

MAROA FORSYTH

Home of the Trojans



Building a Better World One Student at a Time



DISTRICT NEWSLETTER- August 2012

Superintendent Comments

Welcome back! It's hard to believe we are back in school already. Things seem to be off to a good start. Our enrollment looks to be up slightly over last year. At the grade school we had close to seventy students move into the District with thirty-five moving out of the District for a net increase of 35 students. The middle school had about 15 move-ins and 12 transfer out, while the high school had about 15 incoming transfers and five students leave. District-wide we had roughly 100 students transfer in and close to 55 students transfer out for a net increase of 45 kids from our projections in May.

The number of students transferring in and transferring out is how our mobility rate is calculated for the school report card. The numbers that we have experienced at the beginning of this year are a little higher than normal. We are not sure what the cause of the increase is, but we are glad to have the new students. 2012-2013 will be the eighteenth out of the last twenty years the District has seen growth.

Procedural Changes for Football Games

With the completion of the new athletic field facilities there have been some changes made

to our procedures that we would like to make the community aware of. The biggest change is the fact that fans will no longer be able to park around the field. The entrance off of Cedar Street will be solely for the emergency personnel that are required to be in attendance. The area to the North of the football field and South of the old Intermediate School will be available for parking. There will be parking spots in this lot designated as handicap only in close proximity to the field to assist our fans with special needs. There has been a new admission gate added at the East end of the field in front of the storage shed.

One of the other changes necessary to accommodate the new all weather track is spectators will not be allowed on the track. There are walkways between the bleachers and the track and areas to observe the game both in front of the picnic area to the West of the bleachers and in front of the storage shed to the East. Fans will not be able to congregate along the fence in front of the concession stand and main entrance to the facility.

Fans will be able to watch the game from both the east and the west end zones. There are four areas where you can cross the track and watch the games behind the crowd control

barriers in each end zone. We ask that if you use these areas fans take extra precaution with their food and beverages in order not to spill on the sports surfaces. We also ask that the trash is placed in the proper containers throughout the facility, but it's a must in these areas.

One rule that has not changed but always seems to be an issue is students are not allowed to bring footballs into the facilities. This was put in place several years ago for the safety of the individuals involved and the enjoyment of all spectators.

We understand these changes might be a small inconvenience for some, but we are very fortunate to have such a wonderful facility and would like to take the precautions necessary in order to make sure it continues to be one of the nicest facilities in the area.

Track Available for Community Use

The new all weather track is available for community use from 6:00 AM to 8:00 AM and from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM Monday through Friday (as long as the facility is not being used for games or competition). The hours will vary on Saturday, depending on the custodial coverage. Entrance to the facility is available to the west of the main entrance through a new walkthrough gate.

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Maroa Forsyth CUSD #2



MAP Assessment

Students in grades 2nd through 9th will participate in Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) again this year. Results will not only be used as one of the measures that monitors student growth but will provide information on the districts transition to the New Illinois Learning Standards Incorporating the Common Core in the areas of English language arts and mathematics.

Just as we measure to see how tall our children physically grow each year it is equally important to check academic growth. In addition to MAP results sources of data include: ISAT/PSAE, EXPLORE at 8th grade, PLAN at 10th grade, curriculum based measures (CBM), and classroom assessments. Staff takes advantage of this valuable information to design appropriate instruction.

Data from a variety of assessments are used to identify students in need of assistance, students on target and students ahead of expectations. Teachers and parents receive reports in the fall, winter, and spring regarding their child's progress on the MAP assessment. The results for fall and winter may be discussed during parent teacher conferences. The spring results are sent home

with end of the year report card. Please take a moment to review the results with your child. This helps them understand the importance of their academic growth.

The district selected the Common Core version of the assessment in order to prepare for the implementation of the new standards and their assessment that will occur during the 2014-2015 school year. This will guide our curriculum alignment efforts and instructional practices professional development. Additionally it allows the district to "try out" a common core aligned test before it is officially in place and benchmarks are established.

Common Core Standards

Teachers worked over the summer to create end of year grade level benchmarks for English language arts and mathematics that align with the new Illinois Learning Standards Implementing the Common Core.

During the 2012 and 2013 school year teachers will continue to refine and align the districts grade level learning expectations until there is grade level and cross grade level alignment, creating sequential flow from one grade to the next for our

students. Teachers will continue to use their professional expertise to design learning activities best suited for their unique students. You will begin to see changes in the topics and activities your child is using to build knowledge and skills during the conversion. The district is maintaining a gentle balance in curriculum as we transition to the Common Core and the State is still assessing the Illinois Learning Standards. The district is focused on the long-term benefits of providing a college and career ready curriculum.

