



MARION COUNTY
SCHOOLS



Goals and Achievements

2024/2025

www.marionboe.com

● Our Mission

To develop, promote, and implement the understanding of *“all means all, and that is all that all means”* in achieving, learning, and lifelong success.

● Our Core Beliefs

- Through committed partnerships, all students, families, and personnel have the responsibility to contribute to the community and global society.
- In an environment of mutual respect, all stakeholders are responsible for their own actions.
- All adults are responsible for the well-being of students.
- Valuing diversity in people and in ideas enhances education and enriches the community.
- All students can learn.
- All students must have a safe, secure, and orderly learning environment.
- High expectations are essential for student success in a global society.
- Teamwork is essential for effective learning.
- Successful global schools require effective instructional leadership.



● Our Goals for 2024/2025

GOAL 1 - ACHIEVEMENT AND STUDENT GROWTH:

Implement a system-wide school leadership and administrators' plan of action that focuses on integration of practical skills, student leadership, career exploration, and hands-on learning experiences that facilitate community and business partnerships and career technical education programming for elementary, middle and high schools by June 2025.



Dr. Donna Heston, Superintendent

Increase student achievement rates as measured by beginning of the year, middle of the year, and end of the year assessments by June 2025.

GOAL 2 - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

Create student, parent and faculty advisory councils, which will meet four times during the school year by June 2025 throughout the district, to discuss concerns related to the school system and have input for school system initiatives.

GOAL 3 - FAMILY AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT:

Increase positive engagement opportunities with students, families, and the community at-large as measured through Marion County Schools app and social media, stakeholder surveys, open houses, fairs and festivals (social studies fair, science fair, literacy fair, spelling bee, career fair, etc.)

GOAL 4 - DISTRICT OPERATIONS AND PLANNING:

Monitor student enrollment to access and make recommendation to the board of education for a 7% decrease in the number of professional and service personnel over the state aid formula by June 2025.

GOAL 5 LEARNING ENVIRONMENT:

Increase student learning environment standards as well as safety and security throughout the county as measured by regular walkthroughs by law enforcement and first responders, monthly safety reports, drills and trainings, and submission of funding requests to the School Building Authority to address identified priorities (such as mantraps and roofs) in Marion County School's Comprehensive Education and Facilities Plans 2020-2030.

Spotlight on Public Education

We have witnessed so much success over the years and our focus this year is “Tune In! Turn On! Turn It Up!” as Marion County Schools is in the pursuit of excellence in partnership with our students, families, and communities. To advance Career and Technical Education programs, which compete on a state and national level, we offer 14 CTE pathways, including simulated workplaces in health services, catering, criminal justice, welding, construction, electrician, auto mechanic, welding, nursing, marketing, small business, aviation, and broadcast news. A partnership with Mid-Atlantic Aerospace Complex is aimed to create a pipeline to jobs, community college, or 4-year programs in North Central WV. A hands-on experiential curriculum delivered with an entrepreneurship and job shadowing focus is established, as well as recently added collaborations with Fairmont State University, Marshall University, and Pierpont Community and Technical College to afford students the opportunity to earn dual credit towards post-secondary education. Marion County Schools has ranked in the Top 10 West Virginia school systems for student achievement consistently, and in 2023, moved to number 9 in English Language Arts, Math, and Science.

Innovation is found in our classrooms including instruction in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math. A STEAM Bus makes weekly visits to grades Pre K through 4 throughout the state’s 11th largest public school system. In Spring 2022, a ribbon-cutting for a state-of-the-art STEAM Center will continue to expose students in grades 5-8 to college and career options, real-world learning experiences with local experts (aeronautics, agriculture, business and marketing, health sciences, technology, trade and technical education) and increase student engagement and instructional design. A growing list of advanced placement (AP) and dual credit offerings are available at each of our high schools. Marion County Schools hosts state robotics competitions, advancing one team to the national level. We soar in rocketry as two middle school teams competed in the American Rocketry Challenge national competition in 2023. In October 2023, all 6th grade students attended a 4-day and 3-night outdoor experience connected with science at The Bechtel Summit in Fayette County in collaboration with WVU Science Adventure.

Our students thrive in fine arts, including visual, theatre, choral, and band, with programs in each of our schools and collaborations with Fairmont State University Academy for the Arts Community Outreach and theatre summer camp, national artists in residence in jazz, community art projects and

exhibits, participants in Governor’s Academy for the Arts, and state award-winners and national showcases that recognize the individual and group talents in our fine arts programming.

