



**Commentary
For
January 21, 2010**

**Presented by Dr. Bill Vogel
Superintendent,
Seminole County Public Schools**

Word Count (388 words)

The “Triple A Experience” continues in Seminole County Public Schools! Despite budget challenges during these unprecedented financial times, Seminole schools are committed to providing students with an impressive array of programs in **Academics, Arts, and Athletics**. Seminole County Public Schools is an “A” rated school district and is designated Academically High - Performing by the Florida Department of Education. Our school district remains focused on preparing 21st century students for success today, in college and for their careers of choice as they enter a globally competitive world, because providing a quality education matters in their future.

Public schools in Seminole County focus on high levels of academic achievement for all students. All middle and high school students offer advanced course work, including Advanced Placement courses at every high school. Gifted and special needs classes begin at the elementary level, providing opportunities for acceleration and academic support.

A close look at school offerings finds opportunities for the arts at all levels. Some courses are: Orff symphonies/ choirs / creative arts; instrumental band / choral groups; digital design/dance and drama. The arts help students discover and develop the creative genius within.

Athletically, Seminole students are recognized across Florida, annually earning state titles in various sports. Physical education programs, which begin in kindergarten, emphasize the importance of physical exercise and fitness for life. Intramural athletics are offered in middle school, and high school students can choose from a vast array of sporting opportunities. We believe that student engagement in athletics, clubs, the arts, and other school activities provides important life lessons in teamwork, dedication and goal attainment.

With all the acclaim about Seminole schools, you might wonder about your return on your investment in public education. Last year, 5880 students earned over \$14.5 million in Bright Futures Scholarships. Seminole County Public Schools’ graduation rate is 93%, one of the highest in Florida and the college ready rate is the highest in Central Florida. Sixty-one students earned National Merit Scholar designations; and the county’s academic team finished 2nd in the state. Advance Placement students earned scholarships to the nation’s best colleges. SAT scores remain above state / national averages. Regionally, FCAT rankings are 1 and 2 in every academic category.

Thank you, Seminole County residents, for your extraordinary support of Seminole County Public Schools... because a quality education for our children matters.