

# Marathon Middle/High School Literacy Newsletter

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## A Rising Tide Lifts All Ships



“Somebody said that it couldn’t be done, but he with a chuckle replied-That “maybe it couldn’t.” but he would be one who wouldn’t say so ‘till he’d tried...” These words by poet, Edgar Albert Guest illustrate the power of positive thinking!

The second semester began with excitement and purpose. January presented new opportunities to inspire and motivate our students to rise up to the challenges ahead and give it their all. From data chats to celebrating Literacy Week. January proved that our students are ready to show they can do it! Students demonstrated their knowledge in a variety of Literacy Events, from student led discussions and presentations, sharing opportunities to grow together. February provided professional development opportunities that made us aware of the capacity for shared learning and leadership that is in all of us through empathy, communication and perseverance. As alluded to in Covey’s 7 Habits, beginning with the end in mind- can lead to empowering our students with grit, responsibility, knowledge, and the spirit to succeed.

### It Couldn’t Be Done by Edgar Albert Guest

Somebody said that it couldn’t be done  
But he with a chuckle replied  
That “maybe it couldn’t,” but he would be one  
Who wouldn’t say so till he’d tried.  
So he buckled right in with the trace of a grin  
On his face. If he worried he hid it.  
He started to sing as he tackled the thing  
That couldn’t be done, and he did it!

Somebody scoffed: “Oh, you’ll never do that;  
At least no one ever has done it;”  
But he took off his coat and he took off his hat  
And the first thing we knew he’d begun it.  
With a lift of his chin and a bit of a grin,  
Without any doubting or quiddit,  
He started to sing as he tackled the thing  
That couldn’t be done, and he did it.

There are thousands to tell you it cannot be done,  
There are thousands to prophesy failure,  
There are thousands to point out to you one by one,  
The dangers that wait to assail you.  
But just buckle in with a bit of a grin,  
Just take off your coat and go to it;  
Just start to sing as you tackle the thing  
That “cannot be done,” and you’ll do it.

### From the principal’s desk-

Your commitment to fostering an environment of increased rigor, critical thinking, and student collaboration has truly transformed our classrooms. The innovative strategies you have implemented and the supportive atmosphere you have cultivated have empowered our students to reach new heights in their academic journeys. I have witnessed firsthand the positive impact of your teaching on our students. Your ability to challenge them intellectually while nurturing their curiosity and creativity is commendable. The collaborative projects and critical discussions you have facilitated have not only enhanced their learning experiences but also prepared them for future success.

*Christine Paul*



### January and February Events

Many exciting activities were planned for Celebrate Literacy Week during the last week of January-see schedule left. On February 5th, the Florida State Teacher of the Year visited our school and met with our RAISE Tutors. Our students were able to ask questions as she shared her background and discussed the teaching profession. The students were impressed with her gracious and friendly demeanor. Pictured right: Serena Steele, Sabrina Schofield, Jaime Suarez (State TOY), Zyan Wiggins, Rylee Seligson.



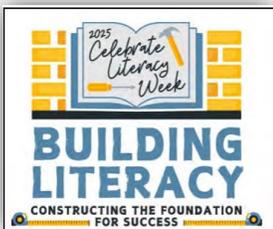
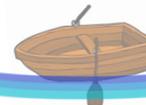
### The joys of reading:

Reading with library friends. (right). Taking turns reading to a very attentive listener (far right) .



Our own AP, Rebecca Keenum, age 4, all smiles, as all young children know—“reading is fun!!!”





## Literacy Week

Jan. 27-31, 2025

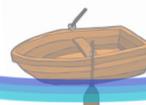
This special edition's focus will provide a glance at the many activities and events celebrating Literacy Week. According to the Florida Department of Education, "Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida!" is designed to raise awareness about the importance of reading and to inspire Florida's students and families to make reading part of their daily routines." The activities planned for the week illustrate that reading is part of our everyday activities, in school and out of school in all endeavors we engage in. The motto- "Building Literacy- Constructing the foundation for success" strives to build resiliency through reading to promote confidence and perseverance in achieving goals leading to success. Marathon Middle High School spent an exciting, activity week inspiring our students to enjoy and build the capacity for learning through reading. Activities ranged from guest readers to student presentations as well as parent involvement through lunch time and evening "books & bites!"



**Guest Readers:** Schoolboard Member, John Dick & Principal Paul read classic short stories from renown science fiction/mystery authors.



Ms. Sokolosky's 6th graders listen intently to "The Fun The Had" by Issac Asimov, while Ms. Moore's 8th graders are amused by Phillip K. Dick's, "The Eyes Have It." Senior, Rylee Seligson leads class Q &A discussions after each reading. 7th graders were transfixed by the Principal's suspenseful reading of Dahl's, "The Landlady."



### MHS Guest Readers at Stanley Switlik Elementary

**MHS RAISE Literacy tutors at Stanley Switlik Elementary working with students.**



Pictured left: Serena Steele & Arishebeth Wilson pose with their students after completing activity. Seated right: Celene Remis enjoys a read aloud activity with her little class.

