

Madison Messenger



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and Madison Home & School Association

Visit our website at www.ncusd203.org/madison

November/December 2004

Home & School President Report

Eye on Springfield

There are many people and organizations that have varying effects on our children's education. We as parents hopefully have the largest effect, followed by the teachers and rest of the people working in our school district. One other large group that has a significant input on our kids' education works down in Springfield and consists of our friendly State Representatives, Senators, and the Governor.

The reason I mention them right now is because as I write this in mid-November, our state legislature is considering a bill, HB 750, which will have a huge effect on the entire educational system in Illinois, as well as your pocket book. And the interesting thing is, nobody seems to know about it.

HB 750 is a bill that totally restructures education funding in our state. If passed, it will attempt to decrease our reliance on local property taxes and shift a higher percentage to state income taxes. Some of the major changes include:

- Creates the "School District Property Tax Relief Fund" The General Assembly shall appropriate \$2.4 billion to this special fund with the intent of refunding approximately 20% of the property taxes we pay for schools.
- Increases income tax rate for individuals from 3% to 5% Estimated to raise approximately \$5 billion.
- Increases income tax rate for corporations from 4.8% to 8% Estimated to raise approximately \$491 million.
- Includes retirement income in taxable income for individuals with an adjusted gross income over \$75,000
- Increases the foundation level in the school funding formula to \$5,952 in the first year of the law's enactment In subsequent years, the foundation level would increase by the rate of the Employment Cost Index (ECI). The estimated cost of this provision is \$1.8 billion.

There are additional smaller changes, but those are the big ones and the bottom line is that this bill would significantly change how our public schools are funded in Illinois.

Now there are pros and cons to this bill, and of course many supporters and opponents. I'm staying far away from those arguments here. But this bill, whether in passing or by not passing, will have a great effect on our schools for years to come. That's why I believe it is vital for us as parents, taxpayers, and citizens, to be informed and make our opinions heard. Our State Legislators will listen to you (I hope), but you have to let them know your feelings.

I urge you to take a few minutes and learn about this bill. A Google search for Illinois HB 750 will give you more than enough information. Then let your representatives know how you feel. There's a good chance that this bill will only be acted upon next year in the new session, so there's time to let your voice be heard. After all, we are talking about our kids, our money, and our schools.

Mike Jaensch
Madison Home & School President

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Message From Our Principal

NOTEWORTHY THOUGHTS . . . From Madison Junior High

By Erin K. Anderson

The leaves are changing and we have comfortably nestled into another exciting fall and winter season at Madison. Our students have already been busy with field trips and special events to support their learning. These experiences couldn't be made possible without the dedication and creativity of our staff and the support from our parents. The fall athletic teams had great seasons with their hard work and dedication. We appreciate their efforts, the leadership of the coaches and the support of our parent community.

Communication continues to be a paramount project for Naperville School District 203 and Madison Junior High. Striving to keep our parents in the loop of conversation only enriches our partnership together and strengthens the growth and learning of every child. In this effort, we continue to have "Madison Mail" in which we email the daily announcements to your home or work and encourage you to talk to your children about the many opportunities available here for them to get involved. If you are interested in joining this listing, please email MaryBeth Zielinski at mzielinski@ncusd203.org. Another valuable communication tool for Madison and District 203 is our district email "Talk203". This email communication also carries much of the important information for Madison as well as highlights many important updates from the district. If you are interested in receiving these updates please visit the district website at www.ncusd203.org and sign up for Talk 203.

As many of you know, we have our daily announcements posted on our website. We are also posting them in the front office window for any student who may miss

hearing the announcements or for viewing by families who may be at Madison visiting us. Please visit our website regularly to find out the latest news and special events that are coming up.

We continue to need your help in keeping our students safe as they travel to and from school. This includes following the drop

off and pick up procedures that we have in place. All student drop off and pick up should occur in the back of the building. The front lot is limited to school busses and staff. We recognize that this can be an inconvenience; however, for the safety of our Madison family it is imperative that we get your support

with this. The winter months can often be the most challenging as ice and snow can create additional obstacles and hazardous conditions.

Please follow the signs and adhere to the traffic designations when coming to and from Madison. Our students are worth it, not only for their safety, but in modeling for them the importance of following traffic protocols. Thanks for your support in helping to make Madison a safer school.

Finally, the season of reflection and giving thanks is upon us. Madison wishes our families a safe and happy holiday season.

Visit us at www.ncusd203.org/madison/.



This is the year!
Erin K. Anderson

JOIN A CLUB!

