



2012

Mason City Schools ANNUAL REPORT

10,734

reasons for Comet Pride

Each of our *10,734 students* is important, and each child celebrated an important milestone in 2012. We were especially proud to be part of so

many of our students' "firsts" -

the first bus ride, the first lost tooth,

the first class presentation,

the first solo, the first goal,

the first college acceptance letter.

It all adds up to a lot of Comet Pride!

Are you a proud Mason Comet? Share your Comet Pride story at

www.MasonOhioSchools.com/cometpride

reaching out

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Many great things were accomplished in 2012. Mason once again ranked in Ohio's "Academic Top 10" while spending significantly less than our peers. Our Sudler Flag and Shield award-winning band came in 8th in the nation, and our athletes once again took home the coveted GMC All-Sports trophy. There's a lot of pride in what our students achieve!

I want to commend our students, their families and the Mason City Schools team for their efforts to improve our district's academic performance and fiscal stewardship.

To achieve improved outcomes with fewer resources, we must continue to be innovative about the ways we do business. To deal with reduced revenue, we've committed to making an additional \$6 million in reductions over the next two years. If revenue remains stable, Mason City Schools will not seek a levy in 2013.

Mason Schools belong to you - the residents of this community. We must work together to prepare our children for a future of jobs that may not yet exist, using technologies that haven't been invented, in order to solve problems we may not even yet know.

As Superintendent, I pledge to do everything I can to give students what they need to graduate ready for college, career and life in our rapidly evolving global economy.

I invite you to join me in this work during the coming year of growth and change.

Yours in Education,



Dr. Gail Kist-Kline



88%

of Mason grads
go to college



key facts

BY THE NUMBERS

The numbers don't tell the whole story. To get a real feel for what's happening in Mason City Schools, you have to see it for yourself. What starts as a classroom conversation evolves into a problem-solving mission. There is a culture of learning in Mason. It's "cool" to be smart, and students and staff expect to work hard.

Student Enrollment: 10,734

Average Class Size (K-12): 27

Racial Diversity: 26%

Students Identified as Gifted: 33%

Students with a Disability: 8.9%

Native Languages Spoken by Students: 65

Students in Poverty: 7%

Teachers with Advanced Degrees: 77.9%

Average Years of Teaching Experience: 10.89

Extracurricular Participation (7-12): 76%

Public & Private School Students Transported: 7,967

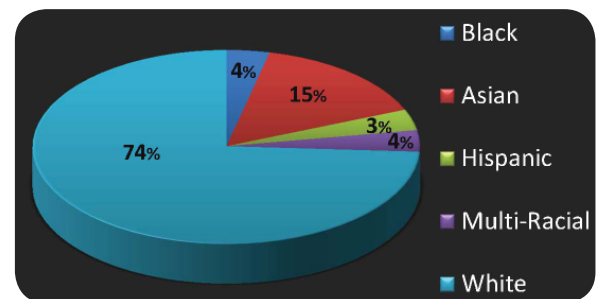
School Meals Served: 876,567

2012 National Merit Scholarship: 20 Semi Finalists
12 Commended
1 Outstanding Participant

2012 Advanced Placement: 20 AP courses offered
705 students took 1200 exams
90% scored a 3 or higher
(the score typically needed to earn college credit)

Class of 2012 Scholarship Offers: Over \$10 million

Community Service: Over 15,000 hours given by students and staff





What's Changing?

Common Core: Increased Rigor Coming to a Classroom Near You

Mason students and families are beginning to see some exciting shifts in the way that students are learning. For years, Mason has used academic standards that exceeded the State of Ohio's standards. Now, Ohio's standards for English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies are becoming more rigorous. Mason will use these new standards as a foundation as it elevates what students are learning and what teachers are teaching.

The new standards — which set out clearly what students should learn at each grade level — are being phased into use in Mason's classrooms in advance of the 2014-15 school year, when state assessments will be aligned to the new standards.

Fewer, Clearer, Higher

- Students will study fewer topics within each subject, but drill deeper into each to gain more understanding.
- There will be clearer definitions of achievement so that students and families will know what children must accomplish to be ready for college and career.
- Teachers will use more in-depth teaching methods and get frequent measurements of how their students are performing.

