

# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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K-12: 2005-54

May 9, 2005

## MEMORANDUM

TO: District School Superintendents

FROM: Jim Warford, K-12 Chancellor

SUBJECT: College Goal Sunday

As part of the Department's goal to improve student access to higher education, this memorandum is to inform and update you on the development of the College Goal Sunday (CGS) program as Florida prepares to host this event in February 2006. Guidance counselors from local school districts are partnering with community college and university representatives to implement the CGS program in an effort to increase access to quality postsecondary education options for students from low-income, first-generation, and families who have no college-going tradition. Increased financial aid for college will serve to improve the quality of education options for district graduates as they transition from high school to the postsecondary arena.

The College Goal Sunday program is a volunteer, charitable program designed to help targeted families and first-generation college students complete the federal *Free Application for Federal Student Aid*, or FAFSA. Plans are being made to host the CGS event at various sites throughout the state, free of charge to families. With the assistance of guidance counselors and financial aid professionals, College Goal Sunday will provide families with step-by-step instructions on completing and submitting their financial aid forms.

JIM WARFORD

K-12 CHANCELLOR

District School Superintendents

May 9, 2005

Page Two

The CGS steering committee reviewed free and reduced lunch data to identify the high schools in Florida that potentially have the greatest number of students that fit the description of those for whom the CGS program was devised. Twelve high schools were selected based on these criteria and are representatives of the five school district service areas. Plans are being made to host events in the areas noted on the attached form in February 2006. Additional CGS sites will be launched in subsequent years.

The steering committee has hired a public relations firm and is preparing a statewide media blitz to “get the word out” about the upcoming February 2006 event. As schools close for the summer and reconvene in the fall, further information will be disseminated to the districts and local high school guidance counselors. If you would like additional information and details about the College Goal Sunday program, visit the national website at [www.CollegeGoalSundayUSA.org](http://www.CollegeGoalSundayUSA.org) or contact Dr. Beverly Sermons by calling (850) 245-9488 or email [beverly.sermons@fldoe.org](mailto:beverly.sermons@fldoe.org). A list of the statewide steering committee members is also provided for your reference.

JW/bs