

MARGARETTA

Local School District Newsletter

Volume 6, February 2008

Consolidation of Elementary Buildings

by Mr. Ed Kurt, Superintendent

Margaretta student enrollment continues to decline while costs of utilities, maintaining three buildings, and fuel costs continue to rise. In researching ways to reduce expenses, we felt consolidation of the elementary buildings was not only cost effective but had many positive curriculum impacts as well. We have determined that the district could save in excess of \$400,000 annually by operating one less building and trimming costs in food service, grounds and maintenance, utilities and general staffing. Consolidation is not isolated to the Margaretta Local School District. Port Clinton City School District, Sandusky City School District, and many others around the state have done the same to contain costs.

In order to make this possible some capital improvements are needed to be made at the current Bogart building. Plans are to add four classroom units, an additional computer lab, gymnasium, and office space to the Bogart Elementary facility. The annual payment of the capital improvement project would be approximately \$200,000 annually and still provide us with a \$200,000 reduction in operation costs. The Margaretta Elementary Building would house K-6 students. Our educational services would be directed to only two buildings: Margaretta Elementary and Margaretta High School. This would also result in one bus run without having to transfer students between buses. Students would be dropped off at the high school and then the elementary building daily.

Townsend Elementary is being considered for use by

outside educational sources for the 2008-2009 school year and beyond. The possibility of special education students being served in that building is under consideration. We are very open to this as it would help contain transportation cost for students needing special services outside the district.

We are working with architects from Steed, Hammond and Paul to design and manage the construction project. Staff members from both elementary buildings are meeting and planning for a smooth transition. We currently have a basic plan for the addition and current rooms in the building. Educational materials, furniture and technology currently at Townsend Elementary will be moved to the appropriate location in the Margaretta Elementary facility over the summer.

The district has been faced with little to no operating revenue growth over the past several school years, driven by declining enrollment and the failure of a new operating tax levy. The district has taken this opportunity to look at ways to become more efficient while continuing to provide quality educational opportunities for our children. Some of the initiatives include going to one bus route, reduction in staff through attrition and implementing innovative curriculum models. The consolidation of the Elementaries is the next major change we are planning to implement with the goal of becoming more efficient without compromising student achievement.

The consolidation of elementary buildings is by no means the last step necessary to cure the district's financial woes. We will continue to explore ways to become more efficient while attempting to maximize student success. In order for the district to continue to provide the current level of academic services, we will need to increase revenue by the way of a new operating tax levy. All indications are that an increase in state aid is not very likely. Over the next several months, the school board and staff will attempt to engage the community to determine if a tax levy is viable. We hope that you will get involved in the discussions.

The enrollment period for **Open Enrollment** for the 2008-2009 school year is between May 1 and May 31. Applications are available on the district website at www.margaretta.k12.oh.us.



We are pleased to announce that Bogart Elementary is now serving a nutritious breakfast to students every morning at 7:45 a.m. The cost is \$1.25, \$.30 for students approved for reduced-lunch prices, or free to those approved for free-lunch prices. Bogart received a \$1,000 *Action for Healthy Kids, Zone 10* grant to apply to the start up cost of the breakfast program and a \$500 grant for Health and Wellness. Bogart receives high grades for helping students be more alert, focused and ready to tackle the school day!

Treasurer's Notes

by Mr. Jude Hammond, Treasurer/Business Manager

Last May the Board of Education took actions to place a School Income Tax Levy on the ballot. The levy failed to be approved. Since then, the Board and administration has continued to consider a school income tax to help the district overcome its financial peril. We have heard concerned constituents say that they do not like the idea of school income tax. I thought that it would be appropriate to first give you the facts about a school income tax:

