



**Florida Council of Instructional Technology Leaders  
Instructional Technology Leadership Award:  
2016-17 Innovative Principal of the Year  
Nomination Form**



**District Name: Seminole County Public Schools**

**Nominating FCITL Voting Member Information**

Nominating FCITL Member (must be voting member for district): Beth Pocius

Street Address: 400 East Lake Mary Blvd.

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Country: USA

Work Phone: 407-320-0336

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FCITL Voting Member Email: [beth\\_pocius@scps.k12.fl.us](mailto:beth_pocius@scps.k12.fl.us)

**Principal Nominee Information**

Name: Demetria Hayes Faison

Professional Title: Principal

School Name: Crooms Academy of Information Technology

Work Address: 2200 Historic Goldsboro Blvd.

City/State/Zip: Sanford, FL 32771

Work Phone: 407-320-5701

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Work Fax: 407-320-5798

Work Email: [Demetria\\_Hayes@scps.k12.fl.us](mailto:Demetria_Hayes@scps.k12.fl.us)

## **Statement of Nomination:**

As principal of Crooms Academy of Information Technology, Seminole County's only one-to-one high school, Demetria Faison has expanded technology-related opportunities for students while maintaining district-leading student performance. Mrs. Faison's fusion of high quality instructional practices, data-driven instruction, and classroom technology have resulted in Crooms Academy being distinguished as one of the top high schools in Florida and the nation by *US News and World Report*, and also receiving recognition on *Newsweek's* "Beating the Odds" list of high schools preparing economically disadvantaged students for college.

Under Mrs. Faison's administration, Crooms Academy launched AA Pathways, a program in which students complete Seminole State College courses while in high school, culminating with graduates who simultaneously receive a diploma and an AS degree in Information Technology. Additionally, to prepare students for college and careers, all students participate in coursework with opportunities for professional certification and career development. In 2016, 394 students earned industry certifications including Adobe Dreamweaver, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Flash, Adobe Photoshop, Cisco CCNA Routing and Switching, CompTIA A+, CompTIA Network+, CompTIA Security+, Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS), Windows Operating Systems, and the National Center for Simulation Modeling and Simulation.

Crooms Academy of Information Technology was selected to participate in the Lenovo Scholar Network, implementing a curriculum focused on app development that will cultivate the next generation of coders and entrepreneurs. This is a component of Crooms Academy's recognition as a National Academy Foundation (NAF) Distinguished Academy, one of only four academies nationally awarded for six consecutive years. As a distinguished academy, Mrs. Faison has demonstrated that all students graduating from Crooms Academy of Information are prepared to enter college or the workforce.

One of the reasons that the students at Crooms Academy are consistently successful is Mrs. Faison's relentless focus on collecting and evaluating data, then using that information to design instructional interventions. Teachers use a number of digital tools including Canvas, Socrative, EdInsight, and Nearpod to collect qualitative and quantitative information from students, and then evaluate that data and customize instructional practices in PLCs and quarterly data meetings. These interventions include additional learning opportunities, but also leverage digital tools including Adaptive Curriculum virtual labs, Reading Plus, Khan Academy, Learnerator/Albert, and many more to differentiate instruction for every student.

Mrs. Faison provides a model of innovative and successful educational technology for our entire school district and the state. Crooms Academy continually hosts other schools, school districts, and community members for collaborative opportunities to shape the trajectory of school technology. Additionally, the administration and teachers at Crooms Academy of Information Technology participate and present at a number of professional events including the What's @ppening showcase for Seminole County, FETC, the National Academies Foundation Conference, and the National Center for Simulation.

## DEMETRIA HAYES FAISON

### EDUCATION

Educational Specialist, Educational Leadership  
*Nova Southeastern University, Orlando, FL Campus*  
Dates of Enrollment: Fall 2005 – Fall 2006

Master of Science, Science Education  
*The Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL*  
Dates of Enrollment: Fall 1998 – Spring 2001

Bachelor of Science, Science Education  
*The Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL*  
Dates of Enrollment: Fall 1993 – Spring 1998

### CERTIFICATIONS

Florida Professional Certificate, School Principal  
Florida Professional Certificate, Educational Leadership  
Florida Professional Certificate, Biology 6-12

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Crooms Academy of Information Technology  
Sanford, Florida  
*Principal, July 2013 – Present*

Under my leadership, Crooms Academy of Information Technology has:

- Planned and implemented the Associate in Arts Pathway in partnership with Seminole State College of Florida
- Earned Distinguished Academy status by National Academy Foundation
- Earned Magnet School of Distinction status by Magnet Schools of America
- Ranked as one of the Best High Schools in the US by *US News and World Report*
- Ranked as one of the Most Challenging High Schools in the US by *The Washington Post*
- Ranked on *Newsweek's* Beating the Odds list of high schools preparing economically disadvantaged students for college
- Increased the number of industry certifications earned by students from 70 in 2010 to 394 in 2016
- Ranked #20 of all high schools in Florida (95.6 state percentile overall rank) – Florida High School Accountability Measures
  - Graduation Rate 100% (100% state percentile rank)
  - ELA Achievement 80% (95.6% state percentile rank)
  - ELA Learning Gains 59% (93.6% state percentile rank)
  - ELA Lowest Quartile Learning Gains 53% (93.5% state percentile rank)
  - Math Achievement 64% (90.5% state percentile rank)
  - Math Learning Gains 48% (85.9% state percentile rank)
  - Math Lowest Quartile Learning Gains 38% (69.5% state percentile rank)
  - Social Studies Achievement 97% (99.6% state percentile rank)
  - Science Achievement 86% (92.5% state percentile rank)
  - College and Career Acceleration 86% (98.5% state percentile rank)

Crooms Academy of Information Technology  
Sanford, Florida

*Assistant Principal and NAF Academy Director, July 2007 – July 2013*

- Served as the Principal's Designee
- Problem-solving and performance-driven leader of the science and technology departments which resulted in significant increased student performance on state assessments and industry certification exams

- Facilitated the Multi-Tiered System of Support Team, analyzed student data and planned for increased academic and behavioral interventions
- Led the recruitment team, annually revisiting the marketing and recruitment plan to analyze the school's recruitment data and to plan for attracting students
- Collaborated with members of the Business Advisory Council and post-secondary education partners to ensure that the IT program is aligned with current trends in industry and the skillsets needed in today's workforce
- Provided professional development opportunities for the instructional staff to remain knowledgeable of cutting-edge technologies and to plan for technology integration

Millennium Middle School

Sanford, Florida

*8<sup>th</sup> Grade Dean of Students, May 2005 – July 2007*

- Assisted the assistant principal in managing and reducing the discipline, tardy records, and dress code violations for eighth grade students
- Coordinated clinical experiences for junior and senior interns
- Organized and submitted the school's portfolio for the Florida Department of Education's Five Star School Award
- Served as the Business Partner Liaison to establish and maintain partnerships with local members of the business community
- Managed the Dividends Volunteer Program and Falcon Friends Mentor Program

Millennium Middle School

Sanford, Florida

*7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Grade Comprehensive Science Teacher, August 2000 – May 2005*

- Implemented creative curricula and incorporate new texts and technology into comprehensive science curriculum
- Wrote and implemented curriculum for an Advanced Science Research course
- Assessed student performance utilizing multiple methods
- Developed progress monitors to track student performance on the FCAT 8 Science standards
- Served as the sponsor for the SECME Club and School Science Fair

## **PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES**

- National Academy Foundation Workshop Presenter, NAFNext Conference, 2011 – 2016
- National Academy Foundation, Webinar Co-Presenter: Work-Based Learning Exemplars, October 2015
- National Academy Foundation Distinguished Academy Review Team Member
- The National Center for Simulation Education and Workforce Development Committee
- Central Florida NAF Advisory Board
- Seminole State College of Florida Information Technology Advisory Committee
- Seminole Association of School Administrators Executive Board Member (2009-2012) and Member (Current)
- Crooms Academy/Seminole High School Cluster Representative

## **AWARDS & HONORS**

- National SECME Teacher of the Year, Finalist, 2006
- Teacher of the Year, Millennium Middle School, 2006
- Sanford/Seminole County Chamber of Commerce Teacher of the Month, March 2005
- Teacher of the Month, Millennium Middle School, October 2004
- Sanford/Seminole County Chamber of Commerce Teacher of the Month, November 2002

1. How do you help reduce or remove barriers for effective technology use in your school or school system?

One barrier for effective technology use in schools is teacher training. Teachers are polled to indicate their self-assessed needs resulting in a differentiated plan to meet the range of skills. Time is allocated to allow teachers to engage in training during the work day, providing them opportunities to collaborate within PLCs to plan for meaningful technology integration. Nine teachers have been trained as Digital Learning Leaders and serve as school-based leaders for the implementation of digital curriculum in the classroom. Teachers attend a myriad of off-campus trainings hosted by the National Academy Foundation, ISTE, Magnet Schools of America, IITSEC, and Certiport. Innovative student projects have resulted from teacher training including an emergency response simulator which was featured at the IITSEC Future Leaders Pavilion and the Florida State Science and Engineering Fair and an award winning student tracker application developed by students participating in the Lenovo Scholars Network Mobile App Development Challenge.

