

CURRICULUM CONNECTION

MADISON-PLAINS LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

FOURTH ISSUE, 2015-2016



Connecting Students, Staff, and Parents

The *Curriculum Connection* serves as a quarterly publication designed to keep the Madison-Plains community connected and informed of important information and events managed by the Curriculum Department.



MPJH Awarded State's First Momentum Award

The Ohio's State Board of Education granted Madison-Plains Junior High one of its first annual Momentum Awards. The Momentum Award recognizes schools that have received A's on every value-added measure included on Ohio's School Report Cards. This award recognizes schools that are keeping learning momentum high as evidenced by the growth they make with their students. As one of the first winners of this award, Madison-Plains Junior High is part of an elite group of schools that is demonstrating that children of every background and ability level can achieve. The Junior High report card for the 2014-2015 school year showed that under the leadership of former principal Kim LeGault (currently principal of our K-6 building), staff ensured their students received a year's worth of academic growth in reading and mathematics. **Thank you to all of the teachers, support staff, and parents for believing that every child can be academically successful and committing to make sure that our Golden Eagles soar!**

Board of Education Accepts Grading Recommendations

After months of work and debate, the Grading Committee proposed recommendations to the Superintendent in March related to changes in the district's weighted grades practices, grading scale, and averaging of final grades. At its April and May meetings, the Madison-Plains Board of Education accepted those recommendations.

The new policies will allow students taking courses above the level of rigor of high school standards to receive an additional 1.0 boost to their grade. These courses included Advanced Placement courses approved by the College Board, College-Credit Plus classes, and a few other select courses.

The new grading scale is aligned to what is typical of four-year colleges and universities in Ohio by including the use of plus or minus.

For more information about grading changes, see page 11

In This Issue

- Grading changes beginning 2016-2017
- Student Awards and Recognition
- Spotlighting a few members of the Curriculum Council
- High Schools that Work
- Student Trips
- Back to school dates

MPHS student receives Distinguished Citizen Award for the Arts

Sophomore Aubrey Lilly was honored with the title Distinguished Citizen for the Arts by the Central Ohio Arts Education Association (COAEA) on Thursday, May 12. A reception was held at the Frank Museum of Art at Otterbein University and she was surrounded by family and two of her art teachers, Ms. Tracy Johnson and Mrs. Alecia McCafferty. She was nominated as the youngest person in history to receive this award by her art teachers. Upon hearing her impressive resume of effort and events that she helps to organize and assist with, the COAEA members believed these qualities made her a stand-alone candidate and elected to close nominations immediately to award her this title.



Aubrey Lilly

MP Students Advocate for Arts in Education on the State Floor

Aubrey along with five other Madison-Plains students recently participated in the Arts Advocacy Day at the State House. Andrew Sines, Lily Virjee, Skylar Stewart, Regan Rubel, and Faith Rife joined Aubrey and MPHS art teacher Tracy Johnson on May 18th for the event. Madison-Plains was one of eight schools selected from the state to participate in this event.

The students met with state representatives, speaking one-on-one with them to discuss the importance of the Arts in education. Later that day, the students had the opportunity to speak on the floor of the House. The day concludes with the Governor's Award luncheon.



Madison-Plains students meet with State Senator Bob Hackett to discuss the importance of Arts in Education.

Aubrey pictured with Madison-Plains art teachers Tracy Johnson and Alecia McCafferty



Curriculum Council Spotlight: Tracy Johnson, Fine Arts Department Chair

Tracy Johnson is the Department Chair for Fine Arts for grades K-12. She has a Bachelor's of Art Education from The Ohio State University, a Master's Degree in Education: Principles and Leadership, and is currently completing a Doctorate in Education with a specialty in Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment.

Tracy was recently appointed the Secondary Division Chair for the Ohio Arts Education Association, a seat on the Board of Directors, and a member of the Professional Standards Committee.

Tracy was recognized in the Top 100 magazine for educators in 2012.

General Art II

Students completed their final art projects for the year in General Art II. The final project was a student centered and developed project.

In this course taught by Alecia McCafferty, students explored big ideas and narrowed down a topic that was important and relevant to them. Students wrote artist statements to accompany their artwork.

