



The Maritime Academy of Toledo

Parent Newsletter
October 31st, 2024

Message from the Superintendent

Dear Maritime Academy Families,

Firstly, I would like to wish all of you a Happy Halloween! One of the spooky rumors making the rounds is that Maritime Academy will be closing. This rumor is not true but we do need to score higher on our state tests. In the State of Ohio there are 95 charter schools that have either a middle and high school or just a high school. We are one of the 95 and 87 others are dropout recovery schools which means they are not held to the same standards as Maritime Academy. We have chosen not to take that designation which, in turn, causes the issue of strikes and academic probation. Since we do not have an elementary school oftentimes, because we are a public school, get students that are years behind academically. We have had, on multiple occasions, middle school students that cannot read or read at a kindergarten level. This, in turn, causes extremely disruptive behaviors in the classroom because every kid would rather be seen as “bad” instead of “stupid” (Their words not mine). By the time graduation comes, however, these same students are excelling.

This past school year we had 97% of the seniors, who were enrolled at Maritime, graduate on time but our report card will show a different number. For example, one student, on our graduation list on the report card, never stepped foot in our school. These are not excuses but reasons as to why our school, with this current model, does not fit the report card mold. I strongly believe in accountability and I reference our state report card repeatedly throughout the year but our school just does not fit the mold and metrics of the report card. In 2019, for example, we had 12 students out of 44 graduate with over 30 credits and our valedictorian earned 39.90 credits. That is double the required credits for the State of Ohio. These students were able to earn so many credits from having full schedules and college credits. Not a single student in that class, or any other, has failed a college course while enrolled at Maritime Academy. That school year we still had 2 strikes and had all “F’s” on the state report card.

I could go on for days but hopefully these examples prove to you that not everything is as it seems and sometimes numbers do not tell the real story. I have always been and will continue to be as transparent as possible and do the best I can do to educate your children.

Sincerely,
Aaron Lusk
Superintendent
The Maritime Academy of Toledo

Please note: I am going to begin to figure out how to make the newsletter more interactive in the coming months.

Upcoming Events and Important Dates

- **Election Day- No School, November 5, 2024**
- **No Students/ Teacher Training – November 8th, 2024 and November 19th, 2024**
This will be training to help teachers grow and become more knowledgeable in their teaching practices.
- **STAR Benchmark Assessments- November 18-22, 2024**
The **STAR Benchmark Assessments** are computer-adaptive tests designed by Renaissance Learning to assess student achievement in reading, math, and other subjects. They are used for **screening, monitoring progress, and measuring growth** across the school year. STAR assessments are widely used from kindergarten through 12th grade and are known for their efficiency, with most tests completed within 20–30 minutes.
- **Thanksgiving Break- November 25-29, 2024**
GOBBLE GOBBLE!

School Preparation

As we progress through the school year, we want to remind everyone of some simple but essential habits that contribute significantly to our students' health, well-being, and academic success. In this issue, we'll be focusing on three areas that make a big difference in children's learning: **getting proper sleep, reducing screen time, and making time for reading.**

The Importance of a Good Night's Sleep

Sleep plays a huge role in how students perform both in and out of the classroom. Research shows that teens ideally need **8–10 hours of sleep per night** to stay alert and engaged throughout the day. Lack of sleep can lead to lower concentration, irritability, and a weakened immune system. Setting a consistent bedtime, even on weekends, helps regulate your child's internal clock. This also prepares them to learn, retain information, and stay healthy.

Sleep Tips for Students:

1. **Establish a bedtime routine:** A relaxing routine, like reading or taking a warm shower, helps signal to the body that it's time to wind down.
2. **Limit screens before bed:** Screens stimulate the brain, which can make it harder to fall asleep.

Reducing Screen Time for Healthier Habits

While technology is part of our everyday lives, too much screen time can disrupt sleep patterns and contribute to less active lifestyles. It's recommended that students limit non-academic screen

time and spend more time doing physical activities, reading, or spending quality time with family and friends.

Screen Time Management Ideas:

- **Set daily limits** on non-educational screen time.
- Encourage **screen-free meals and family time**.
- Provide **alternative activities** like board games, reading, or outdoor sports.

Reducing screen time not only benefits mental and physical health but also encourages children to engage in other enriching activities.

Reading for Growth and Imagination

Reading is a powerful tool for learning and personal growth. Reading regularly improves vocabulary, comprehension, and critical thinking skills. A great way to encourage reading is by setting aside a little time each day to read as a family, visiting the local library, or choosing books on topics that interest your child.

