



**RICK SCOTT**  
GOVERNOR

November 5, 2013

Dear Parent:

November is Florida Parental Involvement in Education Month, and I want to share information with you about important changes to Florida's laws that empower you, as a parent, to play a greater role in your child's education, especially if your child receives Exceptional Student Education (ESE) services.

As a father and a grandfather, I know the positive impact of parents taking part in their children's education. That is why I signed Senate Bill 1108, which went into effect July 1, 2013. I am pleased that it will improve education for Florida students, especially those with exceptional needs.

Senate Bill 1108 strengthens the rights of students with disabilities and their parents. The core of the legislation empowers parents in the individualized educational plan (IEP) process. Some of the measures established by the legislation are described below:

- The law expands a parent's right to bring an adult of your choice to meetings with school officials about your child. You will be asked to sign a form indicating whether anyone with the school or district hindered this right.
- You now have more input regarding your child's placement in classes known as "access courses" that do not count toward a regular diploma. You also have more input into whether your child is enrolled in an ESE center school (also called "a separate day school"). Prior to either change, you must sign a consent form.
- If you have hired a certified professional (such as a behavior analyst, occupational therapist, or clinical social worker), you can now include that professional in your student's education. The law removes barriers to allow this collaboration at a time and location agreed upon by both the parents and the school.
- For children in very special circumstances or with physical conditions that cannot be accommodated for participation in statewide testing, the IEP team may request an extraordinary exemption from specified tests, such as standardized assessments and end of course exams. The exemption process takes time, so I encourage you to learn more and discuss this option with your child's IEP team.

These items are just a brief summary of how Senate Bill 1108 empowers you to be a part of your child's education. I encourage you to visit the Florida Department of Education's website and visit the Online Parent Community at [www.fldoe.org/family](http://www.fldoe.org/family) to learn more.

Thank you for taking an active role in your child's education. Together, we can ensure that Florida schools prepare all students for the career or college of their dreams.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Scott".

Rick Scott  
Governor

THE CAPITOL