

# School District of Marathon Community Survey

## **A wide range of course offerings for all students?**

*Marathon has always offered a sound education program for students in 4K-12. The programming in our Elementary is sound and foundational for our students. Once in High School, we offer a full slate of core curricular offerings (English, Social Studies, Math, and Science with a balanced level of elective course offerings (Physical Education, Technology Education, Business Education, Art, Vocal & Instrumental Music, Agriculture, and Foreign Language). In our core areas we also offer advanced coursework and Advanced Placement in order to fully prepare our students for College, Technical School, or the workforce. Additional courses are offered for high school via distance education and Youth Options.*

## **No split-grade classes within grades K-5 even if it costs more? The current average for this grade level is 23 students.**

*We currently have no split-grade classes at Marathon Elementary. Budget cuts could potentially have a staffing impact that might necessitate having some split-grade classes.*

*A split-grade class is one in which there are students from two different grade levels being taught in the same classroom. As an example, there might be 13 second grade and 12 third grade students in the same classroom receiving instruction at the same time from one teacher. The promise made during the last referendum that passed was to eliminate split-grade classes in our Marathon Elementary School.*

## **Strong participation in clubs, sports, music, drama, etc. for all students?**

*Marathon has had a tradition of strong participation in co-curriculars. In recent years, we have had nearly 100% participation at the middle school level and 65% participation at the high school level. Co-curricular participation is an integral part of a student's education and growth.*

## **K-12 summer school?**

*We offer a varied curriculum for our students during summer school here at Marathon. There are learning opportunities for students from Kindergarten through the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Most courses are designed to meet the various levels of interest for students and are different from courses taught during the school year. Recent courses have included work on the Prairie Garden Park, Elem. Pond project, physical activities, science related courses, weight lifting, marching band, agriculture, music and art.*

## **Summer school courses to assist students with academic deficiencies?**

*Each year we have a few students who have not met the requirements for required classes. Summer school provides an opportunity for these students to receive additional instruction in the area(s) of deficiency to help get them back on track for academic success and for graduation.*

## **New course offerings for summer school?**

*For the past few years, there has not been a significant change in the types of courses offered during our summer school session. We are hoping to find out if there is desire on the part of parents/students/community to offer other courses during the summer.*

## **Create school fees to support programs such as athletics, fine arts, and other activities?**

*Some school districts have initiated a process of assessing fees for various co-curricular activities. The reason for the fees is to have those participating in the activities help offset the cost of the program by having to pay fees. These fees would be set by the school board a district policy.*

**Consider providing transportation for summer school even if it costs more?**

*Marathon currently has good participation in summer school. However, there are always some students and families who wish to participate but do not have the opportunity because the transportation to school is an issue. If the district looks into the possibility of transportation for summer school, more students may be able to attend.*

**Maintain our current level of education knowing that we continue to face decrease in state aid?**

*This past school year the district received about \$400,000 less in state aid than the previous school year. This had a significant impact on the local property taxes. There have been indicators that we will again receive a decrease in state aid again this year. Though we do not know the amount of the decrease, indications are that it may be another quite significant amount. However, we as a district have been very frugal and cost conscious. As such, there is little in expenses that can be cut in order to maintain the current level of education for our students.*

**Add K-12 after-school programming with a focus on academic support? The program would start immediately after school and end at approximately 4:45 p.m.**

*This question is two-fold. Annually, we receive questions about the possibility of having an after-school program to assist students with academic support. This support can come in the form of personnel and/or volunteers staying after school to provide tutorial support for students. However, this may also bring additional cost. Secondly, there has been talk that there will be changes in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (recently known as No Child Left Behind) legislation on the federal level. Our understanding is that one of the changes would require school districts to offer after-school programming.*

**Add K-12 after school academic support programming with bus transportation provided?**

*With the possibility of having an after-school program for educational support for students, it is important to know if this would come with the provision of transportation for those students who would not be able to attend without it.*

