



SANDRA "SAM" HIMMEL – SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

*"Where Learning is the Expectation
And Caring is a Commitment"*

THOMAS KENNEDY
DISTRICT 1

VIRGINIA BRYANT
DISTRICT 2

DOUGLAS A. DODD
DISTRICT 3

SANDRA COUNTS
DISTRICT 4

LINDA B. POWERS
DISTRICT 5

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Inverness, Florida – May 8, 2017

All of Citrus County’s High Schools are Nationally Recognized:

- **2017 America’s Most Challenging High Schools List by the Washington Post**
 - o Lecanto High School
 - o Crystal River High School
 - o Citrus High School
- **2017 Best High Schools in the U.S. List by U.S. News & World Report**
 - o Lecanto High School
 - o Academy of Environmental Science

2017 America’s Most Challenging High Schools List by the Washington Post

For the last 19 years the *Washington Post* has been ranking the most challenging high schools in America. *Post* reporter, Jay Mathews, identifies and recognizes the top public high schools in the country that have reached a specific standard. This list identifies and ranks schools that challenge students from all backgrounds with courses such as AP (Advanced Placement) and IB (International Baccalaureate). Only 12% of all US high schools made the list (2,323 schools).

All three high schools in Citrus County are included on the 2017 *America’s Most Challenging High Schools* list. Lecanto High School ranked 599* out of the noted 2,323* awarded schools (increase of 213 from last year), Crystal River High School is 1,341* (increase of 335 from last year), and Citrus High School is 1,515* (increase of 646 from last year). The rankings are based on the total number of Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and Advanced International Certificate of Education tests given at the school each year divided by the number of seniors who graduate in May. This formula leads to a *Challenge Index* and the schools that achieved at least a ratio of 1.000 have administered as many tests in 2016 as they had graduate. The schools that earn this challenge honor are in the top 9% of the schools in the US. Our high schools received the following Challenge Index Numbers: LHS-3.285; CRH-2.004; CHS-1.836.

*Rankings are adjusted; current rank is based on 5/7/17 listing.

SCHOOL	RANK	RANK Difference from Last Year
Lecanto High School	599	↑ 213
Crystal River High School	1,341	↑ 335
Citrus High School	1,515	↑ 646

Additional information and details are available at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/local/high-school-challenge-2017/>

2017 Best High Schools in the U.S. List by U.S. News & World Report

U.S. News & World Report has released the national and state rankings of the 2017 Best High Schools in the U.S. The U.S. News rankings include data on more than 22,000 public schools in 50 states and the District of Columbia. Schools were awarded gold, silver or bronze medals based on their performance on state assessments and how well they prepare students for college. U.S. News worked with RTI International, a nonprofit social science research firm, to identify which of the U.S. public high schools are high performing, receiving a bronze medal (16.8% of U.S. high schools), and those that are high performing while showing success in college-readiness performance, receiving a gold or silver medal and a national and state ranking (top 12.7% of U.S. high schools). National and state ranking is determined by student performance on state proficiency tests in Reading and Math, including a comparison of proficiency rates for disadvantaged and diverse students, college-readiness performance using Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate test data as the benchmark for success, and graduation rate.

Lecanto High School and The Academy of Environmental Science are recognized nationally and are medal recipients. Lecanto High is a silver medal recipient based on their performance on state assessments, their graduation rates, and how well they prepared students for college. Lecanto High School is nationally ranked #1423 out of 28,561 U.S. high schools and #113 out of 889 Florida high schools. The Academy of Environmental Science is not ranked, however it is nationally recognized by being awarded the bronze medal based on student performance on state exams.

SCHOOL	MEDAL AWARD	*COLLEGE READINESS INDEX VALUE	MATH PROFICIENCY (% proficient)	ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (% proficient)	GRAD RATE	NATIONAL RANK	STATE RANK
Lecanto High School	Silver	36.6	61%	56%	87%	1,423	113
Academy of Environmental Science	Bronze	N/A	50%	82%	N/A	N/A	N/A

*College Readiness index value is based on the percentages of 12th graders who were tested and passed Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate exams.

Additional information and details are available at <https://www.usnews.com/education/best-high-schools>

Sandra “Sam” Himmel, Superintendent of Citrus County Schools stated, “I am honored to serve for such an outstanding school district. Citrus County schools consistently work to provide the most rigorous curriculum and learning opportunities for all our students. This prestigious recognition is a testament to the continued combined efforts of our elementary and secondary school teams.”

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