

# SUPERINTENDENT'S BULLETIN

APRIL 23, 2024  
ISSUE 45

News for School Board Members and District Personnel



Dear Team Monroe,

As we near the end of April, all the closing activities of the school year are upon us. Of course, most importantly in late April and early May comes our final progress monitoring for the year. Our K-2 students are busy taking the STAR tests. In addition, the FAST Test is on the horizon, I think we have learned a great deal this year about the BEST standards and their implementation, and we are using new textbooks in both reading and math to the best of our ability. It's been a challenge but one we have met. Please make sure to share with students what Computer Adaptive Testing is really all about. The Teaching and Learning team under the direction of Jennifer Barrios has developed videos to explain CAT testing. There are individual videos for students, parents, and teachers. It's a different procedure for testing than any we have experienced before. Thanks to Rachel Spencer, our Parent and Family Engagement Coordinator who has done a masterful job of recording the videos. Please make sure that all the right people have an opportunity to view these.

I always look back on the year fondly because so many wonderful things have happened in each of our schools this year. This time of year is full of excitement as we make plans to send off our seniors with thunderous applause and well-wishes. Each class moves on with excitement and joy. We make plans for the coming year with great anticipation for success. Let's enjoy this wonderful time and be happy.

Yours in education,  
Terri

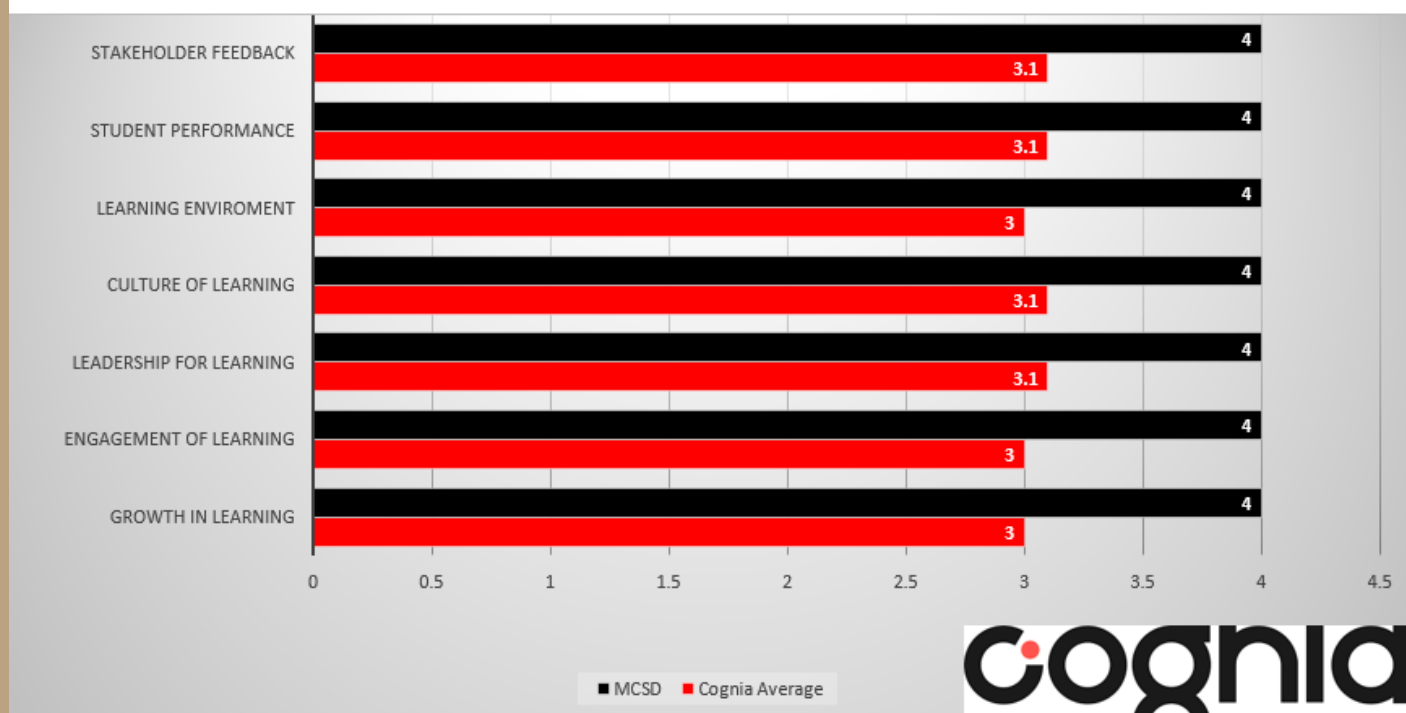
## ASSESSMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY

Testing is in full swing across the district! April 15th began the K-2 STAR/ FAST Window, and many schools have already begun to take advantage of the additional two weeks for STAR testing. Schools are also gearing up for the start of May testing for all 3-10 students, students enrolled in EOC courses, and 5th and 8th grade science. This year, ALL tests are online, and results will be available in the Florida Reporting Portal within 24 hours of the exam. High Schools are preparing for their Spring AP testing that occurs during May along with Final Exams. Please be sure students are in attendance daily so they do not miss out on valuable instruction prior to testing. Schools will be posting their testing schedules- please be sure students are on time and present for their exams.

## COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Monroe County School District is pleased to announce its Cognia Performance Accreditation and Engagement Review. Cognia defines continuous improvement as “an embedded behavior rooted in an institution’s culture that constantly focuses on conditions, processes, and practices to improve teaching and learning.” Accreditation is a continuous improvement process that helps an institution improve teaching and learning. Cognia reviewed and rated the following areas: Stakeholder Feedback Analysis, Student Performance Analysis, Learning Environments Analysis, Culture of Learning, Leadership for Learning, Engagement of Learning, and Growth in Learning. The seven areas were evaluated and received a four star rating in each area, the highest rating possible. Cognia identified noteworthy practices such as the sustained use of AVID (Advancement Via Individual Development) for professional learning and student engagement and the TSIC (Take Stock In Children) program. MCSD received an above-average rating score of 338 compared to the Cognia network average of 253. We celebrate the commitment to excellence within the Monroe County School District.

### Evaluations of Institution Analysis



Congratulations to Marathon High School Senior Mikkel Ross on being chosen as one of the 12 female student athletes named the Florida Dairy Farmers FHSAA Academic All State Team. This is the highest award given to student/athletes in the State of Florida by the FHSAA!

To be eligible for this award, students must be a graduating senior with a minimum 3.5 unweighted grade point average and earned a minimum of two varsity letters in at least two different sports during their junior and senior year. Mikkel is a multi-sport scholar athlete who contributes to the school community in a positive manner and we are proud of her recognition. Marathon High School has had 7 in the 29 year history of the award and 5 recipients in the last 4 years.

## CONTINUED COMMUNITY RELATIONS



Congratulations to the KWS Academic Challenge Team for placing 3rd in the state!! The students did an outstanding job, scoring 174 points. Their teamwork, effort and composure were impeccable according to their sponsor, Joanna Gray. Competition Team Members Neslo Atilla, Nate Burgh, Wyatt Gibson, Nico Burnett, Matthew Robertson, Antonio Gomez.



Outstanding employees were recognized at the annual Employee Recognition Banquet. It was an exciting evening with an opportunity to highlight those employees that were selected by their schools and departments for dedication and excellent work during the 2023-2024 school year.

Congratulations to all the honorees!

## EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION

The ESE Department would like to extend a huge THANK YOU to teachers, test coordinators, and support staff who made this year's Florida Alternate Assessment (FAA) a successful endeavor. A total of 235 tests were administered with the following schools going above and beyond to complete these 1:1 assessments: KWS (61 tests), HOB (51 tests), MMHS (48 tests).

As the school year winds down, the department is focused on providing a robust ESY program to help students with disabilities. We are also gearing up for SY 24-25 with a diverse selection of professional learning opportunities. Registration is open for teams to sign up for the 24-25 Environmental Communication Teaching training for students with complex communication needs. Contact Marianne Nelson ([marianne.nelson@keysschools.com](mailto:marianne.nelson@keysschools.com)) for more information.

## **FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE**

Payroll Department systems are operating smoothly and effectively.

Benefits administration continues to provide comprehensive support to staff members, addressing their healthcare, retirement, and other benefit needs efficiently.

Finance has successfully concluded all budget meetings with the schools, and we're now gearing up to meet with the Departments for their budget discussions. A huge thank you to everyone for their dedication and collaboration with the Finance Team throughout this budget season. Your hard work has been invaluable.

MIS is nearing the final deadline for Survey 3 state reporting and ensuring that all required data is accurate and complete to maximize our funding potential. We are continuing efforts to support schools with EOY processes and next year's scheduling efforts.

