



Update from the Superintendent

To: All BDS Employees
From: Mark McQueen, Superintendent
Date: May 17, 2024

This is a copy of the Superintendent's weekly message that is sent to parents/guardians. We want to make sure you have the same information as well, so you're in the loop :)

I am thrilled to announce the launch of an innovative initiative that will revolutionize how we support our students and teachers: the Adrianna Swearingen Teacher Resource Store. Named in honor of our esteemed Florida Teacher of the Year, Adrianna Swearingen, this initiative embodies our commitment to providing unparalleled resources for the success of every student in our district.

Situated at Rutherford High School, the Adrianna Swearingen Teacher Resource Store will serve as a hub for all Bay District Schools, offering a wide array of school supplies to enhance the learning environment. From large classroom rugs to flexible seating, bulletin board supplies, and all the fun classroom extras, this store will ensure that teachers (particularly new teachers setting up classrooms for the first time) can access the resources they need to create dynamic and engaging learning spaces.

What sets this initiative apart is its unique approach to supporting our educators. Through a grant-funded program, teachers can "work" in the store and earn "gen bucks." These gen bucks can then be spent in the store, allowing teachers to acquire the "extras" they would like for their classrooms at no cost, thus alleviating the financial burden often associated with purchasing classroom materials. While we're still finalizing the details, typically these operations "pay" teachers 40 "bucks" an hour and price supplies at pennies on the dollar so teachers can easily secure their wishlist items.

But the Adrianna Swearingen Teacher Resource Store is more than just a place to obtain supplies for new teachers—it's a community partnership to support our schools and students. Our generous community hosts amazing school supply drives each year but, unfortunately, some of these supplies either don't make it to school with students or are consumed more rapidly than intended. This leaves students, families and teachers short on supplies by mid-year, and we also want to help with that. So, we are calling on local community organizations to consider redirecting their school supply drives to the store, ensuring that resources are distributed equitably to meet the needs of every student. This collaborative effort will streamline the process of acquiring supplies and foster a sense of unity and support within our community.

With enough support from the community, our vision is that teachers will be able to request fully-stuffed backpacks with the needed items for each student in their class who needs assistance and can also request mid-year deliveries as needed. We hope our faith-based organizations and civic-minded individuals will really get involved with this and will help us make these needed deliveries - we know

that all donors want a chance to see their supplies being used, and so we're envisioning a cadre of volunteers who deliver and help distribute these supplies at our schools.

I am proud to announce that this initiative is made possible through a partnership between the Bay Education Foundation and Bay District Schools. Together, we are paving the way for a brighter future for our students and educators.

To kick off this exciting endeavor, we will be hosting a grand opening event in July, where community members can tour the store and learn more about how they can get involved. Additionally, we are thrilled to announce partnerships with Rutherford High School students, who will engage in logistics and supply chain training, and the incredible students at Chautauqua Learn and Serve Charter School, who will gain valuable experience in point-of-sale technology and inventory management.

The new store is just the beginning of a journey toward greater support and success for Bay District Schools. I encourage anyone interested in partnering with us to contact BDScomm@bay.k12.fl.us. Together, we can ensure every student has the necessary resources to thrive.