General Art II is a course designed to issue the art credit required for students to graduate and is designed for students who are not interested in further exploring higher level art courses.

While some of the pieces may not appear polished, the artist statements they created showed true reflection and connection with the medium in which they worked.



Third-grade Animation

Students in Jessie Mace's third-grade art classes integrated their artistic talents with their technological skills this spring.

Students created stop animation movies. Check out a few of the videos at this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/MPFitnessClub>



Sophomores Ian Richardson and Gage Farmer engage in mathematical tasks alongside MP sixth-graders Matthew Groom, Andrew Geyer and Ayden McPherson at the Julia Robinson Mathematics Festival at The Ohio State University.



Julia Robinson Mathematics Festival

On Saturday, May 14, thirteen of our Madison-Plains students from fourth grade to tenth grade attended the Julia Robinson Mathematics Festival at The Ohio State University. Students engaged in rich mathematical tasks that were very open-ended in nature. A facilitator guided each task, asking questions in a student-led atmosphere. Each task was designed to take between 30-45 minutes.

The beauty of doing rich open-ended tasks is that they can apply to all grade levels. Sixth-graders and sophomores worked on the same tasks side by side, but approaching them in very different ways. Some activity tables provided opportunities for students to learn new math games. It was pretty awesome to watch these students working together to solve mathematical problems voluntarily on a Saturday morning!

Madison-Plains students collaborated with students from other central Ohio districts to discover new ways of thinking about math other than their own. Our students were very positive about the experiences and many plan to return next year.

Maybe Madison-Plains can host our own Math Festival?

*~Christina Finney,
Instructional Coach*

Madison-Plains Intermediate students Kinsey Null, Alyssa Geyer, and Emma Wethington dig deeply into mathematical tasks at the Julia Robinson Mathematics Festival on Saturday, May 14th.





Count on MPJHS for the Win

Students from Madison-Plains Junior High scored high marks at the annual Madison County Math Bee held at TOLLES on Tuesday, May 3.

Pictured above, eighth-graders Gavin Jones and Joey Grigsby placed first and second, respectively. Seventh-grader Kenny Shafer (pictured at right) placed second in his division.

Junior High math teachers Stormy Hiram and Hayley Elkins coached the Junior High teams.



Curriculum Council Spotlight: Christina Finney, Instructional Coach

After graduating from Madison-Plains, Christina Finney attended Wittenberg University where she majored in psychology. She then obtained a teaching certificate and began teaching at Madison-Plains.

Christina currently serves as an instructional coach for Junior High and High School math and K-12 gifted education. This is her fifth year as an instructional coach in the district after having been in the classroom for fifteen years.

Christina received her master's degree in gifted instruction and curriculum from Ashland University. She is a Martha Holden Jennings Scholar and has obtained the Master Teacher title. She also completed the Math Coaching Program at The Ohio State University and a Blackbelt in Common Core. Mrs. Finney currently serves on the DLT, BLT, TBT, Curriculum Council, and HSTW.



FCCLA student on her way to National Competition

Freshmen Ashley Griffith recently competed in the FCCLA regionals and qualified to take her Junior Career Investigation project on to the National Competition in California this summer! Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) is a national student organization that helps young men and women become leaders. FCCLA teaches essential 21st century skills that will transform into skills needed for successful families, careers and community members. Family and Consumer Science education (FCS) has over 5,500 chapters in 49 states. Madison Plains High School has an active FCCLA chapter.



In FCCLA, students have the opportunity to participate in STAR events (Students Taking Action with Recognition). Students create a project and then create a professional presentation to share results, experiences or skills gained. Members must receive top score in their category to compete in the next level. Students take these projects and compete at the three levels of FCCLA competitions: regional, state and national. Three Madison Plains' student competed in FCCLA regionals. All three students advanced to state competition on April 28-29.

Pictured are Ashley Griffith, Amber Massie who competed in Job Interviewing, and Zach Marchiando who competed in the Senior Career Investigation category.

FCCLA students are taught and advised by Diane Halloran.



Students in Joan Boyle's Body Systems class built skeletons as a culmination of their learning, using various items they collected.

