



December 1, 2010

Message from Dr. Bob Newsum
Interim Superintendent

Season's Greetings:

By the time you read your December newsletter, there may be snow on the ground, but as of the day my message to you was written, the weather has been unseasonably warm. While that is great news for those of us who have to make school-related delay and cancellation decisions, a little bit of snow certainly helps get us in the holiday spirit.

One of the goals your board of education members and I have agreed to focus on this year is the various methods for communicating the great educational things that are happening in and around Martensdale St. Marys. Two new programs that have been implemented this year are the one-to-one laptop computers for senior high students to use and the student-led parent-teacher conference format for fall conferences. I have visited with Mr. Mike Crozier, secondary school principal, and he is planning to survey teachers, students, and parents to gather data related to these new programs. We're now considering whether these surveys should be posted on-line or mailed to homes of middle school and high school families. Our plan is to have the surveys distributed before the December holiday break, with the completed surveys returned early in January. A summary of the survey data will be shared in the spring.

Currently the Martensdale St. Marys Community School District monthly newsletter is posted on-line. This change in distribution was made as a cost-savings measure. Beginning during the second semester of this year, in addition to the monthly on-line newsletters, we will be publishing a quarterly newsletter and will be mailing these to all district mailbox holders.

It has been brought to our attention that those of you not directly associated with the school occasionally have some difficulty learning when district facilities might be available for your group or organization to use for practice or rehearsal. For this reason, the district weekly activities calendar will be posted at the district web home page. You can check to see if any of the facilities are available for you and your group of students to use. Because scheduled activities can change due to the weather, we ask that you contact Mr. Ron Peterson, at 764-2385, ext. 233, to schedule your use of the facilities.

Recently a district committee, facilitated by Mrs. Jen Pribil, elementary counselor, met to review and revise the Martensdale St. Marys Crisis Response Plan. Joining the committee were Warren County Deputy Sheriff Randy Spurr, Heartland Area Education Agency Consultant Matt Cretsinger, and Iowa Homeland Security Agent Dave Johnston. The district response plan considers several potential crisis situations and includes comprehensive plans to address each situation. During our discussions we concluded that we need to follow our procedures related to visitors and guests in our school. Please help us maintain a safe and secure school by stopping in the superintendent's office or elementary office to sign in and pick up a visitor's pass when you visit our school. The passes are attached to lanyards and can be easily worn during your visit. Thank you, in advance, for your assistance.

We hope you and your family have a healthy, happy, and safe winter vacation and encourage you to enjoy as much quality time as you can celebrating with family and friends. The time together really is more important than the 'stuff' we might receive under the tree!

From the Desk of Mr. Crozier

It is hard to believe, but we are nearing the completion of the thirteenth week of our 18 week semester. With the semester over halfway through, I would encourage you to check in with your son or daughter to review their academic progress to date. While you will be receiving a second progress report in the next few weeks, I believe now would be a good time to set some personal and academic goals with your child which can be measured at the completion of the semester on January 7th.

Grades are our benchmark of a student's academic progress but they do not tell the whole story about their ability and work habits. Be sure to acknowledge your child's strengths, identify areas for additional support, and encourage them to utilize the resources provided by the school to ensure that their efforts to meet these goals will have a greater chance for success.

Congratulations to the following students who participated in the Pride of Iowa Honor Choir at Greenfield on November 9th: Michaela McIlravy, Taylar Furness, Joe Harkin, Broc Christensen, Deana Gyles and Tayler Schad. Congratulations to Mrs. Schad and the cast and stage crew for the fall play. They did an outstanding job.

With the holiday season upon us, I would like to wish all of our school patrons a happy and healthy next few months. Our staff will be participating in the fourth annual charity

fundraising event for our community for the holidays. Participants are allowed to wear jeans from Thanksgiving to Christmas for a donation to the event. Last year the Martensdale-St. Marys staff (PK-12) raised over \$1000.00, which was dispersed to families in our community and helped buy winter clothing items for our students. Mr. Wood and I started this program three years ago and have been very impressed with the generosity of our staff.

From the Desk of Mr. Peterson,
Blue Devils Activities Director

The winter weather has made it to Iowa. Make sure you check the school calendar and daily bulletin for updates on school activities. The calendar changes often during the winter due to weather issues in our communities and the communities of our opponents.

This winter is going to be exciting. Our varsity girls' basketball team is ranked No. 1 in Class 1A. The boys' wrestling team is ranked No. 6 and the boys' basketball team is going to be very good. Our junior high teams are exciting and fun to watch. **Wow** - Get out and see our athletes perform this winter.

Our sportsmanship ratings are in for the fall and I want to congratulate our football and volleyball teams for a job well done. Both teams were well below the state average, which is a good thing. Way to Go!!!

However, I was at a sporting event last week that made me glad to have the parents we have at MSTM. The behavior of the parents was unacceptable. It was extremely disappointing. The athletic association has encouraged us to emphasize good sportsmanship as we head into the winter season. I would ask you to read the material below and reflect on it. Remember, the only person you can control is you. The following materials are from the website: KidsHealth/For Parents.Com

What Is Good Sportsmanship?

