

# Trailblazer Times



November/December 2010 Vol. VIII

## BVS wins iNACOL award!

*Christopher McGuire, Principal*



Well, the first quarter is now behind us and I'm happy to report that we're having an excellent year so far. I'm really proud of all of our

students for keeping up with their pace charts this semester. From grades Kindergarten to 12, our students are working harder than ever before. Many thanks to our teachers for doing such a great job facilitating the learning process for our students. They are simply the best in the business! I also want to thank our students' parents for their invaluable support. As I always say, virtual education offers the best way for parents to be involved in their child's education. BVS would not be nearly as successful without parents fulfilling their role as stakeholders. It was a pleasure to see so many families at the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Meet and Greet in October. We held the event at our new campus, *the BVS Annex*, in Cooper City. I'm happy to report that the evening was a tremendous success with over 150 people in attendance. Many thanks to all the families who were in attendance!

On the evening of the Meet and Greet, the faculty elected Ms. Delores Sallette as BVS Teacher of the Year. Congratulations, Ms. Sallette for a well-deserved honor! BVS is fortunate to have Ms. Sallette on our team. In addition to her remarkable teaching talents and experience, Ms. Sallette has served as the BVS School Advisory Chairperson for the past four years. She is truly dedicated to her profession, students, and school. Thank you, Ms. Sallette!

*Exciting news!* On November 14, BVS was honored by the International Association for Online Learning (iNACOL) for outstanding and innovative online learning practice for our high school reading course. iNACOL is the premiere professional association dedicated to research and the enhancement of online learning internationally. Two years ago, we put forth the idea to give high school students around Broward County the ability to take a state-mandated reading course online so they could take an elective or an AP course face-to-face at school. Our own talented English and Reading teacher, Ms. Dawn Cardenas, authored the course and worked with a team of curriculum and technical experts to create the course. The course was implemented in our district high schools in 2009-10 under the facilitation of Ms. Penny Nurnberg, an outstanding Reading Coach from the district's Core Curriculum Department. As a result of the tremendous student success we experienced last school year, I'm ecstatic to be recognized internationally for our efforts to expand online learning in Broward County. I am so proud of Ms. Cardenas, Ms. Nurnberg, the students, and all the Reading Coaches from around the district who made this course such a success. This is the third consecutive year that BVS has been recognized for excellence!

Finally, I'd like to take this opportunity to recognize one of our student leaders, Emily Jenness. Emily is a BVS 8<sup>th</sup> grader who proposed the idea to have a school wide food drive to assist families in need across Broward. Emily coordinated the *BVS Harvest Drive*, a district wide effort that was taking place in all South Area schools.

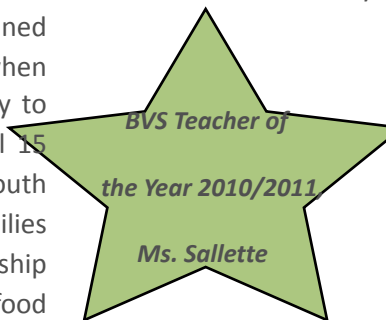
**Continued on page 2...**

**iNACOL award continued...**

Back in October, students were asked to drop off canned goods and non-perishable food items at BECON when they came for School Days activities. I'm very happy to report that our students brought enough food to fill 15 boxes! The food was delivered on November 10 to South Broward High School and will be distributed to families before Thanksgiving. Kudos to Emily for her leadership efforts and to all students and parents who sent in food for the cause. I am so impressed!

On behalf of the entire BVS team, I wish everyone a happy and healthy holiday season. I hope everyone spends

quality time with friends and family as 2010 winds down. I am so thankful to be your Principal.



**Visit Our E-Store**

*Charles Grimes, BVS Teacher*

Have you visited our E-Store lately? If you haven't you're missing out on many new items. We have our new BVS Spirit Shirts on sale now. Also, our Senior T-Shirts are available. The Senior

All tickets for events such as GradBash, Prom, and the Student Teacher Talent Show can be purchased in the E-Store as well.

Seniors can pay for transcripts in the E-Store. Remember that transcripts are required by all universities and colleges. Order now before the spring rush, as seniors are required to send a final transcript to their university before enrolling in either the summer or fall semester

To visit the E-Store go to the BVS website at <http://www.bved.net>. Click on the Welcome Page and there you will find a link to the E-Store. The E-Store accepts both credit and debit cards. Have a great time shopping and remember our T-shirts, coffee, and activity tickets make great gifts for the holidays, plus benefits our students.