Pictured above is Cole Sifrit.



Six staff members from Madison-Plains presented at a statewide High Schools That Work conference at Ohio University in Athens. During the "Teachers Teaching Teachers" presentation the MP staff addressed the ongoing need for quality professional development and discussed how schools can better utilize their in-house resources to provide training.

Assistant Principal Jason Weese, Instructional Coach Christina Finney and teachers Ryan Curtis, Michelle Hildebrandt, Alecia McCafferty and Geoff Stokes discussed how ongoing dialogue between staff members after participating in training conducted by their colleagues aids in their development. The team was selected to share their knowledge for the Best Practices Showcase for Ohio central/southeastern region of High Schools That Work conference. The team has been asked to present again in the Fall at the HSTW Ohio Schools Improvement Institute Conference.



Pictured at left are Junior High and High School staff: Ryan Curtis, Geoff Stokes, Christina Finney, Alecia McCafferty, and Michelle Hildebrandt



Four HS Students Earn State Degrees

The Madison-Plains FFA chapter had the honor of watching four members walk across the stage at the 88th annual Ohio FFA Convention to receive the gold pin charm of the State FFA Degree. Seniors John Vallery and Jake Vallery along with Juniors Colleen Finney and Morgan Hunter (all pictured above from left to right) received the second highest award attainable in the FFA, The State FFA Degree. They received this during the final session of the Ohio FFA Convention. Earning the state degree is no easy task. Some of the requirements include:

- SAE earnings and investments of at least \$3,000 or at least 300 placement hours outside of class time
- At least 25 hours of Community Service
- Demonstrated leadership ability
- Participation in chapter Program of Activities
- Participation in at least five FFA activities above chapter level
- Satisfactory scholastic record

The chapter would like to congratulate these members for their hard work and dedication within the organization.

Respectfully submitted by: Madeline Manning, Reporter

Curriculum Council Spotlight: Scott Spohler, Science Department Chair



Madison-Plains High School science teacher Scott Spohler was recently recognized for participating in an award-winning energy efficiency training program. He was one of just 135 educators within 24 counties who participated in Be E³ Smart, an innovative program that teaches energy concepts and energy conservation strategies correlated to the National Science Education and Ohio Department of Education science standards. The program was sponsored by Dayton Power and Light and Vectren Energy Delivery of Ohio.

Spohler, who teaches physics and chemistry, attended a day of training to learn about the Be E³ Smart program and received more than \$500 in science equipment and supplies to use in his classroom. As a result of the program, Spohler will be able to help his students learn about energy at school who can then apply their knowledge at home.

Scott has been teaching for 24 years across 5 school systems and three different states. Over the years, he has taught just about everything from physics and chemistry to engineering, physical science, biology, earth and environmental sciences.

In the summer, he works with ASM International going around the US teaching week long PD summer camps for teachers on how to bring materials science in to their classrooms.

The first twenty years, he spent with a coaches whistle and hat on doing football, track, and softball. Now he is a dad instead and super happy doing that. Scott is pictured above with his daughter, Anna, a student at MP Intermediate School.

Junior High Summer Reading

Madison-Plains Junior High students will delve into the world of fairy tales this summer with JK Rowling's *Tales of Beedle the Bard*. The short collection of five fairy tales is a spin-off from Rowling's *Harry Potter* series. Proceeds from the book go to support Lumos, a charity to help some of the world's most vulnerable children leave orphanages and regain their right to a family life.

Each student has been provided a copy of the book to read over summer and bring back in the fall. Upon return from summer break, students will use this entertaining and light summer book as a springboard for discussions about reading and writing.



Pictured above English Department Chair Tammy Pitstick prepared her room to invite and excite students about summer reading.

Curriculum Council Spotlight: Tamera Pitstick, English Department Chair

Tammy Pitstick teaches English and literature at MPJH. Upon graduating from high school, and after much demanding that her true destiny was to be a back-up dancer for Madonna (she had, with her best friend, memorized every particular dance move in the "Vogue" music video), or a concert junkie, she trudged off to Miami University, under duress, to complete a college education.

