

AROUND THE HORN

RAMSEY MIDDLE SCHOOL

MARCH 9, 2016

MCA TESTING

Note from Angie Martin

This week marks the beginning of MCA testing. Our testing calendar can be found on the Ramsey Home Page. Even though the MCA receives a lot of hype, it is a snapshot of our students' achievement. It is only one measurement.

“A test score is **an estimate rather than an exact measure** of what a person knows and can do. The **items on any test are a sample** from some larger universe of knowledge and skills, and scores for individual students are affected by the particular questions included.” National Academies, 2009 (p. 3)

So, although the MCA is our state's chosen form of measurement and accountability, the learning and accomplishments of our students go beyond a score on a test. It is our job to make the testing environment as stress-free as possible and continue to focus on our mission: **Ramsey Middle School is an innovative, academically challenging environment that empowers each learner to explore possibilities, act with integrity, and create positive change within one's community and the world.** Through our commitment to high quality teaching, rigorous instruction, strong relationships, and social-emotional learning, we will continue to see positive growth of our students.

To help ease the testing anxiety of our students and staff members, I thought it would be helpful to remind us of some relaxation techniques. Breathing, stretching, and visualization strategies can help students decrease their anxiety and the following physiological changes occur:

- Your heart rate slows down.
- Your breathing becomes slower.
- The blood flow to your brain increases.
- Your metabolism lowers.
- Your blood pressure lowers.
- The levels of nitric oxide in your body increase.

How to Relax Test-Stressed Kids

<http://www.nea.org/home/9380.htm>

IMPORTANT DATES

March 14th

8th Grade Reading MCA Begins

March 15th

Site council /PTA meeting

March 28th – April 1st

Spring Break

April 4th

School resumes

April 29th

Ramsey Twins Outing

Mark your calendar!

SEEKING VOLUNTEERS

MCA escorts

Now that MCA testing has begun, we are looking for parents to serve as bathroom escorts. During the test, students are not allowed by law to leave the testing room without an escort. Escorts would be stationed between the computer labs waiting on call for any students who need to use the restroom during the test.

For the week of March 14th, the 8th grade ELA classes will be taking the MCA reading test and we would like help for the following times:

9:00-11:30

12:00-2:00

If you can be available for this job, please contact Kate Goeddeke :
kathleen.goeddeke@mpls.k12.mn.us

Get Lucky Race

The Student Council has a great opportunity to raise money to help fund activities for our Council. We are looking for student (and parent!) volunteers to help cheer on runners in the GET LUCKY race this Saturday, March 12. We will be partnering with our PTA to create an awesome Cheer Zone.

Please sign up at the following link if you are able to volunteer:

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10CO544abaa2aaafe3-getlucky2>

Thank you for your support of Student Council & PTA!

CURRICULUM NEWS AND NOTES

6th Grade ELA:

We are halfway through our Human Nature unit! So far we've read three exciting texts that have each taught us something about humans and human nature: "What is Your Life's Blueprint?", a speech by Martin Luther King, Jr.; "Slam, Dunk, & Hook", a poem about the power of basketball by Yusuf Komunyakaa; and "The Veldt", a science fiction short story by Ray Bradbury about the powers and dangers of technology. Students have practiced close reading strategies, informative writing, question asking, and discussion. A heads up that the Reading MCA for 6th grade will take place from April 11-15. We will be doing goal-setting before spring break. The best thing you can do to prepare our young readers at home is check in about their independent reading, and even read with them whenever possible!

6th Grade ESL (Suo):

This month in ESL we are practicing the use of figurative language in our writing. We are also reviewing the main idea and how to find text evidence to support the main idea. Our text for this month is a nonfiction article called *The Volcano That Changed the World*. After reading the article, students will complete a brief research project on different volcanoes around the world.

7th Grade Mathematics:

Mathematicians are geeking out this month! We are celebrating our favorite irrational number, pi! Monday, March 14th (3/14, 3.14, Get it?!) we celebrate Pi Day by embracing the circle and all of its amazing qualities, including the ratio of circumference to diameter, or pi. Your mathematician should be able to tell you what pi represents...not just the digits 3.14. We will be having a pi digit contest on Monday (3/14) to see who can recite the most digits of pi and the

students will participate in a pi art contest. The rest of the month we will be focusing on data, statistics and probability before taking the district interim assessment at the end of quarter 3.

7th Grade Arabic (Farah)

This month we are focusing on different topics in Arabic. Students will be able to identify their favorite sports, their hobbies and foods they like to eat. Students will practice in class how to ask and respond to each other in Arabic on these different topics. We will also practice writing the vocabulary words in Arabic and students will be assessed on these words and phrases. Students will be challenged as well this month to create their own skits and to act their skits in class.

