular Term
	1	Four Day Workweek Begins
	15-19	FCAT SSS Reading & Math Retakes (Rising Grade 12-Adult)
July	2	Fourth of July Holiday (Districtwide)
August	14	End of Four Day Workweek
Tentative:	17	Teachers Report/Teacher Planning/Inservice Day
2009	24	Students Report

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

Elementary Schools: To enter kindergarten, a child must be 5 years old on or before September 1st of the year of enrollment. To enter first grade, a child must be 6 years old on or before September 1st. Enrolling at the school where the student is scheduled to attend is a quick process. Families will need to bring two proofs of residency (including a lease or mortgage statement), proof of a recent physical exam, a birth certificate or other evidence of the child's age, the child's social security number, and proof that the student has received all required immunizations. Immunizations may be obtained from the public health department or a private doctor, but they must be current. If you are not sure that you have all necessary documents you need to bring, call the school first to verify what you need to bring as evidence.

Middle and High Schools: Middle or high school students enrolling for the first time in Leon County Schools will need to show the same types of records as elementary students. Before entering seventh grade, students must have proof of current booster shots.

REQUIRED IMMUNIZATIONS

- **Varicella (VZV)** – incoming Pre-K – 6th grade students who have not had chicken pox. The immunization is not required if a physician provides the date that the child had the disease.
- **Diphtheria/Pertussis/Tetanus (DTaP)** – 5 doses – if the 4th dose is given after the 4th birthday, the 5th dose is not required.
- **Polio (IPV)** – 4 doses – If the 3rd dose is given after the 4th birthday, the 4th dose is not required.
- **Measles/Mumps/Rubella (MMR)** – 2 doses
- **Hepatitis B** – 3 doses
- **Hemophilus influenza type b (Hib)** – 1 dose required for 3 – 4 year old students in Pre - K programs
- Students in grades 7 – 12 (new or retained) – must have a second MMR, a Tetanus Booster after 8/8/00 and a Hepatitis B series
- Students aged 11 – 15 – A two - step Hepatitis B series is acceptable. However, the physician who gives the two - step series must indicate on the blue card that it is a two - step series. Without the physician's statement, two does of the Hepatitis B series are not acceptable.

For children entering kindergarten and any children entering the school district for the first time, proof of a school physical completed within the last 12 months must be provided. If the student is coming from another state, an appropriate physical from that state is acceptable as long as it is on appropriate forms.

Pre-K parents/guardians – You don't have to wait until the summer before your child enters kindergarten to complete the required kindergarten immunizations. The health department suggests that parents set the goal of completing the required immunizations by the age of four.

For more information, call Ann Waltz at the Leon County Health Department at (850) 606-8023 or visit www.immunizeflorida.org.

PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

Students must earn promotion to the next grade by showing that they have learned the required material in their courses and that they have reached a level of proficiency on standardized and state assessments. At the elementary level, students must be reading on grade level by the end of third grade or they will be retained to receive additional assistance until they can master this important life skill. In elementary and middle schools, students are expected to show mastery of all Sunshine State Standards. Mastery is defined as 70 percent proficiency on each benchmark. In grades 1-8, students must all score at or above proficiency on all district and state assessments.

The current requirements for middle grades promotion to high school begin with students entering grade 6 in the 2006-2007 school year. In order to be promoted to the ninth grade, students are required to complete three middle school or higher courses in English, mathematics, social studies, and science.

Beginning with ninth grade, student progression changes slightly. Students must still pass their courses and have acceptable levels of achievement on assessments. Students must also meet graduation requirements in a timely manner and at an acceptable level to be classified in the next grade level. Courses that are equivalent to one school year or 180 days of instruction are considered one full credit; courses that are offered for half that time are considered one-half credit. English III is a full-year course and would earn one (1.0) credit. Economics only lasts one semester; passing it would earn one-half (0.5) credit. Courses must be those that allow students to meet graduation requirements. Graduation requirements and options are explained in the *Graduation Handbook*, which is distributed to students each spring.

Major Area of Interest: The high school Major Area of Interest is a means by which a student can explore areas of interest in depth. Students entering grade nine in 2007 and thereafter will select a Major Area of Interest as part of their required electives. Although students need four Major Area of Interest credits, the Major can change each year without penalty and without affecting graduation.

