



TALON Talk!

M-P named best in county

Madison-Plains was voted best school district in the county by the Madison-Press. The publication releases its annual Best of the Best issue each fall.

Madison-Plains has shown marked improvement on test scores and is in sound fiscal health after the public passed two renewals at the polls last year for the spending of operating and permanent improvement dollars.

Superintendent Tim Dettwiller said the district's Improvement Plan, which was put in place just more than a year ago, has set the district in a clear, upward motion. The Board of Education and administrative team are working to define clear expectations for success for students and staff.

"Madison-Plains is a great school district," Dettwiller said. "We have innovative programs, and safe and inviting schools. We are proud to call Madison-Plains home, and are honored to be recognized as the best in the county."



WE'VE GOT GAME: Check mplsd.org for sporting events and scores for all winter sports. Go Eagles!



Key district leaders and members of the Madison-Plains Board of Education recently attended

the Ohio School Board Association's annual Capital Conference in Columbus to talk about critical issues facing public education, discuss new ideas and learn about creative solutions to challenges. The event draws more than 10,000 people and is the second largest educational conference of its kind. The district supports this kind of training because it helps sharpen skills and offers varying perspectives.



Students show significant growth on state's 2013-14 Local Report Card



A thorough analysis of the Local Report Card issued to the district by the Ohio Department of Education shows Madison-Plains students are making marked improvements in their performance on state tests.

CLOSER LOOK AT PERFORMANCE

A quick glance shows the district earned a "C" for the score that shows how much a student's knowledge grows over the course of the year (value-added indicator) as well as "A"s for both the 4- and 5-year graduation rates. Curriculum Director Karen Grigsby said the gain for value-added is a big jump from the "F" the district earned on the 2012-13 report card, but it's only part of the picture when it comes to measuring growth. She presented details of the results to members of the Madison-Plains Advisory Council and again at a Board of Education meeting and said students are showing improvements in many other areas. Such as:

- More M-P students passed the state assessments in 2013-2014 than in the



Excellence in all we do!

previous year and students are scoring higher than in the past, as measured by the Performance Index score.

- M-P increased both its 4-year and 5-year graduation rates.
- M-P improved in more measurements than did any other school district in Madison County.
- M-P dropped in fewer measurements than did any other school district in Madison County.
- M-P is closing the performance gap across subgroups such as income and disabilities at a higher rate than any other district in the county.

MORE WORK AHEAD

Grigsby also explained the impact of the state raising the passage rate from 75 to 80 percent, the first time ever Ohio has used the higher bar: M-P would have met 83.3 percent of the criteria (same as the previous year, plus three additional indicators) using the 75 percent rule. This, she said, would have earned the district a "B" and really highlights the significant improvement.

"We still have more work to do," she said. "The tests are getting harder and we are pushing ourselves to higher standards."

See mplsd.org for a full report.

COMMUNITY KEEPS DISTRICT'S FISCAL HEALTH STRONG

Thanks to the support of our community at the polls last May, the district is in good financial standing for the next three years. Treasurer Todd Mustain presented his 5-Year forecast to the Board in October. This most recent projection is in line with the district's original 10-Year Financial Plan. When the 10-Year Plan was initially proposed, the General Fund was projected to go into



the red in 2017; however, through implementing proposed financial strategies included in the plan (renewing the operating levy this past May, reducing projected salaries and insurance costs, etc.), the district was able to stay in the black an extra year. Adhering to recommendations for future levies and expenditures outlined in the 10-Year Plan -- with our community's continued support -- will allow the district to meet the goal of a positive General Fund balance in 2021.

M-P ELEMENTARY

Learning with a twist!

Students in Tereca Rubel's first-grade class got an up-close look at the 1950s as they celebrated the 50th day of school. Ms. Rubel wanted the students to find as many connections across as many subjects as possible so all of the learning centers in the room included the number 50 or sentences with '50s-era vocabulary.



The children wrote to 50 by 2s, 5s and 10s and discussed how 50 is half way to the 100th day of school -- for which they will have a grand celebration. They made venn diagrams (charts to describe similarities and differences between two objects) to compare today with the '50s. They included details about TVs, fashions and soda shops. They agreed listening to music and dancing are just as popular now as it was more than 60 years ago. The black cows with Coca-Cola and ice cream were a hit and the students had fun with a bubble gum blowing contest. Fittingly, the class ended its day with the hand jive and the twist!

