



January 19, 2011

Emily Lembeck, Ed. D.  
*Superintendent*

Dear Marietta City Schools parents/guardians and employees,

As a result of the Marietta City Schools (MCS) school closures caused by the severe winter weather during the week of Jan. 10-14, 2011, students and staff missed five days of instructional time. In making my recommendation to the Board of Education about how best to recover the lost instructional time for students, I realize that no one recommendation will satisfy all families or staff. We did review a number of alternatives.

If we are to provide our students every opportunity for quality instruction in preparation for upcoming course and grade-level performance requirements and assessments, we must somehow recover this valuable time as we progress into the second semester. Canceling the Feb. 22-25 break was not a viable option because it could likely have a negative economic impact on numerous MCS families and employees who may already have booked reservations or made deposits towards planned travel.

Therefore, my recommendation to the school board was as follows:

1. Classes will be held on March 14, and the scheduled March 14 furlough day will be moved to January 10 (recovers one instructional student day). *Payroll deduction for furlough eligible employees for this day is on hold pending additional mid-year budgeting and funding information for Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 and FY2012.*
2. Classes will be held on March 15. The scheduled professional learning day of March 15 will be canceled (recovers one instructional student day).
3. Add one hour to the school day over a 13-day period: Jan. 31-Feb. 4, March 7-11, and March 14-16 (recovers an additional two instructional student days). *The period Jan. 31-Feb. 4, March 7-11, and March 14-16 occurs prior to the state-wide Criterion Referenced Competency Test (CRCT) and other high-stakes testing. See modified Bell Schedule on back page.*

Athletics should not be hampered by the later dismissal time during these 13 days (see modified Bell Schedule on back page). Parent Conference Weeks at elementary schools, the Marietta Center for Advanced Academics (MCAA), Marietta Sixth Grade Academy and Marietta Middle School are currently scheduled during these dates and can continue with a later release time for students. Transportation can accommodate the temporary change in the Bell Schedule.

It is my belief that an additional hour of instruction is a significant amount of time for schools to makeup missed classes and content, and to provide enrichment and remediation as needed. In the elementary grades, lost instructional time occurred across all content areas and this schedule will extend the time needed to provide beneficial instruction that focuses on literacy skills, mathematics and engaging integrated science activities.

The school system overall will experience little to no increased costs to add one hour per school day, except possibly for some specified support staff. Costs associated with March 14-15 are offset by savings realized from two of the five inclement weather days. Employees will receive approved options for making up the fifth day. *This plan is subject to modification should there be additional loss of instructional time due to further cancellation of school due to severe weather.*

Our Charter System flexibility enables teachers to have two additional professional learning days during the school year resulting in MCS students attending school for 178 days instead of 180 days. However, when we add in the five severe weather days we were closed, the total reduction of instructional time totals seven days.

While a local board of education may, without the necessity of authorization from the State Board of Education, elect not to makeup up to four additional days otherwise needed (because of school closures caused by a situation such as occurred January 10-14), our commitment to the education of our students and the benefits afforded by MCS' quality programs and teachers does necessitate that we makeup lost instructional time, especially prior to important high-stakes testing.

Marietta City Schools strives to provide the best possible educational opportunities for our students even when severe weather days and other unforeseen circumstances occur. We thank you for your support and look forward to a successful continuation of the 2010-2011 school year.

Sincerely,



Dr. Emily Lembeck

**Modified Bell Schedules: *Jan. 31-Feb. 4, 2011***

- Marietta Middle School: Dismiss at 1:30 p.m.
- MCAA/MSGGA: Dismiss at 2:30 p.m.
- PLC: Dismiss at 3:00 p.m.
- MHS: Dismiss at 3:30 p.m.
- Elementary Schools: Dismiss at 4:15 p.m.

**Modified Bell Schedules: *March 7-11, 2011***

- Elementary Schools: Dismiss at 2:15 p.m.
- PLC: Dismiss at 3:00 p.m.
- MMS/MHS: Dismiss at 3:30 p.m.
- MCAA/MSGGA: Dismiss at 5:00 p.m.

**Modified Bell Schedules: *March 14-16, 2011***

- PLC: Dismiss at 3:00 p.m.
- MMS/MHS: Dismiss at 3:30 p.m.
- Elementary Schools: Dismiss at 4:15 p.m.
- MCAA/MSGGA: Dismiss at 5:00 p.m.