

# MAROA FORSYTH

## Home of the Trojans



Building a Better World One Student at a Time



## DISTRICT NEWSLETTER- November 2013

### School Report Cards

The Board of Education reviewed the annual school report cards during their October Meeting. The scores for the Grade School and Middle School showed an overall decline in performance. This decline can be attributed to two factors. One, the State of Illinois increased the cut scores on the test. A cut score is simply the level that must be attained to reach one of the four levels of performance; Exceeds Standards, Meets Standards, Below Standards, and Academic Warning. For example, in 2012 a score of 190 was needed in order to "Meet Standards" on the third grade reading test. In 2013, in order to obtain the same "Meet Standards" level, students had to score a 207.

Secondly, the ISAT test has begun to incorporate more material from the Common Core Standards, which are more difficult than the Illinois State Standards.

This combination of increased cut scores and increased difficulty of the

test has lead to a significant decrease in the apparent performance of students across the state.

However, when looking at the performance of the Maroa Forsyth School District our performance did not decline to the extent that the state average declined. The actual net change when comparing the District with state averages shows the District performed rather well. This speaks highly of the students, staff, and parents within the Maroa Forsyth Community.

The high school performance on the PSAE test continues to be above state averages. The PSAE test did not go through the changes the ISAT test has gone through. However, a large portion of the PSAE is comprised of the ACT Test. The ACT test is a nationally "normed" test that changes each time it is given. This process of "norming" the ACT makes it very difficult to track growth from one year to the next. The other issue that makes tracking high school improvement over time difficult is the fact that the test is only given one time to the juniors and each year you are looking at a

different set of students completing the exam.

I fully expect the overall performance of the District to be at or near the top of the area comparisons that are completed annually by the Herald and Review. Those comparisons should be published later this month.

The school report cards can be found at:

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

### Illinois State Board of Education Information

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has developed several pieces of information for parents and residents to review as a means to provide a better understanding of the school reform initiatives the state is pursuing. We have placed these informational pieces on our website for your review. If you have any questions in regard to this information, please do not hesitate to call. The direct link is below.

<http://www.mfschools.org/unit/ISBEResources/Index.htm>

# TROJANS



# Maroa Forsyth High School



## Principal's Message

The board of education approved our new weighted grades proposal at its October board meeting. At the board's May meeting, an ad-hoc committee of high school faculty, board members, and community members was appointed to determine a policy/formula for weighted grades at MFHS. After significant time and research, the committee recommended a formula for an appropriate weight and proposed weight be given to only Advanced Placement classes at this time. This will begin with the graduating class of 2016. The committee will meet later this year to consider possible honors courses and an appropriate weight value for those courses.

To find out more information about the weighted grades formula, you can contact me at your earliest convenience. [scott.adreon@mfschools.net](mailto:scott.adreon@mfschools.net)

## School Improvement

**Focused Learning:** Focused learning continues to go extremely well. Considering we are in our first session, I have been extremely pleased with the professionalism and planning of our faculty. As you recall, we added an element of choice this year which has really improved

the students' perception and participation. In addition, students have produced some excellent products in the form of podcasts, blogs, web pages, etc.

Mr. Doty's focused learning group, *Sports Writing*, has produced some very good articles on a blogging site called Word Press. You can view those articles at <http://sportswritingfl.wordpress.com/>

## Athletics & Activities

We have had an AMAZING fall here at MFHS in regards to athletics and activities.

**GOLF:** Our golfers started a streak of Okaw championships by beating the competition by 10 strokes at Tuscola's Iron Horse. They were led by senior Spencer Underwood, who also qualified for the state golf meet.

**FOOTBALL:** Football just capped their best regular season ever by going a combined 27-0 at all three levels. The Trojans are also favored to defend their class A football title this year in Dekalb.

**VOLLEYBALL:** Volleyball has been as good as expected and just swept through our own Regional to claim the crown and is prepared to make a run at the title. They also went undefeated through Okaw play.

**OKAW CROWN:** Last year marked the first time our athletic department had won the Overall Okaw Crown. The fall seasons have definitely put us in position to do that again this year.



Kevin Krows Sports Photography

KEVINKROWS.com  
SPORTS PHOTOGRAPHY

## Important Dates

11/5 PLAN Test- All Sophomores

11/11 Veterans Day Assembly- 10:50

## Special People @ MFHS

Spencer Underwood-Male Athlete of the Month  
Bailey Martin-Female Athlete of the Month  
Student of the Month-Lindsay Mandrell  
Volunteer of the Month-Kim Fredericksen



# 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 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. Over 85% of all middle school students were on either High Honor Roll or Honor Roll. As a result, the students got to participate in an Academic Celebration (Costume Dance) on November 1<sup>st</sup>. To view the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Honor Roll please visit the middle school website at <https://sites.google.com/site/mfmiddle/>.

I would like to encourage everyone to come out and see this years Middle School Musical, "The Pinocchio Show". The choir will be holding two performances open to the public on November 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm at the HS. Anyone interested in purchasing tickets can do so in the MS office.

