

## School and Community Leadership

-Madonna Wise

School and Community Leadership have been missions for Madonna Wise throughout a 36+ year career. She has served as a teacher, counselor, grant writer, assistant principal, principal, director and a high school virtual school principal as well as an elementary principal. Her work in the multi-agency realm has come from all of these roles which complement each other. Her skills are both hands-on and theoretical in nature. She has been a strong advocate for education in the community and a few examples of news coverage of these times are included. Please contact Madonna for further examples. Her expertise encompasses in-depth knowledge of curriculum, serving as a leader on some of the first curriculum mapping exercises; student services where she was one of the founders of one of the first school crisis teams in Pasco County and worked with the development of advisement services and social work. She was also educational programs for a variety of agencies such as the Juvenile Detention Center.



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## FCAT scores improve – a lot

In year two, test grades exceed expectations. Just four schools earn an F.

By STEPHEN HEGARTY

© St. Petersburg Times, published June 29, 2000

Florida need not worry next year about failing schools springing up across the state, or vouchers sucking dollars out of the public schools.

Instead, Gov. Jeb Bush is going to have to come up with a lot more money to reward schools for academic improvement.

In just the second year of assigning A through F grades to Florida's public schools, the number of failing schools declined from 78 last year to four this year, A-rated schools increased from 203 to 551, and advocates and critics alike are beyond surprised.

Half of Florida's elementary schools improved at least a grade. Thirty-eight schools, including nine in the Tampa Bay area, leapfrogged three grade levels to A. Two made the improbable jump from F to A.

"I knew we would improve, but I never expected this," said Loretta Jenkins, principal of Fessenden Elementary School in Ocala, one of the F-to-A schools. Jenkins put off retirement until she and her school could shed the failing label, and now she is the center of attention again as one of the state's academic stars.

Are Florida's public schools really that much better?

At a news conference Wednesday, Bush and Education Commissioner Tom Gallagher said yes. They applauded teachers and students and spoke of vindication for their much-maligned accountability system.

"The student performances reflected in these grades go beyond our highest expectations," Gallagher said. "Students, parents, educators and communities have responded to the challenge of accountability and made outstanding progress."

West Zephyrhills Elementary School principal Madonna Wise thinks she knows what worked -- and it wasn't Bush's plan.

Wise's school jumped from a C to an A in this, the first year it qualified for extra federal funding because the school has so many low-income children (63 percent qualify for the federal lunch program, an indicator of poverty.)

"That helped us lower class sizes," Wise said. "That makes such a big difference."

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## County schools show marked improvement

**Seventeen Pasco schools improved their grades, with five earning A's. Only two schools received D's, and there were no F's.**

By KENT FISCHER

© St. Petersburg Times, published June 29

Madonna Wise had spent the past several days wondering what she might say to teachers, parents and reporters about her school's test scores. The preliminary data looked gloomy, and Wise, principal of West Zephyrhills Elementary School, had steeled herself for a disappointing state evaluation.

It never came. Instead, a phone call from her boss at the Pasco County School District's central office brought some incredible news: West Zephyrhills had earned an "A" grade from the state, the highest accolade under Florida's new system of grading schools by their test scores.

"I'm just really delighted for our teachers and our children," Wise said. "We were fairly confident that we wouldn't be a "D" school; however, we were shocked at the "A." We didn't expect it."

There was similar unexpected good news across Pasco County on Wednesday as the state Department of Education released its second annual batch of school grades.


Five Pasco schools posted A's and another nine earned B's, only six reached those levels last year. Two schools received D's, down from five schools a year ago. No school earned an F.

Schools that improved at least one letter grade are eligible for a cash reward from the state of \$100 per student. Three of the district's A-rated schools are also Title I schools, meaning they serve so many poor students that their schools qualify for additional federal money aimed at boosting the achievement of poor children.

Principals at the three schools said the roughly \$200,000 they received in Title I money was instrumental in helping them earn their A's. The schools used the money to hire more teachers to lower class sizes, improve reading instruction and to buy more computers, among other things.

"The money certainly gave us the resources to implement our improvement plan," said B.J. Smith, principal of Anclote Elementary, which improved from a C to an A this year. "Those resources make a difference."

In addition to meeting the state's test score requirements, A-rated schools also must have attendance rates that are better than the state average. The attendance data used in this year's analysis is from the 1998-99 school year, the most recent available to the state Department of Education.