Robust, Relevant, Real-World

The standards aren't about memorizing facts for a test. Instead, students will learn to relate key ideas from math, science, language arts and social studies to real-life situations. Teachers will work to facilitate students' learning – guiding them to think deeply about complex issues, to evaluate sources of information, to persist when work is hard, and to confidently communicate the rationale behind their answers.

raising the bar

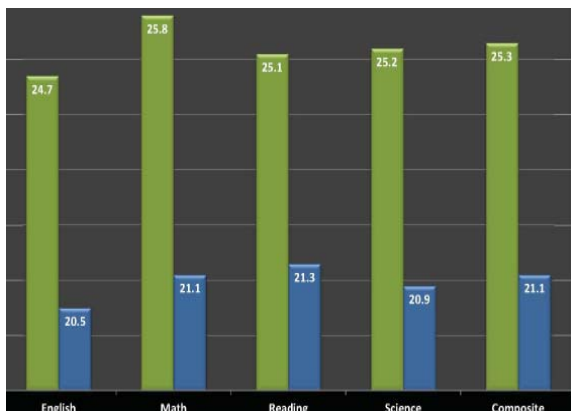
ACADEMICS

Ohio's Academic Top 10

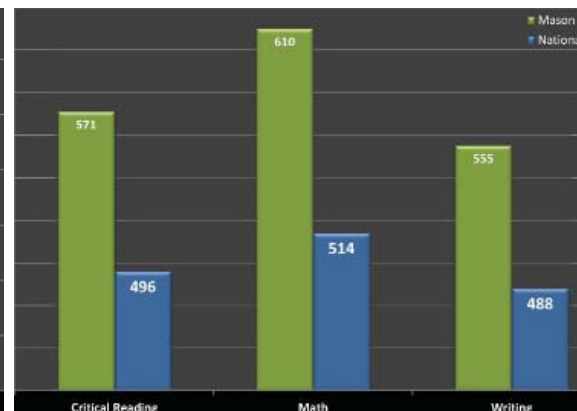
District Name	Performance Index	AYP	Value Added Growth	Report Card Rating	Enrollment	Expenditure Per Pupil
1. Wyoming	112.4	Met	Above	Excellent w/ Distinction	2,021	\$11,278.61
2. Madeira	111.6	Met	Met	Excellent	1,429	\$11,709.24
3. Solon	111.2	Met	Above	Excellent w/ Distinction	5,150	\$13,386.08
4. Indian Hill	111.1	Met	Met	Excellent	2,072	\$15,207.26
5. Rocky River	110.8	Met	Above	Excellent w/ Distinction	2,667	\$12,951.44
6. Ottawa Hills	110.7	Met	Met	Excellent	1,012	\$14,271.33
7. Mason	110.3	Met	Met	Excellent	10,734	\$10,125.37
8. Oakwood	109.8	Met	Met	Excellent	2,160	\$11,237.97
9. Sycamore	109.6	Not Met	Above	Excellent w/ Distinction	5,290	\$14,751.48
10. Marion	109.6	Met	Met	Excellent	859	\$9,143.06

Mason's students once again performed as some of the State's highest academic achievers – earning the 7th highest score in the state while spending \$2,281 less per pupil than the average Top 10 district. Mason students met adequate yearly progress and met the expected growth. MHS students consistently score above the national average on the ACT and SAT.

2012 ACT Scores



2012 SAT Scores



Visit www.MasonOhioSchools.com/CometPride to watch MHS 2010 graduate **Bhavik Modi** share how Mason's business programs "got me ahead of the pack." Modi developed *The Bearcat LaunchPad* – a business accelerator and incubator to help make Cincinnati a destination for entrepreneurs to start businesses.