Newspaper Club - Mrs. Aimonette
FCA - Mr. Bakke
Technology Club - Mr. Beckman
Yearbook Club - Mrs. Labedz
Amnesty International - Mr. Beckman

Environmental Club - Miss Owen
Student Council - Mr. VanHarlingen
Drama Club - Mrs. Kurinsky
Chess Club - Mrs. Tarpey

“EXPLORING THE EXPLORATORIES” NOTES FROM THE MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Exploring the Exploratories

Jerry Zitko, MJHS Orchestra Director and
Music Department Chairperson

Erika Owen, MJHS Band Director

David Carroll, MJHS Band Director

Janet Kurinsky, MJHS Choral Director



By Janet Kurinsky, MJHS Choir Director

The Madison Music Department is busy preparing for the Autumn Concerts. On Tuesday, November 16 the MJHS Bands will perform. The sixth grade band will perform a fun piece called, *Stick It!*, featuring the percussion section. Come see the first appearance of the Madison 6th grade band perform this fun piece. The 7th grade band will be performing a highly entertaining mix of band literature, from the lyrical to the energetic. Enjoy the beautiful phrases of *Whispering Winds* and the jovial, up-tempo piece: *Fiero*. The eighth grade band will be sure to dazzle with their concert selections; one selection, *Dance of the Slippery Slide Trombones*, will feature fun glissandos from the trombone section.

On Wednesday, November 17 the MJHS Orchestras and the 7th and 8th grade chorus will present a concert. This concert will feature the combined choirs on a medley of music by Andrew Lloyd Webber and will conclude with the combined orchestras performing a new piece entitled *Dragon Dances*, by Asian American composer, Soon Hee Newbold. Both Autumn Concerts will begin at 7:30 pm in the Madison Gymnasium.



On Thursday, November 4, 2004 the District 203 Junior High School Orchestra cello and string bass players had the opportunity to work with Philip Serna, a leading teacher and performer on string bass. The Madison Orchestra cello and string bass players participated in a two hour workshop that was held at Lincoln Jr. High School during the day. In the evening, a concert which was open to all of the District 203 Jr. High School Orchestra members and their families was given by Mr. Serna at Lincoln. The concert featured a group of students (including Tyler Summers, Vanessa Lin and Nathan Lin from MJHS) demonstrating what they had learned during the workshop in addition to solo performances by Mr.

Serna. Philip Serna is a PhD candidate at Northwestern University and has participated in ensembles performing a wide variety of musical genres in groups throughout the United States. This event was made possible thanks to a generous grant from the Naperville Education Foundation.



On Wednesday, December 8, the professional a cappella performing ensemble, **Chapter 6**, will be coming to Madison. Through funding provided by NEF and Madison Home and School, our students will have the opportunity to hear this impressive musical group. That afternoon all Madison students will finish the day with a performance by **Chapter 6**. In addition, all Madison Chorus students will have the opportunity to participate in a workshop with **Chapter 6**. The group will present an evening performance at Naperville Central High School at 7:00 pm. (Contact Mrs. Kurinsky for more information.)

From the **Chapter 6** website . . . *Their comedy-infused blend of pop, jazz, gospel, and rock brings spontaneous bursts of laughter and applause throughout the show. High-energy performances feature diverse repertoire ranging from freshly-arranged swing standards and covers, to signature pieces such as “Ode to Krispy Kreme,” Queen’s “Bohemian Rhapsody,” and Chapter 6’s very own version of “The Wizard of Oz.”*



The MJHS 6th Chorus will present a concert with the Bluegrass Strings, Jazz Choir and Jazz Band on Thursday, December 9. This concert will be held in the Madison Cafetorium at 7:30 pm.

WANTED FOR SCIENCE

Have you recently upgraded your digital camera???
Wondering what to do with the outdated camera?
Consider donating your old camera to the Science Department where we will put it to good use!
We even prefer the cameras that use floppy disks.
Any donation is a tax deduction!
Donate to the Science Department Chairperson

Thank You

ORGANIZATION, STUDY SKILLS AND GOALS

It is never too late to organize and set new goals and we have two more spectacular trimesters left. Students may need their parents' help with reinforcing good organizational and study habits. What can you do to help your son/daughter? Here are a few suggestions you might try:

- Get a supply of stickers (yes, middle school students really do still like stickers) and each night the assignment notebook has been filled out, put a sticker on it. Maybe you can come up with a small incentive for a week's worth of stickers, etc.
- If poor organization skills create issues at your home try to get the expandable file folder in order by creating a separate file for each subject. When in class simply pull out the subject file needed.
- Clean out folders/binders weekly. Help organize materials; recycle old papers, re-fill supplies. (If he/she is not sure whether to recycle a paper or not, keep a special folder at home with the questionable work. That way if it turns out it is needed, it will be accessible.)
- Go to the Madison Student Links page on the web site and investigate different links that might enhance certain subjects. For example, there are some great math links that are specifically designed for the middle school student and our curriculum.
- Study Skills Websites: There are several websites that give suggestions for anything from scheduling time to

preparing for tests. These sites might be of some interest and help. (ex: <http://www.keene.edu/aspire/obj.cfm>)