**Help provide academic opportunities for all resident school-age children, including home based education students?**

*Our district, just like many others, has families who choose to provide the education for their children at home. Additionally, there are many families who have their children attend private school. We have a very positive relationship with our private school, St. Mary's, and have all teachers in the Marathon District take part in various in-service and professional development opportunities as well as providing special education programming assistance. The district could proactively approach and work with our home-based education families with academic opportunities.*

**Offer online class experiences for students at the senior high level?**

*Colleges are providing many classes in an online format. With this type of programming, it may be significantly important for local high schools to do more in providing the opportunity for students to experience an online class format. Learning through an online format takes more self-discipline while maintaining course rigor and content. Our students will no doubt experience this type of learning after high school, and we would like to know if you want us to do more by providing this type of learning opportunity.*

**Begin offering online course or distance education courses as a means of generating revenue?**

*Currently, our students in high school can take courses in the distance education lab. This two-way interactive class format allows our students to take a course from another school that we might not otherwise be able to offer. These classes do come at a cost. There is also the thought that we might have teachers begin teaching more classes in either the distance education or online format. Providing this type of class offering with Marathon as an originating site would bring revenue from the school sites who choose to take our classes.*

### **Ensure all students are prepared for continued education beyond high school?**

*Research has indicated that the days of training and schooling for a single career are over. The research also shows that our current students will have an average of seven occupation changes during their lifetime. This would also indicate that it will be more important for schools to ensure that students are prepared for a lifetime of continued education.*

### **Ensure that all students are prepared to take Advanced Placement classes at the high school?**

*To prepare for a future that is rich in education opportunities for our students, focus on schooling after high school is important for our current students. Advanced Placement classes are high level classes which are aligned to specific curriculum and competencies no matter the school where the student is taking the class. Students who complete an Advanced Placement class have an opportunity to take a test through the College Board and upon scoring well enough may receive credit and advanced standing in college. (This is different than the Youth Options program where students are enrolled in college level classes while in high school and receive dual high school and college credit.)*

### **Send online progress reports for middle school and senior high students instead of traditional paper progress reports?**

*As a means of saving on district postage and paper expenses, it may be possible for the district to go paperless for student progress reports. In this type of situation, progress notices for students in middle and high school would be sent securely via email to parents. Currently, parents are able to access their student's grade and attendance information via the internet by having a login and password. This system would necessitate parent designation of an email address where this information might be sent electronically.*

### **(Considering we are currently one of the lowest per pupil spending districts in our CESA)...hold the line on tax increases regardless of how many programs may be cut or how large class sizes would become?**

*Marathon has typically ranked as one of the three lowest per-pupil spending districts in our Cooperative Education Service Agency area. This is truly an indicator of our holding the line on spending. The current economic situation of decreased state revenues and consequently state school aid reduction is based for the most part on student enrollment and equalize land valuation. We currently have a valuation per pupil amount that is larger than many other districts in our CESA which ultimately correlates to less state aid. This situation of decreasing aid results in choices of cuts to programming and/or drastically increase class sizes to offset the loss of state aid, or maintaining programming by shifting the state aid loss to local taxpayers.*

### **Increase taxes gradually over time, if necessary, in order to provide the resources and programs needed to maintain our current quality of education for all students?**

*Again, we have always been a cost conscious district. We also provide a very quality education for our students. Through a process of limited cuts in programming and working within our revenue sources, it may be possible for the district to maintain most of our programming efforts through smaller and gradual increases in taxes. We always looking to find places to save or reduce spending based on finding other efficiencies within the district.*

### **Provide free access for district residents to our Wellness Center?**

*It has been suggested that the Wellness Center was provided by our community and as such should be free to district residents. This may be possible by changing the staffing of our facility. If the district works to train all who might utilize our Wellness Center in properly maintaining and cleaning the areas they use, we may be able to save on the staffing costs, eliminate the membership fee, and increase the hours of access for the Center.*