Class of 2011 is selling Jungle Bean Coffee for \$14.00 a pound to raise money for the Prom. The gourmet coffee will be on sale until December 7. Add a cup to the pound of coffee and you have a great holiday gift, plus helping our students have events like other county schools.



**Order Now While Supplies Last**



**Do you love coffee? Do you know anyone that would love some for the holidays? If so, we are the perfect spot for YOU!**

**Jungle Bean Coffee is willing to donate 7 out of 14 dollars to the BVS Seniors!**

**If you are interested, you may visit [www.junglebeanscoffee.com](http://www.junglebeanscoffee.com)**

**to redeem your coffee. When doing so, plug in the promo code: BVS1 (BVS1) to send your donation to us!**

\*These cost will help relieve the costs of PROM! Thank You! \*Candace Almy (PR)

**Guidance Corner**



*Tanya Mistretta, Middle School Guidance Counselor*

**Benchmark Testing:**

Broward County Public Schools is conducting the District Benchmark Assessment Test and requires that all 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> grade full-time students be present to take this test and complete all sessions. It is designed to mirror the Sunshine State Standards appropriate to each grade level. **Students may not opt out of participation.**

All students must have picture identification to be tested (school ID, driver license or permit, current passport, or Florida ID).

\*Please also bring a sweater.

Testing Address: Broward Virtual School Annex  
5400 SW 90 Avenue  
Cooper City, FL 33328

**Middle School 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade**

Monday, November 29, 2010 **6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade**

Testing Time: 8:30 am – 12:00 am  
Reading Session 1 60 minutes  
Reading Session 2 60 minutes

Tuesday, November 30, 2010 **6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade**

Testing Time: 8:30 am – 12:00 am  
Mathematics Session 1 60 minutes  
Mathematics Session 2 60 minutes

Wednesday, December 1, 2010 **8<sup>th</sup> grade only**

Testing Time: 8:30 am – 12:00 am  
Science Session 1 60 minutes  
Science Session 2 60 minutes

**High School 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade**

Monday, November 29, 2010 **9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade**

Testing Time: 8:30 am – 12:00 am  
Reading Session 1 60 minutes  
Reading Session 2 60 minutes

Wednesday, November 30, 2009 **9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade**

Testing Time: 8:30 am – 12:30 pm  
Mathematics Session 1 80 minutes  
Mathematics Session 2 80 minutes

Wednesday, December 1, 2010 **11<sup>th</sup> grade only**

Testing Time: 8:30 am – 12:00 am  
Science Session 1 60 minutes  
Science Session 2 60 minutes

Students must complete all sessions. BVS School policy requires participation in all district testing as a condition for continued enrollment

**We will not be having "School Days" on November 24<sup>th</sup>.**

*Continued on page 4...*

**School Days**

**When: Wednesday, December 8, 2010**

**Where: BVS/Becon**  
6600 SW Nova Drive  
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33317

**Time: 9:00am-12:00pm**

**Teacher: TBA**

**Schedule:**  
9:00AM -11:30AM: TBA

**We will not be having "School Days" on December 22<sup>nd</sup>.**

**FCAT Explorer**

There's good news for all students taking the FCAT this year: you can get free reading and math practice on the FCAT Explorer. That's right: free practice for the FCAT at [www.fcatexplorer.com](http://www.fcatexplorer.com).

The FCAT Explorer is an online practice program made for Florida's public school students by the Florida Department of Education.

Both programs offer practice for the skills tested on the FCAT and feature lots of stuff to help you get the most out of your study time. You'll receive helpful feedback to the answers you choose and a second chance to answer questions to apply what you've learned. The FCAT Explorer also features helpful online tools like a calculator, a formula reference sheet, and a glossary that defines and pronounces the glossary words.

Best of all, the FCAT Explorer is online, which means you can use the FCAT Explorer on any computer connected to the Internet.

To get your free FCAT Explorer sign-in name and password, contact your guidance counselor using the information below:

- High School students email [ruth.eloi@browardschools.com](mailto:ruth.eloi@browardschools.com)
- Middle School students email [tanya.mistretta@browardschools.com](mailto:tanya.mistretta@browardschools.com)

\*\*Please be sure to include your name and grade in the email.