Facts About School Income Taxes in Ohio

- Ohio is one of only five states (PA, IA, KY and MI) that allow for a local school income tax.
- School income taxes have been available in its traditional form since 1981. In 2005, the general assembly crafted language to allow for an "earned income" only school income tax.
- A traditional school income tax, proposed to Margareta School District voters in May 2007, levies a tax on all income sources, with the exceptions being social security, railroad retirement, workers compensation, child support, bequests and disability cash payments.
- An earned income tax would only be levied on wages and business earnings, and would not tax investment earnings or pensions, in addition to the aforementioned exceptions.
- School Income taxes the district's residents only, unlike a Municipal income tax that is levied on residents and those employed within the boundaries of the Municipality.
- Income taxes are not levied on businesses, just its residents.
- School Districts can pose income tax in 0.25% increments. The effective date of the tax must be January 1st of the subsequent year to the voted levy. In other words, if the voters approve an income tax during this year (2008), the tax will not take effect until next year (2009).
- Taxpayers who are 65 or older would be entitled to a \$50 tax credit. Under a traditional income tax, each resident is entitled to personal exemptions, similar to the state's personal income tax. However, an earned income tax does not allow for a personal exemption provision.
- School Income taxes, like state personal income taxes, may be deducted from Federal Income taxes provided the taxpayer itemizes their deductions.



- Employers are required to withhold School Income tax on employees that reside in the School District that levies a school income tax.
- School Income taxes are included in estimated tax payments, provided that the annual

amount in combination with the personal income tax is in excess of \$500 of the amount withheld by an employer.

For more information, you can contact the State Tax Commissioner's office at (614)466-3960 or visit his website at <http://tax.ohio.gov>.

Now that you know a little bit more about the tax, you might ask yourself is this the right tax for you and your family. Below, is a list of pros and cons from a taxpayer's perspective:

Pros for an income tax as opposed to property tax:

- The *income tax* is levied in smaller increments through a wage withholding on your paycheck or made in quarterly estimates. A *property tax* bill is paid in two installments in its traditional fashion. However, you can request a monthly *property tax* bill from the County Treasurer or your tax payments maybe made through an escrow arrangement with your mortgage holder.
- The *income tax* is levied to your earning capacity. If your wages decrease, so does your *income tax* liability. In comparison, your *property tax* does not decrease if your income decreases. It generally remains constant or could go up or down dependent upon the market value of your home and homes in your district.
- An earned *income tax* would not impact a taxpayer who is fully retired, since it is not levied on social security, pensions and investment earnings. In that case, if the taxpayer owned property, they would be subject to a *property tax* increase.
- If you are a farmer, the Current Agricultural Use Valuation (CAUV) program has experienced a significant increase in the taxable value of farmland across Ohio and should impact your *property tax* burden beginning in calendar year 2010. This may mean that an *income tax* would be more beneficial than a *property tax* levy increase.

Cons against an income tax as opposed to a property tax:

- If you are a renter and do not own real estate, you do not pay *property taxes* directly. However, your landlord may pass on a *property tax* increase in the form of a rent increase; while an *income tax* would be levied upon your earnings.
- Do the math, an *income tax* may cost you more money than a *property tax* increase. If your household income is \$50,000 per year and you live in a home valued at \$150,000, a one percent income tax would be \$500 per year, which would be equivalent to a 10.9 mill *property tax* increase.

These are just a few thoughts on school income tax. The Board and administration will be seeking your thoughts on what type of levy would be most palatable to taxpayers. Keep in mind the future of the Margareta School District rest in the hands of its residence.



Mrs. Binger

Mrs. Evelyn Binger, a Townsend alumna, brought a collection of her Townsend memorabilia to share in an interview with Mrs. Kuns' sixth grade students. This group has been hot on the interview trail trying to find out information about Townsend in years gone by for their book entitled T is for Townsend. They have greatly enjoyed their time talking with Mrs. Binger, Mr. Bill Warner, and Mrs. Julie Gardner who

shared many heartwarming stories of how the community used the school not just for education, but also as the center of community life. Thanks to these people for sharing their memories with us. Look for T is for Townsend this spring!



The Margareta FFA chapter recently participated in the Parliamentary Procedure Career Development Event. The team placed 1st at sub-districts, advancing them to districts where they placed 2nd. By placing 2nd at districts, the team qualified for the state contest. Team members included Lindsay Schaeffer, Kayla Munk, Jen Nath, Alissa Malott, Jordan Cramer, Meghan Brownell, Ashley Sartor, Megan Miller, Courtney Balduff and Sydney Alexander. This was the first time the Margareta Parliamentary Procedure team has made it to state in many years. The team placed 3rd in their preliminary round. Congratulations on a strong effort!