Partnerships with WVU Hospitals Project SEARCH, internships, and job shadowing training as well as the Veteran Experienced Liaison System offer students with special needs training to transition into the workplace. Additionally, behavior specialists, interventionists, and coaches are on staff to meet students’ diverse needs.

The collaborations to support our families continues. MCS is one of 16 Purple Star Districts in WV. This is a distinction through the West Virginia Department of Education for districts that make a special commitment to supporting military children and their families.

Healthy Grandfamilies supports grandparents raising school-aged children through many partnerships, including Family Services, WVU Extension, and faith-based organizations. In 2024, Marion County Schools entered into a one-of-a-kind partnership with Fairmont State University to establish Middle College, where foster students of WV can earn a MCS high school diploma and an associate’s degree through Fairmont State University.

After school programming is offered at middle schools through Tygart Valley United Way Flipside and a 21st Century Learning Grant. In 2023, martial arts instruction was added to these elementary programs along with summer programming. Likewise, we are proud partners with the Foster Grandparent Volunteer Program with AmeriCorps Seniors, MCPARC, Connecting Link, Game Changers, Family Resource Network, Marion County Chamber of Commerce, Literacy Volunteers, Communities In Schools at North Marion and Fairmont Senior feeder schools, and various community volunteers.

We are a one-to-one device county, grades Kindergarten through 12, with mobile access points in each classroom throughout the county.

The ranking of US News and World Report Best West Virginia High Schools (2023) lists all three Marion County high schools as ranked out of 130 WV high schools for graduation rate, college readiness, performance on state required tests: East Fairmont (#14), North Marion (#18), Fairmont Senior (#22). In 2023, Jayenne Elementary was named as a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence. In 2024, Pleasant Valley teacher Krista Blankenship was named as one of the five finalists of West Virginia Teacher of the Year.

Based upon the most recent State assessments, several individual schools are recognized in the top 20 of schools across WV based on student achievement in 2023.

- **Among 309 West Virginia elementary schools**
 - White Hall Elementary - #7 in Math
 - White Hall Elementary - #11 in English Language Arts
- **Among 168 West Virginia middle schools**
 - Fairview Middle - #4 in Math
 - Fairview Middle - #6 in English Language Arts
 - Barrackville Elementary/Middle - #9 in Math
 - East Fairmont Middle - #9 in Science
 - Monongah Middle - #9 in English Language Arts
 - West Fairmont Middle - #14 in Science
 - Monongah Middle - #20 in Science
- **Among 114 West Virginia high schools**
 - North Marion High - #13 in English Language Arts
 - Fairmont Senior High - #15 in English Language Arts
 - East Fairmont High - #19 in Math
 - Fairmont Senior High - #20 in Math

Pursue public education with us and take advantage of our many offerings. Become one of Marion County Schools graduates as we consistently maintain a 90% or higher graduation rate since 2016-17.

Our Departments

ATHLETICS

Marion County Schools prides itself in having three high schools, which are very competitive on the state level. Multiple state championships, sectional and regional champions are a common theme at East Fairmont, Fairmont Senior, and North Marion High Schools.

In 2023, the first in the history of Marion County Schools, all three teams qualified and hosted football state playoffs as participants. The 2023 AA State Title Football Game is now considered as the greatest state championship game played, between Fairmont Senior High School and North Marion High School.

Men's and women's basketball, soccer, cross country, track, and lacrosse are a force to be reckoned with at the state level, and our three high school cheer squads certainly give us reason to stand and root for our favorite squad.

A cohesive group of veteran and novice coaches, who pride themselves in educating the student athletes at the highest of levels, are the backbone of Marion County Athletics.

Sportsmanship, students' safety and respect are outlined in our county-wide coaches Professional Development Session in July. Middle School Golf and Middle School Baseball are new sports, which will place Marion County Schools as a "Pacesetter" in offering opportunities for our student-athletes.

ATTENDANCE

Trisha Maxwell, Director of Attendance and School Choice Options, works closely with the families and schools to address student attendance and truancy concerns. Marion County Schools has a 94.2% attendance rate.

Partnerships through Ms. Maxwell's department include Truancy and Delinquency Diversion Programs with the Youth Report Center, vaping prevention, intervention, and cessation initiatives with AmLung Association, Marion County Teen Court, Marion County Juvenile Drug Court, and Community Outreach/Healthy Grandfamilies. Homeschool, HOPE Scholarship and homeless requests, as well as the McKinney-Vento Act, are also handled through this department.