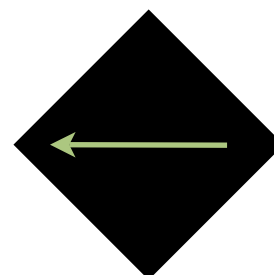
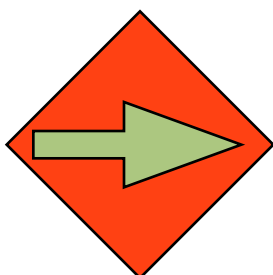
Broward Virtual has started collecting Box Tops!!!

You can make a difference for Broward Virtual school every time your shop for groceries! Just clip the Box Tops coupons from hundreds of your favorite products and send bring them to Broward Virtual School.

Visit <http://www.boxtops4education.com> for more information!



School Days Costume Contestants



**Continued on Page 7**

## Student Buzz

### A Lesson Learned

*Ethan Barnes, 7th Grade Student*



I am a returning student at BVS, and currently in 7th grade. I have discovered the key to success of being a virtual school student- **READING!** All courses require the ability to read and comprehend the lessons, and fortunately the manner in which they are presented is captivating.

For example, in language arts, my classmates and I have recently been entertained by reading and studying the elements of fiction. The reading selection was fairytales; stories from our childhood. One of my friends, who is also a student at BVS, said, "I haven't read fairytales since kindergarten and forgot how much I enjoy them!" What I love about reading fairytales is the lesson contained in the theme.

My all time favorite is "The Empty Pot"; the setting is China and the old Emperor needs to choose an heir. He gives all the children a seed to grow a flower to be presented to him. The children do not realize the seeds have been cooked. All but one child, returns with flowers in their pots. The main character, Ping, returns with an empty pot and is rewarded for his honesty. He is chosen to become Emperor of the kingdom!

Remember my fellow classmates, "Readers Are Leaders"! Let's read on and trailblaze into the 21st century!

### Music to My Ears

*Sage McBride, 8th Grade Student*



When I close my eyes, I see notes on a staff line. When I'm alone, I think about hard passages in my pieces and I practice them in my mind. When I feel a full orchestra playing behind me, my heart starts racing and the adrenaline builds from my head to my toes. I am a musician and my dream is to become a solo violinist.

I can remember what one of my first violin teachers told me when I was a young boy. After telling him that I wanted to become a famous violinist, he explained that in order to do so I would have to dedicate many hours each and every day. As I have progressed, my pieces have become harder and longer, so I need to practice more and more everyday. Thankfully, with virtual school, I am able to practice 4 hours a day. What I love most about virtual school is the

flexibility I have with my schedule. Although, I have found that a structured schedule works best for me, sometimes I need to modify my plan if I have an upcoming audition, competition, or performance I must prepare for.

Preparing for auditions, competitions, and performances is a long process. First of all, I need to make sure that my all of my notes are in tune. Then, I practice technique with my bow hand and bow arm paying close attention to the quality of my tone production. Lastly, phrasing. Phrasing is very important because phrasing is what makes a piece beautiful. Like my teacher says, it's not what I play; it's how I play it. For auditions, competitions, and performances, all of the pieces must be memorized. For me, memorizing is the easy part. Because I have practiced my pieces so many times, I can usually play it from memory with no problem.

Many people ask me why I choose to be enrolled in virtual school. I answer them by saying "Because I want to be a famous violinist, I have no choice." In traditional school, it would be impossible for me to dedicate the amount of time necessary to prepare for my musical studies. I can remember when I was in school being so frustrated because it seemed as though I had to make a choice between my schoolwork and my violin. When my schoolwork was excellent, my music suffered or vice versa. I am grateful to have the option to be enrolled in a virtual school program because now I can excel in both.

***More Student Buzz on page 8***

## Teacher Talk

## Student/Teacher Talent Show Auditions

What to be part of a new tradition at Broward Virtual School? Then audition for the inaugural Student/Teacher Talent show!

### Student/Teacher Talent Show

Charles Grimes, Teacher



That's right, you read it in the Trailblazer Times first. Broward Virtual School will hold its inaugural Student/Teacher Show in February at Nova High School's Auditorium. Here's how the audition process will work.

1. Get your act together: All students are welcome to put an act together to audition for the show. Your act can be anything you want it to be: dancing, singing, and playing a musical instrument, comedy, reading poetry, and acting. If you've got a talent we want to see it.

2. Next, make a minute and a half audition video. Make sure your video is no longer than a minute and half as you will be disqualified if the audition goes over the time limit. Make sure your video is clear and has good sound. We're looking for the best and greatest talent our students have to offer.

