

**From:** Smith, Kevin  
**Sent time:** Tuesday, December 27, 2011 4:43:22 PM  
**To:** Cari Miller (Cari@excelined.org) <Cari@excelined.org>; elefsky@cfl.rr.com; Lee, Laurie; Colle, Hope; Walt Griffin <walt\_griffin@scps.k12.fl.us>  
**Subject:** FW: 12-23-11 through 12-16-11 Education Round Up

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FYI – have a great afternoon!

Sincerely,

Kevin Smith,  
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**From:** Etters, Cheryl  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 27, 2011 10:01 AM  
**Subject:** 12-23-11 through 12-16-11 Education Round Up

## Department of Education News Clips

December 23 – 26, 2011



**[FAU gets \\$3.5 million grant for school leadership development program](#)**  
(Boca Raton Tribune © 12/26/2011)

BOCA RATON – Florida Atlantic University was recently awarded a \$3.5 million Race to the Top grant for Job-embedded Principal Preparation Programs through the Florida Department of Education. The grant will provide funding for an innovative leadership development partnership between FAU's College of Education's Department of Educational Leadership and Research Methodology and Broward County Publ...

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**[New evaluations for teachers ready in Collier and Lee, but some say it's rushed](#)**  
(Collier Citizen © 12/26/2011)

NAPLES — Teachers and administrators want more time. More time to test out the system. More time before observations and a complicated equation determines how effective a chemistry, physical education or fifth-grade teacher is at his or her job. It's been five months since principals and administrators conducted the first teacher

observations using the new state-mandated evaluation system. This t...

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#### [New evaluations for teachers ready in Collier and Lee, but some say it's rushed](#)

(Naples Daily News © 12/26/2011)

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#### [Guest column: Roy Terry ... Sizing up where Collier schools go from here](#)

(Naples Daily News © 12/26/2011)

While we are celebrating the completion of one calendar year and the dawning of a new one, my "year" as School Board chair began on Nov. 22. During the better part of 2011, a.  
[inline\\_topic: hover { background-color: #EAEAEA; }](#) Julie Sprague served as chair and she served us well. Julie guided us through the superintendent search which is still being lauded in the community for its openness and tr...

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#### [Despite a few glitches, Lee and Collier county leaders account for finances](#)

(Naples Daily News © 12/26/2011)

NAPLES \_ Lee County Commissioner a.  
[inline\\_topic: hover { background-color: #EAEAEA; }](#) Frank Mann knows a few things about financial disclosure for public officials like himself. After all, Mann was a state legislator when the laws requiring constitutional officers were put into effect. "At first, we heard it was an invasion of privacy, that we shouldn't make them make disclosures, that it woul...

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#### [Gym debate heads to the Legislature](#)

(Tampa Tribune © 12/26/2011)

TAMPA – A playground scuffle over physical education could reignite in Tallahassee next month. Public school districts and health advocates remain at odds over a 2008 requirement that students in grades 6, 7 and 8 attend gym class for 225 minutes a week, for at least one semester. The law aimed at combating childhood obesity has been criticized by school administrators weary of m...

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#### [Parents need to lead kids to healthy lifestyle](#)

(Tampa Tribune © 12/26/2011)

TAMPA – When 11-year-old Shania Lape sees an overweight classmate struggle to keep up, she's filled with sympathy. "They can't run as fast, they can't play the games at school because they're not healthy," said Shania, a fifth-grader at Kenly Elementary in Tampa. Worse yet, not being able to play with their classmates could lead to a lifetime on the sidelines for some kids. ...

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#### [35 Florida school districts face possible class size fines](#)

(Ft. Myers News-Press © 12/25/2011)

TALLAHASSEE (AP) ? Florida school districts could face fines as high as \$66 million for failing to comply with the class size amendment. Broward County Public Schools is facing the largest penalty, followed by Miami-Dade, which could have to pay about \$9 million. Duval and Pasco county school districts are facing fines of \$6.8 million and \$4 million, respectively. In all, 35 districts were found...

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### [Parents trying to bring charter schools to unincorporated Boynton Beach](#)

(Palm Beach Post © 12/25/2011)

Parents who are trying to bring their own charter middle school to the unincorporated Canyons area of western Boynton Beach are also trying to create a charter high school, saying the available option the district has given them is simply too far away. "There is the need for a high school at the very least," said attorney and Canyon Springs parent Eleni Pantaridis, who is leading the effort.

