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NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Statement from Superintendent Paul

Today I must offer a most heartfelt apology to the employees and students of our school district, as well as the community at large, for the poor judgment I exercised that led to my arrest on driving-under-the-influence charges yesterday in Pinellas County.

I have strived for the past seven years as superintendent of our school district to exhibit the highest personal standards of conduct as an example to all district stakeholders and have expected the same of our employees and students. Obviously, my recent actions have fallen far short of that example and I quite frankly find it difficult to find the appropriate words to relate my remorse for the shame and embarrassment I have brought to my position as the school district's chief executive and to the school district itself.

Clearly, I have disappointed a great number of people. Just as clearly, I violated state law and must now accept the consequences of my actions in the legal, personal, and professional arenas.

It is important to me that I be held personally accountable as employees have for similar transgressions and I follow the same process that any individual in our school district would face. To that end, I have instructed Dr. Alan Scott, assistant superintendent for human resources, to take the following actions:

- A copy of the arrest report will be placed in my personnel file
- Appropriate documentation will be filed with the Professional Practices Commission in Tallahassee for its consideration
- I will be referred to our Employee Assistance Program for counseling

In addition, I plan to schedule meetings with student government associations in our high schools to discuss my recent experience in an effort to communicate with students in general and bring a "real life" example of the hazards of such actions.

I am proud of the accomplishments of our school district over the past seven years and am most proud of the daily performance of our teachers and staff. I apologize once again for the distraction that these recent events have caused. We have a great deal of work in front of us on a variety of fronts and I am eager to move forward with your help and place the focus of our efforts squarely where it belongs—on the achievement of our students.