There, in the Harvard of the Midwest, she earned her BA in English Literature and Sociology. Having to leave her newly-found friends of four years and head out into the real world, she learned that graduate school was her destiny, as she had come to accept the fact that she could allow her love of reading and writing to knock dancing from its first place spot. So it was: teaching certifications in English and Special Education, Master's Degree, and years of passing her love of words onto children.



Bookstores house Tammy for hours upon end, as does her basement with its Just Dance DVDs keeping her dance moves up to par. Dancing around the lawn at outdoor concerts is Tammy's favorite hobby; you can find her at any 3 Doors Down Concert to which she can escape.

Tammy leads the Power of the Pen efforts for Madison-Plains, having many students recognized for their outstanding writing under her leadership. In the past, Tammy has taken groups of students to Cleveland to appear on television to read their poetry, as well as their recognition in The Columbus Dispatch. Her students' outstanding accomplishments and nominations helped to deliver the Walmart Teacher of the Year Award to her feet, an honor that she holds sacred.

Curriculum Council Spotlight: Linville Herald, Social Studies Dept. Chair



Linville Herald, long-time history teacher and member of the Civics-English Team serves as the Social Studies Department Chair. Linville has organized many of the student trips to Washington D.C., New York, and Philadelphia over the years.

Linville earned both his Bachelor's and Master's Degrees from the University of Kentucky. He and his wife, retired Madison-Plains teacher and librarian Paula Herald, reside in Madison County.



Laws of Life Essay Writer

Tyson Guiette was in the top 20 students out of 1,500 that submitted essays written for the Laws of Life essay contest which was put on by the Better Business Bureau. He received 4th place out of all 6th-grade contestants.

The Central Ohio BBB Laws of Life Essay Contest is a competition of the best Laws of Life, or other character-related essays written by middle grade students in the 21 county Central Ohio area. The BBB Center for Character Ethics sponsors the regional contest to recognize the achievements of the exceptional youth who participate in their local school contests, and to encourage schools and communities to engage in this enriching and valuable experience.



Seventh-Grade Science Fair Winners

The annual Seventh-Grade Science fair proved once again to test the knowledge of students. Leslie Reisinger, teacher and coach, started with more than 90 entries this year.

The field was narrowed for the top 25 to display their work on May 5. First place went to Kenneth Schaffer; second place to Hannah Dyer, third to Sara Sampson and honorable mention was awarded to Jonathan Martin.

Grading Changes, *continued from page 1*

Below is the new grading scale that will be in effect for all students beginning in the 2016-2017 school year. Student report cards will now show only the letter grade with a plus or minus; percentage averages will still be available for parents and students to view in ProgressBook.

All grades earned throughout the year will be stated as an alpha-mark with plus/minus on the student report card. Semester and final grades will be based on the average of those alpha-marks. The new grading scale will be applied to all students receiving grades (Grades 2-12) beginning with the school year 2016/17.

Quarterly grades and Exam grades will count as follows:

Percentage Grade earned	Alpha Mark Awarded	Quality Point Values Applied to Quarterly GPA	Quality Point Values Applied to Quarterly GPA for Weighted Courses*
93-100	A	4.0	5.0
90-92	A-	3.67	4.67
87-89	B+	3.33	4.33
83-86	B	3.0	4.0
80-82	B-	2.67	3.67
77-79	C+	2.33	3.33
73-76	C	2.0	3.0
70-72	C-	1.67	2.67
67-69	D+	1.33	1.33
63-66	D	1.0	1.0
60-62	D-	0.67	0.67
0-59	F	0	0

Semester and Final averages will be calculated by averaging the quality points earned as stated above. Semester and Final averages are based on the following.

Average of quality points earned**	Semester and Final Average	Quality Points applied to cumulative GPA	Weighted Quality Points applied to cumulative GPA*
93-100	A	4.0	5.0
90-92	A-	3.67	4.67
87-89	B+	3.33	4.33
83-86	B	3.0	4.0
80-82	B-	2.67	3.67
77-79	C+	2.33	3.33
73-76	C	2.0	3.0
70-72	C-	1.67	2.67
67-69	D+	1.33	1.33
63-66	D	1.0	1.0
60-62	D-	0.67	0.67
0-59	F	0	0

Weighted Grades

Madison-Plains will offer weighted grades for courses that exceed the level of rigor and content of typical high-school college preparatory courses. The Student Achievement Team will review the course content and expectations of our courses which meet the initial criteria to be weighted. Courses meeting all criteria will then be denoted as weighted in the course description handbook.

