

STRAIGHT TALK

By Dixie District School Superintendent – Mark Rains

January, 2012

As our schools begin the new semester, we look forward to an exciting second half of the 2011-2012 school year. Academics continue to be at the forefront of our agenda. We work hard to prepare our students for success.

Governor Scott recently requested that the Florida Department of Education officially rank Florida's school districts. We received news that Dixie District Schools is ranked 12th out of Florida's 67 school districts. You may review this complete report at the Florida Department of Education website (www.fldoe.org).

In early January, high school grades were released by the Florida Department of Education. Dixie County High School earned a "B" for the 2010-2011 school year, up from a "D" received the previous year. These grades are based on the high school grading formula that was used for the first time in the 2009-10 school year, which takes into account additional factors like graduation rates, accelerated coursework, and certification exams; rather than the previous grading system that relied solely on Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test results.

The State Board of Education is in the process of changing the current grading system for public school districts. From our understanding, it may be more difficult to become an "A" district than ever before.

I am spending a lot of time in classrooms and reviewing the data at all schools working to ensure that our students are ready for FCAT and End of Course Exams. I am also continuing to monitor student attendance. It is my personal goal for our students to graduate with the appropriate education to achieve their goals in life and become productive citizens.

Our District STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Committee continues to meet to discuss ways to improve programs offered to students in Dixie District Schools. STEM is a national and global focus of instruction and specialized skills to prepare our students for career paths in the 21st century.

On January 23rd, I attended the Dixie County Anti-Drug Coalition Meeting at the Dixie County Public Library. I am very appreciative of this organization for helping combat drug abuse in our community. My next Superintendent's Drug Advisory Committee Meeting will be held on February 27th, at 10:00 a.m. in the Superintendent's Office at 16077 NE 19 Highway, Cross City.

I would like to invite you to visit me in my satellite office at Old Town Elementary School on February 23rd between the hours of 8:00-10:00 a.m. During April, I will be visiting the outlying areas of Suwannee, Horseshoe, and Jena. My goal is for these to be more convenient locations for our residents in the outlying areas to communicate with the Superintendent of Schools.

For current Dixie District Schools information, visit our website at <http://www.dixie.k12.fl.us>. We welcome your suggestions in making this a user friendly website for students, parents, and the community.

The way to a child's mind is through the heart.



Mark A. Rains, Superintendent
Dixie District Schools



Supt. Rains reviews projects at the DCHS agriculture land lab.