\$7 million

reduction

in revenue

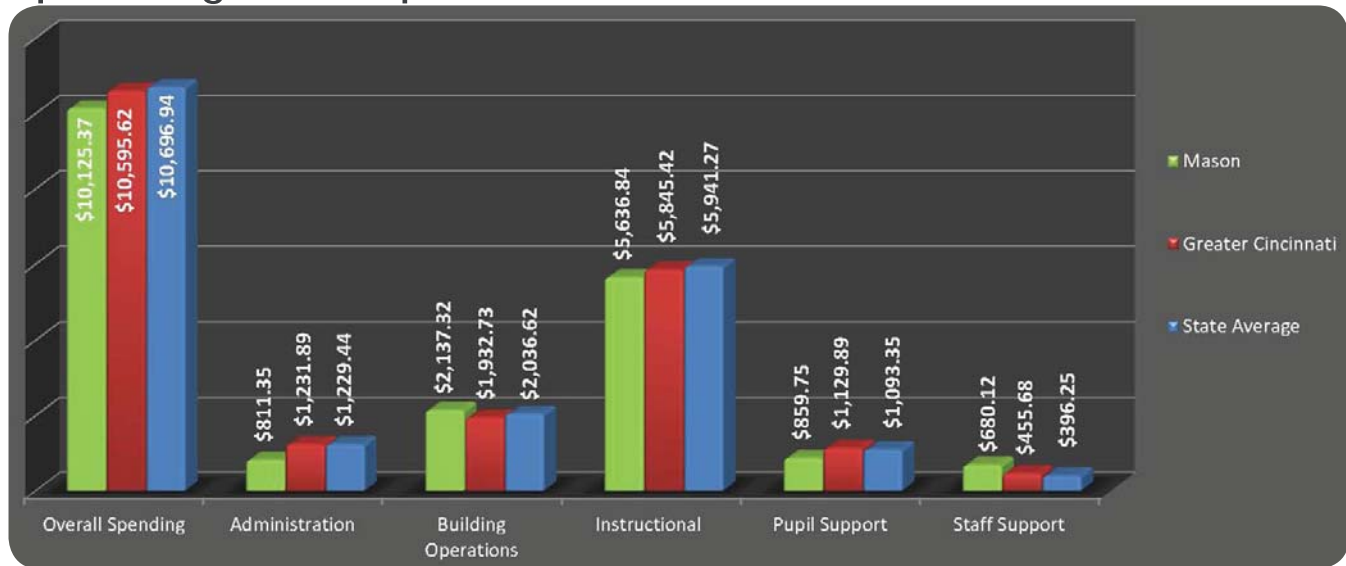


The five year forecast approved by the School Board includes assumptions that school funding will continue to shift from the state level to the local level. In FY 2007, Mason received \$14 million in Tangible Personal Property tax (business inventory) and TPP reimbursement. For FY 2013, that dwindles to \$7 million.

general fund

EXPENDITURES

Spending Per Pupil



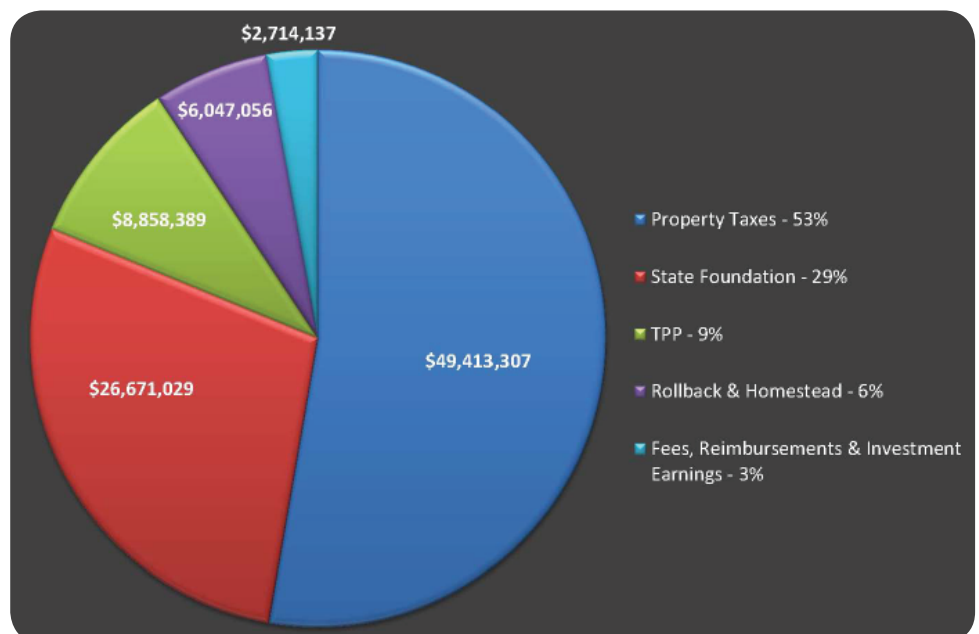
Mason spends \$571 less per student than the state average, and \$470 less per student than the average district in Butler, Hamilton, and Warren Counties.

