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VIRTUAL SCHOOL RECEIVES 'A' AGAIN!

For the second consecutive year the Florida Connections Academy has received an 'A' grade for their FCAT scores by the Florida Department of Education! The Coalition wants to congratulate the students, parents, and teachers for all of their hard work! Also, we are waiting for the final tabulation of Florida Virtual Academy's scores, but we are sure that they too will receive another 'A'!

questions about the new virtual education legislation that recently passed, we just wanted to stop and congratulate all of our virtual families and teachers on their excellent work!

For those of you that have been left without a virtual option this school year we recommend that you contact your local legislators and school boards explaining your situation, and ask that they make virtual education an option for all those that want it!

Contents

Virtual School Receives	1
President's Rally	1
Dates to Remember	1
Virtual Spotlight!	2
President's Rally Cont	2
Virtual Spotlight Cont	3
President Rally Cont	3

These grades are just another reflection of the excellent education that Florida's virtual schools offer, how hard the administration, teachers and students of these schools work, and why they deserve to be treated like any other public school!

To view the grades and scores of each individual school please click the following link, [Florida Department of Education](#).

While we are still working hard on getting answer to everyone's

Did You Know?

In anticipation of statehood, 56 commissioners elected from Florida's 20 counties gathered at Saint Joseph (Port St. Joe) to draft a constitution. The convention lasted from December 3, 1838, until January 11, 1839.

Dates to Remember!

- ◆ August 18, First Day of School
- ◆ September 1, Labor Day
- ◆ October 21, End of the First Quarter

President's Call to Action!

We live in the greatest country on the face of the planet. When it works, we have the best system of government known to man. Sometimes it doesn't work, but it can be fixed. We have that right to rally to fix anything and everything we disagree with. I only have to mention Prohibition and its repeal to prove my point. Oppressive knee jerk reaction legislation once proven to be wrong can be repealed and the situation corrected under our system of government.

I'm drawing this parallel to cause you to have heart and call you to action. As you know by now, the Florida State Legislature passed a bill substantially modifying our Virtual Schools. As you have found out we can't enroll siblings this year, and next year when virtual education reverts to local district control, there will be no room for kindergarten enrollees and any other regulations the districts want to set, onerous or otherwise.

Continued on Page 2!!!

Virtual Spotlight!

Check out this great article by Alexandra Kummernes from the Ponte Vedra newspaper, The Leader, on FLVA student Daniel Goldman!

Actor, 8, gets 'virtual' education

Sometimes Daniel Goldman has to go to school on Saturdays.

But the 8-year-old Ponte Vedra Beach actor doesn't mind.

He is able to balance a busy school schedule between trips to California — where he had a role on the television series “Dexter” — through a virtual school program.

Goldman is enrolled in Florida Virtual Academy, a K-12 public school program that provides flexibility for students whose aspiring careers often result in unconventional schedules.

“We get to travel or do whatever and it comes with us,” said his mother, Shannon Goldman. “[Regular] schools can't accommodate that, but this program can.”

President's Call to Action, Cont'd

For all this time, we became complacent since everything was going “OK” and we lost the sense of urgency to let our voices be heard about how important the program is to us and how we did not want it changed. Politicians respond to the loudest repetitive voices and as proof I call your attention to the first entry on the Florida Virtual School Families Blog. (<http://flvirtualfamilies.edublogs.org/>)

Politicians look for numbers, and volume. They look for a room full of people, not a space filled with empty chairs. They listen to the people vocalizing a cogent message with a strong voice and not backing down. They looked for us, and we weren't there. This year a politician said to me, “Obviously what we did is OK, because there's nobody really complaining.”

Let me direct you to another Coalition of Virtual School Families who faced not only this situation, but also a Court Case SHUTTING DOWN THE VIRTUAL SCHOOLS! Another attempt was made to cut funding, reduce enrollment, over regulate and still.

When Daniel, at the age of 3, announced that he wanted to be “in” the television, his family recognized his interest in acting.

By age 5, Daniel was enrolled in acting classes and was booked to do a pilot episode for Showtime's “Dexter.”

The show centers on a police forensics expert who kills those he believes have escaped justice. Daniel played “Cody” for 11 episodes.

“Dexter” is filmed in Los Angeles, requiring Daniel to be on location from May through October, according to Shannon, who did not want to enroll him in a California school.

That's when she discovered Florida Virtual Academy.

The program allows Shannon to act as Daniel's “learning coach” while providing step-by-step instruction on how to teach lessons. **Cont'd Page 3!**

Through a completely STATEWIDE, GRASS ROOTS effort with hundreds, even thousands of parents, the rulings against were overturned, and now the schools are back, politicians listening to the loudest voices, NOT the special interests. See examples of what I'm talking about at <http://www.wivirtualschoolfamilies.org/home/index.cfm?CFID=2472916> and read what they did...what WE need to do!

With 2000 families enrolled in K-8 virtual education, we need to have 2000 people enrolled in our coalition. With 4000 people on our waiting lists, we need to have 4000 more in our coalition. We need to watch and listen to the politicians that are running, For open positions in the state House and state Senate sending emails and letters to the candidates and telling them about the programs and its importance to us. **Cont'd on Page 3!!!**

Don't Forget!!!

To check out the Coalition's brand new blog! You can get the link to the blog on our homepage at www.flvirtualfamilies.org! The blog contains articles and comments on virtual education. Check it out and make sure to leave comments and become an active member in our blog community!

Virtual Spotlight Continued!

Daniel attended Ocean Palms Elementary for kindergarten and started FLVA in first grade. He has just completed the second grade.

"I think it's awesome," said Daniel, who enjoys talking to his teacher in conferences every two to three weeks.

Because the program allows students to progress at their own pace, Daniel, whose favorite subject is math, can advance to fourth grade math while staying in third grade science, Shannon said.

"This program is so flexible. They can really customize the program to your student's needs," Shannon said.

But attendance logs are mandatory, and students must complete 720 hours per year, which equates to a 180-day school schedule required in Florida.

The program, which also integrates social events once a month, is

considered a public school and all materials are provided at no cost, according to Shannon.

The flexible schedule has allowed Daniel to star in "A Christmas Carole" at Alhambra Dinner Theatre in Jacksonville. That runs 40 shows during December. He also has managed to guest star on other shows and perform in music videos and commercials.

He most recently had a guest role on "Moonlight" in which he played a kidnapped boy.

Daniel also received the 2006/07 Young Artist Award – similar to an Oscar for young stars – and starred in two independent films.

But acting may not be the final stop for Daniel, who said he may "take a break" down the road.

"When he's ready to quit, so are we," said his mom.



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Making virtual and
distance learning a
permanent and
strong part of the
public education
system in Florida

President's Call to Action, Cont'd

Send letters, send emails, join the coalition, Read the Blog and websites every week to watch for changes and calls to action, volunteer to be at events to show our strength.

Remember the repeal of Prohibition...the Government is OURS, not theirs, and IT DOES WORK!

Rob Spangler
President

Florida Coalition of Virtual School Families

If this program is important to you, you MUST talk about it, you must call about it, and you MUST help us this session as we try to make sure that our virtual schools are treated like every other public school. You must help us by talking about your stories, talking about how your children have grown and flourished.

If you know other virtual school families not enrolled in the coalition, encourage them to join. WE CAN DO THIS.

If WISCONSIN can do this, FLORIDA SURELY CAN. If you have any ideas, or questions, contact me directly at virtualeducation@tampabay.rr.com.

DID YOU ALSO KNOW?

The 1868 Constitution provided the Seminole Tribe was entitled to a member in the House and the Senate.

Check us out!
www.flvirtualfamilies.org