Courses receiving a weighted grade will receive an additional 1.0 points to the quality points earned by a student in those courses. Furthermore, no additional points will be awarded for grades of D or F in those courses. (See Grading system chart below)

Weighting of grades will begin with students in the graduating class of 2018 and will be retroactively applied.

Graduating Class	2016/17 Grade	Eligible for Weighted Grades Beginning School Year 2016/2017	Retroactively Applied
2017	Seniors	No	No
2018	Juniors	Yes	Yes
2019	Sophomores	Yes	Yes
2020	Freshman	Yes	Yes

Averaging Final Grades

Semester and Final Exams will be cumulative in nature. The first semester exam will cover the major work of the course for the first semester. The final exam will cover the major work of the course across the entire year. The term "exam" may include assessments such as a test, project, presentation, or written paper for either the first semester exam grade or the final exam grade.

Year-Long Courses: each quarter counts for 20% of the final grade, the first semester exam counts for 10% and the final exam counts for 10%.

Semester Courses: each quarter counts for 40% of the final grade and the semester exam counts for 20%.

The new percentages will be implemented beginning with school year 2016/17.



**Congratulations to the High School Concert Band
for receiving a Superior Rating
at OMEA State Concert Band Contest**

Taking Learning on the Road

Washington D.C.

Eighth grade students along with several staff members returned from a four day stay in Washington D.C. Sunday evening with some incredible experiences. Students visited numerous monuments and were able to see historical artifacts and learn more in-depth about content they've been learning about in their Social Studies class this year.

Students visited the White House, toured the Capitol building, and saw the authentic Declaration of Independence, Bill of Rights, and the Constitution. Students also toured the National Cathedral and George Washington's home at Mount Vernon. Students chose Smithsonian museums they would like to view and also had the opportunity to view D.C. from the top of the Washington Monument.



Current 7th grade students will have a meeting in the Fall to learn more about their opportunity to participate in the 8th grade D.C. trip.

Thank you to those staff members who took time from their families and schedules to make this trip possible: Ross Deyo, Alecia McCafferty, Joan Boyle, Geoffrey Stokes, and Michelle Hildebrandt.



New York and Philadelphia

Madison-Plains sophomores who attended a trip to New York and Philadelphia had a great time learning about American history by visiting Independence Hall, The Constitution Center, The Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, The 9/11 Memorial and Museum. They had the opportunity to explore various cultures and cultural events in Times Square, on Broadway, and in Chinatown.

Thank you to the following staff members for making this trip possible for our sophomores: Linville Herald, Tobi Briggs, Michelle VanVleet, and David Emmons.

Seventh-Grade Outdoor Education

Seventh-graders enjoyed a few days at Camp Cotubic near Bellefontaine, Ohio. Students participated in outdoor education activities including science related topics, archery, canoeing, and square-dancing. For over thirty years, Madison-Plains students have enjoyed this time of outdoor learning and team-building.

Another thank you to the staff who give of their own time to make this trip possible: Lynne Robbins, Stormy Hiram, Leslie Reisinger, Jennifer Wethington, Ross Deyo, and Geoffrey Stokes.



**Thank you parents, staff, and students
for a successful 2015-2016 school year!**

Looking forward to 2016-2017:

August 1, 2016 5:30-7:30pm, Kindergarten Event

August 9, 2016 5:30-7:00pm, Building walkthrough, meet with transportation

August 9, 2016 JH and HS Open House, times to be announced

August 15, 2016 First Day for Students, Grades 1-12

August 15 and 16 Kindergarten by appointment

August 17 First Day for Kindergarten

September 1, 2016, Grades 1-6 Open House/Curriculum Night

5:30-6:30pm, grades 1-3

7:00-8:00pm, grades 4-6