**ROTARY CLUB OF ZEPHYRHILLS DAYBREAK** District 6950

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## President

### Madonna Wise

Greetings from the Daybreak Rotary of Zephyrhills Past President of 2004-2005 and now Vice President and District Assistant Governor. Please email me at [mwise@daybreak.com](mailto:mwise@daybreak.com) if you would like to visit our warm and wonderful club or present to us about a community issue!

I am a retired school principal, having devoted 31 years to education as a teacher, counselor and school administrator. Along the way, I have been a Licensed Mental Health Counselor and I currently consult and do grant writing for a variety of agencies throughout the state. Community involvement and the synergy of community organizations working for a joint cause is what brought me to Rotary about seven years ago. I am so impressed with the International Foundation of Rotary which has virtually eradicated polio from the world. The organization is truly one of the most helpful and aware of those which exist.

On a local level, our Daybreak Rotary Club is doing the following type of projects:

- Sponsoring/ Helping a Haiti Simonette Orphanage project with basic necessities and tuition for 70 children to attend school.
- Funding the wonderful Camp Rotary: \$600.
- Providing Scholarships for local students from Zephyrhills High School and attending Pasco Hernando Community College and St Leo College.
- Collecting items and providing donations to the Zephyrhills Neighborhood Care Center to assist families and women in need.
- Donating to the Zephyrhills Senior Center/CARES.
- Providing five year funding for a project from the City of Zephyrhills to build an Interactive Water Fountain Project at Zephyr Park.
- Sponsoring the Annual Zephyrhills High School Academic Banquet for high achieving high school students who receive an academic letter for their efforts.
- Other miscellaneous (Alzheimer's, Stewart Middle School Nurses Fund for needy children in Zephyrhills area, East Pasco Medical Center, Mexico (Progreso) Iglesia Nacional Presbiterian, ZHS Model United Nations Team, ZHS Project Graduation, American Cancer Society Relay for Life, Area Teacher of the Year/Pasco County Schools, Donations to the Zephyrhills Police Department for the 2004 School Supplies for needy Zephyrhills area school children)

Our Daybreak Rotary Club of 40 members is a dynamic and caring group. We welcome visitors and are always eager to increase our membership. Please contact me if I can provide information or assist you in any way. Recently I was inducted as President of the Club in July 2004, and I was able to read one of my favorite stories which I hope will exemplify the work we do for 2004-2005 as a cohesive team/club:

*"Lessons from the Geese" (Author Unknown)*

*This is a powerful illustration from nature of the principles of effective teamwork. Our Daybreak Rotary Club of Zephyrhills has phenomenal team work! As you read about the natural unity that exists among this species remember- this same unity exists in Rotary!*

*"As geese flap their wings, they create uplift for the bird following. By flying in a V formation, the whole flock adds 7-15% greater flying range than if any bird were to fly along. Similarly, as we share a common direction and a sense of community in Rotary, we can get where we're going more quickly and easily because we are traveling on the thrust of one another.*


*Whenever a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to fly alone, and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front. If we have as much sense as geese, we will stay in formation with those who are headed where we want to go, and we will be willing to accept their help as well as give ours to others.*

*When the lead goose gets tired, it rotates back into formation and another goose flies at the point position. Similarly, in Rotary, we take turns doing the difficult tasks and sharing leadership as with the geese, we become dependent upon each other.*

*The geese in formation honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up the speed. In Rotary, through our fun rituals, the "honk," we make sure it is encouraging.*

*When a goose gets sick or wounded or is shot down, two geese drop out of formation and follow it down to help and protect it. They stay with it until it is able to fly again or dies. They then launch out on their own, with another formation or catch up with the flock. In Rotary, we too stand by each other in difficult times, as we well as when we are strong. Let us all try to fly in formation and remember to drop back to help those who might need it!"*

*The greatest accomplishments in life are not achieved by individuals alone, but by proactive people pulling together for the common good. This is our Rotary Club.*



**Madonna has been involved with local government and service organizations since day one as an educator. Her work in Rotary on the local and district level brought many resources. She continues to be an active member of the reading initiative for Pasco, Hernando and Hillsborough Counties with Rotary... Madonna has been involved with local government and service organizations since day one as an educator. Her work in Rotary on the local and district level brought many resources. She continues to be an active member of the reading initiative for Pasco, Hernando and Hillsborough Counties with Rotary...**

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# New School Can Create Anxiety for Students

By STACY JONES  
THE LEDGER

Published: Thursday, July 31, 2008 at 12:01 a.m.

Moving on and moving up in school can be stressful for students.

