



# DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF PASCO COUNTY

Kurt S. Browning, Superintendent of Schools

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Office for Teaching and Learning  
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Dear Parent,

The District School Board of Pasco County has an unyielding commitment to student learning. Our promise is that we will prepare each student to be college, career and life ready as they transition from our schools into the real world. To that end, we have taken steps to ensure that our curriculum, instruction and assessment practices are aligned to rigorous standards and set high expectations to ensure that each and every student learns at high levels.

The Pasco County curriculum includes the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts and Mathematics, as well as Florida's Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS) for other content areas. Our transition to the CCSS represents a shift to raise the bar in all grades and ensure that our students are receiving a relevant and rigorous education. Because these standards are new and very challenging, we know that students will need the support of their teachers and parents to achieve at higher levels.

As the year progresses, you will see classroom instructional shifts that will lead students to

- gain the knowledge and skills that they need to think and work at deeper levels
- think critically about what they read and the math they perform
- apply what they have learned to the real world
- communicate strong ideas and arguments in writing and react powerfully to what they read

As instruction and activities change in the classroom, so will the assessments and the way that teachers determine student progress. This will also impact the grades that students earn. The purpose of our grading system and report cards is to accurately communicate the achievement and learning of each student toward mastery of grade level standards. Because these more rigorous standards will demand more of our students, beginning of the year report card grades may be lower than grades from previous years. This does not mean that students are learning less, but instead that the expectation for their learning has increased. You can help by reminding your child that learning is a process, and it is normal that repeated opportunities may be necessary to master new skills and understand new concepts.

Stay connected to your child's teacher and school to ensure that you understand the expectations of these new standards and the progress of your child toward college, career and life readiness. For more information to help you track and support your child's progress at each stage, go to: <http://www.parenttoolkit.com/>.

Sincerely,

Vanessa Hilton  
Director  
Office for Teaching and Learning