

MAROA FORSYTH

Home of the Trojans



Building a Better World One Student at a Time



DISTRICT NEWSLETTER- November 2011

Superintendent Comments

The 2011 school report cards were recently reviewed at the October School Board Meeting. The school report cards contain information on student performance, student demographics, staff demographics, and District finances.

I would like to take a moment to provide a quick overview of our student performance on the standardized testing. Our overall number of students meeting and exceeding the state standards increased from 84.9 to 86.5%. To break that down a little further, on the ISAT test (Illinois Standards Achievement Test), which is administered to third through eighth grades, our students meeting and exceeding state standards increased from 92.2% to 93.9%. On the PSAE test (Prairie State Achievement Exam), which is administered to our eleventh graders, students meeting and exceeding state standards decreased from 58.1.2% to 55.2%. The District scored significantly higher than state averages on all but one area of the tested areas. As part of our School Improvement process the faculty, staff, and administration are working diligently to address our areas of deficiency. We will report on the steps being taken to improve the education of our

students in future editions of this Newsletter.

The 2011 School Reports are available on the District's Website at the following address:

<http://www.mfschools.org/unit/repcard/index.htm>

Inclement Weather Procedures

It's hard to believe that we are approaching the winter season once again. It seems like just a few days ago we were bringing in the new class of kindergartners' for their first day of school. As we approach the winter season there is always the potential for the need to cancel or delay school due to the inclement weather. The decision to cancel or delay school is never an easy one and one that is not taken lightly. Student safety is our top priority and will always be the basis for our decisions. However, if we feel we are able to safely transport the students, school will be in session. In the event that school must be delayed or canceled, every attempt is made to make the decision by 6:15 on the morning in question. The District will use the *SchoolReach* phone and email notification system to inform students and their parents. The delay or cancellation information is also available through numerous media outlets. You may listen to radio

stations: WSOY, Y-103, 95Q, WDKR, WEJT, and WHOW. Cancellations and delays will also be reported to the three major television stations in the area as well. Those being: WAND, WCIA, and WICS.

Maroa Forsyth Foundation

The Maroa Forsyth School District is very fortunate to have tremendous community and parental support. One of the most supportive organizations to the District is the Maroa Forsyth School District Foundation. The Foundation is a not-for-profit (IRS 501(c)(3) corporation, organized under the laws of the State of Illinois, that provides a long-term, self-sustaining financial structure to enhance the educational programs of the Maroa Forsyth Community Unit Schools.

Since its inception in 1997 the Foundation has invested over \$100,000 in the Maroa Forsyth schools for such things as science equipment, technology upgrades, band equipment, formal choral attire, and numerous other curricular and equipment needs. To make a tax deductible contribution or to learn more about the Maroa Forsyth School District Foundation, please visit their website at:

<http://www.mfschools.org/unit/found/index.htm>

TROJANS



Maroa Forsyth CUSD #2



New Illinois Learning Standards

In June of 2010 the Illinois State Board of Education adopted new learning standards for students in K- 12th grade in the areas of English-language arts and mathematics. The original Illinois Learning Standards created in 1997 will be in place in all other content areas until additional standards are approved. Science standards are presently under consideration and social studies will follow.

The “New Illinois Learning Standards Incorporating the Common Core,” resulted from 47 states working together voluntarily to develop clear and consistent benchmarks that would ensure comparable high standards exist across states. Presently all but 6 states have adopted the Common Core Standards.

Standards define the knowledge and skills students should acquire during their kindergarten through twelfth grade education so they graduate from high school able to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing academic college courses and in workforce training programs. The new standards provide academic benchmarks with “fewer, clearer and higher” academic standards for essential learning and skills.

The standards were developed while considering the standards of top performing countries and current state standards.

English-language arts and mathematics were selected to be the first areas for new standards, since they are considered the foundation for other areas. The English-language arts standards for K-5 and 6-12 include reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language; additionally 6-12 contains history/social studies, science, and technical subjects sections that focus on reading and writing. Mathematics standards consist of *Standards for Mathematical Practice* and *Standards for Mathematical Content*. Mathematical practice is intended to provide students with necessary processes and proficiencies. Mathematical content focuses on procedure and understanding.

States are working together to develop a new assessment system to replace ISAT and PSAE that are currently in place. Illinois and 25 other states are part of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) consortium. PARCC will create assessments that provide data during the year to inform instruction, interventions, help determine whether students are college and career ready or on track, and serve as a measure for accountability.

This new model offers flexibility to assess early in the year and again at mid-year to provide interim data on student progress.

The end of the year assessment will be used for accountability and will consider student proficiency and growth.