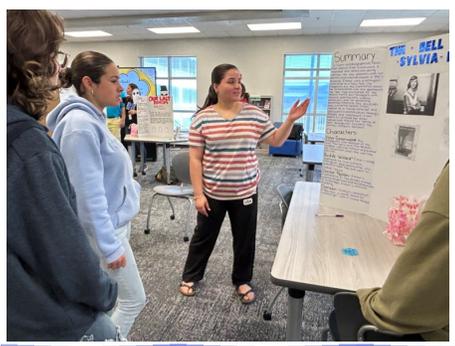


As the photos clearly demonstrate, our MHS tutors easily command the attention of their little students to engage them in their reading lessons. Pictured far left: Celene Remis, Leandro Perez & Arishebeth Wilson engaged in small group activities. Pictured right: Justice Lee enjoys reading aloud to her small group, posing with her students.



### MHS Reader's Festival

**Literary Reading Fair**— Ms. McKechnie's AP English classes created bookstall presentations highlighting their favorite books to recommend to their fellow student body. The day was spent discussing and answering questions about their presentations. Participants were given the opportunity to vote for the best display and overall exhibit. The visiting students were able to win a new copy of the book that they voted for through a raffle drawing. Presenters were treated to mid-morning snacks and lunch. All in all—presenters and visitors experienced a great day, expressing their enthusiasm for the project.



## Take a Look at... Professional Learning Insights

### Leader in Me & Covey's 7 Habits of Effective Leaders

Our school-wide professional development this year has focused on the Leader in Me & 7 Habits of Effective People. This training is the result of careful analysis of where we have been to where we want to move towards in the future. The *Leader in Me* program, combined with the 7 Habits framework, offers valuable professional development for teachers by empowering them with tools to enhance their leadership skills and foster a positive, student-centered classroom environment. By adopting these principles, teachers can build stronger relationships with students, promote personal growth, and create a culture of accountability and collaboration. The 7 Habits encourage self-reflection, proactive problem-solving, and effective time management, helping teachers improve their organizational skills and approach to teaching. Additionally, *Leader in Me* equips teachers to nurture leadership qualities in students, fostering a school-wide culture of respect, responsibility, and achievement. Overall, this professional development boosts teacher effectiveness, supports well-being, and promotes a positive learning environment for both educators and students.

#### Teacher Insights:

Haley Townsend- "To two paradigms that stuck out to me the most is: empowering students to lead their own learning, and everyone has genius. I encourage students everyday to take their education in their own hands. I am unable to do the work for them, but I can assist them in the completion of their work."

### "The Leader In Me"

TEACHING POSTERS FOR EACH OF THE "7 HABITS"



Melody Bartnik-Randolph- "I thoroughly enjoyed *The Leader in Me* workshop. It was interesting to see how much it, and AVID share a strong foundation in fostering student leadership, personal responsibility, and lifelong success skills. Both programs emphasize student empowerment, goal setting, and organization skills, making Leader in Me a natural complement to my AVID classroom."

#### On teaching the 7 Habits, teachers expressed the following views:

Belen Parrado -On Being Proactive- "This lesson engages students in practical problem-solving while teaching valuable leadership skill. By identifying a classroom need and taking initiative to address it, students practice being proactive in a tangible way. The collaborative nature of the activity also promotes communication and teamwork."

Lourdes Dick - On Putting First Things First- "...lesson emphasizes the importance of focusing on what truly matters for long-term success, rather than getting caught up in short-term urgency. By encouraging my Intensive Reading students to think critically about their priorities can help them develop better time management habits and use class time more efficiently. I feel, this is a strategic way to increase motivation to pass the state reading test needed for graduation.

Allyson Knanishu- Reflection: Knowledge is power. Many of my students need confidence to produce language in front of their teachers. Hopefully, utilizing this resource will help them feel empowered & become future leaders of our school & Keys community, at large.

#### A Message from Mrs. Paul-

I want to thank all of you who participated in the 7 Habits Leader in Me professional learning. This timeless framework used for growth and success in both personal and professional life challenges us to utilize the 7 Habits to shift our paradigms. How we interpret the world around us matters; your perspective shapes your approach and the actions you take. What you **See** influences what you **Do** and as a result what you **Get**. I am so impressed with everything you all are doing, the rigor is there, the resources are being used, and everyone is working. THANK YOU!

This semester, MHS has had the opportunity to participate in a pilot program using Edmentum's- EXACT PATH Reading & Math Support Program- Learning Strategies teachers have been selected and trained in its use. The goals are to provide targeted instruction in reading and math to assist our struggling students. The program will provide individually self-paced lessons that students will complete as they move through the program to reach mastery.



Middle school teacher, Lorie Hayes shares her classroom display charts for our new initiative, Edmentum's Exact Path reading and math support program. It will be used to track student progress as well as motivate and inspire students to work hard and envision success.

