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MEMORANDUM

TO: School District Superintendents
Charter School Executive Leaders

FROM: Anastasios Kamoutsas

DATE: August 7, 2025

SUBJECT: Celebration and Welcome to the 2025-2026 School Year

As the 2025-2026 school year begins, I want to recognize the powerful partnership that drives Florida's success: teachers and parents working together to put students first. This shared commitment fuels everything we do. Florida's educators are second to none, and parents across our state continue to roll up their sleeves alongside them to ensure every child receives a high-quality education. This partnership is the cornerstone of Florida's education system.

I am committed to two priorities as Florida's Commissioner of Education: student academic success and school safety. Florida's students thrive when classrooms are focused, families are engaged and instruction is rigorous.

Thanks to the bold and consistent leadership of Governor Ron DeSantis, Florida continues to set the standard nationwide. Governor DeSantis has championed policies that return education to its fundamental mission: academic achievement grounded in high expectations. Indoctrination, DEI and sexually explicit materials are not welcome in Florida's schools. Instead, we are focused on reading, math, civics, and preparing students for success in life and work.

Florida's progress monitoring (PM) is delivering real-time data that empowers both teachers and parents to intervene earlier and more effectively. The results speak volumes:

- Student performance in Mathematics increased by 3 percentage points over last year, and by 7 percentage points over 2022–2023.
- English Language Arts (ELA) performance increased by 4 percentage points over 2023–2024 and by 8 percentage points over 2022–2023.
- Students gained 21 percentage points from PM1 to PM3 in ELA in 2024–2025, compared to 20 points in 2023–2024 and 17 in 2022–2023.
- Students with disabilities improved by 4 percentage points in both ELA and Mathematics.
- Hispanic students increased by 3 percentage points in ELA and 4 in Mathematics.
- African American students earned a 5 percentage point increase in both subjects.
- Students from economically disadvantaged families improved by 3 percentage points in both ELA and Mathematics.

- 70% of students scored at or above grade level in both Civics and U.S. History End-of-Course Exams – a 3 percentage point increase in both subjects over 2024.

Florida's schools are also demonstrating steady improvement:

- 56% of schools increased their grade or maintained an "A."
- The number of "D" or "F" schools dropped from 117 to 71.
- 68% of charter schools increased their grade or maintained an "A."
- 28 school districts earned an "A," compared to 22 last year.
- 31 districts earned a "B," up from 26.

Florida's charter schools are also delivering results, demonstrating that school choice is working. More than 400,000 students now attend a charter school in Florida, and 68% of charter schools increased their grade or maintained an "A." This momentum is no accident. It reflects Governor DeSantis' unwavering support for families and his leadership in expanding access to high-quality educational options. While other states compromised on academic priorities, Florida stayed focused, and it is paying off.

As you welcome students back, please remind families that the first progress monitoring assessment occurs within the first 30 days of school. This start-of-year data point is essential, as it provides parents and teachers with the opportunity to identify needs, provide interventions and align efforts at the beginning of the academic year.

Please share this message with your principals, teachers and families as we set the tone for another strong year. Florida continues to lead because of the hard work and collaboration happening in every classroom and every home. Thank you for your steadfast leadership and commitment to student success.

AK/pob