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### [Class matters, so let's just admit it](#)

(St. Petersburg Times © 12/25/2011)

DURHAM, N.C. No one seriously disputes the fact that students from disadvantaged households perform less well in school, on average, than their peers from more advantaged backgrounds. But rather than confront this fact of life head-on, our policymakers mistakenly continue to reason that, since they cannot change the backgrounds of students, they should focus on things they can control. No Child ...

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### [Obama missed chance to stand up for students](#)

(St. Petersburg Times © 12/25/2011)

When the Obama administration announced it was going to rein in for-profit colleges that exploit low-income students, consumer groups cheered and the industry jumped into action. The for-profit college industry spent \$16 million on a lobbying blitz, enlisting big Democratic names, to persuade the administration to water down its proposed regulations. In the end, the industry got what it paid for. ...

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### [Robert F. Sanchez: Unions find new use for Blaine Amendment's bigotry](#)

(Tallahassee Democrat © 12/25/2011)

You could blame Jim Crow for three provisions in the constitution that was Florida's charter of government from 1885 until 1968. Two of those three relics of post-Civil War bigotry are gone. One remains. Gone is Article XII, Section 12: "White and colored children shall not be taught in the same school, but impartial provision shall be made for both." Even before Florida's 1885 Constitution was ...

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### [Education will be a hot-button issue in Florida primary](#)

(Tallahassee Democrat © 12/25/2011)

No matter which presidential candidates survive the early eliminations in Iowa, New Hampshire and South Carolina next month, Florida Republicans will have an opportunity to register their feelings on federal education policy — and whether there should even be a national policy — next month. "School choice is the civil rights issue of this era," said Bob Sanchez, policy director of t...

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### [Editorial: The big gamble](#)

(Gainesville Sun © 12/24/2011)

The state Board of Education has approved new passing scores for standardized tests, raising the ante in its already high-stakes student assessments. So why are we not surprised that part of the resulting costs could be paid through increased lottery ticket sales? But the tests are not a game for the third-graders and high school students who have ...

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### [No grades yet for schools](#)

(Hernando Today © 12/24/2011)

BROOKSVILLE – While teens' high school grades from this past semester will likely be in before the end of winter break, it's anyone's guess when state grades for high schools will be released stemming from last year. Florida Department of Education officials said this week that it's unknown when the high school grades will be released. In recent years, the grades have been announ...

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#### [Pasco School District Faces Major Fines For Class Size Violations](#)

(Lakeland Ledger © 12/24/2011)

LAND O'LAKES | The Pasco County school district faces a \$4 million fine for failing to meet state class size requirements this fall. The fine would be the fourth-largest among all 35 districts that did not comply with the rules, behind only Broward, Miami-Dade and Duval counties. Florida education commissioner Gerard Robinson could reduce the amount if the district appeals and he finds th...

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#### [Lehigh teacher charged with selling cocaine](#)

(Lehigh Acres Citizen © 12/24/2011)

A Lehigh Acres Middle School teacher has been released on bond following his arrest Thursday when he was charged with selling and possessing cocaine. Carl Richardson of North Fort Myers who teaches mathematics at Lehigh Middle School, is accused of selling \$200 worth of crack cocaine to an informant during Sheriff's undercover operations near his apartment on April 22 and May 10, according to a...

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#### [Broward, Miami-Dade top state in violating class size statute](#)

(Miami Herald © 12/24/2011)

Broward County schools, a district beset by the loss of 1,100 teachers, faces the threat of a \$66 million fine from the state for having slightly more than half its core classes violating size requirements this fall. It is the largest fine imposed on any of the state's 67 school districts, according to figures released by the Florida Department of Education this week. Although the Miami-Dade ...

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#### [Schools getting less property insurance coverage](#)

(South Florida Sun-Sentinel © 12/24/2011)

Like many homeowners and businesses, the Palm Beach County School District is getting squeezed over property insurance. Faced with soaring premium costs for 2012, the School Board recently approved a plan to carry about half the coverage for all of its campuses and facilities. The district's nearly \$8 million premium this year provided \$100 million in coverage. For next year, the board will pay ...

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#### [Broward School District faces \\$66 million penalty for overloaded classes](#)

(South Florida Sun-Sentinel © 12/24/2011)

The Broward School District is the state's worst offender for class-size compliance and could face a whopping \$66.1 million penalty, state officials said Thursday. Half of Broward's classes were over the limits when the state counted students in October. In contrast, Palm Beach County, which was the state's worst offender last year, had every class in compliance and faces no penalty at all, accor...

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#### [35 Fla. districts face possible class size fines](#)

(St. Augustine Record © 12/24/2011)

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — Florida school districts could face fines as high as \$66 million for failing to comply with the class size amendment. Broward County Public Schools is facing the largest penalty, followed by Miami-Dade, which could have to pay about \$9 million. Duval and Pasco county school districts are facing fines of \$6.8 million and \$4 million, respectively. In all, 35 districts were foun...

