

# SUPERINTENDENT'S BULLETIN

NOVEMBER 19, 2024  
ISSUE 50

NEWS FOR SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS AND DISTRICT PERSONNEL



Dear Team Monroe,

I had the great good fortune to visit my sister who lives in Germany and works for the Department of Defense over the Veteran's Day Holiday with a couple days of vacation attached to either side for the trip. I didn't take any vacation time this summer and saved the time to be with her. She and I went to Scotland. Since we both have Scott's ancestry; it was inspiring to see our home land. I was amazed at the beauty of Edinburgh and by its rich history. I found the Scotts to be very friendly and welcoming and they love their country very much, much like we love our island homes in the Keys. There was a feeling of strong family ties and much love of their culture. I visited the National Library in Edinburgh. What else would an English teacher do? They had an exhibit about Robert Burns, their National Poet. I have always loved reading his poems and enjoy their important messages.

My favorite lines from his poem, "To a Louse," which I will share with you are:

" O wad some Pow'r the giftie gie us  
To see oursels as others see us!

Despite the Scottish dialect, I am sure you can understand the meaning of these words. My translation is - it would be a great gift as we go through life to see ourselves as others see us. I think this gift would make us kinder, more forgiving and better people. I hope that you can extend to colleagues and students the well wishes and good intentions that are implied in this verse.

Have a Happy Thanksgiving and enjoy your families and friends.

Yours in education,  
Terri Axford

## ASSESSMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY

During October, we administered the PSAT/NMSQT to all our 11th grade students. Scores will be accessible through the College Board.

Our teachers and students have been diligently preparing for the second FAST progress monitoring window, which opens on December 2nd and will close after the winter break on January 24th. The EOC/Retake window for high schools will begin on December 2nd and close before the winter break on December 20th. Test results will be available through the state reporting portal as soon as they are released.

We will use the data from PM2 to plan targeted instruction for all our students, ensuring we address any areas needing improvement and support.

This structured approach reinforces our commitment to maintaining high standards of accountability and continuous improvement in our educational efforts. Thank you to everyone for their hard work and dedication.

## COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Principals are charged with being the instructional leaders in a school and are consistently participating in professional learning. At the most recent principals' meeting, the curriculum team presented in depth information to help further their knowledge of the curriculum in English/Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies. Coordinators demonstrated through hands-on activities how to support teachers particularly in utilizing EL, ESE and rigorous standards.



**LEARNING**  
**NEVER**  
**ENDS**

As fall sports comes to a close, Coral Shores High School sent several swimmers/divers to state including Aaron Lykins, Abbie Sargent, Layne Smith, Allegra Fucaraccio and Sofia Figueredo; Marathon High and Key West High sent runners to the cross country State matches including the Dolphins girls team and Conch runners Naima Thomas and Caylaa Makimaa. Key West High School Football is making a run for a State championship and will play at home on Friday at 7:00 p.m. against Cypress Lakes. Congratulations to the Boys and Girls Club Cross Country for going to States!



*Great Job!*



# CONTINUED COMMUNITY RELATIONS

We are asking all faculty and staff to update their Focus information. If a person did not receive any messaging (text, call or email) during the recent storm updates, that is an indication that your information in Focus should be updated to ensure you receive all types of communication.

**FOCUS Employee Self Service**  
- Updating Contact Information -

**How to Check Your Information**

1. Go to **Focus SIS** and select **1111 – Employee Self Service** from the site dropdown menu in the top right corner of the screen.
  - a. **Note: Teachers** should switch from “Teacher” to “Admin” in the profile dropdown menu to access this site.
2. In the menu bar, go to **Employee Self Service** and click **My Information**. A list of tabs will appear on the left side of the screen.
3. Visit the **Address** and **Contacts** tabs to review your current information.

