





**Ahfachkee cheerleaders Adryan Garcia, Danae' Gilkes and Thelma Tigertail bring energy to the pep rally before the Florida Standards Assessment testing began March 27. The pep rally pitted the school's staff against students in a friendly basketball game. (Beverly Bidney photo)**

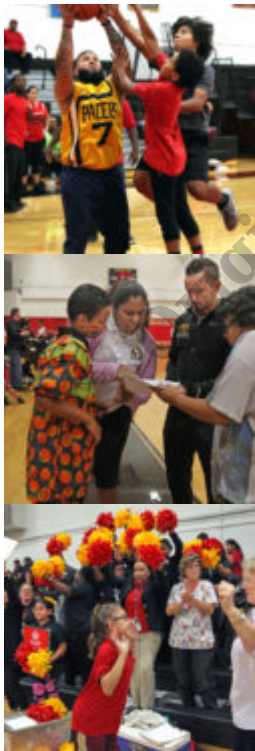
**BIG CYPRESS** — Perhaps not every Florida student in grades three through 10 third looks forward to the annual Florida Standards Assessment, but the test is how the state measures achievement in language arts and math.

The tests were developed to ensure all students graduate from high school ready for success in college, career and life, according to the FSA website.

The testing period stretches from March 27 through May 12 and is an intense period of the academic year. To alleviate students' stress about the FSA, the Ahfachkee School in Big Cypress held a rousing pep rally March 31 at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium.



Tenth-grader Romeo Jumper-Garcia takes a layup during the basketball game between the Ahfachkee students and staff at the pre-FSA pep rally March 27. (Beverly Bidney photo)





Ahfachkee music teacher Ja'Nia Harden rouses the crowd and the cheerleaders at the school's pep rally prior to the FSA testing. (Beverly Bidney photo)

Prior to the event, the student government hosted a fundraiser. A few teachers and SPD Officer Momen Abdelhamid competed for a chance for a little stardom at the rally. The person who raised the most cash "won" the honor of getting beaned in the face with a pie. Momen raised \$194, to be used for student council activities, and paid the price with whipped cream.

As with any pep rally, energetic cheerleaders led the crowd in cheers and songs. This rally was interactive with relay races and a basketball game that pitted students against the school staff.

The staff had their own cheerleaders in the stands during the game and school spirit resonated. Alternating cheers emanated from the stands, "Let's go Warriors, let's go!" "Let's go staff, let's go!"

Ultimately, the staff prevailed; the final score was 39-33.

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