(submitted by Meghan Brownell, Margareta FFA Reporter)



Bogart third grade students Kayla Crum, Alicia Naderer, James Fisher, Matthew Mey and Kent Graves were excited about the family Christmas calendars they illustrated and filled with poetry and prose. This project met many of the Language Arts standard measures while creating a great gift for parents.



The junior high started this school year with the implementation of a new reading program. Previously used at the elementary level, Read 180 is a language arts class designed to give struggling readers the opportunity to improve their skills. This course provides a positive learning experience while increasing student interest and engagement. This Scholastic class also accommodates multiple learning styles.

Students complete a daily rotation of three stations. Each station, combined with whole class and small group instruction, gives students the opportunity to learn at their own pace. Their progress is monitored by both classroom teachers and computer assessments. This class has been a great addition and will hopefully benefit many students in the years to come.



Former MHS student Laura Churchill returned to the upper level Spanish classes to teach salsa dancing to the students. The students in Spanish 2,3 and 4 learned the two different variations of the salsa.

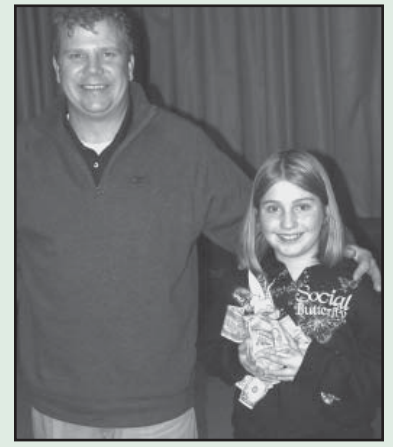


Katie Killingsworth, a 6th grade student at Townsend, won the 2007 local Peace Poster contest sponsored by the Castalia Lions Club. She is shown accepting her award from Lions member Stan Homerick along with elementary art teacher Lynne Sessler. It has become a tradition to display a video of the projects and announce the winner during the Veteran's Day assembly.



Band members performed a medley of holiday tunes at the fine arts assembly held for the students before winter break. During Mr. Reardon's first year of teacher, the band has performed at many events. On December 15, Camden France, James Stewart and Dustin Cooper traveled to the Lorain Palace Theatre to participate in TubaChristmas. The event features large numbers of tuba and euphonium players who get together to perform Christmas carols. On January 19, several students participated in the OMEA District 2 Honors Band and Choir. This event features students from more than 30 schools from 8 counties. Students were selected from audition tapes submitted in December. Students participating in the festival band were Stephanie Rankin, Brooke Sargent, Megan Miller, Annie Fitz, Jordan Haerr and Camden France. Students participating in the festival choir were Kathleen Freeh and Jeremy McClain. On Saturday, March 8, the Margaretta Concert Band will participate in the OMEA District 2 Adjudicated Event for Band. The band will perform three selections at 11:00 a.m. in the Perkins High School gymnasium for a three judge panel. Come on out and see our outstanding high school musicians perform!

Bogart staff and students conducted a very successful fall fundraiser. Monies from this endeavor will be used for Smart Boards and other learning tools. Our top Seller, Karina Haycook, is shown here with her take from the money Machine, the incentive given for her over-the-top performance.



As a part of the 5th grade science unit on "Reusing, Reducing, and Recycling", students cleaned and reused milk cartons from the cafeteria in the construction of gingerbread houses as a holiday gift for their parents. Students also addressed the letter writing standard in language arts when they were required to write letters to Decko products thanking the company for donating the frosting for the project.



Sixth grade science students worked to design and build a prototype egg carrier that would protect an egg and keep it from breaking when dropped from the third floor window at Townsend. Science teams were given specific directions to this problem given constraints (e.g.-limits of cost and time for design and production, supply of materials, and environmental effects).