Of the 40 Greater Cincinnati school districts, 18 school districts spend less on instruction than Mason and only 3 school districts spend less on administration than Mason.

REVENUES

Mason's general fund expenditures total \$101 million, while revenues are only \$93.7 million.

Why is the district spending more than it takes in? School revenues don't automatically grow, and a normal levy cycle produces surpluses in the first half of the cycle and deficits in the second half. Mason is currently at the end of the levy cycle - expenditures exceed revenues and operating cash balances are shrinking. By June 2014, the district will be at a minimally acceptable level of only 2.5 months of operating costs.



130

fewer

staff members

Schools are a people business. Like most service industries, the largest portion (88%) of our operating funds is allocated to salaries and benefits. The remaining balance goes toward all other expenditures such as utilities, software, and supplies. Consequently, most cost reductions end up impacting people. Our goal has been to try to keep staff reductions as far away from the classroom as possible, though class sizes have increased.

Mason's cost reduction plan includes a wage freeze for all administrators, certificated staff, and classified staff in 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. Mason began making cost reductions in 2005; the last time voters approved a tax increase. These cost reductions (coupled with the ongoing efforts to reduce expenditures) helped the district prepare for reduced revenue.

cost reductions

DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY

Staffing Reductions

Full Time Employees	2010-2011	Positions Eliminated	2011-2012	Positions Eliminated	2012-2013	Total Positions Eliminated
Administrators	51.0	5.0	46.0	3.2	42.8	8.2 16% reduction
Bus Drivers	80.3	11.5	68.8	0.0	68.8	11.5 14% reduction
Clerical	66.9	5.4	61.5	4.0	57.5	9.4 13% reduction
Custodial/Maintenance	71.3	13.0	58.3	2.0	56.3	15.0 21% reduction
Food Service	51.5	3.1	48.4	2.0	46.4	5.1 6% reduction
Aides	220.7	9.4	211.3	17.5	193.8	26.9 12% reduction
Technology	14.0	1.0	13.0	0.0	13.0	1.0 7% reduction
Teachers & Professional Educators	701.1	20.3	680.8	19.0	661.8	39.3 5% reduction
Total	1,256.8	68.7	1,188.1	47.7	1,126.19	130.6

There are 130 fewer Mason City Schools employees than two years ago, while student enrollment has only decreased by about 40 students.

- **Administrative reductions** since 2010-11 include an Assistant Superintendent, the Chief Information Officer, an Elementary Principal, 3 Assistant Principals, the Assistant Transportation Supervisor, the Technical Coordinator of Safe & Inviting Schools and a 20% reduction of the Director of Human Resources.
- **Clerical reductions** since 2010-11 include 3.5 Central Office support staff and 5.6 school support staff.
- **Aide reductions** since 2010-11 include 1.4 health service coordinators, 3 media aides, 2 recess aides, a study hall monitor, 3 campus supervisors and 26.8 support aides.
- **Teachers & Professional Educator reductions** since 2010-11 include 1.5 curriculum leaders, a guidance counselor, and 38.4 teachers.
- **Technology reductions** since 2010-11 include a LAN administrator.

Elementary Consolidation

Community members said goodbye to Mason Heights, which closed its doors to Mason school children for the last time on June 5, 2012. The elementary consolidation plan resulted in the first merger of Mason Schools since the mid-20th century, but matched enrollment to building capacity, and saves \$700,000 a year in operating costs.

The Mason City Schools Board of Education approved a lease agreement with Royalmont Academy, a private Catholic school, that plans to purchase the property for \$1 million. Proceeds from the sale of the former school will be used to maintain current facilities. According to Ohio law, money from the sale of facilities may not be used for operating expenses.



65

emergency

drills

With cooperation from the Mason Police Department and the district's Safe and Inviting Schools Committee, Mason City Schools educators and students in grades 7-12 began learning new ways to handle school violence during the 2011-2012 school year.