The assessments are to be delivered on computer, with a paper-and-pencil available as an accommodation and for grades 3-5 until studies confirm that students in these grades are ready for computer-based assessments.

The anticipated implementation for a new assessment is the 2014- 2015 school year. Additional information will be shared with the community as it becomes available.

Maroa Forsyth CUSD #2 is planning for the transition to the new standards over the next two years. Additional information regarding grade level expectations written in student and parent friendly terms can be found on the PTA web site or through the Illinois State Board of Education, ILS Common Core Resources and scroll down to Parent Resources

http://www.isbe.net/common_core/htmls/resources.htm.

These documents include samples of what your child will be working on by grade level and ways to help your child at home.

TROJANS



Maroa Forsyth High School



Principal's Message

What an amazing Fall season we have had here at MFHS. Our football team remains undefeated and hosts a third round playoff game against Marshal on Saturday at 1:30. We hope to have several more playoff games as the Trojans are currently ranked #1 in Class 2A. In addition, our soccer team just capped off an amazing season with a run to the state finals where we finished 4th in the state Class A tournament.



(Senior Cody Drew pictured above)

Without question, we proved to be one of the state's premier Class A soccer teams. We finished the season 21-5-1 and made our first state finals appearance since 2007.

Though our soccer program is a co-operative effort with Warrensburg-Latham High School, it was well represented by Maroa-Forsyth students Cody Drew, Nic Livasy, Aaron

Shore, Andrew Shore, Matthew Leighton, Justin Marz, John Livasy, Chapman Shanefelt, Aaron Smith, Seth Woolen, and Brandon Zelhart.



(Senior Andrew Shore dribbles through traffic during state finals action)

KEVINKROWS.com
SPORTS PHOTOGRAPHY

Congratulations to Boys' Soccer!

Upcoming Assembly

We are also excited to bring nationally renowned speaker Jerry Ackerman to our students for an assembly on November 23rd. Jerry is well known for his message regarding bullying and the acceptable use of social media.

"An education isn't how much you have committed to memory, or even how much you know. It's being able to differentiate between what you know and what you don't." Anatole France

School Improvement

We were fortunate to bring in well known speaker, Marilee Sprenger a.k.a. the "brain lady", to speak to our middle school and high school faculty on learning profiles (how different students learn) and on Dr. Sternberg's three types of intelligences: Practical, Creative, and Analytical. Mrs. Sprenger spoke for approximately an hour and reinforced the importance of differentiated instruction.

Our Juniors will begin their first session of "test prep" on Monday, November 7th. Sessions consist of twelve, 25 minute periods each. We will have two additional sessions as the year progresses. Sessions focus on preparation for the ACT in English, Math, and Science. Students are grouped according to their individual needs.

Important Dates

- 11/7-11/23 Test Prep Sessions for Juniors during Activity Period
- 11/7 First Scholastic Bowl Meet
- 11/11 Veteran's Day Assembly
- 11/14 First Girls' Basketball Game
- 11/18 Mid-Term
- 11/23-Assembly- Jerry Ackerman on Bullying & Appropriate Use of Social Media
- 11/29 First Boys' Basketball Game

TROJANS



Maroa Forsyth Middle School



Principal's Message

The middle school staff is very proud of the students at MFMS for their academic performance during the 1st quarter. 85% of all middle school students were on either High Honor Roll or Honor Roll. As a result, the students participated in an Academic Celebration on October 28th. To view the 1st Quarter Honor Roll please visit the middle school website at

www.mfschools.org/middle.

I would like to encourage everyone to come out and see this years Middle School Musical, "Guys and Dolls". The choir will be holding three performances open to the public. Anyone interested in purchasing tickets should call the middle school office at 794-5115. The performances will take place on November 11th and 12th at 7:00 pm, and on November 13th at 3:00 pm.

I would also like to invite anyone interested to attend our Veteran's Day Assembly on November 11th at 2:00. I have placed an Invitation on our webpage along with information about a picture slide show we create for the assembly. If you know a veteran who is interested in attending or would like to send pictures of family members who are veterans, please have that information to me by November 10th.

If you have questions or concerns feel free to email me at stewartb@mfschools.org or call me at 794-5115.

PBIS News

Earlier this school year, Maroa Forsyth Middle School received recognition for

implementing PBIS. The Middle School was given "Emerging" status and this year we hope to reach "Implementing" status. To learn more about PBIS please visit our new PBIS section of the middle school webpage at

<http://www.mfschools.org/middle/PBISWEB/index.html>.