Curriculum and Testing Notes

by Fran Warner, Director of Curriculum and Instruction

State Testing Calendar Changes

The Ohio state legislature passed HB 190 which gave schools the option to test on non-consecutive days this year rather than the consecutive days mandated last year. We have chosen to use this option. Margaretta's Ohio Achievement Tests (OAT's) will be given starting April 21 through May 2 in grades 3 through 8. Students will be tested in reading and math achievement in all grades. Writing will be tested in grades 4 and 7 with Science and Social Studies tested in grades 5 and 8. Results for the tests will be released over the summer. Parent reports will be sent home with students at the start of the 2008-09 school year.

Ohio Graduation Test Dates

All sophomores will be taking the Ohio Graduation Tests (OGT's) for the first time during the week of March 10 through the 14. Juniors or seniors who have not passed parts of the OGT will be taking those parts on the days they are given. All students must pass the five Ohio Graduation Tests in order to graduate as well as complete course and credit requirements. Senior results will be available after May 12, 2008. The sophomore and junior results will be released on May 22, 2008.

Students not passing during the spring 2008 testing will be eligible to take the required 10 hour summer school classes in order to retake the tests during the weeks of June 16-27, 2008. More information about this option will be available through the Guidance Office of the High School in May.

Science Curriculum Study

Margaretta teachers in grades K-12 are reviewing science texts and materials as they plan for the coming 2008-09 school year. Curriculum work in the area of science is the curriculum focus this year. Science teachers are previewing texts and working on curriculum throughout this year in preparation for next year. January 23 and 25 were two such curriculum study days. Merging science and technology is one of the aspects of this study as we continue to prepare our students to take their places in the workplace of the 21st century.

Professional Learning Community

As part of a state sponsored school improvement project Margaretta has an active group of teachers taking part in a professional learning community activity (PLC). This group is studying how to improve educational services to all our students in an effort to increase student achievement. Monthly meetings with speakers from various educational disciplines have been part of this project as well as a study of "Whatever It Takes: How Professional Learning Communities Respond When Kids Don't Learn" by Rebecca DuFour, Robert Eaker, Gayle Karhanek and Richard DuFour.



Fourth graders performed as Candy Cane Flutes, Toy Soldiers and the Mouse King's Army in the "Nutcracker, A Youth Musical" on December 13th. Other fine performances were given in the program by the Russian Bakers, Chinese Tea Dancers, Waltzing Flowers, and Sugar Plum Fairies.

Kindergarten Registration


The Margaretta Local School District will be holding 2008-2009 Kindergarten registration for all Margaretta residents on Monday, April 7th through Thursday, April 10th. Registration will take place from 9:00-10:00 a.m. and 10:00-11:00 a.m. at Bogart Elementary School.

Parents should call the school office at 684-5357 to make an appointment. Please call between March 10-20 or March 31 - April 4, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m., to schedule your appointment for registration.



Kindergarten is now mandatory before entering first grade. Any child that will be five years old by August 1, 2008, may register for Kindergarten. State law mandates that when registering your child the parent/guardian must provide a certified birth certificate, immunization records, social security card, and proof of custody (if applicable). We will also need proof of residency such as a rental/purchase agreement or current unpaid utility bill.

Screening for vision, hearing, speech and Kindergarten readiness skills will take place at the beginning of the school year. Safety Village information will be available at registration.