Grading Scale: Leon County Schools follows the state grading scale when assigning letter grades to report cards. No plus or minus marks are added to student report cards. The grading scales are as follows:

Grading Scale for Grades 2—12:

A = 90—100%

B = 80—89%

C = 70—79%

D = 60—69%

F = 59% or lower

Grading Scale for Kindergarten and First Grades:

E = high level of understanding

S = progressing satisfactorily

N = needs more time and experience

Reporting Results/Tracking Student Progress

After each grading period a report card is sent home for families to review. Report cards indicate whether a student is progressing and performing on grade level. If students are not working on grade level, kindergarten through fifth grade report cards will show GP, SP, or NP—all indicators of below grade level work.

In grades six through twelve, courses labeled "Basic" or "Intensive" are indicators of below grade level work. These indicators or grades of N, D, or F or similar comments on a student's interim progress report or report card mean a student is having trouble learning. Interim progress reports are prepared and sent out halfway through each grading period. If families have not already done so, this would be the time to talk with your child's teacher or teachers to find a solution. For questions or concerns about student progression, contact the school or call the Department of Curriculum Services at (850) 487-7893.

School newsletters, e-mails, and websites can help you keep up with the work of the schools. These communications keep you informed of current events. Schools invite you to discuss what is happening with your student so that you and the school can work together to help your student succeed.

Schools always ask for your most current address and phone numbers where you can be reached. This is important information for schools to have if there is an emergency. It is also important information for them to have so that they can reach you to talk about your student's progress in school.

FAMILY & STUDENT SERVICES

Family Literacy

Family circumstances are different for everyone. Family members who want to improve their basic reading and mathematics skills or get their high school diplomas can enroll in the Leon County Schools Adult and Community Education (ACE) Program. Contact them at (850) 922-5343 for more information or ask about these services at the guidance office or parent resource center.

Mentors/Tutors

Mentors are volunteers who work weekly on an individual basis with students. For more information regarding the program or to volunteer to be a mentor, please contact the Volunteer Office at (850) 487-7800

After-School Programs

All elementary schools and many middle schools offer before and/or after-school programs that offer both enrichment and academic support. In addition, Leon County Schools has secured three 21st Century Community Learning Center grants to offer free after-school programs four days per week at eight sites. Please contact your school for more information regarding programs available.

Parent Resource Areas

Every school site has a parent resource area containing pamphlets, booklets, books, and other materials about the school. There are also materials available on parenting with tips and techniques that are helpful in dealing with the day-to-day job of parenting. Usually this information is located near the guidance office at the school.

Free or Reduced Price Meals for Students

Leon County Schools participates in the federal food and nutrition program and, based on family income, students may be eligible to receive their meals free or at a reduced price. Families must complete and return the application form sent home at the beginning of the school year to apply for this service. For more information, contact Nutrition Services at (850) 488-7426.

Title I Services for Students and Families

Title I is a federal program designed to serve students in need. Additional funds are allocated to schools where the majority of students are eligible to receive meals free or at reduced rates. The funds are used to provide additional materials and instructional support for these schools, and a portion of the funds are spent on special parent involvement activities and workshops. In addition, Title I contracts with selected neighborhood centers and private providers for after-school programs that support and extend student learning. More information about Title I schools and services can be found at the participating schools or by calling the district Title I office at (850) 413-0441.

Limited English Proficient (LEP) Services for Students and Families

Students from families where English is not the native language can receive accommodations to help them learn English more quickly. A student's LEP plan describes the accommodations needed. Some schools offer side-by-side translations of school newsletters that are sent home with students. Families may bring a translator to any school conference and meeting or may request that a translator be present during those meetings. Families need to notify the school ahead of time if a translator is coming. When 10 or more students with the same native language are enrolled in a school, the school will hire a bilingual aide to ensure family access to important information.

Other Health and Community Services

Parent resource centers have information about community services that are available to families who need them. District school social workers are sensitive to family needs and are prepared to provide confidential help and referrals to community agencies when needed. The district office number for these services is (850) 488-2275.

PARENT PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES

School/District Advisory Councils

Every school has a school advisory council to help determine the goals, budget, and evaluation of the school's improvement plan. Every school has a school improvement plan that guides the changes it will make each year in order to be more effective. Parents elect staff, parents, and other community members to this decision-making council. For more information, contact the school principal or call the district at (850) 922-0199.