Internal Services is keeping busy with processing fixed asset requests, just recently completing an auction for several surplus vehicles including old school buses replaced with newer models by the Transportation Department. Internal Services will soon be working with IT to recycle older technology throughout the district this summer, so please contact your local IT representative to identify any obsolete or unused hardware that you may wish to remove from your inventory.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES AND INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

The Executive Team, Principals and District Leaders submitted recommendations to renew contracts of district educators and administrators. The Superintendent will make her recommendations for reappointment at the April 23rd School Board Meeting to approve instructional and administrative staff renewal & non-renewal for the 2024-2025 school year. The Great Florida Teach-In is an annual job fair organized by the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Educator Recruitment, Development and Retention. It provides a great opportunity for educator candidates seeking employment in Florida to reach Florida school district personnel responsible for hiring teachers. On April 13th, Monroe County School District was represented at the Great Florida Teach-In. Human Resources is currently reaching out to the registration candidates inviting them to apply in our applicant system and meet our HR team during a "Get To Know MCSD" Teams meeting.

## **OPERATIONS AND PLANNING**

The Transportation Team is gearing up for the summer with continued planned maintenance of both fleets. "We appreciate all that our Transportation Maintenance Team does to keep us running!" said Rudy Kennedy, MCSD Bus Driver and SRP of the year. Changing fluids, filters and tires keeps the maintenance shops very busy. With full maintenance facilities in Stock Island, Marathon and Tavernier, repairs and routine maintenance are made very quickly.



## CONTINUED OPERATIONS AND PLANNING

“The critical members of our Team are not very visible to campus including our awesome crew of operators, aides, office staff and our mechanics; Jose, Paul M., Pavel, Paul S., Tim, Henry, Sam and Alan” said Jason Thomason, Transportation Director. “It is a humbling honor to work for this amazing Team!”



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Thirty-two students from Key West High School recently achieved their ServSafe Food Manager Certification, marking a significant milestone in their culinary journey. Bill Lay and Bobby Kuchinsky from the Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association were present at the Half Shell Raw Bar to congratulate the students. The students were treated to a full lunch and a tour of the kitchen facilities, providing valuable hands-on experience. The event concluded with a visit to Alonzo's for their famous Key Lime pie. Teacher, Chef Lisa Rivard, expressed her immense pride in her students' accomplishments.





## CONTINUED TEACHING AND LEARNING



On Monday, April 8th, Shannon Duffy's Environmental Science EL students explored the Solar Eclipse by building a model. The students used a bright light source and wooden models for the moon and Earth to reconstruct the orientation of the eclipse celestial bodies. The students were able to visualize the effect of the moon passing between the sun and Earth, creating a shadow on the model Earth. The students gained a deeper understanding how the eclipse phenomenon can affect what we see on Earth.

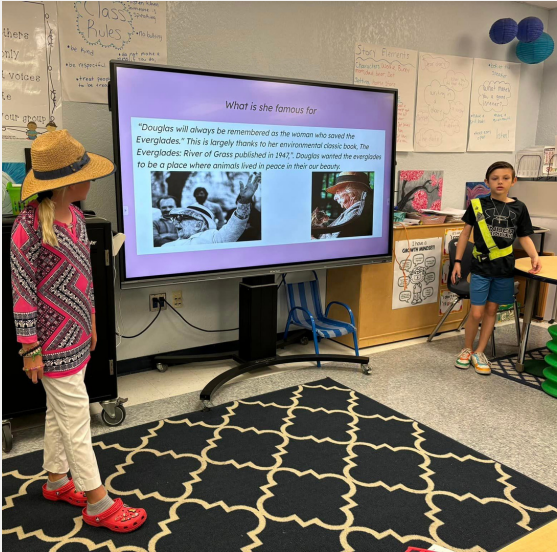
What an incredible day for Key Largo School's 4th graders! They had an amazing opportunity to explore the vibrant marine life at Carysfort Reef with the Coral Restoration Foundation. Snorkeling adventures like these not only spark curiosity but also instill a love and appreciation for our oceans. A huge thank you to Coral Restoration Foundation for making this happen!





## CONTINUED TEACHING AND LEARNING

Also at Key Largo School, their Everglades Ambassadors channeled the spirit of Marjory Stoneman Douglas as they visited elementary classrooms to share her incredible legacy! From advocating for South Florida's natural beauty to her tireless efforts to protect the Everglades, Marjory's impact lives on.



Gerald Adams' 21st Century students proudly showcased their sea creature project exhibits at our Mote Marine Family Engagement event this month. Each year, Mote Marine Laboratories serves as a valued community partner of our afterschool program providing captivating Marine Science lessons and activities for our 4th and 5th grade students.

## CONTINUED TEACHING AND LEARNING

Title I Schools are now hosting Kindergarten Round-Up events to welcome new families and establish the importance of parent-school collaboration. With the goal of integrating students and families into our school communities, Title I supports these events by providing refreshments and funding at-home supply kits and materials to help students transition from preschool or home environments to formal schooling.



kindergarten