8th Grade Arabic (Farah)

This month 8th graders are continuing their advanced lessons in grammar in conjugating different verbs in Arabic and we will finish with the Hospital Unit by creating a skit. Students are working in groups to come up with a skit in Arabic. Students will act their skits in class and after that, we will start with our descriptive writing project.

7th Grade ELA

MCA's all week!

8th Grade Science

We are quickly winding up our CHANGING EARTH unit. Between now and Spring Break, we will explore more of the processes that change the surface of our planet including weathering, erosion, and deposition. We will also investigate the rock cycle and how glaciers have shaped Minnesota topography. Students will take the benchmark assessment on this unit right before spring break.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

Used/old electronics donations

Do you have any old electronics lying around collecting dust? VCRs? DVD players? Old radios? DVRs? Old game systems? Really anything with PCB (the green circuit) boards? Mr. Koupal would LOVE to have them! Bring them to RMS and either drop them off in room 312 (third floor), or drop them off in the office. Mr. K. will use the part for various model building activities and engineering projects. (Please no old tube TV's or old-school computer monitors. They contain some nasty/unsafe stuff inside if broken open.) Thank you!

GIRLS ON THE RUN

Girls on the Run will be beginning Tuesday March 22nd. We meet Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:45-5:00p.m. The program is open to all Ramsey girls and culminates in a 5k race. Contact Ms. Borrell (rachel.borrell@mpls.k12.mn.us) if your student is interested in participating or go to <http://www.gotrtwincities.org/get-involved/register-your-girl> for more information and registration.

Legally Blonde Spotlight Musical

"Legally Blonde The Musical" performances begin at Washburn next week. You won't want to miss this great show by Washburn's award-winning musical theater program. Come experience this story about perseverance and overcoming stereotypes (with a good dose of humor – and the importance of fashion, poise and confidence)! There are 8 performances in the Washburn auditorium:

7:00 p.m. shows: March 3rd, 4th, 5th, 10th, 11th, 12th

2:00 p.m. shows: March 6th & 13th

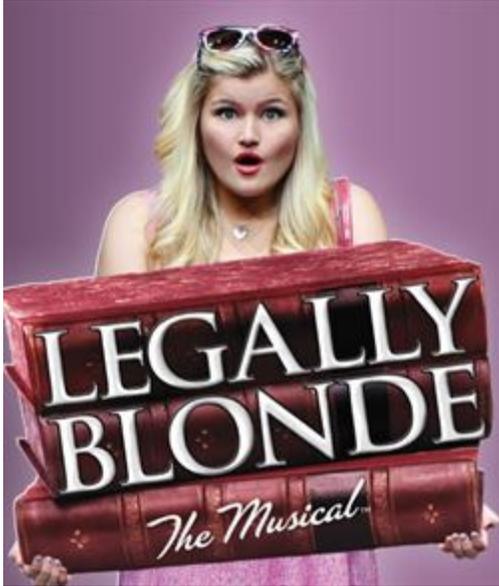
(March 3rd is *"pay what you can night"* – join us for a reception following the performance)

Purchase your tickets online at whslegallyblonde.brownpapertickets.com or at the door (cash/check only).

General admission: \$5 students/\$10 adults.

Reserved seats: \$10 students/\$15 adults.

Contact whslegallyblonde2016@gmail.com with any questions.



Anthony Middle School Theater Production



PTA NEWS

Learn about Arts and Arts Integration at Ramsey!

Join us March 15 from 6:30-8 for our next PTA meeting. After a brief business discussion, we will learn about the Arts program at Ramsey and how art is integrated in the core curriculum.

Become a Parent Leader!

The Ramsey PTA is a great group of parents working to support our school more fully. We are looking to fill key roles which will be vacated in June. Please consider volunteering for one of the open positions: Vice President, Treasurer, Volunteer Coordinator, Spirit Wear Coordinator, or Landscape Coordinator. Contact Heidi Knaus if you are interested in learning more haknaus@yahoo.com

Hey Baseball Fans! Ramsey Twins outing:

Mark your calendars for the Ramsey-Lyndale-Burroughs Twins game night! The three schools have reserved tickets in the same section for the Twins game Friday, April 29. Tickets will be \$10 and will be available soon. If you would like to coordinate this event for RMS, please contact Heidi Knaus haknaus@yahoo.com

Battle of the Bands! Save the Date and Band Registration!!!

That's right, the Second Annual Washburn/Ramsey Battle of the Bands is coming soon! Make sure to save Sunday, April 17th, 3:00-7:00 p.m. at the Junction. And do you have a band and like the idea of some healthy competition? Additional event info and band sign-ups are available on our website: [Battle of the Bands - Ramsey Middle School Fundraising](#)

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| | <p><u>Battle of the Bands - Ramsey Middle School Fundraising</u></p> <p>Save the Date! The 2nd Annual Battle of the Bands is scheduled for Sunday, April 17th, 2016</p> <p><small>View on sites.google.com Preview by Yahoo</small></p> |
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