

# RAMSEY AROUND THE HORN

MIDDLE SCHOOL

A Monthly Newsletter for Ramsey Families

Volume 1, Issue 7  
March/April 2013

## An Update from Principal Marietta

As we fast approach spring break, we realize that the end of the school year will be here before you know it. With that in mind, we are working to finalize many components of your child's 6th-grade year. One key element is the MCA test. This year, the students at Ramsey will be taking the reading and math MCAs. The reading test will be April 16 and 17, and the computerized math test will be the week of April 22-26. The MCA test is the assessment that evaluates overall learning in these two disciplines as compared with last year.

Additionally, it is used as the primary accountability tool for school performance. It is for this reason that we do our best to encourage students to take the exam very seriously. Yet, we do not want to increase anxiety or stress on the students. One thing you can do is talk to your children about the test in the weeks and days leading up to it. Your interest in your children's performance and your support of them will greatly encourage them while still indicating the importance of the test.

While we are working on completing this year, we are also purposefully planning for next year. There are some changes we will need to make as we double our enrollment. We will be finalizing the budget within the next week. Following that process, we will refine the schedule and course catalogue. Your children will be actively involved in the coming months as they prepare for their 7th-grade year. We have the good fortune of being able to hire a new group of staff to support our growth. Last week, we held a "prospective teacher" information night. We had 60 people attend this information night and well over 100 applicants for three to four positions. In other words, we have some of the best teachers applying for our open positions for next year. In the next month, we will be going through the selection process for the new staff. I have no doubt that we will continue to have the strongest personnel at Ramsey to support your children.

## Contact Information

[Join Our E-Mail List](#)  
[Ramsey Middle School website](#)  
[Ramsey PTA website](#)

612-668-4040

## Important Dates

**April 16-17**  
Reading MCAs

**Tue, April 16**  
9:15 am  
Coffee & Discussion  
with Principal Marietta;  
6:30 pm PTA Meeting

**April 22-26**  
Math MCAs

**May 7-10**  
Plant Distribution  
and Sales

**Fri, May 10**  
7 pm  
Twins Game

**Tue, May 21**  
9:15 am  
Coffee & Discussion  
with Principal Marietta;  
6:30 pm PTA Meeting

I hope you have a restful spring break during the first week of April. Hopefully upon our return, it will feel more like spring!

May 21-24  
Scholastic Book Sale

Thu, May 23  
Band, Orchestra, and  
Choir Concert

## Exploring Lessons about Online Safety

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In Advisory, we are wrapping up the third quarter's theme of communication, and soon we will be moving on to the fourth quarter's theme of problem solving. Part of our work with students on communication includes educating them about online communication and social media. We will be doing some lessons with students about online identities, safe online activity, and what constitutes harmful or hurtful online activity.

Most social media is currently only available for ages 13 and older. The [Child Online Privacy Protection Act](#) of 1998 will not allow websites to collect private information from children under the age of 13 without direct parental consent, and most websites aren't interested in the hassle. Children under 13 aren't ready for the responsibility of social media without direct parental involvement, and right now, many of our students are grappling with the concept of "once it's on the Internet, it's there forever."

Please help us continue the conversations we're having about Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. Some themes you can address at home include:

- There's someone on the other end of the screen
- Internet fights live on forever
- Private accounts aren't cool
- Nothing on the Internet is anonymous
- The differences between bullying and fighting

A phenomenal resource to use is [commonsensemedia.org](http://commonsensemedia.org). This website has reviews for parents on all types of media and video games as well as [resources](#) for parents on talking with your child about responsible Internet use. Consequently, it is also the curriculum we use to teach digital citizenship. The best ways to encourage responsible behavior are to model responsible behavior and establish a dialogue about it.

## Core-Class Update

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Science classes recently began Unit Three on sound and light. Students will continue the unit with a focus on light energy after spring break. We are also doing a cow eyeball dissection. Math 6 is working on tables,

graphs, and equations. Advanced Math 6 is working on the distributive property. After break, students will continue a social studies unit on World War II; then they will begin the Modern Minnesota unit.

ELA is finishing a unit on science and ethics, and students are presenting their persuasive podcasts before break. In the coming weeks, students will be working on a storytelling unit.

## Student Council Aims to Raise Awareness

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The Ramsey Student Council is planning two school activities to raise awareness about children around the world who are denied basic rights like food, shelter, and education. Student Council members are planning a "Silent Lunch" on April 10, a day when students will be encouraged to not speak during lunch and reflect upon other children who do not have a voice in this world. They are also helping to develop and plan a play based on that theme. More information about how to get involved in the play will come home after break.

## Last Call for Twins Tickets

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There are still a limited number of Twins tickets available for the game on Friday, May 10. Join Burroughs and Lyndale families as we cheer for the Twins when they take on the Orioles. Orders can only be accepted until Wednesday, April 10.

## PTA Meeting to Focus on Media Safety

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Don't miss this very informative meeting that features a speaker from the Jacob Wetterling Resource Center, who will present information on internet, cell-phone, and general media safety for our middle-school-aged kids. The meeting takes place on Tuesday, April 16 at 6:30 p.m. in the Media Center; PTA members will also be available at the Coffee and Discussion opportunity with Principal Marietta that morning at 9:15 a.m. in the Media Center.

## Get Your Green Thumbs Ready

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Plants orders from the PTA fundraiser will be ready for pickup between May 7 and May 10. Extra plants will also be available for sale at this time, so please tell family and friends to come fill in their gardens while supporting our school.

Volunteers are needed to help organize plants on

Monday, May 6, and to help distribute plants May 7-10. If you can volunteer, please e-mail [Kelly Kist](#) or call 651-605-5776 for more details.

## ALC After-School Program Ends Today

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For various reasons, our ALC after-school program will be ending early. The last day for ALC classes is Thursday, March 28. Community Education classes will continue until Thursday, May 9, but BUSING WILL END FOR ALL AFTER-SCHOOL STUDENTS ON MARCH 28. Classes that will end are: GEMS/GISE Rocketry(T/TH), ELL Study Skills (T), Math Boosters (W), Ready for Writing (W), and Super Readers (W).

ALC students can switch into a Community Education course starting after spring break, but please remember that no busing will be available. Please [see the website](#) for a list of Community Education choices with pro-rated costs. Please contact [JoEllyn Jolstad](#), community education coordinator, at 612-668-3450 with any questions or concerns. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause, but we hope you find an option that suits your child. Thank you for helping us get Ramsey's after-school program off the ground this year, and we look forward to having your students in the program as 7th graders!

## Tissue Needed!

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Although cold and flu season is coming to an end, spring allergies are just warming up. So please help out by donating a box (or two) to your child's classroom or to the front office. Thank you!

## Get Ready to Run

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Time to put away the boots and take out the running shoes. Join members of Ramsey's after-school running club at the Get in Gear 2K! The race is Saturday, April 27, at Hiawatha Park. Adults and kids can register as part of the Ramsey Rhino team, with a cost of \$15. Deadline to register is April 25 (the Thursday before). More details to come. Please email coach [Jenifer Biss](#) with questions. Start training now, and get fit with the Rhinos!

## Next Publication Date: May 9

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The next issue of *Around the Horn* will be published on Thursday, May 9. Please send any [submissions to the editors](#) by Friday, May 3. To sign up for the electronic version of the newsletter, please send an e-

mail request to opt-in to the mailing list to [ramseyscommunications@gmail.com](mailto:ramseyscommunications@gmail.com).



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