

Community News

Achieving Excellence in Education

School starts with staff changes, gains in state tests



Dear Neighbor,

I am happy to tell you that school started smoothly this year. We had a difficult budget process last spring to deal with reduced funding.

There was no way to keep the impact of the cuts from the classroom, but we are

confident that this will be a great year.

Things look different. MACA is no longer a stand-alone school; it is a pathway program at MHS. We reduced some school specialists but still offer PE, music and library services in all schools; class sizes have increased; and athletic supply budgets were reduced.

Despite these and other budget changes, I am tremendously proud of the dedication of our staff and the good work they are doing for students.

Each staff member is committed to providing the best possible educational opportunities for students and making ongoing improvements in schools.

As the recent state test data shows, we are seeing results. Our schools are substantially above state averages in almost every grade and test subject area.

There is a lot to be proud of. Our goal is to continue these successes in this and following years despite the budgetary problems. The dedication and commitment of our staff will meet the needs of our students and continue to produce excellence in our schools.

Sincerely,

Maryalice Russell, Ed.D., Superintendent

Budget update: Last year's cuts and this year's forecast

Last spring, school districts had to make difficult budget reductions to address the shortfall in state funds to education. In McMinnville, the cuts to programs and staff totaled about \$6 million:

- Converted MACA from independent high school to MHS pathway program.
- Reduced K-8 library program.
- Reduced specialist and support staff positions.
- Reduced secondary athletic budgets.
- Reduced middle school summer school.
- Increased class size at middle and high schools.
- Reduced classified support.
- Reduced administrative staff.
- Reduced confidential/supervisory staff.
- Reduced budget reserves.
- Reduced supply and professional development funds.

The District expects a possible additional reduction of \$2 million for 2012-13 based on current State School Fund estimates.

The following priorities guide all budget decisions:

- Minimize negative impact on students and maximize student achievement.
- Maintain sufficient reserve balances to meet board policy and maintain District bond rating status.
- Maintain enriched curriculum opportunities.
- Minimize layoffs to extent possible.
- Maintain elementary class size and minimize secondary class size increases.
- Propose service level that is sustainable for two years.



See p. 3 to read about these MHS graduates from the class of 2011 who earned credits for college in high school.

Successful MHS College Credit Now program gives students boost for college

M Students save money on college credits through College Credit Now

MHS offers one of the most successful dual college credit programs in the state. Students can earn college credits for their high school classes that are transferable to community colleges and four-year universities. Last year, MHS students saved more than \$300,000 in college credit costs by taking dual credit courses at McMinnville High School.

School	College credits earned	Dollars saved	Number of students benefitting from program
MHS	4,366	\$272,442*	1,397
MACA	447	\$28,104*	136
Total	4,813	\$300,546*	1,533

Based on difference between \$72 per credit tuition at community colleges versus \$30 per credit tuition if taken at MHS.

Schools makes gains in state assessments

At the end of the August, the Oregon Department of Education released state assessment data. McMinnville schools scored above the state average for grades three through eight in math and for grades four through eight in reading.

At McMinnville High School, 89.9 percent of students met or exceeded state standards on the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS) test.

No Child Left Behind measures progress of different student groups, including English Language Learners, special education and students from poor families. In McMinnville, students in those subgroups scored above the state averages on the OAKS assessment.

These are great achievements, say District staff, but they don't show how much progress students have made because new, higher standards are put in place each year.

"We can show big improvements from last year," said Superintendent Maryalice Russell.

Elementary and middle school test scores exceed state averages

Reading
Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

Math
Grades:
4, 5, 6, 7, 8

College Credit Now program highlights

- MHS offers 17 Advanced Placement (AP) courses eligible for college credits with passing test scores. Students earned almost 600 credits through AP tests.
- MHS has 27 College Credit Now teachers and 11 AP teachers.
- In 2010-11, More than 1,500 MHS students earned almost 5,000 college credits.
- 21 seniors had earned more than 45 college credits at graduation.

The following Advanced Placement courses provide college credit opportunities:

- English Lit./Composition
- English Language/Composition
- Calculus A/B
- Calculus B/C
- Biology
- Physics B/C
- Environmental Science
- Chemistry
- U.S. History
- European History
- Government and Politics
- World History
- Psychology
- Music Theory
- Art Design
- Computer Science

Five McMinnville High School graduates from the class of 2011 spoke to District staff members about their MHS college credit experience at an inservice training before school started.