# Media Center Instructional Ideas & More



"Battle of the Books & March Madness -Caught Reading VIPs"



MHS Students Caught Reading Awarded in Book Giveaway

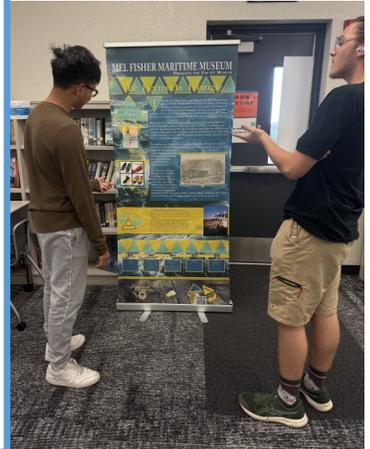
Mrs. Medero and the MHS Literacy Team set up a "Caught Reading" program for March Madness at MHS. Students caught reading by Lieutenant Literacy receive a "ticket" for a free book.

## MHS Battle of the Books Heats Up!

The excitement is building as students participate in the MHS Battle of the Books! After voting on the initial matchups, students continue to cast their votes to determine which titles advance to the next round—until one book is ultimately crowned the winner. So far, *Percy Jackson & The Lightning Thief* and *The Hunger Games* have emerged as fan favorites, with many predicting one of them will take the top spot. Stay tuned as the competition unfolds and the champion is revealed!

## Mel Fisher Maritime Museum Brings "The Bermuda Triangle" to Our School!

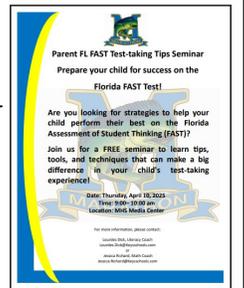
Students recently had the exciting opportunity to explore the mysteries of the Bermuda Triangle through a special pop-up museum presented by the Mel Fisher Maritime Museum. This interactive exhibit brought history, science, and maritime legends to life, allowing students to investigate famous disappearances, examine historical artifacts, and learn about the role of ocean currents and navigation in the region.



## Literacy Coach/ Updates: From the "news we've heard before, but needs reminding" category:

**What is the importance of the FAST PM3 May testing?** This is the third in a series of three state tests in ELA reading and math grades 6-10. There are two critical comparisons made— The first is between the prior school year's PM3 May test data and this school year's PM3 test data that is used as one of the measures to determine the State school grade assigned to MHS. The second is the teacher evaluation student growth measure (SP) between Fall PM1 and Spring PM3. Both comparisons are important. Now is the time for all teachers and staff to be aware of the steps we must continue to take to safeguard the progress our students have achieved so far this school year. We are still short points needed to make our school grade an A. We are not far from it and with continued perseverance and dedication -we can do it!

Parents and interested guests—please save the date and attend the FAST Test-taking Tips Seminar on April 10, 2025 in the Media Center.



Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) Achievement Level Scale Scores including Learning Gains Subcategories within Level 1 and Level 2

Assessment	Level 1 Subcategories					Level 2 Subcategories				
	Low Level 1	Mid Level 1	High Level 1	Level 2	Low Level 2	High Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	
Grade 6	160-180	180-200	200-220	220-240	240-260	260-280	280-300	300-320	320-340	340-360
Grade 7	160-180	180-200	200-220	220-240	240-260	260-280	280-300	300-320	320-340	340-360
Grade 8	160-180	180-200	200-220	220-240	240-260	260-280	280-300	300-320	320-340	340-360
Grade 9	160-180	180-200	200-220	220-240	240-260	260-280	280-300	300-320	320-340	340-360
Grade 10	160-180	180-200	200-220	220-240	240-260	260-280	280-300	300-320	320-340	340-360
Grade 6	160-180	180-200	200-220	220-240	240-260	260-280	280-300	300-320	320-340	340-360
Grade 7	160-180	180-200	200-220	220-240	240-260	260-280	280-300	300-320	320-340	340-360
Grade 8	160-180	180-200	200-220	220-240	240-260	260-280	280-300	300-320	320-340	340-360
Grade 9	160-180	180-200	200-220	220-240	240-260	260-280	280-300	300-320	320-340	340-360
Grade 10	160-180	180-200	200-220	220-240	240-260	260-280	280-300	300-320	320-340	340-360
FAST Algebra 1	160-180	180-200	200-220	220-240	240-260	260-280	280-300	300-320	320-340	340-360
FAST Geometry	160-180	180-200	200-220	220-240	240-260	260-280	280-300	300-320	320-340	340-360
FAST Mathematics	160-180	180-200	200-220	220-240	240-260	260-280	280-300	300-320	320-340	340-360

Please keep in mind the chart on the left— These are the cut scores between Achievement Levels 1-5. Note the cut scores in Levels 1 & 2— there is significant opportunity for students to increase their achievement and make the necessary learning gains required by the state. This allows for all students to be successful and increase achievement across the levels.

Again, try this Cold calling technique— utilizing a spinning wheel as a fun tool to illustrate the use of the strategy.

Note: These requirements are set forth for FAST and are subject to change with the release of the FY2024 School Grade Calculation Guide.