PTA/PTSA

Joining your school's parent - teacher organization is a terrific way to become involved. Parents are greatly needed in every school to serve as links with other parents, participate in fund - raisers, and support the school in many ways. Call your child's school for information.

Volunteering

Schools welcome volunteers to assist with office or classroom preparation and work. Volunteers may tutor students in the classroom, assist with classroom lessons, and provide other valuable assistance to schools. Some people choose to mentor a student for an extended period of time. In keeping with Florida law, Leon County Schools conducts a sexual predator check on all volunteers; mentors undergo finger printing. During the 2007-2008 school year, Leon County had 10,809 registered volunteers in the schools and 1126 mentors working with individual students. Volunteers and mentors donated more than 371,000 hours to our schools in 2007-2008. The Volunteer Office has more information. Call them at (850) 487-7800.

STUDENT ACADEMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Using the Sunshine State Standards as the basis for what is being taught in all our schools ensures that all students receive a challenging and rigorous curriculum. There are additional programs available to students who want and need even greater challenges. Students at any grade level can receive accelerated opportunities designed specifically for their unique needs. There are other opportunities also offered throughout the district. The *Graduation Handbook* describes them in greater detail, and below is a brief listing. Contact the school's guidance counselor for more information about any of the specific accelerated programs listed below.

High School Courses and Credits in Middle School

Middle school students can take several required high school courses, such as algebra or geometry, while still in middle school. These courses would be designated as honors level courses. Students are classified as being in high school for those courses and the grades do appear on the students' high school transcripts.

International Baccalaureate (Pre-IB and IB)

Fairview and Nims Middle Schools offer Pre-IB programs. The International Baccalaureate program is offered at Rickards High School. Students may earn an IB diploma upon demonstration of the required levels of mastery. Entrance into the Pre-IB or IB program is open to all interested students who meet the criteria.

Advanced Placement (Pre-AP and AP)

Griffin Middle School offers a Pre-AP program. Rigorous, high school AP courses are taught by College Board-trained teachers. Students who score a 3 or higher on these Advanced Placement end-of-course exams may be eligible for college credit or may be able to begin college courses at an advanced level when they enroll.

Dual Enrollment (DE)

The DE program permits upper level high school students to enroll simultaneously in high school and post-secondary courses (community college, college, vocational, adult education) in order to take courses that are not available at the high school. There are entrance requirements and restrictions for such courses. Credits earned can be applied toward high school graduation and toward college graduation requirements.

Florida Virtual School

This internet-based, public high school is committed to providing students with educational opportunities by offering a rigorous curriculum. For more information, visit <http://www.flvs.net>.

EDUCATIONAL CHOICES

Public School Options

Students are assigned to schools based on their actual residential address at the time of school registration. Attendance zone boundaries can be found on the district web site. Leon County also offers a variety of school choice options for students and their families. The purpose of the choice program is to provide as many options as possible to maximize student learning. There are a variety of special programs available, such as International Baccalaureate, science, technology, and fine arts. Families apply by March 1 of each school year for controlled choice that includes magnet schools and other special programs. Contact the School Choice Office at (850) 487-7546 for more information about attendance zones and choice options.

Charter School Options

Charter Schools are public schools contracting with the district to provide services to students. Leon County has five charter schools: The School for the Arts and Sciences ((850) 386-6566) serving grades K-8; Imagine School at Evening Rose ((850) 264-7643) serving grades K-5; C. K. Steele-Collins ((850) 681-1929) serving grades 6-8; Stars Middle School ((850) 681-7827) serving grades 6 and 7; and the Life Skills Center of Leon County ((850) 599-9190), serving 16-21 year-old students. Each charter school offers a unique opportunity and setting. Families can obtain more information about each school by calling the schools directly.

K – 12 Scholarship Programs

Florida has three statewide K–12 scholarship programs that permit tuition funds to follow children to public or private schools. In order to qualify for any of the following programs listed below, a student must have been registered and enrolled in a Florida public school during the prior year.

- The Opportunity Scholarship Program offers students who have attended—or who are assigned to attend—failing public schools to have the option to attend a higher-performing public school or a participating private school.
- The John M. McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program allows parents of students with disabilities to choose the best academic environment for their child. Interested parents should visit the Florida Department of Education (DOE) website – <http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org>, and select the John M. McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program option. Parents may also contact the DOE hotline at (800) 447 - 1636.
- The Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship Program offers students who qualify for the free and reduced lunch program the option to attend another public school and receive money for transportation or to attend a private school. View the scholarship website – <http://www.opportunitieschools.org> or contact the Florida Department of Education Parent Hotline at (800) 447 - 1636.