3. Once you have your video completed, please email it to Mr. Grimes at [charles.grimes@browardschools.com](mailto:charles.grimes@browardschools.com). All of the videos must be submitted by December 29, 2010. No late auditions will be accepted. IF you have trouble sending the video via email then please burn it to a DVD and mail it to Charles Grimes, C/O Broward Virtual School, 6600 SW Nova Dr., Fort Lauderdale, FL; 33317.

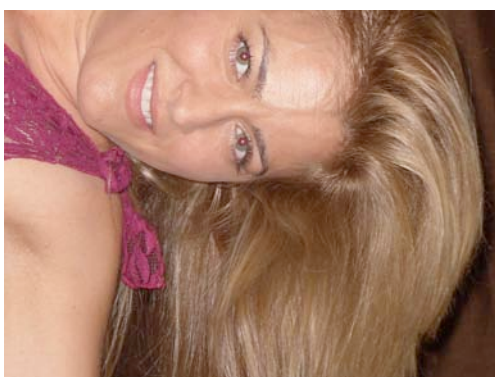
4. After we have received all the audition videos, a group of well known Fine Arts teachers from various schools in the county will select the top 10 student acts to perform in the show. Those Acts selected will be notified and highlighted in the January/February Trailblazer Times. Then those acts must begin polishing and getting ready to perform a 3 minute Act in February.

5. Not only will 10 student acts be performing at the show, but 5 Teacher acts will be included as well. Ms. Cardenas, Mr. Grimes, Ms. Yanes, and even our esteemed Principal, Mr. McGire will lend his talents to make our show outstanding. This is one event that you won't want to miss.

Tickets will go on sale in our E-Store on January 15, for \$7.00. All proceeds will go to the Class of 2011 for their prom and Grad. Bash events. The date of the show has been tentatively set for February 17, 2011. Remember you first read it here in the Trail Blazer Times. Ready, Set, Action!



Sage McBride performing a violin solo.



Ms. Cardenas doing something with her hair.

*More Teacher Talk continued on page 9*

## Guidance Corner



*Ruth Eloi*

*High School Guidance Counselor*

### Diploma Names

Please submit how you wish your name to appear on your diploma to Ms. Eloi via email at [ruth.eloi@browardschools.com](mailto:ruth.eloi@browardschools.com). All names must be submitted by January 3, 2011.

### Dual Enrollment

Dual Enrollment gives Broward County Public School (BCPS) high school students who have completed 11 credits prior to the fall term and 13.5 credits prior to the winter term a unique opportunity to earn valuable college credits for free while still enrolled in high school.

To be eligible for dual enrollment, a BCPS high school student must:

- have a 3.0 cumulative unweighted grade point average (GPA) or higher,
- be enrolled in a course of study which will fulfill requirements for high school graduation, and
- have the appropriate required standardized college placement test scores.

### Important Dates for Term: 20112 - Winter

Nov 02, 2010

Pre-registration: (graduation candidates)

Nov 03, 2010

First day of registration: continuing students

Nov 23, 2010

Registration - open registration

Jan 05, 2011

Registration: state employee fee waiver

Jan 06, 2011

Class begin date

If you are interested in starting dual enrollment classes in January, please contact Ms. Eloi for an application. Classes fill up quickly so don't delay.

### Technical Center

**Junior and Seniors** can take classes at the local **technical center** for free in whatever area they offer and you have an interest. This is called shared-time. The process is a simple application and attending orientation. They formulate a schedule for you to take classes at the center while you still complete your virtual classes. The credits you earn are elective high school credits and applied towards a technical certificate. Some programs are offered completely online! Take a look at the website and see if they offer anything in which you might have an interest: [www.browardtechcenters.com](http://www.browardtechcenters.com). Registration begins January 3, 2011 and classes start January 25, 2011. Let me know if you want me to send you an application and for which center.



## **A Cause to Bark About**

***Brenda McGrane***

***Director of Humanitarian Outreach***

History making seems to be the new buzz at BVS and this is one trend the hard working Class of 2011 hope never fades--especially giving back to the community. With a great start of a promising school year and the holidays all around us, what way better to show our appreciation than to start the new year right with a resolution fit to help out a *furry*-friendly charity? The Seniors intend to do just that.

