



MARTIN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Where Learning Has No Boundaries



UPDATE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

September 15, 2009

It has been a busy and successful start to the new school year. I would like to thank all of our teachers, administrators, and staff for their outstanding efforts in preparing for the commencement of classes. I have had the pleasure of visiting many of our schools over the past few weeks and, as always, I am impressed with the smooth and efficient operation of our schools. This is a true reflection of the dedication of all our employees.

Enrollment

The District completed the student count for the start of the new school year on September 10th. The results showed an enrollment of 17,528 students, which is slightly lower than the District's projection of 17,567 for the new year. Despite this, the student count did highlight pockets of growth within the county, most notably at SeaWind Elementary, Felix A. Williams Elementary, and Citrus Grove Elementary. District staff continues to monitor enrollment in anticipation of the FTE (Full Time Equivalency) Week enrollment count for the Florida Department of Education, which takes place October 12th-16th.

H1N1- Swine Flu

Our schools remain vigilant in their efforts to stop the spread of the flu. At the start of the new year, parents received an informational letter updating them on the District's proactive measures and protocols. The overall message continues to center around prevention and the importance of hand washing. Parents are encouraged to have contingency plans in place for when their children need to stay home from school. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines require sick students remain out of school until they have been fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medications). District and school staff are working closely with the Martin County Health Department in our efforts to maintain healthy learning environments for students.

Raptor Technologies' V-Soft Visitor Management System

On September 8th the District launched the V-Soft Visitor Management System by Raptor Technologies at all of our schools. The V-Soft system works by scanning any government issued ID, such as a drivers' license, identification card, military ID, or immigration cards, and cross referencing the information against a database comprised of sex offender information from all 50 states. The system is secure and is only used for the sex offender screening. It does not screen for any other offenses, such as traffic tickets, felonies, etc. The V-soft system provides an extra level of security for our students and staff, and I believe this system is a valuable new addition to our school security efforts.

Attendance Campaign

This year the District is also launching a new attendance initiative. It is paramount that students attend school on a regular basis. With only 180 days of instruction each school year, unless a child is ill, he or she needs to be in class when school is in session. As part of the initiative, the District is increasing efforts to monitor daily absences and identify potential truants. The District is partnering with School Resource Officers and the court system to enforce school attendance requirements. In addition, an attendance campaign is being developed that will target the roles each of us play in students' education, whether you are student, a parent, or community member. I will continue to keep you updated on this important initiative.

The 2009-2010 school year is off to an exciting start ! **As always, our focus remains on increasing student achievement and providing our students with the tools they need for educational success.** Thank you for all that you do for our students and schools.

Sincerely,

Nancy Kline, Superintendent
Martin County School District