Emily was crying by the time the softball game ended. It wasn't because her team had lost. It wasn't because she was unhappy about her own playing. It wasn't even because of anything the other team had said or done. Emily's tears came after her dad yelled at her — in front of all her teammates — for missing the fly ball that could have saved the game. Emily is just 8 years old.

If your child has ever participated in a sport, you've undoubtedly met people like Emily's dad, parents who behave inappropriately and upset their kids. These parents get so wrapped up in winning and losing or how well their own kids perform that they lose sight of what's really important. They forget that one of the most important goals of kids' sports is to promote a sense of good sportsmanship.

Good sportsmanship is when teammates, opponents, coaches, and officials treat each other with respect. Kids learn the basics of sportsmanship from the adults in their lives, especially their parents and their coaches. Kids who see adults behaving in a sportsmanlike way gradually come to understand that the real winners in sports are those who know how to persevere and to behave with dignity — whether they win or lose a game.

Parents can help their kids understand that good sportsmanship includes both small gestures and heroic efforts.

It starts with something as simple as shaking hands with opponents before a game and includes acknowledging good plays made by others and accepting bad calls gracefully.

Displaying good sportsmanship isn't always easy: It can be tough to congratulate the opposing team after losing a close or important game. But the kids who learn how to do it will benefit in many ways.

Kids who bully or taunt others on the playing field aren't likely to change their behavior when in the classroom or in social situations. In the same way, a child who practices good sportsmanship is likely to carry the respect and appreciation of other people into every other aspect of life.

Good Sports Are Winners

Ask first- or second-graders who won a game and they may answer, "I think it was a tie." It's likely the question isn't of any real interest at that age. Kids may be more eager to talk about the hits they got or the catches they almost made.

But as they move into older and more competitive leagues, kids become more focused on winning. They often forget to have fun. Without constant reminders and good examples, they may also forget what behavior is appropriate before, during, and after a sporting event.

Kids who have coaches who care only about being in first place and say that anything goes as long as they win, pick up the message that it's OK to be ruthless on the field. If parents constantly pressure them to play better or second-guess their every move, kids get the message that they're only as good as their last good play — and they'll try anything to make one.

Adults who emphasize good sportsmanship, however, see winning as just one of several goals they'd like their kids to achieve. They help young athletes take pride in their accomplishments and in their improving skills, so that the kids see themselves as winners, even if the scoreboard doesn't show the numbers going in their favor.

The best coaches — and parents — encourage their kids to play fair, to have fun, and to concentrate on helping the team while polishing their own skills.

Fostering Good Sportsmanship

Remember the saying "Actions speak louder than words"? That's especially true when it comes to teaching your kids the basics of good sportsmanship. Your behavior during practices and games will influence them more than any pep talk or lecture you give them.

Here are some suggestions on how to build sportsmanship in your kids:

Unless you're coaching your child's team, you need to remember that you're the parent. Shout words of encouragement, not directions, from the sidelines (there is a difference!).

If you are your kid's coach, don't expect too much out of your own child. Don't be harder on him or her than on anyone else on the team, but don't play favorites either.

Keep your comments positive. Don't bad-mouth coaches, players, or game officials. If you have a serious concern about the way that games or practices are being conducted, or if you're upset about other parents' behavior, discuss it privately with the coach or with a league official.

After a competition, it's important not to dwell on who won or lost. Instead, try asking, "How did you feel you did during the

game?" If your child feels weak at a particular skill, like throwing or catching, offer to work on it together before the next game.

Applaud good plays no matter who makes them.

Set a good example with your courteous behavior toward the parents of kids on the other team. Congratulate them when their kids win.

Remember that it's your kids, not you, who are playing. Don't push them into a sport because it's what you enjoyed. As kids get older, let them choose what sports they want to play and decide the level of commitment they want to make.

Keep your perspective. It's just a game. Even if the team loses every game of the season, it's unlikely to ruin your child's life or chances of success.

Look for examples of good sportsmanship in professional athletes and point them out to your kids. Talk about the bad examples, too, and why they upset you.

Finally, don't forget to have fun. Even if your child isn't the star, enjoy the game while you're thinking of all the benefits your child is gaining — new skills, new friends, and attitudes that can help all through life.



2nd Annual MStM Pink Out



Martensdale St. Marys & SEW raise \$1,126.00 to donate to Breast Cancer Awareness. On Friday October 1, MStM and SEW competed in a Varsity football game at MStM Blue Devil Field.

Although, the competition was hard fought, both teams and their communities came together to raise money for Breast Cancer Awareness. Both teams wore pink socks, all coaches wore pink beanies and many of the fans wore pink attire in honor of people who have survived, are currently fighting or that have lost their battle with breast cancer. Each team had honorary team captains for the coin flip with a balloon lift to follow with luminaries around the track.

Through cash donations, plus purchases of pink items from beads, balloons, glow sticks, silent auction items and beanies. We were able to raise \$1,126.00 for the cause.



(Pictured: (L to R) Brent Parrott, Head Football Coach - Ron Peterson, Athletic Director - Joani Matalone, Representative from The American Cancer Society - Sandy Kordick, Breast Cancer Survivor.)

