



— M A Q U O K E T A —
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Schools prepare for year to begin

By **KELLY GERLACH**

Students in the Maquoketa Community School District hit the books next week, and staff is busy preparing for the onslaught.

School begins Thursday, Aug. 19, for students at Maquoketa and Sacred Heart Schools. Students will be dismissed at 1:30 p.m. both days.

Cardinal Elementary

One of the most significant changes at Cardinal Elementary School this year – at least in students' opinions – is the new playground equipment. The new age-appropriate and handicap-accessible equipment was installed July 30 on the playpad behind the school.

"Bev Brauer. It was her dream to see that playground out there," said Principal Joan Bollman, noting that a committee of teachers and parents diligently researched playgrounds to find one suitable for as many as possible.

About 30 volunteers, not including the high school football team, erected the playground set. Area contractors donated their labor, trucks, and tools, which helped reduce installation time by about one working day.

A crew continues installing the black rubber tiling that cushions the children as they walk or tumble around the equipment. Barring inclement weather, that project should be finished the day before classes begin.

To pay for the new equipment, the district is selling the rubber tiles for \$25 each. Interested people can stop by Cardinal or Osterhaus Pharmacy to obtain a form to purchase a tile. Further fundraisers include a fall garage sale at the school and a school-compiled cookbook that is on sale now.

Bollman admitted that students "are going to go berserk that first day" when they see the equipment. However, education is still first and foremost at the school.

Cardinal teachers implement a new math curriculum this year. The program focuses on problem solving and logical thinking.

"It's an opportunity for the kids to figure things out and explain what they were thinking as they found the answer," Bollman explained.

She said instead of teaching the students tricks to solve a problem, the new curriculum allows the students to solve a problem in a way that makes sense to them. Students will verbally explain how they derived their answer.

The correct answer is still required; however, students will use methods that make sense to them to obtain that answer. Thus, they will more easily remember how to solve the problem.

Staff from Cardinal and Briggs worked together to select the most beneficial math curriculum for the students, ensuring it correlates well into the Iowa Core Curriculum.

Teachers continue their commitment to Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). As a team, they analyze students' data and use that to determine which students require more help, how to teach differently.

"Effective instruction is the goal," the principal said. "We study how we can do it differently – not do more of it, but do it differently. What amazes me here is all the teachers' desire to do better."

Cardinal expects to add a few new students this year. Bollman estimated about 12 new students registered for classes this fall and about six left the district to date.

One early retirement and one resignation left Cardinal with no secretary in the main office. Ashley Wing now handles all the secretarial duties for the school. Her first day of work was the first day of school registration.

"It will definitely be a transition from two secretaries to one and (Wing) being new," Bollman



MSP photo by Kelly Gerlach

Paperwork, paperwork, paperwork is all new Cardinal Elementary School secretary Ashley Wing sees as she familiarizes herself with the inner workings of Maquoketa elementary. Assisting in the background is Nan Dyas, who retired from Briggs Elementary School at the end of the 2009-10 school year.

said.

A new Title I teacher will be hired. The district received word at the end of July about how much money it would receive, providing money for a Title I teacher at Cardinal. Bollman said there are about 40 or so applicants for the position, which will be filled before school starts.

Rhonda Sterner joins Cardinal staff as a new teacher's associate in preschool.

Cardinal continues its fourth year of Positive Behaviors, a program that rewards students for good deeds.

■ **SCHOOL,**
Please turn to page 14

Street project settlement proposed to city council

By **DOUGLAS MELVOLD**

The Maquoketa City Council will be asked next week to approve a proposed settlement with a paving contractor over work that wasn't completed as called for in the project plans.

The council's Street Committee last week reached a proposed settlement with the contractor in which the city would keep what would have been the final payment of \$14,295 for the project.

The issue involves the reconstruction and resurfacing of South Jones Avenue between Eddy Street and West Platt Street, which was done two years ago.

A section of the concrete street measuring 800 feet long by 4 feet wide on the west side of the street was paved without steel reinforcing rods embedded in the concrete as called for in the plans.

The reinforcing rods, or rebar, are designed to tie the paving sections together to prevent the sections from becoming uneven due to temperature changes and the freezing and thaw cycles over the years.

Horsfield Construction Co. of Epworth was the contractor on the \$285,901 project.

Matt Horsfield, representing the contractor, acknowledged the error and said he wanted to "make it right with the city."

After a lengthy discussion Horsfield and the committee reached a proposed settlement in which the city would keep what would have been

the final payment of \$14,295, or 5 percent of the contract, called the retainage.

If the problems are encountered with the portion of the street in question, the Horsfield firm will repair the street for the retainage amount.

Horsfield explained that there were three options in dealing with the problem.

One would involve repairing the street by removing the existing paving, installing the rebar and repaving that portion of the street.

Another solution would be to apply what Horsfield called a "sew joint" tying the sections of the street together.

The third option was to leave the street as is and compensate the city.

Committee members Todd Mang and Don Schwenker at first argued in favor of having the contractor repair the street and install the rebar.

"It should be replaced and we should get what we paid for," Mang said.

Horsfield said, however, he didn't think the lack of rebar would hurt the street. He said his firm has constructed many streets without rebar that have not had maintenance problems.

John Wandsnider of IIW Engineers and Surveyors of Dubuque, the project engineer, agreed that in all likelihood, the lack of rebar would not cause problems.

■ **STREET,**
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