In the past, the message was to lock down — turn out the lights, lock the door and hide under a desk. That method alone has proven to not always be the most effective, and in some cases has actually led to children being at higher risk. The new, nationally recognized approach is called A.L.I.C.E., or Alert, Lockdown, Information, Counter and Evacuation. It emphasizes making active decisions, such as barricading classroom doors, coordinating on-the-spot evacuations, and, if all else fails, throwing objects and using body weight to topple a shooter.

preparedness

SAFE & INVITING

School safety is always our top priority. Still, there is no guarantee that any school will be completely safe from crime, violence or disaster. Creating safe schools is a continuing process that focuses on the development, implementation and evaluation of strategies to support the safety and security of our students and staff.

The Blue Dot Program: After Mason High School lost members of its Class of 2014 to suicide, MHS history teacher Jerry Schrock searched for a way to help students know that no matter the situation there would always be someone they could contact for help. He developed the Blue Dot Conversation Campaign with a very simple message - students who see a blue dot posted on the door, desk, or wall of a classroom, now know that there is someone there who will never be too busy to listen. With the help and guidance of noted anti-bullying suicide prevention author Stan Davis, the Blue Dot message spread throughout the state and around the country. Now many districts are presenting a very similar program in their schools to send the message that every student belongs and has a place to go where their concerns will be heard.

Revised Tipline: in 2012, Mason revamped the way students, parents or community members can report a safety concern - adding the ability to submit tips online and through text. You can easily report tips on bullying, harassment, drugs, vandalism or any safety issue you're concerned about through SafeSchools Alert. When you submit a tip, be sure to use our district's identification code: 1059 in your communication.

1. Phone: 1-855-4ALERT1, ext. 1059
2. Text: Text #1059 @tip + your tip to ALERT1 (253781)
3. Email: 1059@alert1.us
4. Web: <http://1059.alert1.us>

What's Changing?

Our children are our most precious resource, and our hearts were broken by what happened in Newtown, CT at Sandy Hook Elementary.

The tragedy caused many people to think hard about how to make schools safer.

We've found that people's ideas differ, and we're working to implement some action ideas now, but many ideas will require the support and assistance of parents, other volunteers, and other organizations in the community.

If you are interested in getting involved with the District's Safe & Inviting School Committee, email contactmason@mason.k12.oh.us.



286

residents attend a
“Coffee Conversation”

In the fall of 2012, 286 of your neighbors joined Superintendent Gail Kist-Kline for informal conversations about how Mason Schools should approach a lot of changes that are coming - changes like the new national core curriculum, shifting evaluation systems for teachers and principals, and reductions in funding.

This work has just begun, and it is important that you join the conversation! Dr. Kist-Kline and members of the School Board will continue to meet and listen to your ideas throughout 2013. More voices need to be at the table to help make decisions about how Mason's schools will educate children.

If you are interested in attending or hosting a conversation, contact carsont@mason.k12.oh.us or call 513.398.0474, option 7.

conversation

CONNECTION

Mason City Schools belong to you. The importance of maintaining meaningful, direct, two-way communication between schools, parents and the community is one of the defining features of effective parent and community involvement. Stay connected to all that's happening in Mason City Schools by signing up for the district's e-newsletter at www.MasonOhioSchools.com.



Are you a Mason City Schools community member aged 60 or above? Call 398.0474 opt. 7 to get your Golden Comet Card - your ticket to free admission to most Comet arts and athletic events!





Mason City School District Board of Education

Courtney Allen, President Kevin Wise, Vice-President Marianne Culbertson, Connie Yingling, Matt Steele

211 North East St., Mason Ohio 45040 (513) 398.0474 contactmason@mason.k12.oh.us

www.MasonOhioSchools.com



Mason Early Childhood Center
Grades: PK-2
4631 Hickory Woods Drive
513-398-3741
Principal: Melissa Bly



Western Row Elementary
Grades: 2-3
755 Western Row Road
513-398-5821
Principal: Eric Messer



Mason Intermediate School
Grades: 4-6
6307 Mason-Montgomery Road
513-459-2850
Principal: Greg Sears

Mason Middle School
Grades: 7-8
6370 Mason-Montgomery Road
513-398-9035
Principal: Tonya McCall



Mason High School
Grades: 9-12
6100 Mason-Montgomery Road
513-398-5025
Principal: Mindy McCarty-Stewart

