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John L. Winn
Commissioner of Education

Just Read, Florida!

August 29, 2005

Dear Principal:

Governor Jeb Bush has declared Monday, September 26, 2005, as *Family Day – A Day to Eat Dinner with Your Children*. Family Day provides an opportunity to draw attention to the importance of parents and children spending quality time together. Studies have shown that spending time together at family dinners can greatly affect a child's decisions. For example, children who regularly have dinner with their families are less likely to try drugs, drink, or get into trouble.

As Commissioner of Education and Director of the Florida Office of Drug Control, we are asking for your help. We need you to disseminate the information on Family Day to the educators and instructional aides of your students. This event is aimed at promoting the value of family interaction as a means of preventing and reducing substance abuse among young people.

We are asking that you recognize the importance of this day by not scheduling any extracurricular activities or events that evening that may preclude students and their families from taking part in this important initiative. It would also be helpful if you could assist in getting the word out about Family Day by encouraging involvement at your school via school calendars, websites, newsletters, marquees, and/or other creative ways.

The well-being of our children and families is critical to the vitality and welfare of our communities. It is incumbent upon us as leaders and role models to promote such worthy efforts. While having dinner with your family one day a year may not change a child forever, it certainly is a start. By promoting Family Day, you are helping to raise awareness of the impact this can have on a child's life. We hope that you will also participate in Family Day by making it a priority to have dinner with your family.

Supporting material about Family Day and the important role it can play in the lives of Florida families can be found on the Family Day website at www.floridafamilyday.com. Please review this information to learn more about Family Day and how parents can get involved. Feel free to contact Brooks Rumenik, Program Specialist with the Department of Education's Office of Safe and Healthy Schools, at 850-245-0749 for additional information. Thank you.

Sincerely,

John L. Winn
Commissioner of Education

Jim McDonough, Director
Florida Office of Drug Control

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