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COMMISSIONER ROBINSON ANNOUNCES FLORIDA'S 2011 DISTRICT DATA LEADER

~ Hillsborough County Superintendent honored for creative approaches to using data to increase student achievement ~

TALLAHASSEE – Florida Education Commissioner Gerard Robinson today named Hillsborough County Public Schools Superintendent MaryEllen Elia as Florida's 2011 District Data Leader of the Year (DDL) during a special awards ceremony in the state's capital. The DDL award recognizes school leaders who support and encourage the use of data among their staff to change classroom culture, and identifies districts that communicate the relevance of student data to teachers, administrators, parents and other education stakeholders.

“Data enable us to make informed instructional and academic decisions that lead to increased student achievement,” said Commissioner Robinson. “I commend Superintendent Elia for the outstanding job she has done in making data usage a priority in her district and using it to enhance the educational experience for all of the students and teachers under her care.”

Superintendent Elia was selected from among five finalists based on her leadership in gathering stakeholder input to create customized school- and district-level performance scorecards, as well as building a comprehensive, secure, user-friendly dashboard that combines a variety of data for her district.

Leading Hillsborough County Public Schools since 2005, Superintendent Elia was instrumental in earning the district's \$100 million Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation grant in 2009 to raise student achievement by promoting effective teaching. Since then, the district successfully negotiated a new teacher evaluation system that uses data to gauge the effectiveness of teachers.

Established last year by the Department of Education's Division of Accountability, Research and Measurement, the DDL award program recognizes school district leaders for their critical role in supporting and encouraging the use of data, and in communicating data's significance to all education stakeholders.

For more information about the Florida District Data Leader Award, visit <http://www.fldoe.org/districtdataleader>.

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