

## **Federal & State Mandates, New High School Grading Formula, 2009-2010 Budget**

Thanks to all of you for getting our school year off to such a great start. I'm excited about working together on behalf of our students and their families. We cannot do what we do without each and every one of you – no matter what your role is, you are a valued member of our PCS team!

What are some of the things we'll be working on this year? Many of you attended training during preschool days and heard about some of the new state initiatives that impact school and district office employees. I think it's helpful to know that the majority of these initiatives result from state or federal mandates and are not developed at the local level but will require our employees to document student data during the year. Below are some of the main initiatives that affect our district.

### **Federal Mandates**

- No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) – these guidelines call for all students to be proficient by year 2014
- Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Regulations
- Title I Regulations

### **State Mandates**

- Differentiated Accountability (DA) – a way to provide support to schools with the greatest need, based on school achievement. The Florida Continuous Improvement Model (FCIM) is part of this model.
- Problem Solving/Response to Instruction/Intervention (PSRtl) – a process the district uses to help students move forward.
- K-12 Reading Plan
- Uninterrupted 90 minute reading block (grades K-5)
- School-based Reading Leadership Teams
- FCAT Testing (grades 3-11)
- School Improvement Plans
- District Improvement Plan

### **Local Mandates/Initiatives**

- Bradley Case – Memorandum of Understanding – The aim of highest student achievement is one the district remains committed to for all students, including black students. The agreement also calls for the equitable expenditure of funds and closing the black/non-black achievement gap.
- Decentralized Decision Making – a way to give school teams more input into decision making to boost student achievement in their schools.

Last week, the State Board of Education approved changes to Florida's high school grading formula to account for FCAT performance and other measures such as participation and performance on advanced coursework, graduation rates and college and career readiness of students. This new formula begins this year.

Fifty percent of a high school's grade will be based on the FCAT performance of students. The remaining 50 percent will be based on the following factors:

- The school's graduation rate;
- The performance and participation of students in Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Dual Enrollment, Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE), and industry certification;
- The postsecondary readiness of the students (SAT, ACT, or College Placement Test (CPT))
- The graduation rate of at-risk students; and
- Growth or decline in these data components from year to year.

The state anticipates that due to implementing these changes, high school grades will not be released until the end of the year instead of during the summer when elementary and middle school grades are released. Although the new grading formula does not base the grade solely on one indicator (FCAT), other key measures of student success are not included (for example, GED graduates). Principals will be reviewing how the new formula affects their schools.

The final public hearing on the proposed 2009-10 budget was held on Sept. 15. The school board voted 6-1 to approve the total proposed millage of 8.346. This includes the discretionary critical needs additional millage of .25 that will generate \$16 million in revenue. These funds help offset a critical revenue deficit and made it no longer necessary to recommend employee furloughs. The board also voted 7-0 to adopt the \$1.4 billion 2009-10 budget as advertised and amended. Our finance team did a tremendous job working through this most difficult budget year to bring a balanced budget to the board. Thanks also to those of you who submitted feedback during the budget planning process.

I appreciate your continued support as we move forward toward 100% student success. Have a great year!

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Superintendent