I would also like to invite everyone to attend the MS Veteran's Day Assembly on November 11<sup>th</sup> at 2:00. I have placed an Invitation along with information about a picture slide show we create for the assembly on our webpage. 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 8<sup>th</sup>. The band and choir will be performing so we encourage parents to attend as well.

The 8<sup>th</sup> graders will be taking the Explore test on December 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>. This test will give the high school and parents an indication on how the students will perform on their ACT test. Please encourage your students to try their best on the Explore test.

If you have questions or concerns, feel free to email me at [brice.stewart@mfschools.net](mailto:brice.stewart@mfschools.net) or call me at 794-5115

## PBIS News

The PBIS 1st quarter goal was to have less than 35 discipline referrals. I am very pleased to report we met our goal and only had 11 discipline referrals for the first quarter. Since we did so well the first quarter we have dropped our second quarter goal to less than 30 discipline referrals. As a reward for a great quarter, all middle school students had the opportunity to participate in field games.

The students have also been receiving Star Bucks and Star Student awards for following our Code of Honor. Students have been able to use the Star Bucks on potato chips, candy, Kool Aid drinks, and early passes to lunch. Students who have continually met expectation have also been rewarded with free time outside and Buffalo Wild Wings certificates.

To find out more information about PBIS please visit our website at: <https://sites.google.com/site/pbismfms/>

## Athletic News



Congratulations to the Baseball team on their 4th Place finish at the State Tournament. The boys set a school record for most wins this year with 14.

Congratulations to the girl's 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade basketball teams on winning this years Girls' Athletic Boosters Round Robin Tournament. Both the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls will begin regional play in November in Lincoln.

The boys' basketball teams will open their season on November 7<sup>th</sup> at Heyworth. The boys play Warrensburg and Tolono 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 in December and their first game is January 13<sup>th</sup>. 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

8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> MS Musical 7:00  
11<sup>th</sup>-Veterans Day assembly  
15<sup>th</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Midterm  
20<sup>th</sup>-Girls' Basketball 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Night  
27<sup>th</sup> -29<sup>th</sup>-No School

### December

2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade Explore Test  
6<sup>th</sup>-MS Winter Dance 3:00-5:00  
17<sup>th</sup>-MS Band/Choir Winter Concert 7:00 at the MS  
19<sup>th</sup>-End of 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter  
20<sup>st</sup>—Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>-No School

# TROJANS



# Maroa Forsyth Grade School



## Principal's Message

The fall has been great at Maroa-Forsyth Grade School. The students and teachers have been working very hard. It is always an exciting time in our school because of Halloween Parties, Book Fair, Homecoming, and the school spirit generated by our high school's athletic success.

It is very important for students to be at school by 8:15. If you are dropping your children off at school we have two people assisting in front of the school until 8:15. If you are later than 8:15 parents must either come into the building or call the office to check students in to have their tardy excused. Students will then be signed in and sent to class.

There is an option on the STI Parent Portal called *Go Green*. This option allows you to receive your Progress Reports and Report Cards electronically. If you are interested in this you can find information on the Parent Portal.

We will be outside for recess weather permitting. Please make sure your child dresses for the weather and has proper coat, hat, and gloves. If the wind chill is below 10 degrees we will be inside. We also stay inside if it is raining or the playground is unsafe due to standing water or ice.

November 12 will be our second McTeacher Night at the McDonald's in Forsyth.

Teachers will be assisting with cooking and serving from 4:30-7:30. This night is a fundraising event and the school receives 20% of sales during this time. Last year, we set the Forsyth McDonald's single hour sales record. If you are available please come support this event.

## PBIS News

The October PBIS goal was to improve hallway behavior. The students earned parts to their pumpkins hung in their doorway. The classes who completed their pumpkins received a 10 minute dance period one afternoon in the gym. Students are still collecting Trojan Treasures and turning them in quite often for prizes. Some students have already turned in 100 Trojan Treasures for the year.

## Veteran's Day Assembly

Veteran's Day is an important day at our school. At 9:30 we are conducting our annual Veteran's Day Assembly. This assembly will include all students singing patriotic songs, several readings by students, a flag folding display, and also Mr. James Keith, a local Iraq Veteran, will give a speech about the importance of Veteran's Day. This event is open to all local veterans and

parents to attend. We will also have coffee and donuts for the local veterans attending. Doors will open at 9:00 for the assembly.

## Bus Stop Safety

When students are waiting at the bus stop it is important that students remember some safety rules. Students need to stand far enough away from the curb so the bus driver and other drivers on the roads can see the students and have enough time to slow down. Students should stand in line with their backpack so they are ready to board the bus when it arrives. It is very important that students are not running around and playing at the bus stops. After getting off of the bus, remember to cross in front of the bus so the driver is able to see them. Safety is the number one priority of our bus drivers.

## Important Dates

- November 11 -Veteran's Day Assembly (9:30)
- November 12 -McTeacher Night (4:30-7:30)
- November 15-Progress Reports
- November 21 -K-1 Concert
- November 27-29 -No School
- December 5 -4<sup>th</sup> Grade Concert
- December 12 -5<sup>th</sup> Grade Concert
- December 19 -Holiday Parties (2:15)
- December 20 -Teacher Institute Day (No student attendance)