



The Florida State Spanish Conference
631 Shores Blvd.
St. Augustine, FL 32086

5 September 2023

Dear Principals,

The Executive Board of the Florida State Spanish Conference cordially invites you to send a team to represent your Spanish Department at our FSSC Conference being held **March 7-9, 2024**, at the Wyndham Orlando Resort, International Drive, Orlando Florida.

To those of you who have sent teams in previous years, we thank you and hope that you will encourage your teachers to participate again in **2024**. To those of you who have never heard of or had a team participate in this Conference, please encourage your teachers to do so this year.

Here's a little background on the FSSC. The competition itself has been going on for over 60 years; in fact, this will be our 67th competition. In 2001, a group of Spanish teachers decided to incorporate and become a separate entity from the Florida Chapter of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese.

Teams consist of up to 16 students, all of whom must participate in the Impromptu Speaking competition. Up to 6 students may participate in the Declamations (Oral Presentation of a Poem by a Hispanic author) and the team may participate in the Play competition. Points are awarded based on performance. All students receive a ribbon, tolling their performance. Winning schools in each division (determined by FHSAA basketball divisions) receive trophies.

In addition to these **Academic** competitions, students may also choose to participate in **non-academic** competitions: Regional Dress, Entertainment (Vocal, Instrumental, and Dance), Scrapbook, and Poster. In the past couple of years, we have added another non-academic competition tied directly to the theme of the competition. Winning entries receive a ribbon, and all entries are displayed at the banquet, held on Friday evening. We also have an essay competition for Seniors who attend. Winners receive monetary awards from both FSSC, Inc. and the Florida Chapter of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese.

Though the Conference itself does not take place until March, we felt it necessary to “plant the seed” now. The cost of sending a team of 16 students (+2 teachers) varies depending on distance and the cost of transportation. However, registration fees and hotel costs add up to about \$3,125 per team (\$125 for school registration, \$70/student and teacher attending, and \$139 per room (for up to 4 people) for 2 nights). Teachers fundraise all year long to help defray the cost. Any help you can provide for them would be greatly appreciated. **Title I, Title II and Title III funds can be used.**

These are some of the highlights of the Title I program and use of funds:

- to ensure that **all children** have a **fair, equal, and** significant opportunity to **obtain a high-quality education** and reach, at a minimum, **proficiency in challenging State academic achievement standards and state academic assessments.**
- **closing the achievement gap between high- and low-performing children, especially the achievement gaps between minority and non-minority students, and between disadvantaged children and their more advantaged peers.**
- **providing children with an enriched and accelerated educational program, including the use of schoolwide programs or additional services that increase the amount and quality of instructional time.**

Title II funds can also be used. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title II is designed, among other things, to provide **all students** with greater access to effective educators.

What does Title II power?

Instructional coaching

Mentoring

Leadership development

Professional learning communities

Novice teacher and principal induction and mentorship

Forums to leverage teacher expertise and leadership

Increased content knowledge for educators

Structures for personalizing learning for every student

Teacher residency programs

Title III frequently asked question:

Can Title III funds be used for alternative bilingual education programs?

Yes. In Title III, Section 3301 a language instruction educational program is defined as a program of instruction: “...that may make instructional use of both English and the native language to enable the child to develop and attain English proficiency and may include the participation of English proficient children if such course is designed to enable all participating children to become proficient in English and a second language.”

We hope to see your school and students as participants in **FSSC 2024**. Our theme this year is ***Español, más que una lengua, un tesoro*** (Spanish, more than a language, a treasure). The host schools are **The Osceola County School of the Arts** and **Celebration High School**, under the direction of Ms. Lizzette Marrero and Ms. Luisa Barrios respectively.

I am including the School Registration form for you to forward to your Spanish teachers (or to the sponsor of the Hispanic Honor Society or Spanish Club).

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Linda Villadóniga, FSSC Secretary at fsscsecretary@gmail.com

Sincerely,

The FSSC Executive Board

Amarilys Heard, President (Miami Country Day School)

Linda Villadóniga, Secretary-Treasurer (retired teacher, St. Johns County)