



Polk County Public Schools

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Sales Tax Oversight Committee Meeting

November 9, 2009 - Bartow, FL

The public is invited to a Tuesday, December 1 sales tax oversight committee meeting held at the school district administrative office, 1915 South Floral Avenue, Bartow. The meeting begins at 5:30 p.m. in the facilities conference room. The sales tax oversight committee, composed of community members, was formed by the school district after voters approved a 2003 referendum authorizing an additional 1/2-cent sales tax for school construction. Contact Larry Helton, school district director of planning and concurrency, at (863) 519-7562 for further information on the meeting or the sales tax oversight committee.

Polk Staff Member Honored For Assisting Farmworkers

Nilda Soto, a Winter Haven resident and a 19-year employee with the Polk Public Schools, received the highest honor from a national farmworker organization in October at the organization's conference in Arizona. Nilda was announced as the recipient of the Association of Farmworker Opportunity Program's (AFOP) Excellence Award during AFOP's national conference in Carefree, Arizona. The Excellence Award is given to one frontline staff member among 52 farmworker programs nationwide. [Click here](#) to read more about Nilda and her award.

28 Students Achieve FCAT Perfection

Twenty-eight students achieving perfection on the reading and math portions of the 2008-2009 FCAT tests will be among those honored at a school district special event on November 10. More than 55,000 Polk students in grades three through ten took the tests. These students with 500 on both the reading and math portions represent approximately .0005 percent of the total number taking the tests. Gary Wang, a sixth grader at Winter Haven's Jewett Middle Academy in 2009, has attained perfect reading and math scores in three out of the last four years. [Click here](#) to see the list of students and their schools.

Polk Culinary Arts Programs Honored By Professional Organization

The Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association (FRLA) and the local chapter of the FRLA have honored Polk culinary arts teachers and students. George Jenkins' teacher Brenda Doss won the equivalent of the FRLA's state Teacher of Year award. Students Taylor Behnke (Lakeland's Kathleen High) and Kelsey Pennington (Eagle Lake's Lake Region High) were both awarded \$2,000 scholarships through the FRLA. Teachers Karen Kilday (Kathleen High), Kimberly Martinez (Lakeland High), Ann Redd (Lake Region High) and Rebecca Rhodes (Haines City High) each received mini-grants from the Polk chapter of the FRLA to enhance resources in their culinary classrooms.

Links and Information

- » [Polk County Public Schools Homepage](#)
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Polk Well-Represented In State English Awards

Fifteen students statewide won awards in a Florida Council of Teachers of English (FCTE) writing contest and four were from Polk: Dorothy Kleissler (Bartow International Baccalaureate), Billy Maise (Winter Haven High), Bianca Mulaney (Bartow International Baccalaureate) and Benjamin Vickers (Lakeland's Harrison School of the Arts). At the state FCTE conference held in October, Lakeland High teacher Chad Garcia won the state's Beginning Teacher of the Year Award and Tenoroc teacher Diane Bondurant received an FCTE Honor Award as a long-standing FCTE member advancing the teaching of language arts.

Public Invited To All-County Chorus

The public is invited to the All-County Chorus performance on Tuesday, November 17, 7:30 p.m. at Florida Southern College's Branscomb Auditorium, 111 Lake Hollingsworth Drive, Lakeland. There is no charge to attend. More than 300 middle and high school students will perform. Arrangements to be sung include "J'entends Le Moulin" by Emily Crocker, "American Folk Rhapsody" by Linda Spevacek and "Bloom" by Philip Silvey. Conductors will be Tucker Biddlecombe of Tallahassee's Lawton Chiles High, Karen Buie of Lakeland's Southwest Middle and Todd Peterson of Naples' Barron Collier High.

Produced by the Department of Community Relations, Polk County Public Schools

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