



MARTIN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Where Learning Has No Boundaries



UPDATE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

November 24, 2009

I would like to wish our teachers, administrators, and staff a happy and safe Thanksgiving holiday. It is difficult to believe that the holidays are already upon us. I hope you are able to spend quality time with your families and friends over the long holiday weekend.

This time of year, it is also important to remind ourselves that many families across our area may be struggling financially as evidenced by the number of families qualifying for the Free and Reduced Priced Meals program. Families can apply for this important program at any time, and can reapply if they have been denied previously and their economic status has changed.

To assist families, parents can now complete the application by visiting the district's Food and Nutritional Services Department. Staff members will be available to answer questions and to help with the application process. The Food and Nutritional Services Department is located at the Stuart Learning Center, Building 13, which is behind J.D. Parker Elementary. The office is open weekdays from 7:30 A.M until 4 P.M. Only one application per family needs to be completed. Parents can also complete the application at their child's school by meeting with the cafeteria manager or online at http://www.sbcm.org/departments/foodservice/free_reduced.php.

Class Size Reduction

The Florida Department of Education has notified the district that it has met the requirements for class size reduction this year. The calculation is based on data provided to the state during FTE (Full-time Equivalency) week in October. This year, the calculation remains at school-wide averages. However, if there is no action by the Florida Legislature, the calculation will move to the individual classroom level in 2010-2011.

Superintendent's Certification Program

I recently completed the Florida Superintendent's Special Certification Program. This is a voluntary program which provides extensive training in school law, school finance, collective bargaining, and leadership. I found this program to be extremely valuable and I look forward to continued professional development opportunities provided through the Florida Association of District School Superintendents.

Single Point of Entry

A major initiative for the district this year is to create single points of entry at school sites where this function does not currently exist. The School Board will be holding a workshop in the near future to discuss this project. At all times, the safety and security of our students and staff is the district's highest priority. Creating a single point of entry at schools provides an additional layer of security and complements the new Raptor system by assisting schools in monitoring people who are granted access to campuses.

The single point of entry concept is created by adding perimeter fencing to designated areas of a campus, thereby redirecting access through a reception area or front office. This concept has most recently been instituted at Pinewood Elementary with several additional schools in the design phase. The School Board will also be discussing the district's plans to implement this previously approved capital project at the Instructional Center (IC). This will not only address security concerns, but will also help to alleviate the ongoing issue of visitors at the IC not being able to locate the correct office or department upon arrival.

Congratulations!

Congratulations to our schools participating in the Positive Behavior Support (PBS) program in 2008-2009 for being named *Model Schools* by the University of South Florida. Jensen Beach High and J.D. Parker Elementary both earned Gold status, Anderson Middle and Jensen Beach Elementary earned Silver awards, and Stuart Middle and Pinewood Elementary received the Bronze award. The PBS program uses evidence-based strategies and systems to increase academic performance, increase safety, decrease problem behaviors, and establish positive school cultures.

I would also like to congratulate both Martin County High School's Girls Volleyball Team (Class 5A) and Jensen Beach High School's Girls Volleyball Team (Class 4A) for winning the state championships! What an outstanding accomplishment to have two teams both ranked 1st in the state in the same year. Way to go!

These are just some of the amazing achievements across our district. This past year serving as your Superintendent of Schools has been an incredible honor. Our schools and staff have accomplished great things and received state and national recognition. By working together as one team, we are all winners! Thank you all for everything you do each day for our students and have a happy, safe Thanksgiving holiday.

Sincerely,
Nancy Kline
Superintendent, Martin County School District