The Humane Society of Broward County is a non-profit organization providing shelter, aid, responsible adoptions, and education to the community about respect and compassion to all animals. Since being founded in 1944, this facility has taken in abandoned or abused dogs, cats, and even bunnies under their “open admission” policy which accepts all owned animals into their shelter regardless of the animal’s condition. Luckily, the number of locals kind enough to seek adoption have increased and HSBC was successful in placing an astonishing 9,923 pets into loving homes in 2007. However, HSBC can’t do it all alone. Because this organization receives no financing from the government, they rely heavily on donations from companies or dedicated volunteers. So to show our gratitude, we want to *lend a paw*.

Starting Monday, January 3<sup>rd</sup> 2010 and throughout the month of January you can help support the BVS Seniors by donating items during our “Lend a Paw” food and supply drive benefiting the Humane Society of Broward County. Items can be dropped off directly at the Becon office and will include: boxed dog and cat treats, puppy and kitten milk replacers, new or gently used bath towels, and even hand sanitizer (A full list of items will be sent out in a flyer so keep checking your e-mails). We encourage all students, teachers, and staff to contribute to this purrrfectly heartfelt cause and hope it’s the start of many community service projects to come!



Senior Class Board of Directors working on the “Lend A Paws” program.



Board of Directors for the Class of 2011 hard at work.



## Algebra End of Course Exam

*Frank Koegel*

*Teacher of Mathematics*

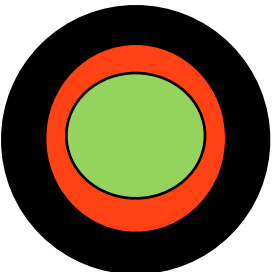
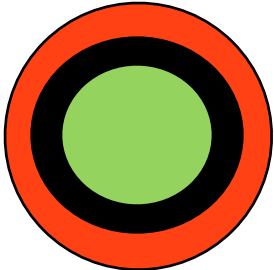
There are big changes coming! In case you have not heard, there will no longer be a FCAT math test for 9th graders. Instead, they will take a test based specifically on Algebra 1, and it will not be done at the same time as the Reading portion of FCAT; it will be done the third week in May. This is from the Florida Department of Education's website:

*The Florida EOC Assessments are part of [Florida's Next Generation Strategic Plan](#) for the purpose of increasing student achievement and improving college and career readiness. EOCs will be computer-based, criterion-referenced assessments that measure the [Next Generation Sunshine State Standards](#) for specific high-school level courses, as outlined in the course description. The first assessment to begin the transition to end-of-course testing in Florida is the Algebra 1 EOC, which will be administered for the first time in May 2011.*

This is part of the changes being made as we transition into the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test 2.0 (FCAT 2.0). One of the largest obstacles confronting schools also represents the main adjustment students will face; the Algebra 1 End of Credit Exam will be done online. This represents a dramatic change for students that have done the test for years in their test booklets. But fear not, there are many helpful online tools. For example, there are online highlighters, rulers and calculators that the students will use. And they will have a booklet and pencil to take notes or work on any computations they feel are necessary. Students will be required to take a practice test before they can do the End of Credit Exam. This practice test is designed to use the same format as the EOC exam, so students will have already practiced with all of the tools, and be familiar with how the questions are shown. They will be instructed how to go back and check answers, and how to make sure they did not miss any questions.

Will our students be prepared? Absolutely! Our students are in a very advantageous position. They are used to taking online tests and using online tools. So the nervousness many students will face due to the new mode of testing will not be present in our students. And there is a new version of Algebra 1 this year that embraces the new math standards. It is a rigorous course, which means students that are successful in it should be prepared for the EOC in May. We will hold weekly sessions starting in semester 2 that will review the material covering the whole course, so students can review for the test over a long period of time. Students will be expected to attend these sessions since the End of Credit test counts for 30% of the Algebra 1 grade. And the sessions will be recorded, so if a student misses something, or wants to review a session from a month earlier, he/she can always view recorded sessions.

End of Credit Exams are planned for Geometry, Biology and U.S. History, so this year will really help prepare our 9th graders for their future!