CHILD NUTRITION

One of the most vital supports of our students is that of fulfilling their basic needs, and this is where the Child Nutrition Department rises to the challenge year-round. Marion County Child Nutrition participates in many programs, allowing students to receive nutritious breakfast, lunch, supper as well as after school snacks. The National School Lunch Program allows for all students to receive breakfast and lunch at no cost to students through the Community Eligibility Provision Program again this year.

Snacks are served in any school that participates in an enrichment activity after school. Marion County Schools, in collaboration with the 21st Century grant, allows supper to be served in three schools. The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Grant was awarded to four elementary schools to provide students the opportunity to enjoy nutritious healthy snacks during the school day.

Thirteen schools participate in the Backpack Grant Program that provides two-day take-home boxes on the weekend filled with shelf stable meals. In Marion County we strive to encourage participation by offering a variety of meal services at various grade levels. New menu items and second line offerings, including salad and pizza, are offered at several sites.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

L.D. Skarzinski, Administrative Assistant of Curriculum & Instruction, oversees quality programs and services that maximize academic achievement and personal growth to prepare each child to be career and college ready for a successful future. The department provides leadership, support and guidance to ensure continuous improvement of student achievement with targeted professional learning, analysis of student data, curriculum implementation, and guidance in developing the district's 7,110 students (September 2024).

The C&I Department supports research-based instructional practices and strategies for differentiated, innovative and effective teaching, Career Technical Education, and problem-based learning on the State-adopted standards to stay current with an ever-changing, fast-paced, and technological global society.

An emphasis on teacher leadership and empowering reflection and sharing of best practices among teachers of grades 5-12 in Marion County was fostered by the establishment of a Math Cadre by Supervisor of Secondary Curriculum and Instruction, Policy and County Testing Coordinator Kristin DeVaul.

The addition of Master Teachers, a mentorship program, is aimed at ensuring that all teachers, especially those new to the profession or in temporary roles, receive the support they need to succeed and thrive in their careers. This, in turn, enhances the overall quality of education provided to our students.

Marion County is placing a strong emphasis on the state-wide Science of Reading initiative to enhance literacy and education. Supervisor of Elementary Curriculum & Instruction & Federal Programs, Melissa DeWitt, oversees the establishment of an English Language Arts cadre for grades K through 3: "Tapestry of Literacy."

A partnership with the Marion County Chamber of Commerce improves academic outcomes and advances post-secondary educational awareness that lead to employment in the area, as well as student leadership opportunities through Young Leaders.

Celebrating the achievements of our students, grades Pre-K through 12, is a valued mission of the C&I Department. For the third consecutive year, Marion County Schools has ranked in the top ten school districts in the state for student achievement in English Language Arts, Math, and Science.

Additionally, the C&I Department supports active engagement in Celebrate Freedom Week, county-wide Literacy Fair and Marion County Art Exhibit,

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, student art exhibits and community art projects, Golden Horseshoe, Governor's Honor Academy, U.S. Presidential Scholars, Spelling Bee, Math Field Day, Social Studies Fair, Young Writer's Contest, county wide Book Festival, and College, STEAM Fair, and Science Fair.

Through Federal Programs (Title I through Title V), Marion County's support of the excess levy, grants, collaborations, and other local funding, the department assists students and families further with programs in Credit Recovery, STEAM Bus, Energy Express, WVU Extension Agency, Math Readiness, 21st Century Learning Programs, Communities In Schools (therapy dog), and West Virginia Virtual School.

Marion County Schools has consistently maintained a 90% or higher graduation rate since 2016-2017. The graduation rate for 2022-2023 is 96.3%. Additional data about Marion County Schools can be found at <https://zoomwv.k12.wv.us>.



FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE

The Facilities/Maintenance Department, led by Administrative Assistant L.D. Skarzinski, is the backbone of the district. With a team of 30 employees, the department services 53 total facilities and includes skilled professionals such as plumbers, electricians, masons, carpenters, roofers, painters, warehouse workers, and delivery personnel.

At the district's maintenance warehouse, a variety of essential activities take place to ensure the smooth operation of facilities. The warehouse serves as a central hub where supplies and equipment are stored, organized, and managed. Skilled workers gather the necessary tools and materials for their tasks. Inventory management is a critical function, with staff tracking stock levels and ordering new supplies as needed. The warehouse also handles the logistics of delivering materials to various job sites, ensuring that maintenance and repair projects are completed efficiently. Additionally, the warehouse team is responsible for maintaining equipment, conducting regular inspections, and ensuring that all tools are in good working condition. This organized and systematic approach helps keep the district's facilities in top shape. Marion County has an excess levy in place, dedicating \$1.1 million annually to capital improvements.

