

# Cougar Growl Family Newsletter

## August 26 – August 30, 2024

### August Character Counts Trait – All Pillars

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) is a progress monitoring system that is administered three times per year to track your student's progress in learning the **Benchmarks of Excellent Student Thinking (B.E.S.T.) Standards** throughout this school year. The purpose of this letter is to inform you that your student will participate in the first administration (**PM1**) of the **Grade [3/4/5/Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) ELA Reading [and Mathematics] assessment[s]**. Your student's results from PM1 are for informational purposes only, and you will be provided with information about how to access the results after testing is completed.

FAST assessments are computer-adaptive tests taken on a computer or tablet. The questions get easier or more difficult depending on how the student responds, and each student will see different questions from a common item bank. Each test attempt (PM1, PM2, and PM3) will present 35–40 items that will cover the entire test "blueprint," meaning students will encounter items representative of the standards within the subject or grade level. For more information on the test design, please visit <https://www.fldoe.org/accountability/assessments/k-12-student-assessment/best/>.

If you or your student would like to interact with the online testing platform or review **FAST ELA Reading and Mathematics** sample items at home, sample test materials are available at <https://ffast.org/families.html>.

9/5 **3<sup>rd</sup> Reading:** Bikowski, Coriell, Keating, Matthiesen, McVay

9/6 **3<sup>rd</sup> Math:** Bikowski, Coriell, Keating, Matthiesen, McVay

9/9 **5<sup>th</sup> Reading:** Acs, Daniel, Miller, Whitaker, Willard

9/10 **5<sup>th</sup> Math:** Acs, Daniel, Miller, Whitaker, Willard

9/12 **4<sup>th</sup> Reading:** Allen, Kennelly, Skanes, Smolek, Zaletel

9/13 **4<sup>th</sup> Math:** Allen, Kennelly, Skanes, Smolek, Zaletel

**Make Up Dates:** 9/16, 9/17, 9/18, 9/19, 9/23, 9/24, 9/25, 9/26, 9/27

Please review the following policies with your student before testing:

- **Electronic Devices**—Students are not permitted to access any electronic devices, including, but not limited to, cell phones, smartphones, and smartwatches, at any time during testing or during breaks (e.g., restroom). If your student is found with an electronic device or is found using Bluetooth/wireless headphones/earbuds during testing, his or her test may be invalidated.
- **Testing Rules Acknowledgment**— All tests include a Testing Rules Acknowledgment that reads: "I understand the testing rules that were just read to me. If I do not follow these rules, my test score may be invalidated." Prior to testing, test administrators read the rules to students, and students acknowledge that they understand the testing rules by clicking the box in the secure browser indicating they understand the testing rules.

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- **Discussing Test Content after Testing**— The last portion of the testing rules read to students before they click the box to accept the Testing Rules Acknowledgment states that because the content of all statewide assessments is secure, students may not discuss or reveal details about the test content (including test items and passages) after the test. This includes any type of electronic communication, such as texting, emailing, or posting to social media sites.

Please make sure your student understands this policy prior to testing and remind them that “discussing” test content includes any kind of electronic communication, such as texting, emailing, posting to social media, or sharing online. While students may not share information about secure test content after testing, this policy is not intended to prevent students from discussing their testing experiences with their parents/families.

- **Working Independently**—Students are responsible for doing their own work during the test and for protecting their answers from being seen by others. If students are caught cheating during testing, their tests will be invalidated.
- **Testing Accommodations**—If your student has an Individual Education Plan (IEP), a Section 504 Plan, or is an English Language Learner (ELL) or a recently exited ELL, please contact the school to discuss any testing accommodations that will be provided for your student.

**If you have any questions related to this test administration, you may contact:**

Joelle Johnson – [Joelle.Johnson@stjohns.k12.fl.us](mailto:Joelle.Johnson@stjohns.k12.fl.us) (3rd-5th)

Adriana Orta – [Adriana.Orta@stjohns.k12.fl.us](mailto:Adriana.Orta@stjohns.k12.fl.us) (K-2<sup>nd</sup>)

Bailey Benoit – [Bailey.Benoit@stjohns.k12.fl.us](mailto:Bailey.Benoit@stjohns.k12.fl.us)

For more information about the FAST program, please visit the portal at [FLFAST.org](http://FLFAST.org)

Thank you for supporting your student and encouraging him or her to do his or her best during this test administration.

Sincerely,

Patrick Roach

**PAWS UP!**