



MARTENSDALE- ST. MARYS COMMUNITY SCHOOL

December 1, 2009, Issue No. 11

From the Desk of Ms. Peterson, Superintendent

MStM Community Schools Budget Update:

As I wrote in our last newsletter, Governor Culver, on October 8th, issued a 10% budget cut in response to a continued decline in state revenues. This 10% cut resulted in a \$246,479 reduction in state revenues for the MStM Community School District General Fund during the 2009-2010 school year. Last year school districts were cut 1.5% which totaled \$33,590 for the MStM School District. The Phase I dollars of the Educational Excellence Fund were also cut late last year for school districts and this amounted to \$71,000 for MStM. So, the cuts for our school district totaled \$353,069.

The school's General Fund is the main operating fund. General operating expenses including teacher and all other employee salaries/benefits, transportation, and all building operational costs come from this fund. Approximately 70% of the school's General Fund comes from state aid. Property tax funds the remaining 30%. Levying local property taxes is the only avenue to replace any loss of state funding.

Under state law, teachers are employed by a contract that protects their job for the full school year. Laying off or reducing teaching staff is not an option for a local school board to exercise mid-year in response to this 10% cut. Teacher salaries and benefits comprise 80% of a school's budget. So, this 10% cut affects 20% of the rest of the budget and the cash reserve. MStM's cash reserve is being used to offset the 1.5% cut from last year, the reduction of Phase I dollars, funding our At Risk Program and to offset the Special Education deficit.

The MStM School Board has met in two workshops to discuss how best to handle the Governor's 10% cut for the 09-10 school year. At the November 9th School Board Meeting, the Board approved for the following positions to be cut as of December 22, 2009:

- ❖ 4 associate positions
- ❖ 1 full time secretary position
- ❖ 1 part time secretary position
- ❖ 1 full time custodian
- ❖ Reducing the remaining custodian hours from 40 to 35 hours a week

The above positions result in a savings of \$64,735 for this school year and a savings of \$129,470 for the 2010-2011 school year. School districts have the discretion to set the staffing level of the district. Like I stated before, once a contract is in place for teachers, a district cannot terminate them during the term of the contract. However, a district may choose to reduce the number of teachers prior to awarding contracts in the spring. These reductions must follow the provisions of the Code of Iowa and individual contract language. The 10% cut we are experiencing gives us a legitimate reason to reduce staff.

It is also important to mention that school districts have other special funds to use that are limited in purpose and allowable expenditures. There are two other funds that can only be used legally for school facility construction and maintenance. Those two funds are the Physical Plant and Equipment Fund and the Local Option Sales Tax Fund. The revenues from these two funds can only be used for school facilities. It is not legal for the Board to transfer the Sales Tax revenues into the General Fund to replace the 10% cut. Some district patrons have questioned the reason for building the new football field/track facility and adding air conditioning and technology when cuts to staff have to be made. Again, those funds from the Physical Plant and Equipment Levy and the Local Option Sales Tax revenue by law can only be used for school facilities.

Our MStM Board of Education has the authority to set the district's priorities during the budget process. There are key places in the budget that the Board can exercise policy level decision-making. These key places are not operational decisions (how many paper clips to buy), but rather strategic decisions on both the revenue side (overall tax rates, levies, fund balances) and the expenditure side (class size, professional development, etc.)

To summarize:

There are four things the Public should know about school finance in Iowa:

- 1. The total amount of money a district has to spend is primarily driven by the number of children a district has. Schools cannot just raise as much (or as little) as they want locally.**
- 2. The tax rate of a school district is largely driven by formula and only a small portion is impacted by the School Board.**
- 3. Certain funds have to be spent on certain things. This explains why a school might have the funds to build a new**

football field/track facility but might not have enough to pay their teachers.

4. Most of our expenses are staff. Approximately 80% of a district's General Fund is made up of staff salaries and benefits.

From the Desk of Mr. Crozier

I would like to begin with congratulating the Junior High Band members who participated in the South Central Iowa Bandmasters' Honor Band on November 3rd at the Johnston Middle School: Hailey Clark and Emma Johanson. Congratulations also go out to the 8th grade singers who attended the Norwalk Festival on Monday, October 19th: Kaitlyn Belieu, Corajean Clemenson, Riley Coates, Jennice Croy, Laura Lacquement and Dallas Newman. The following students participated in the Pride of Iowa Honor Choir at Mt. Ayr on November 10th: Michaela McIlravy, Taylar Furness, Emily Hutchison, Katie Butcher, Broc Christensen and Brandon Robinson. I would also like to congratulate Mrs. Gabbert-Clark on her selection and participation as guest conductor for the Bluegrass Conference Junior High Honor Choir. The district is proud of her representation in this event.

With the end of our 1st quarter, I would like to pass along good news about our students' behavior this year. Compared to last year, our detentions are down 50%, from 100 in the 1st quarter of the 2008-2009 school year, to only 50 during the 1st quarter of 2009-2010. Suspensions have also declined by 25%. Our student body is to be commended for their positive behavior. Staff members and administrators feel that our Advisor/Advisee Program has been a big factor in the reduction of discipline referrals.

The Governor's 10 percent budget cut has had a negative effect on our school and has caused us to think outside the box to cover all the needs of our students. With the reassignment of some of our associates, we are looking for volunteers to help out in our Junior/Senior High Library. If you have some available time and are willing to help out, please contact me at (641)764-2468 or e-mail me at mike.crozier@m-stmarys.k12.ia.us. We need help in the afternoons on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. If you can cover anything from 1 hour to a half day, it would be appreciated.

In an effort to cut costs, we will no longer be mailing progress reports or report cards to parents who have an e-mail address and access to JMC (our student information system). We will e-mail progress reports out, and parents with JMC access are able to print report cards at quarter and semester time through their access. Parents are encouraged to call and request an official report card if they need one for insurance, legal, or any other purposes. Parents without e-mail addresses will still receive progress reports through the mail and report cards will be sent home with students. This will save the district money and will enhance the district in going GREEN. We will continue to look for ways to save money without cutting vital services to students.

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 a charity fundraising event for our community for the holidays. Participants are allowed to wear jeans for the last week of school before the holiday break for a donation to the event. Last year the Martensdale-St. Marys staff (PK-12) raised over \$900.00, which was dispersed to families in our community and helped buy winter clothing items for our students. Mr. Wood and I started this program two years ago and have been very impressed with the generosity of our staff.

From the Desk of Mrs. Kirvin, PK-12 Nurse

We are seeing a lot of absence in both the Elementary and the Jr/Sr High School. Symptoms have been widely varied, but most report a headache, sore throat, body aches, fever, and stomach aches. A lot of the students report feeling ill for several days, and then feeling better, only to get to school and feel sick again. We understand that it is hard to distinguish when it is the right time to send your children back to school.

Please do keep your student home if they have had a fever of greater than 100 degrees in the last 24 hours. If you have to use Tylenol or Ibuprofen to keep their temperature down they are not ready to come back.

Please continue to encourage your children to wash their hands frequently with soap and water or hand sanitizers, and to cover their coughs and sneezes.

In an attempt to keep doctor's offices and emergency rooms and their phone lines clear for necessary patients, we will be suspending the requirement for a doctor's note with extended illness. If you have a regularly scheduled dentist or doctor appointment, please continue to obtain notes for your child's absence.

Warren County Public Health has a phone line dedicated solely to providing information about the availability and eligibility requirements for H1N1 and seasonal flu vaccinations. The number is 515-961-1135. There were some problems with this phone number initially, but hopefully those issues have all been resolved.

Please feel free to call me at school for any questions or concerns you may have during school hours.

Alene Kirvin, R.N.

From the Desk of Mr. Moser *High School English Language Arts Instructor*

What is National Honor Society?

By Josh Moser, National Honor Society Advisor

From time to time you may hear items in the announcements about National Honor Society (or NHS for short). You might

even know someone who is currently or was a member when they were in school. But what is it all about?

To borrow from the official Web site of the National Honor Society (www.nhs.us), it is defined as, "...the nation's premier [organization] established to recognize outstanding high school...students. More than just an honor roll, NHS serve[s] to honor those students who have demonstrated excellence in the areas of Scholarship, Leadership, Service, and Character. These characteristics have been associated with membership in the organization since [its] beginnings in 1921..."

The tenets of scholarship, leadership, service, and character guide the organization and are also the basis on which membership is decided. The membership selection process is as follows:

- A student can be selected for membership as a sophomore or junior.
- The selection process usually begins after spring break.
- The initial criteria to be considered for membership are to have a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher by the spring of one's sophomore or junior year.
- Eligible students are then invited to become full members of the organization. Letters will be given to the student at school and a second one will be sent home.
- If a selected student is interested in becoming a full member NHS, they must complete a form outlining extracurricular activities, community service experience, and other pertinent information.
- Once the Faculty Council (a team of five teachers—excluding the advisor—that serve as an advisory board for the organization) has received the forms, they schedule interviews with each candidate that allows us to "get to know" each candidate more than just what's on their form. The questions generally focus on the four tenets of NHS.
- Based on their interview and the Council's vote, the candidates are then invited for full membership.

Throughout the year, members perform a series of group service projects. In addition to the semi-annual blood drives we host, service projects in the past have included ringing bells for the Salvation Army, working at the Ronald McDonald House in Des Moines, and participating in Kids against Hunger. Each month we gather for a formal meeting where, using parliamentary procedure, we decide each month's service project, discuss the climate and culture of the school, and generally work to improve the MStM community. Being a member of NHS is a privilege and a reward for one's contributions, work ethic, and existing accomplishments. It is my belief that members of NHS should set the standard for what a student at MStM should be, and we are striving to do that each and every day. If you have any questions about NHS, its membership requirements, or have ideas for community service projects, please contact me at (641)764-2486 x 210 or via email at josh_moser@-stmarys.k12.ia.us.

MARTENSDALE ST. MARYS MUSIC BOOSTERS SPONSOR

The Martensdale St. Marys Music Boosters would like you to become a sponsor! Your donations will help support the Pre-K -12 music programs at our school. Music Boosters help to cover costs not otherwise covered by school funds. Music Boosters donations have helped to purchase music stands for the elementary music room, music folders for high school chorus, props for the elementary musical, and some percussion instruments for the band. But we would like to do much more. With your help we hope to be able to work toward these goals:

Rhythm Sticks & other supplies for Elementary Music Students

Percussion instruments for the High School Band

Color Guard flags and uniform parts

Other Music Program extras

If you would like to become a Music Boosters Sponsor, please fill in the information below and send your contribution of \$20.00 or more to:

Martensdale-St. Marys Music Boosters
PO Box 350
Martensdale, IA 50160

Donation Amount \$ _____
(\$20 or more to have your name appear on the concert program)

Please print your name as you would like it to appear on the music concert programs:

(Name)

"Students who participate in music receive more academic honors and awards than non-music students. Even more impressive, music participants make for a higher percentage of A and B students than their non-music counterparts." From: "NELS:88 First Follow-up," 1990, National Center for Education Statistics, Washington DC.

From the Desk of Mrs. Gabbert-Clark, Music Department

High school students who participated in the Pride of Iowa conference honor choir were Michaela McIlravy, Taylor Furness, Emily Hutchison, Katie Butcher, Broc Christensen, and Brandon Robinson. These students performed with other singers in our conference on November 10 at Mt. Ayr high school under the direction of Mr. Tom Hart, Director of Choral Activities at Graceland.

December 17 is the Junior High and High School Winter concert for band and chorus. The concert begins at 7pm here in our high school gym.

High school singers who have volunteered to share their talents with the community will be performing at the Norwalk Christmas Festival on Friday, December 4 at the Fellowship Community Church.

Elementary students in grades 2, 3, 4 presented their concert on November 17th. According to the Music Boosters this was the largest crowd they have seen in recent years. Music Boosters help to prepare the reception after concerts, among many other various activities to support music at MStM. Thank you to everyone who came and supported our young musicians!

Looking ahead, the 6th grade will be presenting their musical "Winter Wouldn't Wait" on January 26, 2010. If you would be able to donate or let us borrow props the students would very much appreciate your help. Items needed are: a light weight couch or love seat, fake fur for trimming costumes, artificial flowers and leaves, cotton for "snow", artificial evergreen trees, and baskets.

**From the Desk of Mrs. Sondag,
Instrumental Music Department**

To MStM Band Parents:

It's getting that time of year that the new experience of playing an instrument is becoming more challenging for 5th grade students. This is the time to encourage kids to stick with it. Have your child play for you to show them it's important, and you are taking an interest in what they are learning. Band class gives students learning challenges they would not otherwise experience if they simply give up and go into a study hall situation. Sometimes it's just good to encourage them to not give up to take the easier route.

There is so much research out there about the effects on students who are taught the skills of reading and playing music. I did my own study a few years ago here at our school. The senior class of 2007 had 10 students who had participated in the band program since they had been in 5th grade. When I compared their standardized test scores in the area of math, I was able to see the effect of this connection. The lowest scoring band students actually scored in the class average and all other band students scored even higher. In fact most of the upper level math scores in the class came from those band students. Reading music helps teach those fractional and spatial relationships needed to do well in math concepts. Many countries utilize this "Mozart" effect to increase student achievement.

In colleges music classes and ensembles are not treated as an extra-curricular activity. It is an academic subject. In some college conferences students cannot earn a scholarship for an athletic sport (local colleges - Central or Simpson College do not give athletic scholarships), but music scholarships are available for majors and non majors who participate.

SCIBA Honor band news:

The junior high South Central Iowa Honor Band was held in Johnston on November 3rd. There were 3 bands with 300 Central Iowa students from all class sizes of schools participating. MStM had three seventh grade students who were chosen and participated in the all day event. Hailey Clark, flutist, Emma Johanson and Baylee Holt, clarinetists were great representatives from our school. Thank you for all your great efforts and on a wonderful evening performance.

**From the Desk of Ms. Condon
Family & Consumer Science Department**

First of all, I would like to thank everyone for all of the donations I've received over the last few weeks. I have received many donations of fabric for students to use in sewing class as well as new place settings and supplies for the foods classes. I am so appreciative of the generosity of this community!

It has been a busy semester so far in the Family and Consumer Sciences Department. Sewing class has been busy with many projects lately, including Pillowcases for Patients. The students made pillowcases as an early project and they were donated to Blank Children's Hospital. They are currently working on t-shirt quilts using t-shirts from MStM which will be great keepsakes for the students.

Food and Nutrition started the semester working on kitchen arrangement, equipment, and measuring. We are currently working our way through MyPyramid by studying nutrition and foods comprising each food group. Next semester Food and Nutrition II will extend on this information while Advanced Foods will progress more to the culinary arts field.

Child Development had a memorable experience taking home RealCare babies. They were able to practice some of the responsibilities of parenting as we combined this with information on the cost of raising a child and proper care of infants. We are currently studying the moral, emotional, social and intellectual development of children, ages one to three. This is important knowledge for the students that will be parents themselves in the future. It is also important for any students seeking a career that involves working with children and families.

I have enjoyed my first semester here at Martensdale-St. Marys and look forward to what the future holds here for Family and Consumer Sciences Department!

From the Desk of Jayne Sherwood

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@msmarys.k12.ia.us. I appreciate all the help from parents.

From the Desk of Bob Sondag

INDUSTRIAL ARTS DEPARTMENT

The 7th grade learned about safe use of hand and power tools, this included taking safety test over each of the different machines. The project they made used the table saw, miter box saw, belt sander, drill press, band saw, and router. The class also learned about staining and finishing of their project, this included the different styles of brushes used for the project.

The Drafting class has been working on basic paper/pencil drawing. They started with graphic paper enlarging simple sketches, they moved on to taking images from the internet and enlarging them. They have done 3-view drawing (working drawing) and pictorial drawings.

The Wood classes started with a hand tool project that only hand tools were used in the building of the project (book shelf). After finding the board they wanted to use they had to hand plane the board. Then moved on to cutting a dado and rabbit joint using a back saw and a chisel. They hand sanded the project, there were a few complains about this step. The wood classes are now learning about the different machines and their safety.

The Welding class has learned about using the oxygen and acetylene torch system to weld and cut metal. They are starting to work with the arc welding machines to work on different projects. One of the projects they are working on is converting a boat trailer into one to haul lawn mowers and other items.

The Power/Energy class has been working on an old single cylinder engine from a grain elevator. The engine when done will be attached to a frame that the Welding class has been working on. They are going to try to recreate a 1903 Oldsmobile automobile.

The Manufacturing class has been studying how to set a business, they came up first with a building group and a company name. They were given the task to build a small table that would fit into a 25"X25"X27" box for shipping. The table could be of their own designs. The 2nd project was to build a "Garden Bench" with each group building the same bench; the differences would have to be in the sale advertising.

From the Desk of Mrs. Butcher

MARKETING & BUSINESS

by Vivian Butcher

Career and Technical Education (CTE) is the new word for vocational education. Each school district is required to offer four CTE strands. Our department offers two of the required strands: Business & Information Technology and Marketing. **Business and Information Technology** prepares students to master knowledge and skills needed to function as



citizens, consumers, employees, managers, and business owners. **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. Each strand must offer a minimum of six semesters of study in its area. A student who completes and demonstrates proficiency in a strand (six semester classes) is labeled a **completer**. Those students are prepared to move on to a post-secondary school.

The Business Strand consists of: Word Processing, Computer Applications, Accounting I & II, and a full year of Workplace Basics. The Marketing Strand consists of: Entrepreneurship, Marketing, Management, Sales, and Workplace Basics. Our department also offers Computer Apps II, Web Design, Accounting III & IV, and School-to-Work.

Activities that are happening in class: **Accounting** students have learned to analyze and record transactions and report that information on



profit and loss statements. To aid in learning you might hear the students rapping debit and credit songs. The next time you need to advertise ask a **Word Processing** student to create you a flyer. Flyers were our first attempt at learning Microsoft Word 2007. All labs were upgraded this summer to the Microsoft Office 2007 Suite. The students are now using Word to format research papers with MLA style.

Entrepreneurship students will tell you that over 50% of jobs in the U.S. come from small businesses, and they are learning how to start their own businesses. Each student has decided on a business of interest, created a business name, conducted research to find the best location, identified their target customers, and created an advertisement. After they calculate their initial capitalization needs, they will study ways to obtain financing. Ask a **Marketing** student the 4P's of marketing, and they will tell you product, price, place, and promotion.

Allen Brown can confirm how important promotion can be after his *ShamWow* pencil holder was voted Number 1. Students had to create a product from an index card, pencil,

tooth picks, paper clips, and rubber bands. Protect your home from tigers with *Tiger Spray* by Taylor Craven (voted Number 1 product made from junk). Watch the grocery shelves for *S'more Nuts* cereal created by Autumn Harper. Students voted



Autumn cereal box and cereal #1. Brittney Kubik and Dylan Cosner will tell you that **Accounting III** has perks—3 college

credit hours from DMACC. The next time you visit HyVee in Indianola or on Mills Civic Parkway, Reynolds Feed & Grain in Indianola, A&M Services in New Virginia, or Machine Shed in Clive, you might see Haylee Gehringer, Nick Ferin, Trevor Simpson, Jake Defenbaugh, or Kelly Sherwood. These five students are connecting their classroom learning with on-the-job experiences in our **School-to-Work** program.

From the Desk of Mrs. Sowder, English Department / Yearbook Advisor

HIGH SCHOOL TAG NEWS: In the high school arena, students met for another session of knowledge bowl prep, and they have their final one of the year on Thursday, December 4. The eight team members will be selected in December for the competition in January. Selections will be based on practice session scores and content area strength.

Students who selected career counseling as a service they needed for TAG attended a session where they took personality and multiple intelligence surveys, giving them more insight into career choices and their strengths and weaknesses. Within the next few months, those same students will be taking the latest and most advanced version of Choices, a career inventory.

The Enrichment Cluster on music legends is now working on their final products to synthesize their knowledge on how a particular band or artists has changed our culture and influenced generations. If you are a music lover, you may request to be an audience member for their presentations on Friday, November 11, from 11:20-12:00. **Guitar Hero** will be part of the presentation!

Ms. Skellenger conducted a PhotoShop session with TAG students who will be entering Josten's 2010 Photo Contest. If sophomore Kate Cook and 7th grader Emma Johanson chose to enter the Illusion category, they can utilize their PhotoShop skills.

Junior Rachel Connor job shadowed at the Botanical Center on November 5 and junior Shannon Snyder, who takes advanced Spanish, will be communicating with a Honduran pen pal, a foreign exchange student from Indianola High School, before the holiday break.

JUNIOR HIGH TAG NEWS: I'd like to welcome Dalton Knickerbocker, grade 7, to the creative/productive domain of the talented and gifted program.

The junior high TAG students have now attended two support group sessions with Mrs. Pribil and Mrs. Sowder, where we have played ice breaker games in order to get to know everyone better. Discussions have focused around students' perception of how teachers are meeting their needs in class, what types of pressures they feel with parents, how socially things can be awkward for TAG students, and their own set of strengths and weaknesses.

The junior high students have also selected jobs based on their strengths for their holiday service project focused around YESS, Youth Emergency Services & Shelter. Eighth grader Eddy Kraber is leading the project, and eighth grader Elizabeth Gerdes has written an article about the project below:

**During the holiday season, we all look forward to going home to a nice warm house surrounded by the people we love. The kids at YESS (Youth Emergency Services &

Shelter) don't have that. Some of them spend the whole holiday season without seeing any family members at all. Fortunately, programs like YESS exist. This is a system that temporarily takes kids in, age birth to eighteen. They give them a warm place to sleep and hot meals to eat. When kids come in, the facility provides school supplies, clothing, and hygiene materials, and these things aren't free. So as junior high TAG students, we've decided to create a giving tree with all of the in-kind donations going to the children at YESS.

Our service project will run from November 24-December 18, with two giving trees, one in the elementary office and one in the high school office. On the trees will be tags, each with an item listed like toothbrushes, deodorant, baby food and formula, sheets, and socks. Clothing items and sheets can be newly purchased or gently used. These are basic things we use every day, but don't necessarily think about the kids who don't have them.

If you would like to participate in the giving tree, just stop by the office and grab a tag. When you have purchased that item, simply place it under the tree.

These simple gifts will give the kids at YESS something they might not have felt in a while- love, and a feeling that there's someone out there who cares about them.

From the Desk of Mr. Folkerts, H.S. Counselor

PSAT Tests

The PSAT / NMSQT test was administered Wednesday, October 14, 2009. Results should be returned to us in December.

PLAN Test

Sophomores can sign up and take the PLAN test Tuesday, November 24th at school. The PLAN test is a "pre-ACT" test, and is a predictor of success on the ACT. It also has some career prep information along with suggestions on how to improve academic achievement. PLAN results should be back by the end of the 1st semester.

Senior College Visits

If a student is interested in visiting a college he / she needs to come to the Guidance Office and request a college visit form. The student should bring the form home for a parent to sign. Mr. Folkerts will call and set up the visit. Make sure you bring the signed form back from the visit.

College Planning Night

We hosted College Night on October 1st, 2009, for juniors, seniors, and their parents. This night gave the students and parents a chance to look at post high school options and to visit with the College Planning Center representative about college planning.

Financial Aid Night

Financial Aid Night will be held on December 9th in the media center at 6:30. The College Planning Center will give seniors and parents information. A main topic to be presented will be the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) ---the form required to apply for any federal and/or school aid. Additionally, other scholarship sources, application time lines and resources/contacts for parents in search for more financial

aid will be discussed. The best thing students can do right now to help in the process of seeking scholarship money is to be sure all school applications and related paperwork are completed by the end of the first semester. You need to have this done before you will receive a financial aid package.

ACT Testing

Test Date: December 12, 2009

Regular Registration Deadline: November 6th, 2009

Late Registration Deadline: November 20th, 2009

From the Desk of Mr. Peterson, Athletic Director

I want to thank everyone who helped make the fall athletic season successful. It was tough moving back and forth between Martensdale and St. Marys for football but it worked out with everybody's help. There were a lot of individuals who stepped up and helped with projects too numerous to mention. Again --- thank you very much.

The fall competition season is over and MSTM athletes have received numerous post-season honors.

Volleyball News

Pride of Iowa

**1ST Team – Megan Simms
Mackenzie Morrison
Taylor Johnson**

**2nd Team - Kelli Sherwood
Lexie Smith**

POI All-Academic Team Members

PJ Estell

Taylor Johnson

Carrie Wood

Mackenzie Morrison

Andria Harper

Kelli Sherwood

Megan Simms

Sam Norris

Kati Gehringer

Hailey Sweet

The girls volleyball team received certificates entitled "Distinguished Academic Achievement" from the Iowa High School Girls Athletic Union for having a combined team grade point average of 3.716. You read the grade point average correctly ---- 3.716.

We have an amazing group of young ladies who are outstanding athletes and excel in the classroom, as well. Congratulations!!!!

Football News

MSTM All-District Team

**1st Team – Kyle Weidmann
Elijah Shnurman**

**2nd Team – Trevor Simpson
Zeb Noel
Jacob Schrodt**

**Honorable Mention – Ross Chilton
Garrett Gehringer**

The football team received certificates entitled "Excellence in Academic Achievement" from the Iowa High School Athletic Association for having a combined team grade point average of 3.182. Great Work!!!

Girls Basketball News

The MSTM Girls Basketball Team will be playing at Wells Fargo Arena in Des Moines on December 6th against Indianola. The junior varsity will play a half of basketball starting at 1:00 followed by the varsity with tipoff at 2:00. The cost is \$10.00 and you may buy your ticket at the high school office. The ticket is good for the Iowa Energy game that follows. It should be a great contest.

From the Desk of Mr. Wood, Elementary Principal

The Importance of Play

Play is a child's "job." Unfortunately, between television, computers, and scheduled activities, children are left with very little time in which to do their job. Playing provides great learning opportunities and also gives children some much needed time to simply be children. Playing also helps children develop their imaginations and build motor and social skills. Here are some great tips to help get your children playing.

Limit TV.

Children spend too much time in front of the television and computer. Limiting access will encourage them to engage in other activities. If they need or enjoy the background noise, turn on the radio. Music will entice your children to sing, dance, and use their imaginations.

Don't rush.

Just like adults, children need time to unwind and time for their imaginations to start working. Try to provide daily time for unstructured and unscheduled play; time when your children can decide what, when, and how to play.

Be creative.

Children don't need the latest and greatest toys. All you really need are a few basic essentials such as crayons, dress-up clothes, books, and balls. Keep "open-ended" materials around—things that children can use for more than one type of play, from modeling clay to old sheets to wooden blocks to cardboard boxes.

Don't believe the hype.

Many educational toys tout benefits you might never see. Before you spend a lot of money on educational toys or electronics, ask your child's teacher or principal for

recommendations. While that electronic globe looks great and has a lot of features, puzzles or a craft kit might better serve your child's needs. Involve your child in the discussion and purchase of toys. You want to make sure you choose toys with which they will actually play.

Run around.

Regardless of whether or not your child plays organized sports, make time several days a week for them to run around and exercise. From swinging a bat to swinging on a swing set, physical activity helps kids grow strong and release some energy.

Play games.

When children play games, they learn important social lessons. Team games help teach skills such as how to work together, how to handle conflict, and how to strategize. Board games teach skills such as sharing, taking turns, and the art of compromise. Playing games also teaches children how to be graceful winners and good losers. While parents and caregivers can be game "partners," it's more important to have children interact with siblings or peers.

Expect play.

After-school and summer childcare programs can be wonderful opportunities for children to play—or they can be play busters. When looking at these programs, ask how much time your child will have to play and how much time is spent watching TV and playing computer or video games. Choose a program you feel allows your child enough time to play and use his or her imagination. The most important thing is to allow your children to be children and learn through play.

Kindergarten News
Mrs. Henson & Mrs. Webster



On October 15, the kindergarten classes took a field trip to Howell's Tree Farm to visit the Pumpkin Patch. What a blustery day it was! 40 degrees and mud up to our knees was our motto! One of the favorite places to play was in the shed filled with shucked corn.



We also enjoyed climbing the giant hay bales, riding the tractor tricycles, zipping down the big slide, feeding the goats, and picking out our very own pumpkins! It was wonderful to have so many parent volunteers; it always makes the day go a little more smoothly.



When we are not out and about on exciting field trips we spend our time *learning* in our classrooms.



We are currently working on our numbers through 10, practicing new words, learning to write our letters, making rhymes, practicing short vowel sounds, and discovering our world through hands-on exploration!



From the Desk of Mrs. Pelzer

Mrs. Pelzer's 4th grade class is raising money for kids at Blank Children's Hospital. After raising the money, our class plans to put together craft bags for the kids. We will also purchase items like movies, play-doh, coloring books and colors for them to do during their stay at the hospital. If you would like to give a cash or check donation, please deliver it to Mrs. Pelzer's classroom in 4th grade. Checks can be made out to MSTM. Thanks so much for you support as it's going towards a great cause!!

Drake University Press Release

**LOCAL STUDENT EARNS DEGREE
AT DRAKE UNIVERSITY**

Sara Kuhns of Norwalk, Iowa, graduated from Drake University at the conclusion of the 2009 summer semester with a Master of Science in Education in Educational Leadership from the School of Education.

Drake is a private, independent university in Des Moines, Iowa, with an enrollment of approximately 3,200 full-time undergraduate students from 45 states and 62 countries. Drake University's mission is to provide an exceptional learning environment that prepares students for meaningful personal lives, professional accomplishments and responsible global citizenship. The Drake experience is distinguished by collaborative learning among students, faculty and staff and by the integration of the liberal arts and sciences with professional preparation.

Lions Club Food Drive

The Lions Club will be hosting a food drive through December 10, 2009. You may bring any non-perishable food items to the Lions Hall in Martensdale, IA. If you have questions, please contact Cathy Keller at 641-764-2416. Thanks in advance for your cooperation this holiday season!



From the Desk of Mrs. Pribil,
Counselor's Corner



We had our Character Counts assembly on November 20 and the pillar we were recognizing was respect. Students from each classroom were awarded for being respectful. We also gave out awards for those students in grades 4th-6th who made the gold honor roll and the blue honor roll for the 1st quarter. In order to make the gold honor roll, students must receive all A's. Blue honor roll students received A's and B's.

Students have been discussing respect in large group guidance for the past couple of weeks. Respect means showing others that they are valued for who they are, for their character, not what they look like or what they have. It means treating others the way you want to be treated, never insulting or making fun of others who are different in appearance, ability, race or religion.

Our next character pillar that we will be talking about is responsibility. The next character counts assembly will be January 15 at 8:40 in the small gym.



**MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING
OCTOBER 8, 2009**

The Board of Directors of the Martensdale-St. Marys Community School District met in regular session, pursuant to law, on Thursday, October 8, 2009.

Members Present: Scott Anderson, President; Nicole Bunch, Vice-President; Dave Shutt, Amy Harper and Wade Gibson together with Superintendent Jean Peterson and Business Manager Jill Gavin.

Members Absent: None

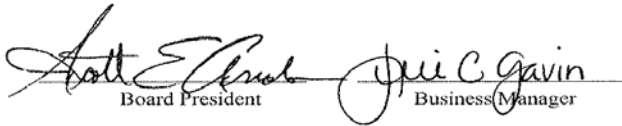
The President called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Supt. Peterson and Gavin reviewed the agenda items for the Monday, October 12, 2009 Board Meeting. Supt. Peterson introduced Matt Carlile to give the Board an update on the football/track project. Carlile handed out a list of liquidated

damages that was proposed to Pinnacle and we are still waiting to hear back from them. The Board thanked Carlile.

Harper moved to adjourn, seconded by Bunch. Roll call: 5 ayes; 5:57 p.m.

APPROVED


Board President Business Manager

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING

OCTOBER 12, 2009

The Board of Directors of the Martensdale-St. Marys Community School District met in regular session, pursuant to law, on October 12, 2009.

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

Members Absent: Wade Gibson

I. Welcome
Anderson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed all guests.

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

Harper requested minor grammar changes to be made to the September 14, 2009 minutes. Bunch motioned to approve the consent items with the minor grammar changes to be made seconded by Harper. RC: 4 ayes.

III. Celebrations

Crozier commented on the 2009 Homecoming by stating that we have a great student body and had a good week. The parade route was changed this year along with having our tailgate party and ribbon cutting ceremony at the new Football/Track Stadium. We had a great turnout at the tailgate and at the first football game on the new field. Supt. Peterson commented on the great publicity we had in the Indianola Record Herald and on Channel 8 Sports News. Thank you to everyone who had a part in making Homecoming week a great success.

IV. Public Comments – No public comments

V. Old Business

- A. Reports

1) Facilities Report – Supt. Peterson

The Facilities Committee will meet Thursday, October 15th at 5:30 to discuss our long range plans and create a 3-5 year plan on how to use our SILO money. The HVAC condenser units have been installed in the high school gym and some adjustments have been made throughout the building, otherwise everything is going well.

- 2) MStM Music Booster Minutes – Supt. Peterson – No minutes were submitted.
- 3) MStM Athletic Booster Minutes – Supt. Peterson – No minutes were submitted.
- 4) MStM PTO Minutes – Supt. Peterson

Wood informed the board that the PTO will be trying something different in regards to fundraising this year. Instead of using a company to sell products they will try requesting donations instead. Harper asked if they sponsor the Jr. Achievement and Wood commented that businesses provide scholarships to schools to help them attend Jr. Achievement.

B. Presentations

1) Superintendent's Report – Supt. Peterson
Supt. Peterson reported to the Board her superintendent's goals for 2009-2010, discussed additional student assessments that will be used to monitor our students' progress, discussed the book *The Global Achievement Gap* by Dr. Tony Wagner that they have encouraged the staff to read, and an article regarding college and work readiness.

2) Principals' Report –Tom Wood and Mike Crozier
Josh Moser, Angela Davidson, Kim Burns and Amanda Pelzer discussed with the Board the 2009-2010 Comprehensive School Improvement Action Plans for Reading, Math, Science, Technology and Character for the Secondary and Elementary. Constructive discussion was made between the Board and the teachers. The Board thanked the teachers for their presentations and look forward to future updates. Crozier discussed the 2008-09 Second Semester CSIP documentation, Collaboration Time and the September Students of the Month. Crozier announced that there were 87 students nominated.

7th Bethany Phillips
8th Laura Lacquement
9th Kayla DePauw
10th Beth Rucker
11th James Phillips
12th Eric Rinard

Wood introduced Brenda Halverson and Jodi Noga to review with the Board the 2009-2010 Title I Handbook. Wood discussed the 2008-09 CSIP documentation, the Elementary CSIP Action Plan and announced the September Character Counts Trustworthy Students.

- PK Eric Reines-Schmidt and Johnnie Cassady
- K Joel Kisling and Sean Kiefer
- 1st Grace Dunahoo and Alani Gibson
- 2nd Morgan Dunn and Nolan Starmer
- 3rd Katelyn Amfah and Jessica Doster
- 4th Garrison Haults and Makenna Milligan
- 5th Tom Warden and Dakota Gibson
- 6th Jennifer Hraha and Riley Verwers

VI. New Business

A. IASB School Board Officers Workshop

Supt. Peterson

Gavin will register Anderson, Bunch and Harper to the October 27th ICN workshop for board officers at the MStM ICN room.

B. IASB Convention 2009 Supt. Peterson

Gavin will register Bunch to the November 19th Iowa School Board Convention at HyVee Hall, and Harper will be attending the Delegate Assembly on November 18th at HyVee Hall.

C. IASB Update Jill Gavin

Gavin informed the Board that the Certified Annual Report has been certified with the state. Gavin gave the Board an update on the Certified Enrollment count and stated that the numbers change daily but will be certified by the state by October 15th. The Board was also provided information regarding the Across the Board Cut of 10% that was announced on Thursday, October 8th and historical data regarding revenue, expenditures, enrollment, cash reserve dollars, solvency ratio, and a comparison of area school districts and their tax rates dated back to the 2000-2001 school year.

D. Approve 2009-2010 Personnel Recommendations Supt. Peterson

Bunch motioned to table the personnel recommendations seconded by Anderson. Upon further discussion, the motion was amended to approve Trevor Gehringer and Tom Vodraska as wrestling volunteers, Amanda Brown as wrestling cheerleading coach and to table the rest of the recommendations for baseball and softball seconded by Anderson. RC: 4 ayes.

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

Supt. Peterson informed the Board that by law the following statement needs to be approved on an annual basis.

Bunch motioned to approve the following recommendations seconded by Shutt. RC: 4 ayes.

The MStM School Board recommends Tom Wood and Mike Crozier to be the Martensdale St. Marys Community School District's Level I Investigators for the 2009-2010 school year. We recommend that Jen Pribil and Randy Folkerts be the Alternate Level I Investigators for the 2009-2010 school year.

The MStM School Board recommends that we use the Warren County Sheriff's Department or the Department of Human Services as our Level II Investigators for the 2009-2010 school year.

F. Approve 2009-2010 Quality Support Committee Supt. Peterson

Harper motioned to approve the 2009-2010 Quality Support Committee that involved staff, parents, students and board members seconded by Anderson. RC: 4 ayes.

G. Discuss Group Health Insurance

Jill Gavin

Gavin discussed with the Board that she would like to put together a committee of teachers and Board Members to discuss new group health insurance for the 2010-2011 school year and submit a Request for Proposal. The Board agreed and Gavin will have an update at the November meeting.

H. Confirm – Next Meeting Dates

11/04/09 – Agenda subcommittee by e-mail

11/05/09 – 5:30 p.m. Agenda Meeting

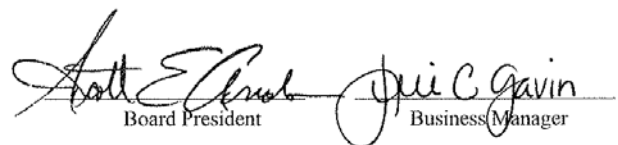
11/09/09 – 6:00 p.m. Board Meeting

The Board will meet on October 29th for a budget workshop.

VII. Adjournment

Bunch motioned to adjourn seconded by Harper. RC: 4 ayes. Time: 8:40 p.m.

APPROVED


Board President Business Manager

The Martensdale-St.Marys District Newsletter will be available by the end of each month.

Questions or concerns may be addressed to:

*Mrs. Tomlinson
Martensdale-St.Marys
Superintendent's Office
390 Burlington
Martensdale, Iowa
641/764-2466*