## Middle School Parents



Is your 7th or 8th grader taking high school Algebra I this year? Did your 8th grade student take high school Algebra I last year? Middle school students who have taken or are currently taking Algebra I will be required to take the state's new Algebra I end-of-course exam in May of 2011. This exam will NOT impact your child's Algebra I grade or credit. Rather, your child's score on the Algebra I end-of-course exam will be "banked" until your child reaches high school, where the score will only be used for high school accountability purposes. Again, your child's Algebra I grade or credit will NOT be impacted by your child's performance on this test. Just like the FCAT,

Algebra I end-of-course exam scores will be reported to parents so parents and children can review their score. The score will provide valuable information as to your child's knowledge and skills in Algebra I. For 8th grade students currently taking high school geometry, we know there is a lapse in time between the Algebra course and the exam. That's why the District is preparing some online review materials that students may utilize to review for the exam, if they choose to do so. The Algebra I end-of-course exam is state mandated and will be given online using computers at your child's school. Middle school students will still have to take the FCAT as well as GEM midterms and final exams. We know this is a lot of testing. Eventually, the Algebra I end-of-course exam will replace the math FCAT, but during this phase-in period the State is requiring that students take both exams. If you have questions, please contact Duke Chinn, District Middle School Mathematics Curriculum Specialist, at (754) 321-1850 or via email at [james.chinn@browardschools.com](mailto:james.chinn@browardschools.com).

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## High School Parents

Is your high school student taking Algebra I? Did your ninth grade student take Algebra I in middle school? If so, your child will be required to take the state's new Algebra I end-of-course exam in May of 2011. The Algebra I end-of-course exams are part of new state laws designed to improve Florida's education system. The exams are being phased in over a two year period. Therefore, this year's rules for the exams will be different than next year's rules. For the current school year, many high school students will be taking the Algebra I end-of-course exam, but it will impact the grades of only the ninth graders who are currently enrolled in Algebra I. For these students only, the exam will count as 30% of the student's final grade in Algebra I. Ninth graders who took Algebra I in middle school and tenth, eleventh, and twelfth graders who are currently enrolled in Algebra I will NOT have their grades impacted by their performance on the end-of-course exam. For 9th grade students who took Algebra I in middle school, we know there is a lapse in time between the Algebra course and the exam. That's why the District is preparing some online review materials that students may utilize to review for the exam, if they choose to do so. The Algebra I end-of-course exam is state mandated and will be given online using computers at your child's school. If you have questions regarding Algebra I end-of-course exams in high school, please contact Nancy Barba, High School Mathematics Curriculum Specialist, at (754) 321-1850 or via email at [nancy.barba@browardschools.com](mailto:nancy.barba@browardschools.com).

## Character Education Traits of the Month



**Responsibility:** Be responsible for what you do and say.

**Courage:** Be brave enough to do the right thing and to ask for help when you need it.

Most people have a good understanding of the concepts of honesty, compassion, respect, responsibility and courage. Parents can help their children better understand these concepts by exploring the five themes of citizenship in realistic situations.

Activities from the editors of *Weekly Reader* can help develop your understanding of the five citizenship themes: honesty, compassion, respect, responsibility, and courage. Parents, try role-playing one of the scenarios below.

**It Takes Guts:** Imagine you're playing basketball with a friend. Some kids come up and take your friend's basketball. Create more specific details about this kind of situation, and then describe what you would do. Note that sometimes a person needs courage to walk away from a situation.

**Test Your Compassion:** You find out that a friend had no time to study for a test because she had to help around the house when her mother was sick. So your friend cheats on the test. What do you say to her? What do you do? Do you tell the teacher?

[http://www.education-world.com/a\\_curr/curr008.shtml#fourth](http://www.education-world.com/a_curr/curr008.shtml#fourth)

**The Broward County Schools Innovative Programs Showcase** is undoubtedly the best opportunity to view multiple magnet programs, innovative programs, and Nova Schools in a fun and informative setting. The Showcase features the very best from each program and allows visitors to “shop around” and compare the unique qualities of each theme and school. Take advantage of the opportunity to explore all the educational options that Broward Schools has to offer during this year's biggest event; The Innovative Programs Showcase!

When: Wednesday, December 8, 2010

5:00pm – 9:00pm

Where: Broward County Convention Center

1950 Eisenhower Blvd

Ft. Lauderdale, FL

 A vibrant graphic consisting of numerous overlapping concentric circles in various colors including red, blue, green, yellow, orange, and pink. The circles vary in size and are arranged in a dense, overlapping pattern.
 

Broward County Public Schools  
Innovative Programs Department  
invites you to

**SHOWCASE 2011**

Wednesday, December 8, 2010 • 5pm-9pm  
Greater Fort Lauderdale Broward County Convention Center  
1950 Eisenhower Boulevard • Fort Lauderdale, FL.

Discover more about Magnet Programs, Nova Schools, and Innovative Programs. Applications will be available for submission. All applicants must bring a copy of their most recent report card and standardized test scores.

For more information 754.321.2380 • [www.browardschools.com](http://www.browardschools.com)