In May 2024 Marion County Schools placed a \$19.9 million bond before its voters for six proposed projects. The Board of Education will focus its attention to May of 2026. A priority for the county is to pursue a Needs Project with the School Building Authority (SBA) to install nine man-trap entrances as the initial phase of a county-wide plan to enhance our facilities. Marion County Schools plan to commit a 25% match of funds to a School Building Authority Needs Project request, totaling \$3,699,926.55. If the grant is secured, Marion County Schools would bring its total number of schools with man traps to ten.

FINANCE

The Marion County Board of Education has a \$110 million annual budget. Treasurer and Chief School Business Official Scott Reider oversees the Finance Department of Marion County Schools to ensure sound financial practices. The Finance Department also oversaw compliance of the COVID response funds, which were used to help address learning loss from the COVID pandemic. Those funds were used to provide afterschool tutors, interventionists, and summer school programs. Additionally, funds were used to improve air quality in schools and upgrade HVAC systems. The Finance Department is committed to ensuring accuracy and timeliness in payments, accountability, and compliance with federal, state, and local government regulations and accounting procedures. There are four units of the department: payroll, accounts payable, insurance and benefits, and cash

receipts. The department conducts auditing on individual school funds and oversees purchasing policies and procedures in accordance with state and federal guidelines.

PERSONNEL, TITLE IX, NURSES, WVEIS 2.0

As the largest employer in Marion County, the Personnel Department, under the direction Administrative Assistant Rockie DeLorenzo, handles contracts, certifications, licensure, use of facilities, Family Medical Leave, job postings, personnel records, the WVEIS student information system, and the substitute call-out system. Marion County is 1,076 (646 professionals and 430 service) employees strong for 2024-25. The department also processes Title IX and parent complaints as well as employee grievances and worker's compensation claims.

Through a partnership with MVA Health and the Marion County Health Department, Marion County Schools now offers vaccination clinics and no-cost sports physicals at schools throughout the county and through mobile clinics. School nurses are also implementing a new electronic health records system to better serve students and families.

Like many school districts across the state and nation, Marion County Schools has experienced substitute shortages. Mr. DeLorenzo works closely with Fairmont State University and West Virginia University to recruit teachers. All available positions are posted on the county website at marionboe.com, on the WVDE website and through our social media on Facebook and X (formerly Twitter).



PUPIL SERVICES

The Pupil Services Department, the second largest in Marion County Schools, is led by Dr. Christina Hare, the Supervisor of Pupil Services. This department oversees special education, Birth to Three referrals, school nursing services, 504 plans, and county-wide positive behavior support programs. The department's fiscal responsibilities and funding sources include IDEA School Age, IDEA Preschool, and State Aid for Special Education. Additionally, Medicaid billing is utilized where appropriate, providing supplementary financial support.

As of October 2023, approximately 1,100 students in Marion County are served through Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), while over 500 students benefit from 504 Plans. The department also manages around 80-100 Birth to Three referrals annually. The Pupil Services Department employs a range of specialized professionals, including special education teachers, aides, school nurses, a physical therapist, two occupational therapists, speech therapists, and three school psychologists. To further support student needs, the department contracts with music therapists, additional school psychologists, sign language interpreters, and providers of vocational assessments and supports. Advances in teletherapy have expanded access to speech, occupational, and physical therapy, ensuring continuous care for the medically fragile homebound population in Marion County.

Recently, the department has focused on expanding grant support, securing awards that enhance communication supports and preschool classrooms. Additionally, Marion County has been invited to participate as a pilot Local Education Agency (LEA) for the State Personnel Development Grant initiative, further advancing the department's commitment to innovative educational strategies.

Among the department's key achievements is its collaborative relationship with Ruby/WVU Hospitals for Project SEARCH and job shadowing training, as well as its partnership with the WV Council of Administrators of Special Education (WV CASE). In conjunction with other departments, Pupil Services supports special transportation, special equipment, Medicaid, supplemental instructional materials, Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports, school health and wellness, and staff recruitment. To assist district employees, the central office provides professional, instructional, and technical support to special education teachers through a special education liaison system. Additionally, students with disabilities and their educators receive support from a behavior specialist and a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA).

At the heart of the Pupil Services Department are the students. Every day, the department works tirelessly as a unified force to ensure that staff are supported, enabling them to, in turn, support students and their families on their educational journey. As Pramod Kumar Sidar wisely said, “Special Education doesn’t mean that a student is incapable of learning. It means that they need different supports in order to succeed.” The collective efforts of the Pupil Services Department are centered on one shared goal: helping each student reach their fullest potential.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Through partnership with the Marion County Sheriff’s Department and Marion County Homeland Security & Emergency Management, MCS has a collaboration with first responders for training and tools for security at each of our schools effective July 1, 2022. This partnership has brought expertise and resources as well as grant funding to MCS in support of student safety and school security. Regular walkthroughs and checklists are completed by law enforcement representatives and first responders, and reflection occurs in conjunction with MCS and these agencies. This has resulted in a list of needs and priorities to improve our facilities and campuses.