If you would like more information, the common core standards the are available at the following link on the State Board of Education's website. http://www.isbe.net/common_core/default.htm

Unit Office Joins Twitter

I encourage you to follow the District on Twitter as we attempt to keep you updated on the happenings in the District. We will pass along schedule changes, important dates, announcements etc.





Maroa Forsyth High School



Principal's Message

What a great start to the new school year! In my seven years as principal, I can honestly say that this has been our smoothest start to date. Undoubtedly, part of this can be attributed to the successful PBIS programs at the grade and middle schools. The students have been very respectful and have adjusted to their new schedules nicely.

One big change here at the high school is the new rule involving the use of cell phones. Cell phone violations have historically been our students' most frequent infractions. In an effort to reduce discipline referrals and attempt to embrace the technology, we have elected to modify our policy on cell phone use in school. Students are now able to utilize their phones during passing periods and during their lunch hour. Teachers are also encouraged to utilize the cell phones for data collection and reporting during class assignments when educationally appropriate.

Academically we have made a significant change in our schedule to accommodate the growing demands of our students and teachers alike. We have implemented an initiative that we refer to as Focused Learning and are excited about the opportunities it will bring to our students (more about this later). The theme that we really want the students to understand is "Be Responsible for Your Learning." Meaning

that ALL students need to be active in the learning process, be responsible for their work, and take advantage of the educational opportunities they are provided here at MFHS.



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SPORTS PHOTOGRAPHY

School Improvement

As previously mentioned, Focused Learning is our newest academic initiative. Focused Learning is comprised of three different groups of students: Research, Enrichment, & RTI.

The research group is comprised of approximately 40 students who are then divided into smaller teams. Students on those teams have defined roles such as researcher, mathematician, documenter, etc. and compete against the other teams on different projects.

The Enrichment group has approximately 240 students split into 12 groups. Those students go through mini-units aimed to meet learning standards of the Common Core and teach a

specific academic skill needed for success on the ACT. Topics for the mini-units include: World Travel, Pop Culture, Media, Careers & Education, Conservation, & Wellness.

Our RTI group was developed to give extra specific attention to those students who need a little extra help with their class work. Interventions are also designed and implemented to assist each student reach their academic potential.

Within each group of students is a mobility component, which allows students, depending upon performance, to transition from one group to the next.

Other News

I also encourage you to follow me on Twitter as I attempt to keep you updated on the happenings in the high school. I've recently important dates/events, contest results, student work, etc.



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Important Dates

- 8/31 Teacher's Institute- No School
- 8/31 VFB vs. Unity Home 7:00
- 9/3 NO SCHOOL
- 9/14 Mid-Term (Already!!)
- 9/19 11:30 Dismissal
- 9/21 Homecoming

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Maroa Forsyth Middle School



Principal's Message

The school year has gotten off to a successful start at the Middle School. The students have already survived their "Basic Training" day and picture day. To help you keep up on Middle School news and events, please pay attention to the middle school website at www.mfschools.org/middle. Another way to receive middle school news is by following Maroa Forsyth MS on Twitter and Facebook.

I would like to make all parents aware of our Homework Club. Every Tuesday and Thursday students can stay after school until 3:30 to work on homework and receive help from teachers. Also, students who do not complete their homework will be assigned a homework club referral until their work is complete. Students who stay for homework club will need to arrange a ride home.

I would like to congratulate the middle school students and staff on the 2012 ISAT scores. Preliminary results indicate the middle school is at 91% meets or exceeds in Reading, and 95% meets or exceeds in Math. This year we will begin our transition to the Common Core Standards. The new standards focus on English/Language Arts and Math. The teachers have been working hard to create new learning targets and units. All teachers will be implementing academic vocabulary into their instruction this year as part of the Common Core transition.

We are looking forward to a great year. If you have questions or concerns, feel free to email me at

stewartb@mfschools.org or call me at 794-5115

PBIS News

On the second day of school, the middle school students participated in "Basic Training". The students went from station to station learning the rules and expectations for the middle school. To end the day the students got to participate in a game show reviewing the rules and expectations. We also reviewed the dress code by having the teachers model what not to wear.