Home Schooling

Families who choose not to send their students to a public school may also decide that Home Education is the best option. The State of Florida and Leon County policies are clear that the family is responsible for all aspects of the education of their students in this situation. However, to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of students between the ages of 6 and 16, there are a few requirements families must satisfy in order to home educate their children. For example, families must register with the district of residence and students must be evaluated annually. The district's Home School Office can assist families who choose this option. Their number is (850) 413-0441.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

There are three levels of assessment: classroom, district-wide, and state-wide. For example, in the area of writing, students take teacher-directed tests in their classes, such as spelling tests or chapter tests, to gauge student mastery of lessons throughout the year. The district provides Writes Upon Request (WUR) four times a year to help assess student progress in writing. The state assessment, the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT), has some components that measure national standards, but it is mostly designed to measure how well students are progressing in their mastery of Florida's Sunshine State Standards. State assessments measure reading, writing, math, and science. Results of these tests can be a factor in determining promotion. Results are also combined at each school to determine school grades under the state accountability system and adequate yearly progress under federal accountability standards.

Students take several assessments to measure their progress toward meeting grade level expectations. Students must score at Level 3 or higher on FCAT assessments to show they are working at the expected achievement levels.

TEST	Grade	Purpose
FCAT: Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test: Reading /Math grades 3-10 Writing to 4 th , 8 th , 10 th grade only Science to 5 th , 8 th , 11 th grade only	3 - 11	The FCAT is a series of tests the state uses to show how well students are meeting the Florida Sunshine State Standards. The tests measure reading, mathematics, writing and science. Student scores on FCAT are combined at each school to determine school accountability grades.
WUR: Writes Upon Request Given four times a year	1-10	Writes Upon Request was developed in Leon County and follows the same format as the FCAT.
PSAT/NMSQT: Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholar Qualifying Test	All 10 (some 9, 11, 12)	These tests help determine college-level skills and potential for success in AP courses. High results could lead to scholarships for 11 th grade test takers.
CELLA: Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment	K-12	This is a language proficiency assessment used to measure the growth of English Language Learners in mastering English skills.
FLKRS: Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener	K	This test helps teachers determine a child's readiness for academic work in kindergarten.
DIBELS: Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills	K– 5	DIBELS and FORF scores are predictors of performance on high-stakes achievement tests and are used to help teachers group children for instruction.
Florida Oral Reading Fluency (FORF)	6 - 12	

Parents receive the results of FCAT in the spring—usually just before or with the students' final report cards. Other assessment results are available by asking for an appointment with the teacher to review and understand results. Not all students take all the tests listed.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Exceptional Education Services (ESE) for Students and Families:

Eligible students with special learning needs have the right to special services. Teachers and guidance counselors will help families determine the student's eligibility and will help ensure that services are delivered. These are students with an IEP or 504 plan. Families are important participants in developing these plans. Based on these plans, students may receive certain accommodations during the instructional day and may be eligible for accommodations on state assessments. Students who have severe disabilities and need to pursue a special diploma may be eligible for enrollment in Gretchen Everhart. Students designated as Gifted may be eligible to attend the Academic Resource Center (ARC). The district's ESE staff can answer specific questions at (850) 487-7160.

What is an IEP?

IEP stands for Individualized Education Plan. Students who might need an IEP have more extreme learning difficulties than students needing an Individualized Progress Monitoring Plan. IEP's might also be written for students who require more challenging curriculum offerings or just need special instructional methods to access the full range of curriculum offered. Before an IEP can be written, students must be allowed to be tested to determine whether their learning difficulties qualify them for exceptional student education services. The tests include assessing academic progress and behavior as well as psychological needs. These tests are given by trained school psychologists in the Leon County School District at no cost to you. If you have an evaluation from a private practitioner, the school district must verify those results with their own evaluations. Students who qualify for exceptional education services have specific legal rights and responsibilities. If you receive a request for an IEP meeting, the sooner you respond, the sooner your child can begin receiving the specialized assistance. IEP's must be reviewed every year to make sure they are specific to the student's needs and are appropriate for the student's education. For more information, call Exceptional Student Education at (850) 487-7160.