The lack of a solid network infrastructure is second barrier. Crooms Academy of Information Technology is a 1:1 device school and has approximately 1,400 devices including hard wired computers, tablets, and interactive boards on site so it is critical to have connectivity that is reliable, quick, and secure. I have committed two full-time network specialist to manage computer maintenance and repair, software installation, and network connectivity. This team partners with the district's Information Services Department to ensure that students and teachers are able to utilize the technologies that are an integral part of our academy.

2. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of digital technology use in your school or district?

The effectiveness of digital technology at Crooms AOIT is evaluated by the impact of these tools on teaching, learning, and student performance. We maintain a school culture that is based on shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning and supports challenging, equitable educational programs and learning experiences for all students. Our team works to provide an atmosphere that is conducive to helping students grow in a variety of ways that all center on the shared idea of our mission to "provide innovative teaching and learning in a technology-enriched environment and to engage students in an academically challenging curriculum that prepares them for post-secondary education with industry validated technology skills". This work has been validated by our school's ranking on *Newsweek's* Beating the Odds (2016) list of top high schools for preparing economically disadvantaged students for college.

All classrooms stay connected with students and families using the Canvas platform which enable online class discussions and home access to class notes and assignments. Student response systems such as Socrative, Nearpod, and Geddit are integrated in the classrooms to increase student engagement in discussions, capture students' knowledge in real time, and check for understanding. The school offers additional digital learning opportunities through programs such as Explore Learning Gizmos and Adaptive Curriculum Activity Objects which empower learning through research-based pedagogy and student inquiry. The implementation of instructional supports is measured annually by the National Academy Foundation and the school has scored 30 out of 30 on the Academy Assessment on this standard.

3. What is your vision of how digital learning can prepare today's students to be successful in attaining college and career readiness and what have you done to move your school towards this vision?

Talent in computer science and information technology continue to be in high demand and the technology curriculum at Crooms AOIT enables students to specialize in networking, programming, gaming, modeling and simulation, computer repair, digital media, and cybersecurity to address these industry needs. Certifications are offered in Adobe Dreamweaver Associate, Adobe Illustrator Associate, Adobe Flash Associate, Adobe Photoshop CC Associate, Cisco CCNA Routing and Switching, CompTIA A+, CompTIA Network+, CompTIA Security+, Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS), Windows Operating Systems Fundamental Microsoft Technical Associate (MTA), and the National Center for Simulation Modeling and Simulation Certificate. The attainment of these certifications validate students' skillsets in industry standard software. Digital curriculum and online programs such as SAM, GMetrix, Cisco Networking Academy, LearnKey, and Lynda.com have been integrated into the curriculum to support student training and provide the opportunity for students to apply technical skills in simulated environments. In 2015-2016, Crooms AOIT students earned 394 industry validated certifications.

It is also a school priority to create opportunities for college-bound students to earn dual enrollment credits and get a jump start on their post-secondary education plans. I have had the opportunity to develop and implement Seminole County Public School's first collegiate high school at Crooms AOIT through our partnership with Seminole State College of Florida. Students can earn an Associates in Arts degree as they are earning their high school diploma. The AA Pathway Program is delivered through a combination of face-to-face instruction, blended learning, and online coursework.

4. How is the use of technology assisting your school's endeavors for monitoring student academic progress?

Crooms Academy of Information Technology is a school that holds teachers and staff to a high standard of accountability. Progress monitors and common assessments are administered three times per year in English Language Arts, Writing, Algebra, Geometry, Algebra 2, US History, and Biology. Data Summits are held by departments to disaggregate the data by student and standard and identify learning gaps. Teachers utilize this information to inform instruction and to plan for remediation or extended learning opportunities for students. These meetings drive instruction and planning so teachers can ensure pedagogical practices are targeting student needs. Students are provided with mini-lessons, probes, or individual/small group interventions, based on their areas of need. Through progress monitoring, our teachers can identify students who are in need of additional support.

Teachers have access to many digital learning tools to assist in creating differentiated assignments such as Reading Plus, Discovery Education, Adaptive Curriculum, Think Through Math, and IXL. By utilizing formative assessments to inform instruction, Crooms Academy of Information Technology has ranked as the highest performing high school in Seminole County Public Schools, ranks in the top 10% of high schools within the State of Florida on the High School Accountability Measures, and has graduated 100% of seniors.