



Update from the Superintendent

To: Parents and Guardians
From: Mark McQueen, Superintendent
Date: May 29, 2025

As we approach the end of another incredible school year, I want to thank each and every one of you for your extraordinary efforts, dedication, and commitment to our students and community.

Throughout the year, I've had the opportunity to witness unwavering excellence across every corner of Bay District Schools ... in every classroom, on every campus, on our buses, in our maintenance department, and throughout the district office. Excellence isn't a slogan here; it's a standard that lives and breathes in all that we do, and I am so proud of this team of teams we've built together.

One of the highlights of my role has been meeting monthly with our outstanding student leaders from across all of our schools. Hearing directly from them provides valuable insight into the work we're doing and how it is impacting those we serve most — our students.

From our most recent meetings, several key themes stood out:

- Our students are energized by the passion they feel from administrators, teachers, staff members, and each other. They can see our laser-like focus on putting the "A" back in Bay, and they believe deeply in our shared mission.
- They expressed sincere appreciation for our renewed focus on attendance, recognizing that being consistently present in school is critical for academic success.
- They praised the work of our graduation coaches, noting the importance of their personalized support for students facing a wide range of personal challenges.
- They also complimented the many ways we are communicating — from billboards, public service announcements, PeachJar flyers, Focus emails, calls, and texts to school newsletters, social media updates, and mainstream media stories. They appreciate being informed and feeling connected to the work we're doing.

At the secondary level (grades 6-12), our students brought forward several ideas that we are excited to begin refining and implementing for the upcoming school year:

- We will launch a significant initiative to ensure that all students understand how to access the services provided by our professional school counselors, empowering them to make informed decisions about their educational and career paths. This includes a targeted outreach to middle school students, and their

parents/guardians, to ensure they understand the opportunities and responsibilities presented by tackling high-school-level coursework in middle school.

- We will begin developing an expanded menu of free, optional test preparation sessions outside regular school hours, including weekends, to better prepare students for state and national assessments.
- We will expand college application support to make the process smoother, more personalized, and accessible for all students, regardless of background or circumstance.

At the elementary level, we are also proud to build on the strong foundation laid this year by focusing on key initiatives to better prepare our youngest learners for the future:

- We will increase opportunities for Career and Technical Education (CTE) exposure across all elementary grades, helping students start dreaming even earlier about the wide variety of careers available to them..
- We will continue to strengthen character education through programs like the Leader in Me and the Ron Clark Academy House System, equipping students with the essential soft skills, such as teamwork, leadership, and resilience, they need to succeed in life.
- We will also expand family engagement opportunities at the elementary level, providing more hands-on workshops and events to equip parents and guardians with tools to support their child's academic, emotional, and social development.

There is so much to celebrate, and even more to look forward to! I am filled with pride, gratitude, and optimism as we wrap up this year. Thank you for everything you have done to make a difference in the lives of our students and families.

I hope each of you has a relaxing, joyful summer filled with everything that brings you happiness. I look forward to seeing the results of all this hard work, dedication, and collaboration when the state releases our school grades this summer, typically in mid- to late-July.

Together, we are putting the “A” back in Bay — and together, we are building an even brighter future for all. Have a wonderful summer!