School resource officers serve high schools through the Marion County Sheriff’s Department, and security guards are placed at high schools during mid-day activities. West Fairmont Middle and East Fairmont Middle are served through the City of Fairmont Police Department. Law enforcement detachments in Fairview, Monongah, and White Hall, as well as the West Virginia State Police, are invaluable supports for our schools and communities. Through ongoing collaboration with retired local law enforcement, Marion County Schools employs crossing guards and security guards to support security measures and assist with crowd control at extracurricular events as we work to ensure students arrive and exit school safely.

Marion County Schools has led the state in adoption of a facial recognition security entrance platform and continues to partner with Rank One Computing on this project. Additionally, MCS is utilizing Halo Vape Sensors in restrooms, 865 Security Cameras throughout the county, metal detectors at all three high schools, wand metal detectors at all middle schools, and security door fobs at all schools. Staff are trained on fire code practices, crisis response, active shooter, stop bleed, and crisis management.

TECHNOLOGY

Marion County Schools continues to grow and meet the demands of the technology world under the direction of Administrative Assistant Chad Norman. The Technology Department oversees 7,800 Dell 3100 Chromebooks with a refresh rate of every four years so that each child in our school system has a Chromebook to utilize in school and home to complete schoolwork.

Each teacher receives a Hewlett Packard 455 610 on a three-year rotation to ensure our teachers have updated equipment. In 2024 Marion County Schools purchased 367 Newline Interactive Boards for each teacher who had submitted a request to augment great teaching.

Additional recent technology upgrades include: a Network Operation Center to man school operations and Ten Zig computers; new access points, switches and routers through e-rate; T-1 Lines with 3 Gig access for all schools to ensure reliable internet throughput.

TRANSPORTATION

Under Administrative Assistant Chad Norman's leadership, there are 80 bus routes throughout the state's 11th largest school system. Each year Marion County Schools purchases five new Blue Bird School buses, funded primarily through the State Transportation Allocation to each school district. Each bus purchased now has air conditioning, multiple cameras inside and outside of the bus, and BearCom Radio for communication and GPS Tracking.

Each driver in Marion County completes the state mandated 58 hours of rigorous training by an in-county trainer to assist and prepare our driver candidates.

Marion County was the first district to offer an incentive package to our recruits, which come to us by the innovative recruiting approach "Come Drive A School Bus."

"Buster the Bus" is always a popular attraction at parades, ribbon cutting events, and classroom safety presentations. "Buster" prides himself on promoting reading and school bus safety and dance.

Marion County Transportation Department prides itself on excellent ratings from monthly WVDE State Bus Inspector Transportation Inspections.

● Board of Education

George Boyles, President

James Saunders, Vice President

Donna Costello, Member

Thomas Dragich, Member

Kevin Rogers, Member



George Boyles, MCS Board President

● Connect with Us

Dr. Donna Heston, Superintendent

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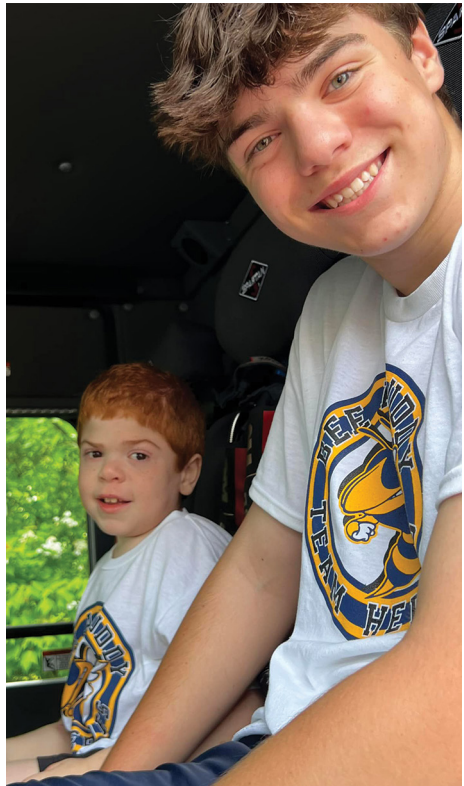
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Turn On! Tune In! Turn It Up!

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