What is a 504 Plan?

A 504 Plan is named for Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, a federal law governing services to students with disabilities. A 504 plan is for students who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, have a record of such impairment, or are regarded as having such a condition. The 504 plan ensures students equal access to the full instructional program by describing the accommodations that the student needs in order to succeed. These plans are reviewed annually. For more information, contact the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance office at (850) 487-7337.

PARENT RIGHTS/RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents are responsible for (pursuant to Florida law):

- Being sure their children are prepared to be successful in school.
- Complying with compulsory school attendance laws.
- Students' compliance with code of student conduct.
- Compliance with schools' reasonable and time-acceptable parental involvement requests.
- Compliance with school health-related requirements with certain exemptions.
- Ensuring that their children complete academic assignments on time and in the manner prescribed.
- Ensuring that their children are prepared for academic tests and other assessments.

Parents have a right to (pursuant to Florida law):

- Receive clear information on what is required for their children to be promoted to the next grade.
- Be notified of their children's progress toward achieving state and district expectations for academic proficiency.
- Be notified of their right to participate in the development of academic improvement plans.
- Receive assessment results, including student progress reports, report cards, and end-of-year status.
- Be notified of their eligibility to participate in school advisory council.
- Be notified of school accountability and school improvement rating reports, including school grading system; district performance grades.
- Be notified of accommodations for assessment.
- Receive information regarding teacher qualifications.
- Receive communication regarding instructional materials.
- Be notified regarding rights related to student records.
- Receive notice and due process for parents of students with disabilities and parents of students in residential care facilities.
- Receive a copy of the District Code of Student Conduct.
- Be notified of student's suspension and reason for suspension.
- Receive written notice of recommendation of expulsion and due process.
- Be notified regarding zero tolerance and protection for victims of certain felony offenses.
- Review child's placement in alternative programs.
- Receive information regarding school-to-work transition.
- Be notified regarding administration of medication and provision of medical services by district school board personnel.
- Receive notification of zero tolerance for harassment.
- Receive notification of zero tolerance for drug possession and use.

Parent Self-Assessment Checklist

Family involvement is a crucial aspect of a child's academic achievement, both in school and other aspects of life. This checklist can help determine how involved you are in promoting a positive education for your child.

Focus on Attitude:

- I stress the importance of education and doing one's best in school.
- I express belief in my child's ability to be successful.
- I help my child to set both short and long-term educational goals.
- I celebrate my child's academic accomplishments.

Focus on Academics:

- I support reading with age-appropriate home activities.
- I ensure that there is a consistent time and place to do homework.
- I make sure that my child has access to the materials needed to complete assignments.
- I regularly discuss and ask to see work that my child is doing in school.
- I attend workshops on helping my child at home.

Focus on Behavior:

- I monitor the television viewing habits of my child.
- I teach and reinforce positive behaviors such as respect and responsibility.
- I am aware of and enforce school behavior expectations.

Focus on Building Responsibility:

- I ensure that my child has a regular routine.
- I encourage my child to accept responsibility for his/her actions.
- I ensure that my child is in attendance and on time to school each day.
- I monitor and promote my child's participation in after-school activities.

Focus on School/Home Connections:

- I communicate regularly with my child's teacher(s).
- I attend teacher conferences or other individualized student meetings.
- I attend open house, science fairs, curriculum nights, and other school activities.
- I volunteer in the school setting when possible.

Nondiscrimination Contact Information

“No person shall on the basis of gender, marital status, sexual orientation, race, religion, national origin, age, or disability be denied employment, receipt of services, access to or participation in school activities or programs if qualified to receive such services, or otherwise be discriminated against or placed in a hostile environment in any educational program or activity including those receiving Federal financial assistance, except as provided by law.”

An employee, student, parent or applicant alleging discrimination with respect to employment, or any educational program or activity may contact:

**Dr. Ruth Hobbs, Equity Officer
Leon County Schools
2757 West Pensacola Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32304
(850) 487-7306
hobbsr@mail.leon.k12.fl.us**

A student or parent alleging discrimination as it relates to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act may contact:

**Dr. Margot Palazesi, 504 Specialist
Leon County School Board Office
2757 West Pensacola Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32304
(850) 487-7161
palazesim@mail.leon.k12.fl.us**

**Leon County School District
Tallahassee, Florida
Jackie Pons, Superintendent**