M-P INTERMEDIATE

Amazing discoveries

Students in Morgan Gaus' science class at the Intermediate School have a lot of energy in store! They spent part of the first marking period studying the differences between potential and kinetic energy and are able to clearly distinguish one from the other. The students also discussed the difference between mixtures and compounds and are able to give examples of each. They can explain the movement of the particles in the three phases of matter using words and pictures and know what density is and why it is important. Madison-Plains teachers work hard to make practical connections to their lessons so they can help their students excel academically and grow their knowledge as measured by the state's academic content standards. Madison-Plains strives to prepare students with the right skills -- critical thinking, problem solving, researching, collaborating -- to be successful in high school and beyond.



See mplsd.org for more

of the great things we do!

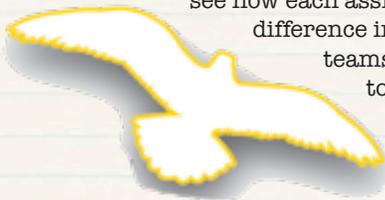
LEARNING
★★★ in ★★★
ACTION

M-P JUNIOR HIGH

SOARing to new heights

A new daily schedule at the Junior High this year gives students 45 minutes Monday-Thursday to sharpen their skills. The purpose of the SOAR initiative -- Students Owning Academic Responsibility -- is to provide students an opportunity to work with teachers in areas that need improvement. The students are grouped by subject matter. Those excelling in all areas meet with teachers for further enrichment. In an effort to help the students take more responsibility of their learning, they are also required to log into ProgressBook each Friday during Advisory teams to monitor their grades and assignments. Principal Kimberly LeGault said the students are learning to

compute a grade point average and can see how each assignment makes a difference in their grades. The teams are also working together in an effort to support growth for all students.



M-P HIGH SCHOOL

Schedule changes focus on achievement

A new schedule is also in place at the high school this year and students are showing marked improvement in their coursework. The building now operates under a nine-period day compared to eight in past years. A new 30-minute block of time opposite the designated lunch period is set aside to improve reading and writing skills. Principal Matt Unger said the focus during the first grading period was primarily on writing. Students responded to prompts assigned by the teacher, discussed their writing with their peers, edited the work based on the feedback and selected their four best pieces for a final grade.



Superintendent Dettwiller said the Board set a very clear directive to increase the rigor of the curriculum at the school so that students would achieve at higher levels. To date, more students are passing more classes compared to the same time period last year.



New day in M-P brings big changes

Tim Dettwiler
Superintendent

When I met with staff members this past summer, a few days before students arrived for the first day of school, I told them I was welcoming them to a new day in Madison-Plains.

As the new superintendent, I had shifted roles from serving as the treasurer. I was very excited to be the newly appointed superintendent of this great school district. Change can bring anxiety which is what I felt in taking the reins of M-P.

The Board of Education issued me lofty goals and asked me to ramp up expectations across the district from academic performance to student behavior to facilities management.

Many of you have seen the cosmetic changes we've made around campus: landscaping, signage, furnishings at the high school and the HVAC improvements. Maintaining

our properties is an investment in the value our district delivers.

We've detailed inside this newsletter some of the changes in place in our schools and highlight some of the gains our students are making, but these are only a few of the examples of the work our staff puts forth each day to strive for excellence in all we do.

We started to shift our practices and how we drive student learning and achievement when we put the Madison-Plains Improvement Plan (MPIP) into action last fall. We've seen tremendous growth as a result. We are hopeful the new initiatives and methods we have in place will continue to produce significant gains as students show deeper understanding of the material we teach.

That's only part of the equation. This year, we will turn our focus on the environment in our buildings -- as guided by the goals of the MPIP -- to

ensure our students know what is expected of them and feel supported when they need help, whether that's inside the classroom, on the playing field, as they perform or when interacting with their peers.

We will work over the course of the next few months to implement a behavior management model that sets clear expectations districtwide. This means we will reward students for good behavior and intervene in a consistent manner when needed by helping students understand how to take responsibility for their actions -- as opposed to handing down punishment after punishment. Students will still receive disciplinary consequences. However, the approach by staff will be one of focusing on rewarding good behavior and good choices, not on consequences.

Thanks for your support along the way. You play a big part in making us No. 1!

Nov. 26-28 Thanksgiving Break
Dec. 1 No School; Inservice
Dec. 11 MPAC meeting
Dec. 16 Board of Education meeting
Dec. 22-Jan. 2 Winter Break
Jan. 5 School Resumes
Jan. 16 & 19 No School

SAVE THE DATE

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