Dear Parent/Guardian,

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that students will be taking the FCAT 2.0 Reading, Math, and Science tests starting April 14, 2014. These assessments are criterion-referenced tests that measure student achievement of the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards.

If you or your child would like to gain familiarity with the item types and response formats your child will see on the test, sample test questions and answer keys are available at http://fcat.fldoe.org/fcat2/.

On the day of the test, just prior to beginning the test, your child will be read the following rules found in the test administration scripts provided by the Florida Department of Education:

“During the test, you must not

- talk to other students or make any disturbance
- look at another student’s test and answer book [computer screen (or worksheet) for CBT]
- allow another student to look at your test and answer book [computer screen (or worksheet) for CBT]
- ask for help answering any test questions
- give help to another student in answering test questions
- have notes or scratch paper (other than your worksheet)
- have any electronic or recording devices in your possession at any time, including breaks, even if you do not use them
- fail to follow any other instructions given”

The Florida Department of Education requires FCAT 2.0 tests include a Testing Rules Acknowledgment. Students must acknowledge that they understand the testing rules by signing their names below the statement. Students refusing to sign the Testing Rules Acknowledgement will still be required to test; however, this may result in them being tested on a make-up day. Students are still subject to the rules outlined in the script. The Florida Department of Education has a clear policy about Discussing Test Content after Testing. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the validity of the test items that are used for state assessments. Many items are used repeatedly over the course of several years.

While you may be very interested in how your child did on the FCAT, per The Florida Department of Education policy, they are not permitted to discuss item prompts or their answers to those prompts. We encourage you to ask how they feel they did on the assessment, whether they thought it was hard, easy, etc., but asking them to disclose what the test and questions asked or their responses is a violation of the state policy and could result in your child’s test being invalidated.
The Florida Department of Education provides school districts with parent letters that outline testing rules and policies. Your child’s school will send these letters home with students prior to testing. Please look for these letters as they provide information about the policies detailed above as well as other policies including the use of electronic devices, test invalidation, and leaving campus during testing. Should you have further questions about any of these policies please do not hesitate to contact your child’s school, the Office for Accountability, Research, & Measurement at the District office, or the Office for Assessment at the Florida Department of Education (contact numbers have been provided below).

Thank you,

Mark Butler - District Assessment Coordinator
District School Board of Pasco County
Office for Accountability, Research & Measurement
727-774-2343

Vince Verges – Director of Assessment
Florida Department of Education
Office of Assessment
850-245-0513

XC: Kurt Browning, Superintendent
Amelia Van Name Larson, Assistant Superintendent for Student Achievement
Beth Brown, Learning Community Executive Director
Todd Cluff, Learning Community Executive Director
Monica Ilse, Ed.D., Learning Community Executive Director
David Scanga, Ed.D., Learning Community Executive Director
Ray Gadd, Assistant Superintendent for Administration and Operations
Ray Bonti, Executive Director for Support Services
Kevin Shibley, Esq., Executive Director for Administration
Kara Smucker, Principal Coach of Professional Development and School Supports
Marsha Van Hook, Principal Coach of Professional Development and School Supports
Rob Aguis, Director of Career and Technical Education
Christopher Christoff, Director of Professional Development and School Supports
Linda Cobbe, Director of Communications and Government Relations
Vanessa Hilton, Director of Teaching and Learning
Peggy Jones, Ph.D., Director of Accountability, Research and Measurement
Angela Porterfield, Director of Early Childhood Programs