Ways to Make Reading a Fun Habit:

- **Create a family reading time:** Set aside 15–20 minutes daily for everyone to read their favorite book or story.
- **Choose books based on interests:** Find stories that resonate with your child’s interests, such as adventure, fantasy, or sports.
- **Discuss what you read together:** Engaging in conversations about books can help deepen understanding and make reading a more social experience.

At The Maritime Academy of Toledo, we’re dedicated to fostering these healthy habits in our students. With your support at home, we can work together to ensure that our students develop the skills and well-being they need for lifelong success.

School Uniforms

Wearing school uniforms at The Maritime Academy of Toledo plays an important role in fostering a focused and inclusive learning environment. Uniforms help students represent the Academy proudly and create a sense of unity and equality, reducing distractions related to fashion or socioeconomic differences. This consistency allows students to concentrate more on their studies and promotes a professional atmosphere within the school. Additionally, uniforms support school safety by making it easier to identify students and visitors on campus, contributing to a more secure and cohesive environment where everyone is recognized as part of the Academy community.

In addition, students often arrive to school out of uniform. If we sent students home, each time, we would never improve our State Report Card and some students want to be home instead of

school. I often hear valid questions about some students being out of uniform and my answer is always the same: We treat everyone as an individual and provide support or guidance based upon their needs. For example, we have a significant population of students that are considered homeless and just getting to school presents significant barriers and challenges. Please help us maintain the uniforms by making sure your child wears the appropriate clothing.

No matter what your child/teen says: We expect students to wear uniforms daily.

Attendance Matters

Why Attendance is Crucial

Excessive absences in student attendance can have significant negative impacts on academic performance and overall development. In Ohio, students with high rates of absenteeism often struggle to keep up with their peers, leading to gaps in learning and diminished engagement in the classroom. Research shows that consistent attendance is closely linked to improved academic outcomes, social skills, and future success. Schools and families must work together to address the barriers that contribute to absenteeism, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to thrive and succeed in their educational journey.

School Day: Classes start at 8:00 AM, and students should arrive no later than 7:50 AM to get settled in their classrooms.

- **Absences:** If your child must miss school, please contact the helm by 8:30 AM on the day of the absence. Absences must be excused with a note or some type of written documentation.
- **Tardies:** Arriving late disrupts the start of the day for both your child/teen and their classmates. Please ensure your child/teen arrives on time.

Let's work together to ensure your child attends school regularly and on time!

Student Spotlight

Maritime Leaders of the Month of October!

Each month, we will recognize students who exemplify leadership, academic excellence, and positive behavior. Congratulations. October will be announced in the October 24th newsletter.

- **Middle School Leader of the Month:** Cruzito Urias
 - **High School Leader of the Month:** Kaitlyn Curtis
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Important Reminders

1. **Attendance Matters:** Please ensure your child attends school regularly. Consistent attendance is crucial for academic success and helps foster a sense of community.
2. **Respectful Communication:** Maintain open and respectful communication with teachers and staff. Positive interactions create a supportive environment for everyone.
3. **Classroom Behavior:** Encourage your child to demonstrate respect and responsibility in the classroom. Good behavior enhances the learning experience for all students.
4. **Stay Informed:** Regularly check our website and newsletters for updates on school events, important dates, and resources available to support your child's education.
5. **Engagement Opportunities:** Get involved! Attend school events, volunteer, and participate in parent-teacher meetings. Your involvement makes a difference in our school community. I would love to have parents come in and help guide students with correct behavior, appropriate language, and a love for school.

Parent Resources and Tips

- **Support Your Child's Study Habits:** Encourage a regular homework routine, provide a quiet space for studying, and check your child's agenda or Google Classroom for assignments and upcoming projects.
- **Stay Connected with Teachers:** Communication is key to your child's success. Don't hesitate to reach out to teachers if you have any concerns or questions about your child's progress. Email addresses for all staff members can be found on the school website.
- **Join the Parent Advisory Group (PAG):** The PAG is looking for new members to help with school events and initiatives. If you'd like to get involved, please contact Priscilla Roman (proman@maritimeacademy.us or 419-244-9999) for more information.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to reach out to us:

- **Helm:** 419-244-9999
- **Email:** secretary@maritimeacademy.us
- **Website:** www.maritimeacademy.us

Thank you for being a vital part of The Maritime Academy of Toledo community. Let's make this year a great one!

Sincerely,
Aaron Lusk
Superintendent