**How to Update Your Information**

1. In the menu bar, go to **Employee Self Service** and click **Employee Requests**.
2. From the **Drafts** tab, click the button that contains the information you need to change.
3. **Edit or delete** your existing information as needed.
  - a. To delete an entry, click the **red dash** next to the entry line, then click OK when prompted.
4. To **add a new entry**, go to the last row of the table and enter your current information into the blank white boxes.
  - a. Click **ENTER** on your keyboard when you are ready to save the entry. It will appear as a new line on the table.
  - b. Click **Files & Comments** to attach documents (if required).
5. Click **Submit Request** when you are finished.
6. Click the **History** tab to review the status of submitted requests.

The screenshot shows the 'Create Draft' button and the following tabs: Legal Name, Address, Contact Information, Emergency Contacts, Direct Deposit, W4 Information, and Demographic Info. Red arrows point to the 'Address' and 'Contact Information' tabs.

# EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION

On November 1st, the ESE behavior team successfully facilitated a series of districtwide professional learning (PL) sessions aimed at enhancing the skills and knowledge of educators and support staff. The sessions included “ESE Behavior Management Mastery: Tools and Techniques for Paraprofessionals” (multiple sessions), “Interventions for Students with Autism,” “Supporting Students with Disabilities in the Classroom,” and “Unique Learning Systems Instructional Planning.” These sessions were designed to provide practical strategies and insights for effectively supporting students with diverse needs.

In addition to the ESE team’s efforts, our partners from the Center for Autism Related Disorders (CARD) and the Florida Inclusion Network (FIN) also delivered targeted professional learning across the district. These collaborative efforts were made possible thanks to the support of our host schools and the enthusiastic participation of hundreds of teachers, paraprofessionals, and support staff. Their active engagement in these opportunities underscores our district’s commitment to fostering an inclusive and supportive educational environment for all students.

## **FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE**

Survey 2 (Semester 1) student and staff data has been successfully submitted to DOE. In collaboration with each school, minor tweaks and updates to resolve any remaining errors will continue for the rest of the month. The new Focus Communication module continues to grow, and many schools are leveraging it to stay in touch with their students and families.

Risk Management continues identifying, assessing, and prioritizing potential hazards that could negatively impact our organization. This process includes evaluating both physical and operational risks, such as safety hazards, and compliance issues. Risk Management continues to ensure the safety and well-being of their employees, and endeavors to maintain a safe workplace for all students and employees within Monroe County Schools.

The Finance team is pleased to announce the completion of our annual Financial Audit. We extend our sincere gratitude to all staff and departments who assisted in providing timely information to support the audit process. We are now awaiting the final step—our upcoming Exit Conference with the auditors—to review their insights and continue reinforcing our financial practices. Thank you for your collaboration and commitment to fiscal integrity!

It is inventory season! Internal Services recently completed on-site audits for fixed assets with all MCSD schools and departments and is pleased to report that no findings were found. Strong asset management is crucial to ensuring MCSD's continued eligibility for state and federal assistance, and it could not be done without the continued support of the dedicated school and district personnel who assist with completion of annual inventory and the on-site audits. Additionally, Internal Services is in the process of rolling out a new standard template for management of non-capital inventory, which should hopefully streamline inventory processes for all MCSD staff. Notices will be issued in the coming weeks with dates for completion of annual inventory in January. Stay tuned!

The Payroll team is proud to share that teacher evaluation raises were included in the November 15th paychecks. A big thank-you to the Payroll team for their hard work and dedication in making this possible! In addition, the Benefits and Wellness Committee recently organized three successful Wellness events, promoting health and building community (AHEC, Florida Health, Florida Blue) throughout the district. We extend our gratitude to KWHS, MHS, and CSHS for hosting these wonderful events, and to everyone who participated and contributed to their Wellness!