Every month the PBIS team establishes an objective for the students to work towards. For the month of September the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades all achieved their objectives. The objectives for the month of October were:

6th-Coming to class prepared

7th-No missing or late assignments

8th- No missing or late assignments

The 8th graders achieved their objective for the month of October. For the month of November all grade levels will have the same objective: No missing or late assignments. To achieve their objects they will need to have 5 or less referrals for missing work.

Unfortunately we did not meet our 1st quarter goal of having 45 or less referrals. The main reason for missing our goal was students not turning in work. That is the reason our monthly objective throughout the school is no missing or late homework. The students who did not have any referrals for missing work got to participate in the 1st Quarter Celebration on October 14th which was field games. The 2nd Quarter goal will once again be 45 or less referrals. Hopefully we will have an entire school celebration!!

Athletic News

Congratulations to the girl's 8th grade basketball team on winning this years Girl's Athletic Boosters Round Robin Tournament. Both the 7th and 8th grade girl's will begin regional play in November. The 7th grade will play their regional in Lincoln and the 8th grade regional will be at Meridian.

The boy's basketball teams opened their season earlier this month. The boy's play Warrensburg, LSA, Tolono-Unity, Central A&M and Blue Ridge at home during the month of November. Please come out and support the teams.

Volleyball season will be starting soon as well. Tryouts will begin on December 13th and their first game is January 3rd. Anyone interested in trying out for volleyball needs to make sure their physical and insurance information is turned into the middle school office.

Important Dates

November

11th-Veterans Day assembly
11th and 12th MS Musical 7:00
13th-MS Musical 3:00
15th-Girl's Basketball 8th Grade night
18th-2nd Quarter Midterm
23rd-2:03 Dismissal
24th-25th-No School

December

9th-MS Winter Dance 3:00-5:00
13th-Volleyball Tryouts
13th-MS Band/Choir Winter Concert 7:00 at the MS
16th-End of 2nd Quarter
18th-30th-No School

TROJANS



Maroa Forsyth Grade School



Principal's Message

It is hard to believe we are already in the second quarter of the school year. There are many things to share going on at MFGS.

The students this year are involved in something new for our building. MFGS has created response to intervention (RTI) times for each grade. This allows all students in the grade to receive instruction 2-3 times per week on interventions that are at their instructional level. This program allows all students a chance to get assistance or to be challenged on their strengths.

The reading strategy for this month is Connections. There are three types of connections students can make in increase their reading comprehension. Text-to-self connections are how a piece of literature relates to their lives and background experiences. Text-to-text connections allow students to relate what they are reading to other literary works they have already read. Text-to-world connections are how a text relates to the world around us.

Next month we will be working on making inferences. Inferences are taking what we read plus what we know to gain a better meaning of the piece of literature. The samples of student work will be displayed on the bulletin board going into the cafeteria.

We will be hosting a Veteran's Day Assembly at 9:30 on November 11th. During this assembly we will have student

readers, singing, and a speech by Mr. Harold Dunham. If you make it to the assembly the students do a great job of honoring our Veteran's.

There are many things going on at MFGS. The students and teachers are all working very hard to keep up the good work.

PBIS News

During the month of September, our school-wide goal was to reduce bus referrals by 25%. The students met and exceeded the goal, by a reduction of 47%. They all earned a hat day for doing such a great job.

During October we are focusing on positive hallway behavior. The teachers have re-taught the expectations, which are walk on right-hands at side-mouth closed tight. When the classes are demonstrating these positive behaviors, the teacher is rewarded with a class treasure. Our goal is to receive 100 class treasures for this month. The students are able to review their progress on the bulletin board in the hallway. Our goal for the month of November is to increase the morning behavior in the gym and cafeteria. The students will review the expectations with their teachers, which are sit down-hands to self-stay in area. Please reinforce these expectations at home to help us attain our November goal.

Parent Involvement

Parental involvement is essential for students to be successful in school. One of the great things about Maroa-Forsyth is the number of parents that are involved in their child's education. Parents model the importance of education. When you spend time reading to your children, working on homework, or studying with your children they learn more than the material, they also learn the work ethic, and value you place on education.

We welcome parents into the building to help with teachers, visit classes, or join their children for lunch. When you want to come into school to visit, please come into the office and get a visitors badge. This helps us keep the building safe for our students.

Important Dates

- November 2-11:40 dismissal
- November 7-Community Club Meeting (6:30)
- November 11-Veteran's Day Assembly (9:30)
- November 17-Kindergarten and First Grade Concert (7:00 p.m.)
- November 23-2:13 dismissal
- November 24 & 25-no school
- November 28-MAP testing begins for winter

TROJANS