These students earned a combined 309 college credits while in high school that they are transferring to college this year.



Dominic Allen

College credits earned: 88

- Entering University of Oregon, enrolled as a junior.
- First member of his family on a path to graduate from college.

I would tell students to take advantage of the PAWS program (Proacademic Ways to Success) your freshman year because it opens you up to all different fields you could be interested in or want to pursue in college. For me, it helped eliminate fields that weren't really for me. It helped me structure my schedule for any college-related classes that would transfer to U of O. By doing PAWS, you also find out what you really enjoy.

I'm currently enrolled at U of O as a junior, allowing me to save \$40,000 and only have two years to pay off. That will get me closer to earning a wage to support a family later in life.



Cesar Anguiano

College credits earned: 57

- Entering Chemeketa Community College
- First member of his family to attend college.

I am going to Chemeketa for the first two years. I wouldn't be going at all if it weren't for the College Credit Now program. As the first member of my family to attend college, this is a really big opportunity. It's going to open a lot of doors for me. College has always been important.

I plan to work hard and will support myself with two jobs. I earned \$2,100 in local scholarships, which will help a lot.

See a video of these students speaking about their experience earning dual high school/college credits on the District website: www.msd.k12.or.us.



Jame Desmond

College credits earned: 54

- Entering Chemeketa Community College

I am planning to pursue a degree in civil engineering. I got into the scholar's program at Chemeketa, which is free to me for the first two years. Then I'll transfer to Oregon State University. I may be able to transfer in a year and a half because of the number of college credits I already earned while attending MHS.



Alyssa Johnson

College credits earned: 45

- Entering Oregon State University

I took College Writing and Intro. to Fiction from Mrs. Savage. With College Writing, you need to go to Chemeketa to take a test to get the credit, which is kind of unusual. With most classes, you can just get the credit if you sign up. Mrs. Savage made sure that if you wanted to pass, she would find a way to help you get that credit and pass. It was a lot of work.



Lacie Knutz

College credits earned: 65

- Entering Western Oregon University
- Earned associate's degree from Chemeketa while in high school

When I was a junior at MHS, I figured out that I would get over half the credits for an associate's degree. I decided to go to Chemeketa to get the other credits not offered at the high school. I started earning them really fast at Chemeketa—you could finish a course in one term that would take all year at the high school.

It was really exciting to get my associates degree. I got 105 credits, which was 15 more than I needed for the degree.

For more information about the MHS College Credit Now program and school curriculum options, see <http://www.schools.msd.k12.or.us/mhs/Curriculum/Default.html>.

District “superheroes” go above and beyond for students

McMinnville staff members are dedicated to providing the best possible education for students. Two staff members were recognized at the August staff inservice for consistently going above and beyond for students. The following comments from Superintendent Maryalice Russell show their tremendous dedication to their schools and their students.



**Fay “Bulldog”
Loflin**

“Bulldog” Fay Loflin got her nickname a few years ago at McMinnville High School for firmly enforcing rules despite complaints about the changes.

When Fay was at Patton, she set up a print shop for staff to reduce printing costs and run the building more efficiently. Some staff said it couldn’t be done. In six months’ time she did it.

She was asked to help with sixth-grade testing at Patton.

In the second year, she was coordinating all testing procedures for the middle school and now does so at the high school.

Student participation in assessments is required, and students doing their best is important. Fay says students are not excited at the beginning of test season but, as she continues to work with them, they embrace it and become more positive about the process. She is enthusiastic about it because, she says, “It’s important for our leaders to be knowledgeable, and these students will be our future leaders.”

Tanya is a one-on-one educational assistant. One-on-one assistants work with students with specific needs that the regular classroom teacher can’t provide for while managing a full classload.

One-on-one assistants must learn the protocols for working with the specific needs of students who are either medically fragile or have behavior management issues.

Tanya is recognized for her skill and caring for her students. She works with dedication and compassion that extends beyond the school day and is recognized by her students’ family members.

When asked what people should know about the work of one-on-ones, Tanya says that a lot goes on behind the scenes. One-on-ones working with medically fragile students need to remember everything they learned in training while adapting to each student’s needs.



Tanya Rue

For More Information

For more information about the McMinnville School District, please contact us:
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