It is an awesome occasion when two communities who are normally on opposite sides of the field fighting for a win are able to fight together for a greater cause. Thank you to everyone who contributed their time and money!

From the Desk of Mr. Folkerts Counselor

WHAT MAKES A GOOD SCHOLARSHIP OR ADMISSION ESSAY?

If an essay is required when you are applying for admission or for scholarships to help with your college educational expenses, the essay is extremely important. A well-written essay will differentiate a truly outstanding student from the merely good ones. Most applicants can boast of memberships in clubs and sports, but the essay is one place where you can set yourself apart from other students. Be sure you have a parent, teacher, mentor, employer, etc. read and critique your essay before submitting it. A good essay should:

- ◆ Be typed or neatly printed (at least 12-point type is preferred).
- ◆ Use proper grammar and correct spelling.
- ◆ Be approximately 1-2 pages in length unless otherwise specified.
- ◆ Clearly address the essay topic specified.
- ◆ Be creative but not strange. Don't be afraid to take a risk but convey your point.

Give the scholarship or admissions committee insight into your personality, interests, motivations, values, attitudes, goals, etc.

WHERE TO LOOK FOR SCHOLARSHIP SOURCES

1. At the college you are considering: Office of Admissions, Office of Scholarships/financial aid
2. Scholarship internet sites (fastweb.com, collegeboard.com)
3. Scholarship Books in the Counseling Office: Scholarships, Grants & Prizes
4. The Scholarship Handbook
5. Parents' Employers
6. Counseling Office
7. Local service organizations (VFW, Elks, Masons, Rotary, etc.)

THAT'S RIGHT IT'S DECEMBER!

December is here – Have you sent in your applications to the colleges you are considering attending??? Some schools use the date your application arrives as the priority date for things such as housing.

The later you apply- the less choices you have. Others have priority dates on scholarships. Missing dates may cost you money or opportunities for special programs. **READ EVERYTHING** you get from schools you are considering. Priority dates are one thing but **deadline dates** are another.

If you are considering select schools, those deadlines are often January 1st. Early decision dates are even sooner! Check your literature so you are fully aware of your deadlines

ACT NATIONAL TEST DATES

<u>Test Date</u>	<u>Registration Deadline</u>
February 12, 2011	January 7, 2011
April 9, 2011	March 4, 2011
June 11, 2011	May 6, 2011

**Students with current professionally diagnosed and documented disabilities who wish to request extended time on the ACT need to stop by the guidance office and pick up a 2010-2011 ACT Assessment Extended-Time National Testing application.

If you elect, you may register for the ACT and SAT tests online. The online addresses are:

ACT- www.act.org

SAT- www.collegeboard.com

COLLEGE VISITATION POLICY

A limit of two absences annually will be allowed for college visitation. Students must follow the guidelines in the student handbook.

From the Desk of Mrs. Condon, *Family and Consumer Science* alison_condon@m-stmarys.k12.ia.us

I am really enjoying my second year here at Martensdale-St. Marys. I was looking forward to returning after a summer of conferences, workshops, and curriculum writing. It has been great to see familiar faces of students, parents, and colleagues and I have greatly appreciated the support of the community through guest speakers, donations and feedback on my program. The purpose of FCS is to create a better quality of life for our students, which in turn improves our communities.

The Food and Nutrition I class is currently studying the dairy group of MyPyramid. We have been working through each food group individually to identify the health benefits of the group as well as guidelines to make better choices in each category. Each food class builds on the previous class, and Foods I students are encouraged to move on to Food and Nutrition II next semester and eventually Advanced Foods as the final class in the program of study.

Reminder: Advanced Foods students will again be running the Blue Devil Diner next semester. Look for an announcement in the January newsletter!

Child Development had a memorable experience taking home RealCare babies. They were able to experience some of the responsibilities of parenting as we combined this with information on the cost of raising a child and proper care of infants. I also encourage Child Development students to take School-Age Child next semester as a continuation of development from age four to twelve. I'm excited to expand the Early Childhood program and look forward to presenting post-secondary opportunities to students in the future.

As always, our FCS program is in need of donations. I've highlighted a few of our current needs. If you have extras of these items in good condition, or are willing to donate new items to the FCS program, please feel free to contact me. Again, I thank you for your unrelenting support and look forward to continually expanding and improving learning opportunities and experiences for students through the MStM FCS program.

Wish List
8-2 qt. plastic containers for flour and sugar
4 round pizza pans
4 can openers
Apple corer
Diaper bag
1 wire strainer
Infant carriers with base
Potholders and oven mitts

From the Desk of Mrs. Sherwood *Physical Education*

My work place basics class is required to job shadow each semester. The experiences of the job shadow can help guide the students into jobs or careers they find enjoyable. For some students it gives them an idea to post high school education. Some of the placings were information technology, police officer, teacher, office supervisor, and retail sales. I was excited about some of their experiences. Other topics that are included in this semester were how to find a job, where to look for a job, how to write a resume, cover letter etc.

I appreciate the great response from parents with the placing of students in the career areas that are of interest to the students. If you did not contact me for this semester, but you would be able to help next semester, please contact me through school e-mail.

jayne_sherwood@m-stmarys.k12.ia.us.

I appreciate all the help from parents.