Mixing with new students, having to change classes or buildings, new teachers with different teaching styles, staying organized and memorizing locker combinations, are all sources of anxiety.

As students move onto bigger campuses, parents can ease the transition by keeping communication channels open, said **Madonna Wise**, district guidance specialist for elementary guidance counselors. She compares monitoring children's progress with baking a cake. "When you bake a cake, it may look like it's done, but you have to put a toothpick in to make sure it's done," **Wise** said. Although children may look and act like they have finally reached adulthood, she said, parents still need to keep lines of communication open.

**FIRST DAY TIPS**  
Keeping tabs on kids, lunches, bus routes and school schedules can be quite a task, especially on the first day of school, which is Monday, Aug. 18. Here are some tips to help ease the tension.

-  **Don't forget the lunch money.**
-  **Make sure** students know their bus stop, bus number and bus schedule. Make sure details for the ride home are clear as well.  
For information call:  
Auburndale, Polk City, Lake Alfred: 534-7343;  
South Lakeland: 534-7308  
North Lakeland: 534-7301  
Winter Haven: 534-7307  
Lake Wales, Frostproof: 534-7304; Haines City: 534-9246; Fort Meade, Bartow, Mulberry: 534-9248; Specialized Services (West) 534-7305, (East) 534-7306.
-  **Make sure** your child knows how to contact you in case there is an emergency.
-  **Students who** are riding their bicycles to school should know the safest route between home and school.
-  **Buy school supplies** according to the list your school provides.
-  **Middle and high school** students should allow extra time to find their homeroom.
-  **Check with your** child's school for exact dismissal times. Often, bus riders are dismissed a few minutes before car riders and walkers.
-  **Relax, enjoy** the day. And don't forget to take a picture.

For more information call your school (listed in the white pages) or visit these Web sites:  
[www.pcsb.k12.fl.us](http://www.pcsb.k12.fl.us)  
[www.theledger.com/backtoschool](http://www.theledger.com/backtoschool)

-  **Get to bed** early.
-  **Parents and students** who are driving to school should allow at least 15 minutes extra. Drop-off lines are usually longer during the first couple weeks of school and so are good-byes.
-  **Eat a good** breakfast.

THE LEDGER

"We're not done developing as human beings until we're 21," **Wise** said, "so keep the parenting active."

Active parenting, **Wise** said, includes ensuring children arrive to school on time, follow the dress code and call to ask any questions about their schedule they may have. Parents should also be on the lookout for students who seem inclined to avoid school, she said, because it often indicates the child is having problems adjusting to their new school or grade.

Kay Noble, district guidance specialist for secondary, said parents can help ease their students' nerves by talking with them about their interests, goals and aspirations, study habits and time management.

"Parents of middle and high school students are encouraged to become very familiar with FACTS.org," she said. The Web site is a free resource for Floridians that offers guidance beginning with middle school and continuing through applying for and attending college.

To help provide guidance, all of the county's high schools either have or are working on providing a transition program for incoming students, such as ninth grade academies.

"We're trying to build in support systems and have teachers really keenly aware of what's going on with students," **Wise** said.

She said the programs also provide mentoring, either from upperclassmen or faculty. As students adapt to their new campus, parents should encourage them to try new things through clubs, ask for help when they feel unsure, and keep a sense of humor in the face of growing pains, **Wise** said.

Parents themselves, she said, should consider volunteering or joining the school advisory committee for high schoolers, and the PTA or PTO for elementary schoolers. Through all of it, **Wise** said, parents and students alike should remember that every school has its own identity and culture. For students, she said, "the biggest transition is going to be forging a new identity."

Presented To

*Madonna Wise*

Thank You For All Your Efforts  
Your Presence Has Made Such A Difference  
In The Lives Of Our Children-

Good Luck

From Woodland PTA 1997



*In Appreciation To*

**Mrs. Madonna Wise**

*For your unparalleled  
leadership and dedication  
to the  
Class of 2007*

*At the helm of every great ship is a wheel to guide the vessel  
in the right direction. In order to keep the craft on-course,  
someone must be there to take hold of the wheel at all times.  
Crew members will take turns, each one playing an important  
role in making sure the ship is always moving forward.  
When it was your shift at the wheel, your mighty dedication  
helped us reach our destination with great success.*



May 20, 2007



The Dreadnaught Battalion  
Expresses a Deep Appreciation To  
*Madonna Wise*  
For your continued support and loyalty to all the cadets of  
Lakeland High School J.R.O.T.C.  
"A True Ally"  
*April 20th, 2007*