



Update from the Superintendent

To: Parents and Guardians
From: Mark McQueen, Superintendent
Date: January 24, 2025

As we approach the 2024-2025 **Excellence in Education Awards Ceremony** on January 25th, we're reminded of the extraordinary dedication of the Bay District Schools' "Team of Teams." With almost 3,500 dedicated employees working each day to support our students and put the "A" back in Bay, our district is powered by incredible people who give their all to strengthen our schools, our community, and our future.

The Excellence in Education Awards honor the very best of this team—those who go above and beyond, exemplifying excellence in their fields. This year, we are proud to partner with our Signature Sponsor, **Trustmark Bank**, whose generosity has enabled us to double the prize funds for our Teachers of the Year, Support Employees of the Year, and Rookie Teachers of the Year. Additionally, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to the **St. Joe Community Foundation** and **Bay Education Foundation** for their generous sponsorships and steadfast partnership. Their support is essential in making this celebration of educational excellence possible.

Please join me in congratulating these exceptional individuals:

Teacher of the Year Finalists

Melissa Clark - Deane Bozeman School
Francisco Garza - Waller Elementary School
Erin Lange - Surfside Middle School
Evony Manning - Rutherford Middle/High School
Pamela Wiggins - Bay High School

Rookie Teacher of the Year Finalists

Kortney Adcock - Merriam Cherry Street Elementary School
Jenna Frigon - Lucille Moore Elementary School
Lea Gunter - Oscar Patterson Academy
Tiffany Moore - Rutherford Middle/High School
Marcus Pocerlich - Breakfast Point Academy

Support Employee of the Year Finalists

Raslean Allen - Oscar Patterson Academy

Eduardo Crisostomo Anastacio - Patronis Elementary School

Cassandra Hutchinson - Lucille Moore Elementary School

Rodney Lane - J.R. Arnold High School

Mary McGowan - Margaret K. Lewis School in Millville

At the same event, we will honor our administrators of the year. Congratulations to:

Principal of the Year: Michelle Good, Callaway Elementary School

Assistant Principal of the Year: Michael Allison, Rosenwald School

Assistant Administrator of the Year: Adrian Baxley, Surfside Academy

We are also excited to celebrate Dr. Stefanie Gall, who was recently named the **Educator of a Lifetime**. For 45 years, Dr. Gall has shaped Bay District Schools in every role, from teacher to superintendent. Her commitment continues as she tirelessly volunteers to support our children. Trustmark Bank's generous \$8,000 donation in her honor will directly support our awardees this year.

This year also marks the debut of the **Joyful Award**, in memory of Joy Noble. Joy, a longtime Teacher of the Year committee member, was an unwavering advocate for public education, bringing immense joy to all who knew her. The Joyful Award will recognize educators who bring that same spirit to their classrooms and community, keeping her legacy alive.

To all our nominees, thank you for representing the very best of Bay District Schools. Your commitment, enthusiasm, and hard work make a meaningful impact and inspire us all. Together, we are putting the "A" back in Bay!