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[Florida GOP sees school choice as big issue in 2012](#)

(Tallahassee Democrat © 12/24/2011)

No matter which presidential candidates survive the early eliminations in Iowa, New Hampshire and South Carolina next month, Florida Republicans will have an opportunity to register their feelings on federal education policy ? and whether there should even be a national policy ? next month. ?School choice is the civil rights issue of this era,? said Bob Sanchez, policy director of the conservativ...

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[Pasco school district faces \\$4 million fine](#)

(Tampa Bay Online © 12/24/2011)

LAND O' LAKES – The state Department of Education made official this week what Pasco County School District officials have anticipated was coming for two months. The school district faces a fine of more than \$4 million because of its failure to meet class-size restrictions. Pasco's fine is the fourth highest among 35 districts that didn't meet the requirements, according to ...

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[KIPP moves forward to open new schools in Duval County](#)

(Florida Times-Union © 12/23/2011)

KIPP Jacksonville officials are pushing forward with plans to open two new elementary charter schools next year. The decision was made after the charter group's students in KIPP Impact Middle School showed enough progress on a national test to make officials feel comfortable with expanding. KIPP is a national network of public college preparatory charter schools that targets underprivileged st...

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[State announces another delay in high school grades](#)

(Orlando Sentinel © 12/23/2011)

Florida high schools will not receive their A-to-F grades for 2011 until 2012, the state said Thursday. The high school grades are due out Jan. 4, according to a memo sent to superintendents Thursday from the Florida Department of Education. The late release of the grades, which many expected in early December, has frustrated school administrators in part because it has held up the award...

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[Construction done, Evans High readies for students' arrival](#)

(Orlando Sentinel © 12/23/2011)

The students at Evans High School will have computers in every classroom for the first time when their new school opens Jan. 3. And with lockers in the hallways — their old school had none — their backs will get a break as well. Even the band will get new uniforms for the first time since 1978. With the new equipment, technology and musical instruments that come with a school repl...

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[Graduation gender gap persists in Florida, but it's shrinking](#)

(St. Petersburg Times © 12/23/2011)

Shakespeare is one of the greatest writers ever, but De'Andre Leaks isn't a fan. Two years ago, the 16-year-old junior at Lakewood High School in St. Petersburg said he got so bored in English class — he singled out Romeo and Juliet — that he zoned out and flunked. De'Andre is back on track now. But only after facing a month in night school and the specter of dropping out. "It wa...

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[Bus service cut pushed back](#)

(St. Petersburg Times © 12/23/2011)

BROOKSVILLE — Hernando County day cares and preschools that enjoy school bus service right to their doors will have the luxury for at least a little longer. Hernando schools superintendent Bryan Blavatt plans to meet with day care center owners and directors next month to address questions about how the district notified them of the decision to cut the bus service as of the first of the y...

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[Pasco faces \\$4 million fine for not meeting class size mandate](#)

(St. Petersburg Times © 12/23/2011)

LAND O'LAKES — The Pasco County school district faces a \$4 million fine for failing to meet state class size requirements this fall. The fine would be the fourth-largest among all 35 districts that did not comply with the rules, behind only Broward, Miami-Dade and Duval counties. Florida education commissioner Gerard Robinson could reduce the amount if the district appeals and he finds that...

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[Teachers Hourly Compensation Doubles Up Private-Sector Average](#)

(Sunshine State News © 12/23/2011)

Credit: Dmitriy Shironosov - ShutterstockTwo surprising new reports show that hourly pay and benefits for public-school teachers are higher than the compensation received by other government employees or similarly qualified private-sector workers. Teachers enjoy greater average hourly compensation in wages and benefits than any other group of state and local government workers, according to the B...

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[Florida once had big ambitions, daring leaders](#)**Commentary**

(Tampa Tribune © 12/23/2011)

I was 8 years old when my family left the harsh weather and harsher economic climate of Youngstown, Ohio, to start life over in Miami. It was 1960, and our Chevy lacked air conditioning. My parents bought one of those \$10,000 homes that were going up all over north Dade County to accommodate a wave of refugees from dying factory towns. Mom took a job teaching speech and journalism at Dade County...

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Have a great week!

*Cheryl Etters*

Cheryl Etters

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Please note: Florida has a very broad public records law. Most written communications to or from state officials regarding state business are public records available to the public and media upon request. Your e-mail communications may be subject to public disclosure.