

SUPERINTENDENT'S BULLETIN



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News for School Board Members and District Personnel



Dear Team Monroe,

Talk about having a smooth start to the school year – well I can. Thanks to all of you, we have begun the 24-25 school year with energy and enthusiasm. I am grateful to everyone for bringing our students back with such an organized and trouble-free opening. I would like to give special recognition to the Transportation, Food Service and Maintenance Departments for their preparations this past summer to make the first day flawless. They helped us fulfill the old adage that getting the students to school, feeding them and getting them home safely is the primary task for the first day.

I hope that every day going forward is smooth sailing and that we put into action, our theme for the year - “Relationships are the Key.” If you build relationships with your students and with each other, great things will happen.

Yours in education,
Terri Axford

ASSESSMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY

The start of school brings the start of assessments for the 2024-2025 school year. Students will again be participating in the FAST Progress Monitoring program that tests students in grades K-10 in English Language Arts and grades K-8 in Math three times per year. The first testing window opened across the state on August 12th, 2024, and concludes on September 27th. Results are available to students within 48 hours of completing the assessment and are available to view in the FAST Family Portal for 3-10 (K-2 results will be available at the end of the testing window).

 <https://fl-familyportal.cambiumast.com/#/>

COMMUNITY RELATIONS



The District Leadership Team participated in an engaging learning opportunity with a two-day session on Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Effective of People. The leaders gained valuable insights and tools to enhance their effectiveness within educational settings while enjoying the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues.

Athletics have begun and the spirit and energy are high! Newly renovated Tommy Roberts Memorial Stadium was host to the first football game for the Key West High School Conchs and fans were excited to see sports back in action along the Kennedy Drive side of the complex. Coral Shores High School hosted a tri-county volleyball meet to kick off the season. All of our high schools and middle schools belong to the FHSAA and have increased programs so sports fans will have lots to cheer about throughout the year.



Principals and assistant principals worked with their Building Level Planning teams prior to all teachers reporting to take a deep dive into data as they determine their school wide goals for the year. Included across the district are the focus areas of relationships and deepening literacy skills in all curriculum areas.

EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION

The ESE Department has worked this summer on several; projects, our IDEA Grant Part B & C have been approved and fully funded! The Florida Department of Education also approved our Policies & Procedures for the coming year. Lastly, the highest recognition the state offers for ESE program administration is "Meets Requirements" and it was issued to our ESE Department. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004 requires states to make annual determinations on each local educational agency's (LEA) performance in meeting the requirements and purposes of the IDEA. At a minimum, states are required to implement a determination process that considers performance on State Performance Plan (SPP) compliance indicators, data integrity, program administration, uncorrected noncompliance issues and relevant state audit findings. Each LEA must be assigned to one of the following four categories: • Meets Requirements • Needs Assistance • Needs Intervention • Needs Substantial Intervention, Monroe County has consistently earned the "Meets Requirements" for the past 15 years in a row!!

FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE

Thank you to our Payroll and Benefits team for their outstanding efforts and dedication. Their presence at the New Teacher Orientation was instrumental in ensuring a smooth and successful event. The team has been working diligently to ensure all new staff members are set up correctly and prepared for the new school year. Kudos to the entire Payroll and Benefits team for your hard work and commitment to excellence. Your efforts do not go unnoticed, and we appreciate all that you do to support our staff.

Risk Management in the workplace continues identifying potential hazards, assessing the impact, and implementing strategies to alleviate them. Continuous monitoring and reviewing of risk management practices helps to improve a safe overall workplace.

Summer is always the busiest season for the Finance Team! This past week, we successfully closed the FY2023-24 Financial Book. Now, we are focused on preparing the Annual Financial Report (AFR), which is due to the Board on September 10th. We take immense pride in our AFR and our commitment to excellence in financial reporting. Simultaneously, we are making final adjustments to our FY2024-25 Budget Book, also due to the Board on September 10th. It has been a highly productive budget season! All the Principals and Department Heads approached the process with dedication, meticulously right sizing their budgets for the year ahead. We are confident that we are well-positioned for success as we move into the 2024-25 school year!

Hot off the heels of the annual summer records disposition and technology recycling projects, the Internal Services Department is keeping busy with back-to-school purchases. Internal Services is also working hard towards implementation of a new electronic procurement platform and a few other updates to existing procedures aimed at streamlining purchasing, records management, and asset control. Gaelan, Taylor, and Neilany are excited to bring more information about these changes to the office manager meeting on September 17. Stay tuned!

What a great Finance and Performance team! They are all extremely busy, but doing an excellent job accomplishing all they need to accomplish for this district and all the employees and students in this district!



HUMAN RESOURCES AND INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

The Human Resources Department is proud to have hired and onboarded 98 educators. The 2024 New Teacher Orientation welcomed educators new to MCSD. After the meet and greet breakfast and sign-in, Mrs. Axford and her team focused their welcome on "Relationships are the Key" and the foundation for success. Throughout the day, classroom sessions provided District information and resources to prepare educators for the school year. Thank you so much to all the vendors and local businesses who support the District in welcoming our new educators to MCSD and the Keys Community. They provided items for breakfast, lunch and amazing prizes raffled during the afternoon cookie break. Many attend the optional Vendor Fair offered during the lunch break providing information, coupons, swag and much more. Thank you so much to the session presenters, vendors, universities, and local businesses who support the District in welcoming our new educators.

OPERATIONS AND PLANNING

The 2024-2025 Free & Reduced Meal Application is now available, and parents are strongly encouraged to apply for meal benefits. Approval for free or reduced meal prices is based on household income. Only one application per household is needed, including all adults, school-aged, and non-school-aged children, regardless of where your children attend school. If your household does not qualify for free or reduced meal prices, adults in the household are responsible for paying for the meals provided at school or packing meals for their children from home. The application for Free & Reduced Meals can be found on the school district's website. Should you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to the Food Services Department at foodservice@keysschools.com.

The Food Service Department had the pleasure of teaming up with Samaritan's Feet International and Gordon Food Service to provide some of our high school students with new shoes. "We were grateful for the opportunity and overjoyed to be able to provide students with a pair of good shoes," says Effie Jackson, Director of Food Services.

The cafeteria staff at Plantation Key School, led by Café Manager Yolanda Lucas, catered breakfast for the school's "Back to School" faculty meeting. They prepared and served a traditional spread of breakfast favorites. "Our department is always willing to provide catering services for special events. We provide food for afterschool events for students, faculty meetings, and holiday events with families, and we enjoy doing it!" says Effie Jackson.



good
FOOD
good
MOOD

YUM!



Pictured Above:
Effie Jackson, Director of Food Services

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The Curriculum Team had a very successful District Professional Learning Day on August 8th. Some of the professional learning topics that were offered were sessions on core content instructional materials including the new social studies curriculum, ELlevation, CTE, Gizmos, classroom management and AVID. Teachers were engaged and enthusiastic to start the new school year. A big thank you to Marathon High School and Switlik Elementary for hosting our big day and IT for all of their support to make the day a success!

CONTINUED TEACHING AND LEARNING



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



*** KEEP ***
LEARNING!

