



School Update  
March 25, 2011

Thanks to everyone for your support!! In case you didn't hear, we did receive approval from the Palmetto City Council for our development plan, which enables us to begin construction. Please see the pictures below of the construction. We are underway!!

A Note from Dr. Jones:

*I wanted to express my sincere appreciation to all of you who attended the Palmetto City Commission meeting on Monday, March 21. Your show of support was tremendous. However, your expression of love and appreciation for this school was just overwhelming. Many of you literally brought me to tears with your words. To be a part of this endeavor and to have students and parents like you is more than most people could ever hope for in a lifetime. Thank you so much for your support.*

*Sincerely,*

*Dr. Bill Jones*



Please read on for more information on what is happening at MSA:

- MSA Heat is having a one-day dance clinic on Saturday March 26th from 10 AM to 4 PM. Registration begins at 9 AM. The cost for the clinic is \$25 per dancer and they can register on site. If they did not register before March 16th they will not receive the Clinic T-Shirt on the day of the clinic, but will receive it within 2 weeks of the clinic. (We will be making a separate order for late registrations)

Also, the MSA Heat will be joining forces with the MSA Strikers on Thursday, April 7<sup>th</sup>, at 7 PM for the first ever "Strike Up The HEAT" Performance to be held at MSA in the large theater. Tickets will be \$5 in advance and \$7 at the door. Tickets will be available soon.

- We will be starting a new class next year, a first in the country, called the Physics of Motorsports. This class has been developed following the trend in education to create STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) courses that increase the rigor in these areas and ignites student interest in advanced study in these areas. As the President of the United States indicated in the State of the Union address, this type of course (STEM courses) are needed to assure our students have the opportunity to compete with students from around the world in the science and technology areas.

As you know, at MSA we think outside the box, and adding another science class would not be enough for us. We have been working very hard over the past many months to create a course that would not only meet the needs of the STEM initiative, but be interesting to our students and inspire them to new heights. So where do we go? To the most technologically advanced science field in the world, motorsports!!

Millions of dollars are spent on technology for racing each year, and the support for those racers we see on the track comes from scientists and engineers. What better way to engage students than to give them a real life focus and application for what they learn.

Now you ask about "go-kart" – well, what good is a science class without a lab? The perfect lab experience for a Physics of Motorsports class is a test vehicle which is equipped to take measurements, readings, and possibly video from a track. Yes, some may say a go-kart, but by no standard is this a go-kart of amusement park "fame." We are doing serious science experiments, and having a little fun along the way.

More details will follow, but this is a quick snapshot of what we are planning. This will be a first of its kind course in the country at the secondary

level. We are very excited about the program, and look forward to educating students in new and exciting ways!!

- **FCAT Update:**

- April 12 – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade -10<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading
- April 13 -6<sup>th</sup> Grade – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade and 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Math\*  
\*9<sup>th</sup> grade students will take the End of Course test in Algebra I in May
- April 14 – 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Science

**PLEASE** make sure your children are at school on these dates to take this important assessment!!

- Please note the following recommendations for students:
  - Eat a good dinner the night before the tests
  - Get a good night's sleep
  - Come in ready and prepared to do your best
  - Leave all electronics at home (including cell phones, iPods, etc.) They are not allowed in the testing room, and if students can leave them home for the day, it would be greatly appreciated.

- On March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011, the National Junior Honor Society and Manatee School For the Arts participated in the 25<sup>th</sup> annual Southeastern Guide Dog Walkathon. This year's National Junior Honor society raised over \$1,200 for the Guide Dogs. Way to go NJHS!



Starting April 2<sup>nd</sup> and running the first 2 weekends in April, NJHS will be volunteering when Thomas the Tank Engine comes to Parrish at the Florida Railroad Museum. Face painting, tattoos, storytelling, giant slides and a bounce house are all part of the fun. The kids work hard, but the work is fun. Those of us that worked with Thomas last year look forward to his return this year.

- MSA's first ever Mock Trial Competition Team competed this past Saturday (3/19/11) in the 12<sup>th</sup> Circuit competition held at the Manatee County Courthouse. Local schools represented in the competition were Palmetto, St. Stephens, Manatee, Bradenton Christian, Braden River and MSA. The team, comprised of high school students, faced off against the two finalists from 2010, Manatee and

St. Stephens. In the opening round, the team upset Manatee before falling just a bit short of the overall championship to St. Stephens. The entire competition centered around a civil case involving alleged drinking and texting while driving. The teams prepared and competed for both the plaintiff and the defendant and argued both sides of the case over the two rounds of competition. Competing teams and trial judges alike marveled at the degree of competence our kids showed in only their first year of competition. Team members Steven Drake, Hallie Mattick, Matthew Quick, Anthony Santinello, Robert Tait and Brooke Thurnau are all to be commended for all their hard work and dedication required to make our first foray into the event a successful and memorable one.

- Congratulations to our Senior Thespians group who participated last week at the High School Florida State Thespian Competition. Our two small group musical numbers from Footloose (including HERO with Channing Weir, Samantha Grutzner, Sarah Haun, Cheyenne DeBarros and Hannah Martin as well as MAMMA SAYS with Matt Quick, Brandon Dake, Steven Drake and Anthony Santaniello) received EXCELLENTS. Our other 4 entries including solos by Channing Weir and Samantha Grutzner, Costume Design by Seth Mead and duet acting by Cheyenne DeBarros and Grace Jean-Pierre received SUPERIORS. In addition, Grace Jean-Pierre and Cheyenne DeBarros were chosen as one of the top scenes at the state competition to showcase at the Saturday evening performance in the 5000 seat Morsani theatre. A huge thanks to all involved.
- Students with a 504 or IEP may be eligible for services after high school. Division of Vocational Rehabilitation will be at MSA on Monday, April 18<sup>th</sup> at 6pm to provide more information about transition services and eligibility requirements. Parents of high school students with a 504 or IEP are invited to attend. For more information about Division of Vocational Rehabilitation go to [www.rehabworks.org](http://www.rehabworks.org).
- Come out to see the Jazz Band perform this Saturday at the Sarasota County Fair – Main Stage – 6:00 PM

- MSA will be holding Wellness Week from April 1-11<sup>th</sup>. We will be doing lessons on and talking about good health practices for all students. More details to follow, but please help us teach our students about good health and wellness.

## **Upcoming Events**

### March

- 26 HEAT Dance Clinic  
Jazz Band Performing at Sarasota County Fair – 6:00 PM

### April

- 1-11 MSA Wellness Week
- 7 Strike Up the HEAT – 7:00 PM
- 8 No School – Records Day
- 12-14 FCAT Reading, Math, Science
- 22 No School – Good Friday  
Children’s Parade
- 29 Senior Grad Night – Disney’s Magic Kingdom

*Please check the website for more dates and times*

[www.msfta.org](http://www.msfta.org)