FEBRUARY 2008

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY		
<p>Calling all parents! Margareta Parents Care is entering a transitional phase in the life of our group. Many of our active parents have children that are graduating this year. If we cannot recruit new parents, the group may not be able to continue. If we disband the organization, graduating seniors would not be able to apply for the six \$300 scholarships awarded annually by Margareta Parents Care, students would not have huddles or Jr. High Halloween Dances sponsored by Margareta Parents Care and 8th graders would not have cameras for the Washington D.C. trip provided by Margareta Parents Care. We invite all interested parents to attend the next Parents Care meeting on February 11, 2008, at 6:30 p.m. in the High School Library. Please help us keep the group alive by attending the next meeting and doing your part for Margareta students!</p>					<p style="text-align: right;">1</p> <p>ABC Valentine's Day Carnation Sale</p> <p>HS Champions Assembly 1:15p</p> <p>BB Port Clinton 6:00p</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">2</p> <p>JHWR SBC@Clyde TBA</p> <p>SW@Port Clinton Relays 12:00p</p> <p>GB New Riegel 1:00p</p>		
<p style="text-align: right;">3</p> <p>The pool is open to the public every Monday and Wednesday when school is in session. Open Swim is from 6:30-7:30 p.m. and Swimmercize is from 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">4</p> <p>JHGB 8th SBC Tournament - Home 4:30p</p> <p>PTO Bogart Library 7:00p MARMO HS Choir Rm. 7:00p Athletic Boosters Football Facility 7:30p</p> <p>Pool Open</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">5</p> <p>JHGB 8th SBC Tournament - Home 4:30p</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">6</p> <p>GB Keystone 6:00p</p> <p>Pool Open</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">7</p> <p>2 HOUR LATE START</p> <p>JHGB 8th SBC Tournament - Home 4:30p</p> <p>9B Oak Harbor 5:00p</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">8</p> <p>SW Sectionals@ Fremont TBA</p> <p>BB@Edisson 6:00p</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">9</p> <p>9B SBC Boys@Edison TBA</p> <p>9B SBC Girls@TBA SW Sectionals@ Fremont TBA WR SBC@Huron 11:00a JHGB 8th SBC Tournament - Home 12:30p GB Huron 1:00p BB New Riegel 6:00p</p>		
<p style="text-align: right;">10</p> <p>6th Grade Mohican School Trip February 11-15</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">11</p> <p>OGT Writing practice test for state</p> <p>9B SBC Girls@TBA</p> <p>Parents Care HS Media Center 6:30p</p> <p>Pool Open</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">12</p> <p>9B SBC Boys@Edison TBA</p> <p>GB Sectionals@ Fremont TBA</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">13</p> <p>9B SBC Girls@TBA</p> <p>GB Sectionals@ Fremont TBA</p> <p>Pool Open</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">14</p> <p>ABC Valentine's Day Carnations Distributed</p> <p>9B SBC Boys@Edison TBA</p> <p>SW Girls Districts@ BGSU 9:00a</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">15</p> <p>Elementary Yearbook Sales February 15-29</p> <p>Market Day orders due today</p> <p>SW Boys Districts@ BGSU 9:00a</p> <p>BB Huron 6:00p</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">16</p> <p>GB Sectionals@ Fremont TBA</p>		
<p style="text-align: right;">17</p> <p>Visit our website for more information on upcoming sporting events. The Athletic Department's calendar is updated daily with district and sectional times and locations.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">18</p> <p>NO SCHOOL President's Day</p> <p>Board of Ed. Mtg. Board of Education 7:00p</p> <p>Pool Closed</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">19</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">20</p> <p>Pool Open</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">21</p> <p>GB Districts@Old Fort TBA</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">22</p> <p>Interims</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">23</p> <p>GB Districts@Old Fort 7:00p</p>		
<p style="text-align: right;">24</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">25</p> <p>Market Day Pick-Up 4:30-5:30p</p> <p>Pool Open</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">26</p> <p>HS Picture Day</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">27</p> <p>Academic Booster Club (ABC) HS Media Center 7:00p</p> <p>Pool Open</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;">  </div> <p>Townsend 6th grader Katie Killingsworth displays her winning Peace Poster along with Honorable Mention winners Maycee Blodgett, Rachael Meyer, Austin Spicer, Trent Balduff and Logan Brauer.</p>			<p style="text-align: right;">28</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">29</p>