- Keep language arts reading calendars on the refrigerator or posted somewhere where they will be visual reminders to keep up with the reading schedule.
- Make an after school/homework schedule with a time grid and fill it out ahead of time. Make sure to include a snack break and of course a dinner break, but try to keep the time pretty consistent. This really will help keep a routine going. Again, the visual aspect is so helpful.
- Remind students to use as many "at school" resources as they can. For example: sixth graders have an opportunity to attend the Lunch Bunch Club during 5th period lunch where they can eat while doing homework. Seventh and eighth graders who have lunch 4th period have a Lunch Homework Club available during that lunch period for extra homework time as well. They can see their teachers or Mrs. Lints for details about these clubs. Students can also work in the LRC and computer lab after school.

Other suggestions are available from Mrs. Lints, who runs the Academic Support program. The program is for any student who might need some assistance in maintaining success in their academic classes.

by Mrs. D. Lints and Mrs. S. Patterson

ATTENTION PARENTS

Have you ever asked yourself . . .

- Why does my sixth grade student take a fluency test?
- Do junior high ISAT and ITBS scores affect course selection in High School?
- Can my junior high student still qualify for Honors programs?

MONDAY FEBRUARY 28

Lenore Johnson, Associate Superintendent for Instruction, Jodi Wirt, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Staff Development and David Chiszar, Director of Assessment & Quality will answer these and many other questions about how District 203 approaches student assessment at the Jr. High level.

9am - 10:30 am **OR** 7pm - 8:30pm
District 203 Administration Office • 203 W Hillside Rd

Please RSVP to 548.7878

Co-sponsored by the School Family Community Partnership Core Team and the Curriculum and Instruction Department

IT'S JUST AROUND THE CORNER

In December, Eighth graders will spend two days in the computer lab working with DISCOVER, a comprehensive career exploration program. They will complete three inventories designed to stimulate their thinking about their Interests, Abilities, and Values. Their results then are compared with those of people actively engaged in thousands of different careers, and the students are provided with information on the World-of-Work map. This map uses Holland's theory of careers to help students see how their results relate to the six types of careers: Investigative (Thinker), Enterprising (Persuasive), Artistic (Creative), Conventional (Organization), Social (Helper), and Realistic (Doer). In addition, DISCOVER lists high school coursework related to each career path.

The computer room activity lays the foundation for the students to begin thinking about high school course selection. Shortly after we return from Winter Break, counselors and administrators from Naperville Central High School will meet with 8th graders to distribute important information about the registration process. Materials include the Freshman Guide, a booklet listing all courses open to freshman; and the complete Course Listing of all NCHS classes.

You will receive information in January about the evening Freshman Family Orientation program offered at NCHS and the specific dates for registration. Your child's 8th grade teachers will complete a course recommendation form that will be an excellent guide for the courses that will be most appropriate for your child. You will be asked to review the recommendations, sign, and return to form to Madison. We consistently receive feedback from the Naperville Central staff that those students who are the most successful are those who have followed the recommendations of their Madison teachers. In mid to late February, your child's high school counselor will come to Madison to register your child for those classes.

We look forward to helping everyone make a successful transition to high school. If you have questions about the DISCOVER program or courses recommended for your child, please feel free to contact the 8th grade counselor, Mrs. Patrice Olinger, at 420-6401.

REGISTERED NURSE SUBSTITUTES NEEDED!

Our District is looking for registered nurses seeking part time positions to substitute for med techs working as one on one assistants with medically fragile students, to substitute in the high school health offices, and/or to accompany students with medical needs on field trips. Please contact Ellen Wolff, Supervisor of Health Services, for more information if you are interested. Ellen can be reached at 42-6540.

Carole Muszynski
Secretary
Health Services

OUTDOOR RECESS – is held unless the temperature or the wind chill is 0° or below.

DISTRICT 203 ACTIVITIES

Feb 21	NO SCHOOL
Feb 22	Board of Education meeting 7:30pm, Administrative Center
Feb 23	NCHS French National Honor Society Induction (7pm, Little Theatre) 6th & 7th grade Band Concert (7:30pm)
Feb 25	Half-Day Institute
Mar 3,4,5	NCHS Spring Play
Mar 4	Institute Day
Mar 8	NCHS/NNHS Combined String Concert at NCHS (7pm, auditorium)
Mar 9	NCHS Symphonic and Concert Band (7pm, auditorium)
Mar 10	Parent/Teacher evening conferences
Mar 11	Parent/Teacher conferences No School