This year the students will once again receive Star Bucks for following the middle school code of honor and displaying Respect, Responsibility, and Effort. The students should keep their Star Bucks to use on many different items throughout the school year including, candy, early pass to lunch, extra credit, and many others. If a student continuously shows Respect, Responsibility, and Effort, they may receive a Star Student Award that will be displayed on a bulletin board.

Each quarter we conduct a celebration in honor of our students following the Code of Honor. For the 1st quarter, if the student body receives 45 or less referrals all students get to participate. If the student body gets more than 45 referrals, students who did not follow the Code of Honor will be withheld.

To find out more information about PBIS please visit our website at:

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

Athletic News

The softball and baseball seasons are well underway and will soon be coming to an end. The softball team will play in their regional on September 5th and the baseball team will begin regional play September 12th.

Spirit Squad practice has already begun and Girls' Basketball practice will start on September 4th. The basketball team will open their season by hosting the GAB Round Robin Tournament the week of September 17th. The Spirit Squad will perform for the first time on September 24th.

The boys' basketball team will begin their season the week of October 15th. Tryouts will be held on the 15th, 16th, and 17th. The boys' first game will be on November 1st at home vs. Heyworth.

Important Dates

August

31st-No School-Teachers' Institute

September

3rd-No School-Labor Day

4th-Girls' Basketball Tryouts

14th-Midterm

19th-11:30 Dismissal-School Improvement Day

21st-Homecoming-2:03 Dismissal

October

8th-No School-Columbus Day

11th-P/T conferences-2:03 Dismissal

12th-End of 1st Quarter

17th- P/T conferences-2:03 Dismissal

19th-Report Cards sent home
23rd-HS/MS Choir Concert

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Maroa Forsyth Grade School



Principal's Message

What a great start! We have welcomed 76 new students into our building on the first day, and we continue to grow. Our enrollment at MFGS is now 594 including Pre-K. There are also several new faculty members and some who have changed their roles in our building. Mrs. Hans is now teaching second grade. Miss Dickerson subbed all of last year in reading improvement, and this year she is teaching kindergarten. Mrs. Nave is our new Title I reading teacher. Finally, because our Kindergarten grew so much Mrs. Brittany Peters moved from being a reading improvement aide to create our fifth section of kindergarten. We are excited for all of the new students and teachers in our building.

Over the summer many of our teachers worked on aligning our curriculum to the new Common Core State Standards. These standards are shared among many states. Teachers worked on interpreting these standards, creating units, and beginning to create assessments to track our improvement toward these standards.

Last year we had three teachers piloting our new phonics program. We have adopted this program in Kindergarten through Second grade. It will really challenge our students as well as help us

adapt to the new Common Core State Standards. This year we will again have all students in second through fifth grade take the MAP test. This computer-based test will be given the week of September 4th. The results will be given to parents at Parent-Teacher Conferences in October.

If you get a chance please stop by to see the great things going on at MFGS.

PBIS News

We are having a great start to PBIS this year! Grades 3-5 kicked off with Trojan basic training on Friday, August 17th. During the week of August 20th, grades K-2 had their training. Students learned the expectations of them at different spots around the school: cafeteria, bathrooms, gym, library, hallway, playground, bus, and office. They also learned more about the Trojan Code of Honor, which is Respect, Responsibility and Effort. When students are caught showing the expected behavior they may be rewarded with a Trojan Treasure. New this year, students now have the opportunity to collect their Trojan Treasures for prizes. There are many choices for students. For example, a student may turn in their treasures after 5 for a bookmark or they can accumulate 100 to turn in for a McDonald's lunch. Our school

wide monthly goal for September is to lower the number of bus referrals. For September 2011 we had 11 bus referrals. We would like to reduce this to 10 or less to earn a school wide celebration. Yahoo!

Community Club

The Community Club is planning the Trojan Trot. The students will all get a chance to run this during their PE times on September 14th. We would also like to thank the Community Club for providing the ice cream social for the students and families at Back to School Night. Their support for the teachers and students of MFGS is greatly appreciated. If you would like to get involved with the Community Club their meetings are the first Monday of every month at 6:30 at the Grade School. More information about the Trojan Trot as well as a newsletter from Community Club will be sent out through SchoolReach.

Important Dates

August 31-Institute Day (no school)
 September 3-Labor Day (no school)
 September 3-MAP test begins
 September 13-GS Picture Day
 September 14-Trojan Trot
 September 21-Homecoming (2:13 Dismissal)

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