MARCH 2008

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>2</p> <p>Lifeguard Class Tuesdays & Thursdays starting March 4 for anyone 15 and older. Contact Holly Miller for more information.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>PTO Bogart Library 7:00p</p> <p>MARMO HS Choir Rm. 7:00p</p> <p>Athletic Boosters Football Facility 7:30p</p> <p>Pool Open</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Pool Open</p>	<p>6</p> <p>OMEA Band contest</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>Shop at the Sandusky Mall and win cash for our school by redeeming receipts at the customer service center. Every dollar spent means one point for Margareta! The winning school is selected based on the total number of points accumulated. A total of \$5,000 in cash prizes will be awarded to winning schools each session.</p>						
<p>9</p> <p>Kindergarten Registration April 7-10</p> <p>Call March 10-20 or March 31-April 4 between the hours of 10:00a-2:30p to schedule your appointment for registration.</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Ohio Graduation Test March 10-14</p> <p>Parents Care HS Media Center 6:30p</p> <p>Board of Ed. Mtg. Board of Education 7:00p</p> <p>Pool Open</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Otis Lennon Grades 4 & 6</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Pool Open</p>	<p>13</p> <p>"Fantasticks" Musical Townsend Gym 7:00p</p>	<p>14</p> <p>"Fantasticks" Musical Townsend Gym 7:00p</p>	<p>15</p> <p>"Fantasticks" Musical Townsend Gym 7:00p</p>
<p>16</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Market Day orders due today</p> <p>Winter Sports Banquet SHS 6:30p</p> <p>Pool Open</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Townsend 6th Grade Independent Study Fair</p>	<p>19</p> <p>SBC All-Star Game@ Perkins 6:00p</p> <p>Academic Booster Club (ABC) HS Media Center 7:00p</p> <p>Pool Open</p>	<p>20</p> <p>ABC Creative Writing Contest Deadline</p>	<p>21</p> <p>NO SCHOOL Spring Break March 21-28</p>	<p>22</p>
<p>23</p>	<p>24</p> <p>NO SCHOOL</p> <p>Pool Closed</p>	<p>25</p> <p>NO SCHOOL</p>	<p>26</p> <p>NO SCHOOL</p> <p>Pool Closed</p>	<p>27</p> <p>NO SCHOOL</p>	<p>28</p> <p>NO SCHOOL</p>	<p>29</p>
<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>Market Day Pick-Up 4:30-5:30p</p> <p>BB@Norwalk 4:30p JVBB Norwalk 4:30p</p> <p>SB Western Reserve 4:30p JVSB@Western Reserve 4:30p</p> <p>Pool Open</p>					<p>Margaretta Academic Boosters sponsored a College Panel on December 18th in the Margaretta high school cafeteria. This annual event gives current Margaretta juniors and seniors an opportunity to ask questions of recent Margaretta graduates who attend various colleges and universities about their experiences in making the transition from high school to college. Graduates included (L-R) Amy Drossman - Ashland University, Jaime Frisch - OSU, Kendra Orwig - Heidelberg, Kari Day - Bluffton, Matt Zahel - Univ. of Toledo, Nikki Bollini - BGSU, Kaitlyn Kuns - St. Mary's College, Emily Kuns - John Carroll University and Meredith Greene - OSU.</p>



Senior Master Sergeant Tracy Troxel, husband of Townsend teacher Cheryl Troxel, addressed Townsend students and guests at this year's Veterans Day celebration. He shared information about what it means to be a veteran and about various experiences from his military career over the last 20 years.

Online Payment System

We are happy to announce that we are providing an online system where parents can access their child's lunch and/or breakfast accounts. Once an account is set up, parents can view account balances or add funds to the child's meal account by using a credit and/or debit card. No credit card information is stored and the transaction is completely secure. A \$1.50 convenience charge will be added to each transaction to aid the district in processing the charge. This payment method is optional to families; parents still have the option to pay with a check or cash at the buildings. You can access EZpay from the Margareta district website at www.margareta.k12.oh.us or by logging on to SPSEZpay at www.spsezpaymargareta.com. More information and your child's Student ID number, needed to set up an account, will be sent home soon. We hope to make the online payment system available for student fees and activity fees in the near future.



Carol Greene retired last month after giving countless years of dedicated service to the staff and students of Bogart Elementary. Board President Elmer Lippert honors Carol at a retirement party hosted by her colleagues. Best wishes in your future endeavors!

This year's Special Safety Award went to Bogart 3rd grader Lydia Bias. Her response to the fire safety assignments was judged as the most complete and insightful. Her name now joins that of previous winners on the wall plaque. Here she is being congratulated by Bogart Principal, Mrs. Stauffer.



MARGARETTA LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF EDUCATION 2007 - 2008

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