From the Desk of Mrs. Sowder,

YEARBOOK DEADLINE:

Seniors need to turn in at least one baby photo and one senior picture to the yearbook staff before leaving for Winter Break. Seniors can submit up to two different baby photos (yearbook, graduation slide show) and three different senior vertical portraits (yearbook, graduation slide show, class composite).

Contact Mrs. Sowder if you need to make other arrangements for this deadline.

WILDWOOD ROUND UP

**BROUGHT TO YOU BY MRS. SOWDER
AND JR. HIGH TAG STUDENTS**

Round up your pennies and other coins for a great cause this holiday season-Wildwood Hills Ranch therapeutic riding program. The ranch in rural St. Charles offers riding lessons to children and teenagers with a range of challenges, including



physical disabilities, autism, depression, and ADHD. Your donation will support this program and adoption fee of a horse, which provides horse feed, farrier services, and veterinary services.

Change or any free will monetary donation can be dropped off by all students, parents, or teachers to a TAG student outside the high school and elementary offices every morning from 8:00-8:20 December 6-13, 2010.

This event is sponsored by junior high TAG, so contact Dalton Knickerbocker, Gabe Haupts, or Mrs. Sowder for more information. There are also many volunteer opportunities at the ranch.

From the Desk of Mrs. Butcher, Business and Marketing

The MstM Business and Marketing Programs have been working closely with DMACC to complete Program Plans of Study. The Program Plans coordinate our high school business and marketing courses and competencies with the entry-level competencies of DMACC programs. The coordination of these competencies will aid in the transition and success of students pursuing a degree in a post-secondary college. MstM Business Department offers two Career & Technical strands: Business Financial Management and Accounting and Marketing. **Business Financial Management and Accounting** prepares students for a career in the field of accounting. Upon graduation, the students will be able to distinguish, analyze, summarize, communicate and record business transactions. **Marketing Education** enables students to understand and apply marketing, management, and entrepreneurial principles; to make rational economic decisions; and to exhibit social responsibility in a global economy.

Accounting I students have completed the entire accounting cycle for a service business and have progressed to journalizing for a merchandising business. **Accounting III** student Michaela McIlravy is presently calculating employee payroll and employer payroll tax requirements while earning dual credit with DMACC. **Word Processing** students are presently formatting MLA style research papers. The students have learned to format block style, modified block style, mixed and open punctuation letter correspondence. The biggest change for the students as well as the teacher is using the laptops for class instead of having to go the lab to work.

Marketing students completed their unit on product/service planning with a cereal competition. A Stick in a Box cereal prepared by JD Nielsen, Beth Rucker, and Tim Snyder won first place for taste. Taylor Gavin, Logan Heckinger, and Jake Schrodt took first place with their box Giraffe-tastic. To demonstrate knowledge of pricing strategies the students created posters with examples of each of the five strategies. The **Entrepreneurship** students have chosen businesses they would like to operate, studied population trends in order pick a location for their businesses, identified competitors, profiled their target market, studied pricing strategies along with breakeven graphs, as well as the affect of supply and demand on pricing. The class has begun to learn financial requirements of a business. **Computers 8** students have worked on capitalization, number expression, symbol use, proper formatting, and speed. The students will end the semester with letter correspondence formatting.

From the Desk of Mrs. Clark, Music Dept.

Thank you to all who attended the elementary concert for grades 2, 3, and 4. The children were a delight as they shared their music with the audience.

Thank you to Mr. and Mrs. Tomes for donating the new rhythm sticks, and thank you to Mrs. Davison's Art Club for painting the rhythm sticks with metallic gold and blue! Painters were Jacob Herrera, Kaitlyn Belieu, Alex Behounek, Erin Deming, Megan Ameigh, Jordan Bown, Savanah Husted, Joselyn Miller, and Dallas Newman.

Mark your calendars for the junior high and high school band and chorus concert on Thursday, December 16 at 7:00pm. Junior high chorus will be presenting fun two and three part music. The high school chorus is performing a tribute to the Beatles. After the concert, the high school singers are invited to go caroling in Martensdale, if the weather permits. If you would like for us to carol at your home in Martensdale, please contact me, Mrs. Clark at 641-764-2486 x321 or click on my name on the staff page of our school's website.

Congratulations to the high school chorus members that participated in the Pride of Iowa Honor Choir. Those singers were Michaela McIlravy, Tayler Schad, Taylar Furness, Deana Smith-Gyles, Broc Christensen, and Joe Harkin. The 12 schools in our conference brought 85 singers. The guest director was Mark Babcock, who is the Chair of the Music Department at Central College, as well as the Director of Choral Activities. Also, thank you to the parents who came and supported their young singers!

CONCERT DATE CHANGE: The 5/6 grade concert has been changed to **Thursday, February 3, 2010**. Please make this change on your calendar.

From the Desk of Mr. Wood,
Elementary Principal

Everyday Activities to Reinforce Math Skills

Everyone knows the importance of reading to their children. But how many parents realize that it's equally essential to help their children understand math—both math concepts and how it's part of their everyday lives? Here are some fun, easy ways to incorporate math learning into your family life—without a lot of time, effort, or expense.

In the kitchen.

Cooking and baking using a recipe not only is a terrific way to help children better understand fractions, it's great bonding time. (And you get to eat the results!) With younger children, show them all the different sizes of measuring cups and spoons and show them how measuring two half-cups of flour or sugar gives them exactly the same amount as one full cup. Ask older children to help you cut a recipe in half or double a recipe. Have them write down the new measurements and double check them together—making sure they understand that, when you cook, it's important to get your math just right.

At the grocery store.

Bring a simple calculator with you to the grocery store when you shop with your children. Young children can add up how much you've spent on groceries or saved with coupons. Kids in third grade or higher can help you figure out which size of detergent, for example, is the best value, or whether using a particular coupon will end up costing less than buying the same product from a different manufacturer.

In the garage or driveway.

A tire gauge is one of the simplest tools for a child to use, and can help him or her learn about adding and subtracting quantities. Show your children how to measure the pressure in your bicycle or car tires. Explain what the pressure should be, and have them help you figure out how much air you need to add or release. Figuring out gas mileage is another great math skill booster for older kids.

When it's time to relax.

Look for games and activities that reinforce math skills, whether they're computer games (like Math Blaster), online programs (there's a great list of children's Internet math games at www.kidsites.com/sites-edu/math.htm), or old favorites like dominoes, card games, or puzzles.

On the road.

Long car trips were made for math games. Pick a number from one to 10 and have each child try to find a license plate whose numbers equal the target number. Younger children can add the numbers together. Children who have learned subtraction can try to find one that involves adding a few of the numbers and then subtracting one. Kids who have learned multiplication and division can put those skills to use.

Money is a powerful teacher.

If your children are trying to save up to buy something special for themselves or others, keep a chart of how much money they will need and what they have saved to date.

Create something.

Both sewing and building involve a lot of math ability and children love the ability to create. Teach your children how to measure and sew fabrics together and to build basic structures out of wood (just make sure they know to always have adult supervision and to never do any projects like these on their own).

Above all, make sure not to pass any math phobias that you might have on to your children. It's important for children to hear at home that what they're learning is valuable—that all the work they're doing trying to comprehend division or fractions or measurement will pay off their whole lives.

From the Desk of Mrs. Noga and Ms. DeWaard
Elementary Special Education

Winter Family Fun

Winter is the perfect time to cuddle up with your kids and share a book or learning activity. Here are some fun ideas that your family can enjoy at home to make the long winter days more enjoyable.

Read a book together

Visit a local library and check out some winter themed books. Read the books and talk about them together. Children of all ages love to listen to books that are read aloud. Older children could also read aloud to you or you could take turns reading aloud. What is your child's favorite part of the story and why? Did the story remind them of anything that they have experienced in their lives? If they could change the ending of the story, how would it end? Some fun activities that you can do together after reading a story include: making book marks with a picture and sentence or phrase from a favorite part of the story, create a new book cover with the title and author of the book, make a word graph by writing 4-5 words on a piece of paper and then marking them each time you see them in the story, and make a paper bag or paper plate puppet of the characters and then retell the story using the puppets. Reading for enjoyment is one of the best ways to get kids hooked on reading, so grab a book and have some fun!

- **Winter themed book list:**

- The Biggest, Best, Snowman by Margery Cuyler
- The First Day of Winter by Denise Fleming
- Hello Snow by Hope Vestergaard
- I Like Winter by Lois Lenski
- It's Winter - Celebrate the Seasons by Linda Glaser
- The Jacket I Wear by Shirley Neitzel
- Lights of Winter by Heather Conrad
- Mouse's First Snow by Lauren Thompson
- Ollies Ski Trip by Elsa Beskow
- Poppleton in Winter by Cynthia Rylant
- Snowball Fight! By Jimmy Fallon

Snowmen at Night by Caralyn Buehner & Mark Buehner (Illustrator)

Teaching About Winter Holidays With Favorite Picture Books by Immacula A. Rhodes

The Big Snow by Berta Hader

The Five Dog Night by Eileen Christelow

The Shortest Day: Celebrating the Winter Solstice by Wendy Pfeffer & Jesse Reisch (Illustrator)

The Snow Dude by Daniel Kirk

The Tomten by Astrid Lindgren

The Winter Solstice by Ellen Jackson

There Was a Cold Lady by Lucille Colandro

When Winter Comes by Nancy Van Laan

While the Bear Sleeps by Caitlin Matthews

The Three Snow Bears by Jan Brett

Winter – An Alphabet Acrostic by Steven Schnur

Winter Lights by Barbara Seuling

Winter Waits by Lynn Plourde

Additional learning activities

- Help your child write an acrostic poem using a winter word such as snowman, blizzard, fireplace, freeze, holidays, etc. Write the word vertically on a piece of paper and have your child begin each line with a word or phrase that starts with the letter on that line.
- Go on a nature walk and then talk about all of the cool stuff that you saw. Ask your child to tell or write a story about the walk. Did your child see an animal that could be the main character? What problem did the animal have and how does it get solved? These simple questions will help guide your child use his/her imagination.
- Allow your child to help you decorate for the holidays by sorting objects by color, shape, beginning letter, alphabetical order, etc. To incorporate math skills, ask your child to count the objects, make a graph of the objects, or put them in order from least to greatest or greatest to least after sorting them.
- Travel games are fun as you are on the road during the holidays. Ask your child to help find as many states as they can on license plates; count the number of cars and trucks you pass and compare the numbers to see if there are more cars or more trucks on the road; make a graph of the colors of cars you see to find out the most and least popular car colors, see if you can find a word for every letter of the alphabet, A-Z, on the road and business signs that you pass; count the number of water towers or any other objects that you pass, create a never-ending story where each person takes turns telling the next sentence and keep it going as long as you can. If the first story lasts 5 minutes, see if you can create another one that lasts more than 5 minutes.
- Print the lyrics of favorite holiday songs and have your child read the lyrics as you listen and sing the

songs together. Help your child create new lyrics to the tune of a favorite song.

What other ideas do you have for fun family learning activities during the long winter months? We would love to hear what you are doing with your children at home to promote and encourage their learning. Please email your ideas to us and we will share them in a future newsletter: jodi.noga@m-stmarys.k12.ia.us; amy.dewaard@m-stmarys.k12.ia.us

Counselor's Corner *Mrs. Pribil, Elementary PK-6*



Our next Character Counts pillar is RESPONSIBILITY. Some ways to encourage responsibility at home with your own children are:

- **Teach kids self-care:** If you have younger children, have them brush their own teeth or get dressed by themselves.
- **Give them age-appropriate tasks to do at home:** Start with easy things, like setting the table and feeding pets. As time goes on, kids can move on to vacuuming a room and doing laundry.
- **Help kids get organized:** Teach basic organization skills. For instance, have kids make a “to do” list with due dates and a general idea of how long each task will take.
- **Be patient:** Kids need practice so they can build responsible habits, learn from mistakes, and develop a sense of ownership.
- **Prepare them for independence:** One of your most important jobs as parents is to prepare your children to cope with life outside the home. Teach your child basic life skills, such as [grocery](#) shopping, cooking, budgeting, and doing laundry, and other household tasks.

We will be having our next Character Counts assembly on Friday, December 17, 2010 at 8:20 in the small gym. Here we will be rewarding the most responsible student from each homeroom and recognizing the class that earned the most gold cards.

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING **OCTOBER 7, 2010**

The Board of Directors of the Martensdale-St. Marys Community School District met in regular session, pursuant to law, on Thursday, October 7, 2010.

Members Present: Dave Shutt, Vice President; Scott Anderson, Amy Harper, and Wade Gibson together with Business Manager Jill Gavin.

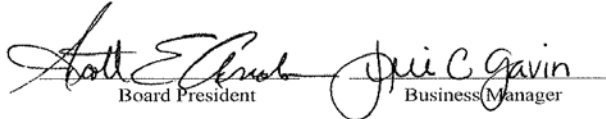
Members Absent: Nicole Bunch, President

The Vice President called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

Gavin reviewed the agenda items for the Monday, October 11, 2010 Board Meeting.

Harper moved to adjourn, seconded by Anderson. Roll call: 4 ayes; 5:27 p.m.

APPROVED


Board President Business Manager

**MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING
OCTOBER 11, 2010**

The Board of Directors of the Martensdale-St. Marys Community School District met in regular session, pursuant to law, on October 11, 2010.

Members Present: President; Nicole Bunch, Vice President; Dave Shutt, Wade Gibson, and Amy Harper; together with Mike Crozier, Tom Wood, Josh Moser, Interim Superintendent Jim Verlengia and Business Manager Jill Gavin.

Members Absent: Scott Anderson

I. Welcome

Board President Bunch called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and welcomed all guests.

II. Consent Items

- A. Approval of Minutes Board President
- B. Approval of Agenda Board President
- C. Approval of Bills and Secretary's Report Board President
- D. Approval of Hot Lunch and Activity Reports Board President

Harper requested a couple of changes to the September 13, 2010 minutes. Harper motioned to approve the consent items seconded by Gibson. Roll call: 4 ayes.

II. Celebrations

Mike Crozier announced that Ron Peterson will be inducted into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame at the end of October. Congratulations Ron!

Tom Wood thanked the Elementary Teachers for all their hard work in providing parents with information on the new literacy initiatives. They have been receiving a lot of positive comments and the parents can see the difference with their children.

Jim Verlengia has been very impressed on how the community supports the direction of the School Board. He stated that he was very impressed with a Special Education Teacher that showed compassion, care and professionalism with a student in his office this past week. He informed the Board that the lunch program has gone more electronic with its reminders that are sent out by Karen; which allows

Lorretta to focus more on the nutrition side. He recognized both Karen and Lorretta for their efforts in making the program success for all students.

IV. Public Comments - none

V. Old Business

A. Reports

1) Facilities Report

Verlengia shared with the Board information from the September 21st Facilities Meeting with Bunch, Gibson and Jim Lynch. Verlengia had asked Lynch what his top five projects he would like to move forward on in this fiscal year. The Board will discuss these items at the November Board Meeting.

2) MStM Music Booster Minutes – Minutes were provided from the September 14, 2010 meeting.

3) MStM Athletic Booster Minutes – Minutes were provided from the September 8, 2010 meeting.

4) MStM PTO Minutes – Minutes were provided from the September 13, 2010 meeting.

B. Presentations

1) Principal's Report Tom Wood

Wood announced the Character Counts! Trustworthy Students:

PK: Sampson Henson and Colton Wenck

K: Adam Snowden and Eric Reines-Schmidt

1st: Sean Kiefer and Lane Wilgenbusch

2nd: Jack Franey and Alani Gibson

3rd: Morgan Dunn and Kaley Verwers

4th: Jessica Doster and Sophia Gibson

5th: Jayme Wilson and Elizabeth Townsend

6th: Bridgette Ouimet and Andrew Shutt

Wood provided the Board with a Preschool update and discussed the Quality Preschool Program Standards (QPPS) and preparations that the staff will need to do for future verification visits. Wood listed the following trainings and classes that the staff will be attending this fiscal year: Every Student Counts (K-5 math), QPPS Study Group (preschool), Crisis Planning (district-wide), and Iowa Core (district-wide). He will keep the Board updated on these trainings at future Board meetings.

2) Principal's Report Mike Crozier
Crozier introduced Alex VanHoose and Taylor Gavin to the Board. Taylor informed the Board of the many opportunities that he has been introduced to because of the new laptops the Board purchased for the students this year. He attends a technology class and was able to help other students set up the internet at home and help with random problems. The laptop has become an important tool for him for taking notes in class. It is also a better research tool. Alex also informed the Board of the many different tools like gizmo and graphing tools that she has used in math and chemistry classes that have been very helpful. The laptop is also an important tool for Alex to take notes with. It is quicker and neater. The Board thanked Taylor and Alex for their presentations and look forward to hearing from other students.

Crozier informed the Board about Student Lead Parent Teacher Conferences that will allow students to take ownership of their education and gain leadership skills. Crozier announced again about Ron Peterson being inducted into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame.

September Students of the Month:

7th Madison Newbury
8th Nicole Shutt
9th Dani Trom
10th Katrina DeVore
11th Hannah Schnurman
12th Cheyenne Good

3) Curriculum Director's Report

Josh Moser

Moser updated the Board on what is being done on Professional Development days that include PLC Forum, PK-6 and 7-12 course proposals and the upcoming Professional Development Advisory Committee Meeting on October 28th. He showed the Board his PLC blog that the teachers have been utilizing and invited the Board members to participate on the blog at <http://mstmplc.blogspot.com>.

He reviewed information from the Curriculum Directors' Network meeting and the Iowa Core Leadership Team meeting on October 7th. He reviewed the Curriculum-Focused Walkthrough Form, a survey for parents of open enrolled students and the Staff Technology Assessment.

4) Superintendent's Report Jim Verlengia

Verlengia thanked Tom Wood for presenting at the Superintendent's meeting at the Heartland AEA in regards to our districts' use of Google Apps. He did a wonderful job and we received many positive comments. Verlengia welcomed Bob Newsum to the meeting tonight and informed the Board that he will be getting together with Newsum at the end of the month to follow up on items that will need follow up after he was gone. He announced information that was received today from the Revenue Estimate Committee that just met and revised the FY11 with a growth rate of 3.3% compared to the FY11 revised estimate. This is a significant increase in the estimate of revenue available to the state but Verlengia stressed to the Board not to use this as a false sense of security and that the Board still needs to look two to three years ahead financially. He updated the Board that our enrollment for FY11 went down by 10-11 students. This will be certified on October 15th. He also updated the Board about some of the concerns that were brought up in the Agenda Meeting and will discuss those concerns about transportation and coaches with the administration and follow up with the Board prior to his departure.

VI. New Business

A. Presentation by Eric Steffy – Women's Football League Jim Verlengia

Eric Steffy introduced himself to the Board as the new owner of the new Iowa Xplosion Women's Football League. He has hired a new head coach, Isaiah Shurman, and had a kick-off meeting at the Roadside last Sunday with 75 women who are interested in playing on the team. MStM is their first choice for their home field. The players are excited to become involved in the community and at our school. There would be four games with the possibility of two playoff games. The games would be held on Saturday evenings during the months of April through June. Concerns from the Board were the financial liability and beer cans on the property after games or practices. He understands the previous relationship was not a good one and states that they will pay the necessary fees upfront. He will also make sure that type of behavior will not be tolerated. Verlengia will set up a time to meet with Steffy and the administration regarding policies, maintenance, liability, and responsibilities and will give a formal report to the Board in November. The Board thanked Steffy for his presentation.

B. Discuss/Approve Open Enrollment

Jim Verlengia

Gavin was contacted by Mike and Olivia Miller regarding open enrollment of their two children. The Miller's have contacted Waukee and they verbally agreed to approve the request with the funding to follow. Harper motioned to approve the open enrollment in request for Brynn and Colton Miller pending on the funding to follow seconded by Gibson. Roll call: 4 ayes.

C. Approve Personnel Resignations

Jim Verlengia

Shutt motioned to approve the resignation of Caleb Hales' coaching position of JH Volleyball pending finding a suitable replacement seconded by Gibson. Roll call: 4 ayes.

D. Approve Personnel Recommendations

Jim Verlengia

Harper motioned to approve Trevor Gehringer, Tom Vodraska and Sean Lash as wrestling volunteers seconded by Shutt. Roll call: 4 ayes.

E. Approve Level I Investigators and Alternate Level I Investigators for Identifying & Reporting Child Abuse

Gibson motioned to approve Mike Crozier and Tom Wood as Level I Investigators and Randy Folkerts and Jen Pribil as Alternate Level I Investigators for identifying and reporting child abuse seconded by Harper. Roll call: 4 ayes.

F. Approve 2010-2011 Quality Support Committee

Jim Verlengia

Harper motioned to approve the 2010-2011 Quality Support Committee seconded by Gibson. Roll call: 4 ayes.

G. Discuss/Approve School Equipment Insurance

Jim Verlengia

Verlengia stated that if the Board agreed to the new equipment insurance, that Infomax, our vendor for our copiers, would agree to release us from our maintenance agreement as long as they were the first to be contacted when we had problems. We received a separate quote just for the copiers that came to \$14,819. The original quote was reduced from \$22,346 to \$19,712 due to our reduction in enrollment and based on our starting date being October 1st and not July 1st. The total of the quote was \$25,898. The Board stated that to get the most out of this policy that

we would need to clean out our closets and be very detailed in documenting time used to fix equipment. Wood mentioned that we have about a dozen old computers sitting around that we could get credit on. Our technology guy with EdNet is familiar with this policy and knows what can be submitted and what can't. The Board asked if this policy would be beneficial since we have all new laptops for the teachers and the students, all new projectors, and all new equipment at the athletic complex; which is still under warranty. Verlengia stated that if we are hesitant about purchasing this policy that we could revisit the policy again next year. He stated that he and the administrative team had concerns that there wasn't enough data available to make a solid recommendation. He would meet with the administration to get an overview of our inventory and make sure we keep track of all expenses this year to provide better data to the Board at the end of the fiscal year. Harper motioned to not approve the School Equipment Breakdown Insurance for this fiscal year and review the policy again for the next fiscal year seconded by Gibson. Roll call: 4 ayes.

H. Confirm – Next Meeting Dates

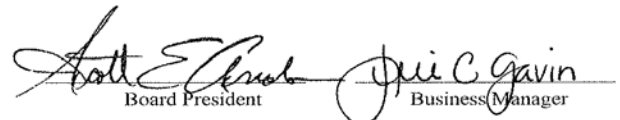
Jim Verlengia

11/03/10 – Agenda subcommittee by e-mail
11/04/10 – 5:00 p.m. Board Agenda Meeting
11/08/10 – 6:30 p.m. Board Meeting

VII. Adjournment

Shutt motioned to adjourn the meeting seconded by Gibson. Roll call: 4 ayes. Time: 7:54 p.m.

APPROVED



Scott Anderson Board President
Jill C. Gavin Business Manager

**MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING
OCTOBER 22, 2010**

The Board of Directors of the Martensdale-St. Marys Community School District met in special session by conference call, pursuant to law, on Friday, October 22, 2010.

Members Present: Nicole Bunch, President; Dave Shutt, Vice President; Scott Anderson, and Amy Harper, together with Interim Superintendent Jim Verlengia and Business Manager Jill Gavin.

Members Absent: Wade Gibson

I. Welcome – Board President

President Bunch called the meeting to order at 12:24 p.m.

II. Public Comments – no public comments.

III. New Business

A. Open Enrollment Request Jim Verlengia


Dr. Verlengia explained that he recently received a request by a family wishing to open enroll their three children in the district immediately. He presented the board with the options that they might consider under the circumstances. They could approve the request as explained or deny the request due to the fact that the request was made after the established deadline. Currently, the family who resides in the Indianola district is home schooling their three children; two elementary and one secondary student. Verlengia contacted Indianola's superintendent and asked if funding would follow. He was informed that there was no funding to follow this request because the family had not dual enrolled the students in the Indianola district.


The board expressed support for allowing the request but asked that a clear set of procedures be established and consistently followed in dealing with requests that are submitted after the deadline. The motion was made by Anderson to approve the Erwin family's request to open enroll into our district for fiscal year 2011 seconded by Shutt. Roll call: 4 ayes.

IV. Adjournment

Harper moved to adjourn, seconded by Shutt. Roll call: 4 ayes; 12:43 p.m.

APPROVED


Board President


Business Manager

It is the policy of the Martensdale-St. Marys Community School District not to illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity, and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices.

There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy, please contact the district's Equity Coordinator.

MStM's Equity Coordinator is Mike Crozier, secondary principal. His address is MStM Community School, 390 Burlington, Martensdale, Iowa 50160. His phone number is 641-764-2686 and his email address is: mike_crozier@m-stmarys.k12.ia.us

The Martensdale-St.Marys District Newsletter is published and disbursed by the end of the preceding month. The newsletter is available for pickup in the Superintendent's office, Jiffy station and Roadside Inn. All of which are located in Martensdale.

Copies are also available at Kum & Go in Bevington. You may also view it on the <http://mstm.us/> website. Questions or concerns may be addressed to:

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