## **HUMAN RESOURCES AND INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

Title IX Discrimination/Sexual Harassment specifics were delivered in a district visit from ICS Consultants to provide further training, materials, legal support and assurance for Title IX Sexual Harassment compliance with federal law changes. This training is to remain in compliance and keep MCSD out of legal challenges. While requirements of 2024 Title IX regulations have expanded, Florida is currently operating under the 2020 guidelines. ICS Consultants provided two separate days of mandatory Title IX Sexual Harassment training that included scenarios to enable knowledge of required processes to conduct within specific timeframes. Day one was attended by district Principals who serve as Decision Makers when there is a harassment allegation in their school. Assistant Principals attended day two for training as School Investigators. The school district has a male and female Compliance Officer (CO) available to provide complainants with the option to report their concerns to an individual of the gender with which they feel most comfortable. An MCSD Compliance Officer may be contacted at [TitleIX@KeysSchools.com](mailto:TitleIX@KeysSchools.com). Dr. Lesley Thompson, Director Exceptional Student Education, serves as the District's Section 504 Compliance Officer/ADA Coordinator. An MCSD Compliance Officer may be contacted at [TitleIX@KeysSchools.com](mailto:TitleIX@KeysSchools.com). Mr. Harry Russell, Executive Director, Personnel Support and Instructional Leadership is the Title IX Coordinator. Jerian Winn, HR Generalist, serves as District Title IX Support and Investigator of employee allegations.

# OPERATIONS AND PLANNING

The Maintenance Department is coordinating the replacement of four older red LED-style marquees with new multi-color Daktronics panels, similar to those at newer schools. Completely new marquees will be installed at Key Largo and Poinciana Schools. Marathon Middle/High and Coral Shores High Schools will have new panels integrated into the existing sign structures. Principal Laura Lietaert said, "Coral Shores is excited to get this new system and can't wait to put it to good use." The display panels will be similar to those seen at Plantation Key School and Sugarloaf School. This initiative aims to standardize the features at some of the older sites with those enjoyed by recently constructed schools. Deputy Superintendent Amber Acevedo has stressed the importance of these resources in enhancing communication with students, parents, and the community. Because of this need, the Maintenance Department has made this a priority project for this year. We hope to have all installations completed before the end of the school year.

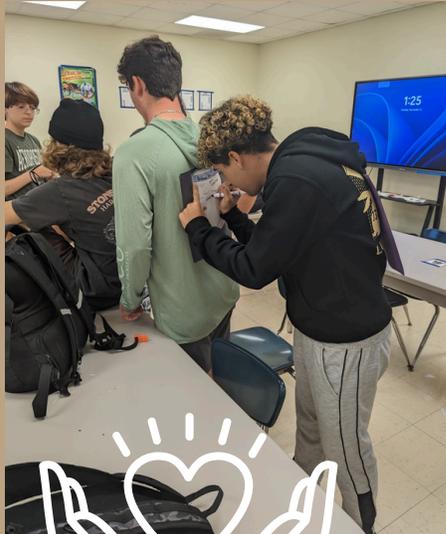


New panels ready for installation



2003 Vintage Marquee at Coral Shores HS to receive new panels

# STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES



In honor of World Kindness Day, the HOPE and Drivers Education classes at Coral Shores High School made Kindness jars. The students worked together to come up with kind words which were displayed on the Clear Touch. Those words were then placed into individual jars. The students walked around with their jars on their back and people walked around to place the words in their jars. The students loved seeing what their classmates wrote about them and they were displayed for everyone to see.



# CONTINUED STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Each month, community partners present to our Adult Education Classes. In November, the College of the Florida Keys (CFK) introduced our students to various academic options, including Community Education and Workforce programs, Apprenticeships, and Associate's and Bachelor's degrees. Throughout the fall semester, we've also had presentations from CHI, CareerSource West Florida, Key West Transit, and SOS Food Pantry.



# TEACHING AND LEARNING

Students throughout MCSD learned about the significance of Veterans Day and then celebrated and honored Veterans across the district. Our local Veterans were recognized with heartfelt breakfasts, patriotic displays, inspiring songs, and specially written letters expressing gratitude.



# CONTINUED TEACHING AND LEARNING

Additionally, teachers across the district engaged in our District Professional Learning Day on November 1st. The professional learning sessions offered a variety of enriching topics, including Utilizing Roadmaps for Reading Comprehension, a NEFEC-facilitated training on Multilingual Learners, and Exploring the Benefits of AI in the Classroom. The dedication of our teachers to professional growth and their commitment to enhancing the educational experience for all students is commendable. The knowledge and skills gained during this day will undoubtedly contribute to the continued success within our district.

