

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ANNOUNCES FINALISTS FOR PRINCIPAL  
AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR AWARDS**

*~ Winners to be selected at Principal Summit in 2011 ~*

**TALLAHASSEE** – Education Commissioner Dr. Eric J. Smith today announced the six finalists for the Principal Achievement Award for Outstanding Leadership and the Outstanding Assistant Principal Achievement Award presented by the Florida Department of Education (DOE). The awards recognize principals and assistant principals who have enhanced student achievement and fostered partnerships through community outreach and family involvement.

"We are excited to honor these outstanding school administrators and recognize them for their dedication to Florida students," said Commissioner Smith. "These leaders are playing a major role in boosting achievement in the classroom and accelerating learning gains for all Florida students."

The finalists are:

**James Griffin**, Principal, Rock Island Elementary School, Broward County, (currently at Lauderhill Lakes Middle School)

**Stephen Shell**, Principal, Hobbs Middle School, Santa Rosa County, (currently at Pace High School)

**Michelle Morrison**, Principal, Winter Springs Elementary School, Seminole County

**Claudia Shirley**, Assistant Principal, West Shore Junior/Senior High School, Brevard County

**Matthew Phillips**, Assistant Principal, Neptune Elementary School, Osceola County (currently at Cypress Elementary School)

**Emily Harrison**, Assistant Principal, Fruit Cove Middle School, St. Johns County

The Principal Achievement Award for Outstanding Leadership was established in 1988 and the Outstanding Assistant Principal Achievement Award was established in 1997. The awards recognize exemplary education leaders for their contributions to their schools and communities. The program honors principals and assistant principals that have spearheaded initiatives to increase student performance, promote safe learning environments and establish partnerships with parents and community members.

The Commissioner's Summit for Principals is sponsored by the Florida Education Foundation, a not-for-profit charitable corporation established to support K-12 public

schools. The Foundation has identified leadership development as one of its top priorities and supports educational reform initiatives that lead to higher student achievement.

For more information about Department of Education recognition programs, please visit:  
[http://www.fldoe.org/profdev/rec\\_prog.asp](http://www.fldoe.org/profdev/rec_prog.asp)

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