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MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 31, 2020
TO: School District Superintendents
FROM: Jacob Oliva

Contact Information:

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DPS: 2020-17

SUBJECT: Proposed Benchmarks for Excellent Student Thinking (B.E.S.T.) Standards

One year ago today, Governor DeSantis issued Executive Order 19-32 to eliminate Common Core, develop a roadmap to have the #1 standards in the nation, increase curricular quality, streamline testing, raise the bar for civic literacy and become the most literate state in the nation.

On January 24, 2020, Governor DeSantis announced that he approved the roadmap to adopt the B.E.S.T. Standards in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics for grades K-12, which are posted along with summary documents at www.fldoe.org/standardsreview. The State Board of Education will take action to adopt the proposed standards on February 12, 2020, at their meeting in Tallahassee.

Over the past year, the department collaborated with colleagues and the public across Florida to develop these standards. Florida teacher experts participated in 154 virtual and 11 face-to-face meetings. National content experts and more than 80 Florida-based education stakeholder groups provided input. Nine Florida Standards Listening Tour stops were held around the state last October to collect public comments, and over 100,000 reviews were made online by the public on drafts of new standards.

Through these immense and important efforts, you will find that the B.E.S.T. Standards:

- Were created by Florida experts and eliminate Common Core;
- Are content-rich and developmentally appropriate;
- Go back-to-basics, building a foundation in the early grades;
- Are understandable, concise and set clear expectations for students, teachers and parents;
- Imbed Civics throughout K-12 and include the only Civics reading list for ELA in the nation;
- Include the only comprehensive K-12 reading list in the nation;
- Offer flexibility for teachers with a focus on great content; and
- Include clear expectations for progression year-to-year through great course alignment.

Once adopted, teacher professional development will begin, a new instructional materials adoption process will be conducted and new test development activities will commence. By 2022-2023, all new standards will be taught, classroom materials will be aligned and new statewide assessments will measure a baseline of their impact.

We appreciate all of the contributions of school district staff and teachers to bring you the B.E.S.T. Standards, and we look forward to working with you on successful implementation.

JACOB OLIVA
CHANCELLOR OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS