



Winter 2012 Quarterly Newsletter

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. We hope you and your family have a healthy, happy, and safe holiday 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! Students will be dismissed at 1:00 on Friday, December 21, for the 2012 Holiday Vacation and classes will resume on Wednesday, January 3, 2013.

Your district communications advisory committee has focused on the various methods for communicating the great educational things that are happening in and around Martensdale-St. Marys. Since the district communications advisory committee began work in January 2011, we have been addressing the complex issue of 'branding' and ensuring that the logos and images attached to our school district have not been copied or plagiarized from another organization or institution. Elsewhere in this newsletter and in the fall quarter newsletter that will be delivered to your mailbox early in December is an invitation for you to enter a Blue Devil image contest. Please consider entering this contest to support our school with a Blue Devil image that is attractive and appropriate. Deadline for submitting entries is Monday, January 14, 2013, at 4:00 PM. The next meeting of the district communications advisory committee is scheduled for Monday, January 14, 2013, beginning at 6:00 PM. Please mark your calendar and plan to join us!

2011/12 Communications Survey SUMMARY

1. More than half (56%) ranked the overall communications they receive relating to the MSTM community as **good** with 19% saying they felt it was **excellent** and 18% ranked it as being **fair**.
2. 90% of those completing the survey said they have access to the internet on a regular basis with 10% saying they do not. The percent of patrons accessing the internet on a regular basis is much higher than we expected.
3. Over half (60%) use their home or office computer to go online and 29% said they use both, their home/office computer and smart phone. 5% indicated they do not have access to the internet and 2% said they use other methods.

Area of focus: How do we continue to communicate with the 5-10% who either do not have internet access or do not refer to it on a regular basis?

4. When asked how often they use their computer or devise to visit the school website, 23% said **every day**; 25% said 2-3 times per week; 25% said once a week; 14% said 1-2 times a month; 12% **never**; and 4% said 1-2 times a year with 9% saying they only visit the school website when prompted.

We found those in the 12% **never** category include young families who either have no children or their children are not of school age; while the majority of this group consist of empty nesters and retirees. Most

indicated they would prefer hard copies of the newsletter or at least an email prompting them to view the newsletter online (for those with computer access). Half of those in the never category do not have computer access which explains the need of hard copies.

Area of focus: How do we reach out to everyone including those without computers? How can we bring attention to the website to encourage those who currently view it one to two times a month or less often to view it more often?

5. On a typical day, there was not one time of day that stood out when asked what time of day they most access or visit the school website. 32% said morning; 16% said afternoon; 13% said evening; 24% said all of the above with 15% falling in the category of either not having a computer, not having children in school giving them no reason to visit the school website, or maybe they do not access the website on a daily bases unless prompted to.

7. As far as searching for information on the website, 48% said they are satisfied with 21% being very satisfied. 3% were dissatisfied and 2% were very dissatisfied.

Area of focus: How and what can we do to make it easier to locate info on the website?

8. When it comes to wanting to know what is going on in the school district – from current activities to future events, we asked if they felt information was available to them. More than half (62%) said they receive adequate information. 19% marked neutral. 11% responded they felt they did not receive enough information. Additional comments made by those in the 11% category included they would like to be more informed on how their tax dollars are spent and what improvements the school is making to improve education.

Area of focus: What type of information can we include on the website to better communicate and make others more aware of how tax dollars are spent and when and what improvements are being made?

9. The best method of communication for them to receive information regarding the MSTM school district relating to current activities and upcoming events was ranked as follows:

- 40% school website
- 19% quarterly newsletter
- 15% electronic newsletter
- 21% all of above
- 3% newspaper
- 2% annual report

Half of those in question 4 who marked they never use the computer to access the school website said hard copies of the newsletter was their best method of communication for them to receive information regarding the school district.

31. Out of all the families participating in the survey, we found the majority (69%) to have children who currently attend our school with 14% saying they have children who formerly attended; 10% have extended family with relations currently attending; and 7% are friends of the MSTM school district with no direct ties. Based on this information, we feel we received feedback from all categories.

32. The majority (68%) of the surveys were completed by married/females. 15% were married/males; 11% single/females; and 6% single/males.

33. Based on the following information, you will see what age group the majority of those completing the survey fell under. You will also find we not only heard from those with children currently attending, but also heard from several retirees and grandparents. We feel all age groups were well represented.

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|-----|-----------|----|-----------|
| 33% | age 30-39 | 7% | age 20-29 |
| 25% | age 40-49 | 7% | Over 70 |
| 18% | age 50-59 | 2% | under 19 |
| 8% | age 60-70 | | |

Communications Advisory Committee (CAC)

The main purpose and goal of the communications advisory committee (CAC) is to improve communications throughout the Martensdale-St. Marys community and to promote the Martensdale-St. Marys Community School District. This committee has worked diligently these past two years and we would like to thank all those who have taken the time to participate in the CAC meetings. Thanks to these individuals, this committee has accomplished much as follows:

Communications Survey

A year ago, the Communications Advisory Committee sent a survey out to the community. Based on the geographic, age, and number of families with and without children in school, we felt the survey captured a mixed audience and were very pleased with the overall participation and outcome of the survey. We learned the school district is doing a fine job communicating and found the school website and newsletter to be the best forms and methods of communication. We also learned the members of our community who completed the survey are well educated with 78% either having attended some college, having a college degree or earning a masters degree.

It was interesting for us to hear how several community members without children in school want to be kept informed and have an interest in volunteering at school events. Based on this information, we are looking for individuals of all ages who would be interested in serving on a short term committee as outlined below.

Style Guide

With regard to copyright legal requirements and limitations, and the interest in establishing one identity or 'brand', the committee felt the need to create a style guide where one set of basic standards can serve as a guide when promoting the Martensdale-St. Marys Community School District. One of the main purposes of the MSTM style guide is to provide guidance when images or graphics are being considered for MSTM School District clothing, apparel, uniforms, or other merchandise. Another important benefit of having a style guide is to assist vendors who are placing the images and graphics on merchandise with consistent technical information about colors and fonts. Members of any organization or club that is associated with, represents, or supports MSTM school district programs or activities in any way are asked to follow the MSTM style guide and go through the Athletic Director or administrator for preapproval.

The style guide can be found on the district website (www.mstm.us) homepage by taking the following steps:

1. Place your cursor on [District Information](#) from the list of links found on the left center portion of the district website homepage.
2. The [Style Guide](#) link is the last link on the list of links found under [District Information](#).
3. Click on the [Style Guide](#) link.

Website

Based on survey responses, many patrons stated they value the information on the school website. Because of this, we continue to add information and make upgrades. If you're interested in hearing about former members of your graduating class or making contact with former Martensdale-St. Marys Community School District graduates, you might be interested in the 'Alumni Finder' link we're planning to add to the district web page.

Blue Devil Mascot Contest

As you might have gathered when reading about the district communications advisory committee efforts to develop a Style Guide for use for in promoting the Martensdale-St. Marys Community School District, we are very interested in creating an attractive and appropriate Blue Devil image to represent our school. What we have learned is that the district has previously used the Blue Devil image associated with Duke University and the Sun Devil image associated with Arizona State University on district apparel and uniforms. Use of these images without express permission from the institutions is a serious violation of copyright law. The communications advisory committee has also commissioned an advertising agency graphic artist to create completely new and different pitchfork and Blue Devil images. While the pitchfork image is attractive and acceptable to many district patrons, the Blue Devil image is viewed by others to be too sinister, mean looking, and controversial for students of elementary age. With those concerns in mind, we have decided to conduct a contest to develop an alternative Blue Devil image to include in the district Style Guide. The Blue Devil Image Contest invitation is included elsewhere in the Winter 2012 Quarterly Newsletter.

Signage

Another important project that the district communications advisory committee has taken on to promote our school district is the installation of an electronic message system. As the range of costs for of such an electronic system can vary greatly, depending on

size, color, graphics, and placement, we are currently collecting information and trying to identify sources of funding for the project. If you have background or know of someone in the community with sign experience, we can use your help. Please call Bob Newsum, Superintendent, at school (641-764-2466) or on his cell phone (641-203-8893) if you want to help us with this project.

Volunteer - RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program)

Several community patrons, including retired 'empty nesters', made responses on the communications survey that they were interested in volunteering their time and talents to assist in our educational and extracurricular efforts. Volunteer efforts could range from reading to students or being read to; using flash cards to help students; chaperoning students on various educational fieldtrips; copying, laminating, cutting out images, and creating bulletin boards; helping with data entry; or serving as a timer, scorer, or ticket taker at extracurricular events. We are aware of a formal volunteer program that is currently in place in at least one of our neighboring school districts and are currently exploring the possibility of implementing such a volunteer program in the Martensdale-St. Marys Community School District. If you are interested in learning more about the RSVP Program, please call Bob Newsum, Superintendent, at school (641-764-2466) or on his cell phone (641-203-8893).

Parent University

Most of us can remember the former 'Adult Education' opportunities that were offered for district patrons in the past. Another program that the district communications advisory committee is considering is a variation of the adult education program. In the age of technology and 'social media', many of us feel helpless and completely out of touch when it comes to email, Facebook, YouTube, Google, 'surfing the web', tweeting, Skype, Pinterest, and other electronic interaction options. Three years ago your administrators and board members decided to invest in a one-to-one laptop program to provide a Lenovo (IBM) laptop computer for every high school student. Your administration, teachers, and board members decided last spring to adopt a new math program (Everyday Math). In our judgment students have generally made a smooth transition to the new approach to math instruction. We have received comments from some parents that indicate that offering an evening informational session related to Everyday Math might be of some benefit. The district communications committee is considering implementing a 'Parent University' program for parents and other adult community members. Parent University sessions might be offered on a once per quarter or once a semester basis, with a specific informational focus for each session. As an example, we might have several students help those who attend with demonstrations of the various social media applications. If you are interested in learning more about the Parent University program, please call Bob Newsum, Superintendent, at school (641-764-2466) or on his cell phone (641-203-8893).

Alumni Clearinghouse

If you're like me, have you ever caught yourself thinking, "I wonder whatever happened to ...?" The last communications project your district communication advisory committee is considering to help promote the Martensdale-St. Marys Community School District is establishing a link on the district website that would serve as a clearinghouse for sharing information for groups and individuals associated with the Martensdale-St. Marys Community School District. This link could be used to promote class reunions, former team and squad reunions, personal and professional announcements and updates, or just to reconnect with old friends and classmates. We have included a list of the senior class valedictorians for the past twenty-five years as a sample the types of searches and lists of former graduates to stimulate "I wonder?" searches.

MARTENSDALE-ST. MARYS VALEDICTORIANS THROUGH THE PAST 25 YEARS

1987-1988	Jayne Andrus	2000-2001	Sally Bell
1988-1989	Joe Cassidy	2001-2002	Krista Scott
1989-1990	Melita Bourdon	2002-2003	Kenna Wheeldon
1990-1991	Jenny Parker	2003-2004	Christen Sondag
1991-1992	Christina Gray	2004-2005	Wyeth Lynch
1992-1993	Jennifer Strable	2005-2006	Morgan Gehringer
1993-1994	Rachel Smith	2006-2007	Chris Wiegert
1994-1995	Amanda Stember		and Summer Streiffeler
1995-1996	Laura Lynch	2007-2008	Erin Davitt
1996-1997	Alesia Purdy	2008-2009	Meghan Halverson
1997-1998	Michael Cassidy	2009-2010	Megan Simms
1998-1999	Allyson Donohue and Greg Spick	2010-2011	Shannon Snyder
1999-2000	Jennifer Eyberg	2011-2012	Hailey Sweet

If you are interested in learning more about the Alumni Clearinghouse project, please call Bob Newsum, Superintendent, at school (641-764-2466) or on his cell phone (641-203-8893).

BLUE DEVIL IMAGE CONTEST!

Your district communications advisory committee has recently decided to address the lack of an acceptable image of the Blue Devil image to use to represent our school on clothing and apparel. The image we are currently using has generated mixed reactions, so we have decided to seek your help in creating a Blue Devil image that is completely new and different.

Here are the procedures the committee has decided to implement to select our next Blue Devil image:

1. Blue Devil image entries will be accepted until 4:00 PM, on Monday, January 14, 2013.
2. Submitted entries should be directed to Bob Newsum, Superintendent, in the district business office, Box 350 or 390 Burlington Avenue, Martensdale, Iowa 50160.
3. You may submit more than one entry.
4. Entries should be submitted on sheets of white 8 1/2 " X 11" paper.
5. Entries may be hand-rendered or computer-generated.
6. Entries **MUST** be original, with no "borrowed" images from other institutions.
7. Please include your name, address, and telephone number with each submitted entry.
8. Prizes (yet to be determined) will be awarded to the first, second, and third place entries.

If your Blue Devil image is selected, you will have the honor of seeing your Blue Devil image(s) used on future school-related clothing, uniforms, and apparel.

The district communications advisory committee will review all submitted entries at our next meeting, scheduled for Monday, January 14, at 6:00 PM and will select the top three to five entries, depending on number and quality of submitted Blue Devil image entries.

The top three to five entries will be displayed between January 14 and January 25, the date for the home boys' and girls' varsity basketball games when elementary students are performing their 'cheer camp' routines and the high school dance team will perform. Those district patrons (adults and students) who attend that game will have the opportunity to cast their vote for the submitted Blue Devil image that they believe best represents our school.

Results of the community vote will be posted on the district web site and the winning Blue Devil image will be recommended to the school board for approval and inclusion in the district 'Style Guide'.

Please support your school and district and participate in this important contest!



MARTENSDALE ST. MARYS BASKETBALL SCHEDULE REMAINING GAMES 2012-13

<u>Date</u>	<u>Opponent</u>	<u>What Team(s)</u>	<u>Where</u>	<u>When</u>
Nov 30	Wayne	Girls JV/V/Boys JV/V	Home	6:15
Dec 3	Murray	Girls JV/Boys JV	Murray	6:15/7:45
Dec 4	Southeast Warren	Girls JV/V/Boys JV/V	Liberty Center	6:15
Dec 6	Van Meter	Girls JV/Boys JV	Van Meter	6:15/7:45
Dec 7	Pleasantville	Girls V/Boys V	Pleasantville	6:15
Dec 10	Pella Christian	Girls JV/V	Home	6:15
Dec 11	Central Decatur	Girls JV/V/Boys JV/V	Home	6:15
Dec 14	Nodaway Valley	Girls JV/V/Boys JV/V	Home	6:15
Dec 17	Pleasantville	Girls JV/Boys JV	Home	6:15
Dec 18	Interstate 35	Girls JV/V/Boys JV/V	Home	6:15
Jan 3	Ankeny Christian Academy	Girls JV/V/Boys JV/V	Home	6:15
Jan 4	Mount Ayr	Girls V/Boys V	Home	6:15
Jan 8	Wayne	Girls JV/V/Boys JV/V	Corydon	6:15
Jan 10	Bedford	Girls V/Boys V	Bedford	5:45
Jan 14	Interstate 35	Girls JV/Boys JV	Truro	6:15
Jan 15	Southeast Warren	Girls JV/V/Boys JV/V	Home	6:15
Jan 17	Corning	Girls JV/V/Boys JV/V	Corning	5:30
Jan 21	Iowa Christian Academy	Boys JV/V	Home	6:15
Jan 22	Pleasantville	Girls V/Boys V	Home	6:15
Jan 24	Des Moines Christian Acad.	Girls JV/V	TBD	6:30
Jan 25	East Union	Girls JV/V/Boys JV/V	Home	6:15
Jan 28	Clarke of Osceola	Boys JV/V	Osceola	6:00
Jan 29	Central Decatur	Girls JV/V/Boys JV/V	Leon	6:15
Feb 1	Lenox	Girls V/Boys V	Lenox	6:15
Feb 5	Interstate 35	Girls V/Boys V	Truro	6:15
Feb 8	Murray	Boys JV/V	Home	6:15

Feb 11-20 Girls' Post Season Games February 11, 14, 19, 21 Boys' Post Season Games
 Feb 25, 27 28 Mar 1 Girls' State Tournament March 4, 7, 8 Boys' State Tournament

MARTENSDALE- ST. MARYS WRESTLING SCHEDULE REMAINING MEETS 2012-13

<u>Date</u>	<u>Opponent</u>	<u>What Team(s)</u>	<u>Where</u>	<u>When</u>
Nov 29	SE Warren/Moravia	Jr. Var./Varsity	Home	6:00
Dec 1	DC-Grimes Tournament	Varsity	Grimes	10:30
Dec 6	Nodaway/Pleasantville	Jr. Var./Varsity	Greenfield	6:00
Dec 8	Saydel Tournament	Varsity	Saydel	10:00
Dec 15	Wayne Tournament	Varsity	Corydon	10:00
Jan 3	WC Valley/Under./Clar. Acad.	Jr. Var./Varsity	Stuart	5:30
Jan 5	Winterset Tournament	Varsity	Winterset	9:30
Jan 10	Corning/East Union	Jr. Var./Varsity	Home	6:00
Jan 11	Mount Ayr Tournament	Varsity	Mount Ayr	5:00
Jan 12	Mount Ayr Tournament	Varsity	Mount Ayr	10:00
Jan 15	Woodward Granger/PCM	Jr. Var./Varsity	Monroe	6:00
Jan 17	Wayne/Moravia	Jr. Var./Varsity	Corydon	6:00
Jan 19	Interstate 35 Tournament	Varsity	Truro	9:30
Jan 22	Chariton/Eddy. Blake./LS	Jr. Var./Varsity	Chariton	5:30
Jan 24	Cent. Decatur/I35/Van Meter	Jr. Var./Varsity	Home	6:00
Jan 29	P'ville/Carlisle/Knoxville	Jr. Var./Varsity	Carlisle	5:00
Feb 2	Sectional Tournament	Varsity	Greenfield	12:00
Feb 9	District Tournament	Varsity	Corning	12:00
Feb 13-16	State Wrestling Tournaments	Varsity	Des Moines	TBA