

Headlight

Written by the students of Marblehead High School for our school and community
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Coming from Charter

Alex Kerai
Headlight Staff, Freshman

(This is the final part of Alex's series on his transition to Marblehead High School.)

The first week of school was confusing. Question: How many different ways are there to get to Biology? Answer: There are too many. You can go behind the theater, you can take the main stairs, you can take the stairs right next to Foreign Language, you can take the stairs near the gym, and there are probably others I haven't even found. That's one challenge of the building. Then there's the schedule. I, at Charter, was used to having set schedule written on the whiteboard (French first, then Language Arts...). Here, there is a four day, block dropping, rotating schedule. Luckily it's already written out for us. It's a nice idea, but it gets confusing for me. Coupled with the massive building (in comparison to Charter) and I have a complicated fiasco on my hands.

I got used to the schedule quickly. Then came the building. As long as I had some idea of where I was going, I would be fine. I went to the same classes, and only had to know those rooms, so that made it easier as well. Five minutes transition didn't seem like enough at first. The stairwells would be crowded and I'd have to run through the halls and make sure I didn't get lost on my way. And if I wanted to drop books off, I'd have to make sure I was going either to lunch, World Cultures, or English. Those weren't very frequent visits. Although, if I did forget something, I could get a pass, those were also (at times) hard to get. Teachers did not like it if you left their class. But passes did work. I could leave class to get something or use one to prove I had a reason to be late.

However, I like all of my classes a lot, so why would I want to leave them or be late? I also think that I have

some great teachers who teach my classes. All of the teachers that I have make my classes interesting and at times very entertaining. They made sure that learning wasn't boring, but it is something that you would be interested in. Most of them did things that may be called unconventional but in reality, influence the outcome of a high school student's continuation with high school (sound effects, hats and Gilligan, slideshows, miter saws, build-an-atom sets, tangential conversations, and vicious dog pictures). I believe that in liking high school (as I do) you must have good teachers and classes, which I am lucky enough to have.

Progress

The first week of high school flew by, and the second week came and went. After a while, it felt like I'd been in school for more than two weeks (more like two months). But in that time, I've made some progress. I've become reacquainted with some old friends, and made some new ones. I've been enjoying every single one of my classes and paying attention at every quiz (there have been five in these weeks). Each day the Daily Bulletin is posted with listings of clubs, and I check it constantly for something that might interest me, but all the ones that do, I've found. So, the weeks have flown by, and while writing this I see high school through a new perspective. In the few weeks since school has started, I've been checking out some of the clubs. At Charter we had enrichment, a time everyday after school where we would take forty-five minutes and just have fun with an extra-curricular activity. It could be baking or a musical (or even a study), but every one of them served a purpose. I've immersed myself in the clubs at Marblehead High, already a part of the Headlight newspaper (for which I am writing), the Contours literary magazine, Mock Trial, and I have joined the Jazz Ensemble. All of them have welcomed me with open arms.

Closing

High school is an experience. It is one that shouldn't mar the rest of your life; instead it should open the doors to greater knowledge and experience. That's what every high school should strive for and do what Marblehead High does perfectly. It's amazing the amount of opportunities that are present to everyone at Marblehead High School; the amount of clubs, sports, fine arts productions and everything in between are available for anyone at the school to do.

Coming from Charter, what seemed would be a difficult transition was, in retrospect, quite simple. There were drastic change all around; there were the schedule and the building, clubs and people, but they were easily handled. If I had a question I could ask anyone: peers, teachers, or my mentor, and they would have all gladly answered. That is the type of community that is built at Marblehead High School; it's the type of feeling that you want to get anywhere you go. You want to know that you can learn and have fun, that you can make friends and do whatever you'd like to (in terms of clubs, classes, and sports). Marblehead High School opened a window of opportunity, which can only be closed with the completion of everything there; which is near impossible.

Charter opened doors for me as a student, and as I went on, I reminisced of how I could do without Charter. It didn't seem right. I'd been there for five years and they were great years. All of my friends from Charter thought that the transition was going to be harder and I told them just to stick together and go with the flow. That's my advice to anyone going anywhere new with someone who they might know: stick together and go with the flow. It worked for me. I already feel like I've been at Marblehead High for a year and a half, and I haven't even begun to explore all of the opportunities available. Luckily it's only the second month, and we're just getting started...

An Introduction to Dr. Maass

Dan Rosenberg
Headlight Staff, Junior

Dr. Gregory Maass met with me on the Tuesday when monsoon-like rains flooded Marblehead and caused major flooding and a commuting nightmare. It was Maass' first big weather disaster, and he was happy with how it went. The intensity of the rain had surprised him, and he had only a short timeframe in which to make a decision about delaying the schools' opening. He attempted to make a two-hour delay, but many parents only got the message after dropping their kids off at school. Still, Dr. Maass says he was very impressed and proud of the way the students and faculty handled themselves; they kept their heads and managed to have a normal school day.

Gregory Maass didn't want to be a school superintendent when he was younger; he wanted to be a baseball player and was recruited to play shortstop for the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. When he was cut from his college team, he decided to use some of his leadership talents from on the field, and apply them to getting an education degree. A natural leader, Dr. Maass says, "All the things I learned from

sports, I applied to being a student." After college, in 1975, he began teaching in a local elementary school, where he was directed to the career path that he follows even today. The school's principal noticed his strong leadership talents and suggested that Maass become an administrator. Eventually Dr. Maass became a principal, and in 1994, he finally became a superintendent of schools.

Dr. Maass worked in Green Bay as superintendent for a long time. He was in charge of the district when the Packers won Super Bowl XLV and says it was amazing to be in Green Bay at the time. In fact, on the day of the Packers' victory parade, Dr. Maass actually had to close schools! The Green Bay Packers' players and staff were well connected to the public schools in the city and made a very large impact on the students. Maass met many team members through coordinating events with public schools.

Over time, he decided he wanted a different, smaller scene to work in. An executive recruiting firm contacted Maass to tell him about the Marblehead opening, and he applied for the job. Dr. Maass says that after visiting Marblehead, talking

with the School Committee members, school administrators and townspeople, he was ready to make the move. Happy with his decision to go East, he was "looking forward to going to a place that cared about education, and still had its own identity."

It hasn't been entirely easy to switch into Marblehead, though. First off, Massachusetts has different laws governing schools than Wisconsin does. Maass has been poring over the books in order to learn all of the laws of his new state. But the most challenging obstacle for Maass? New England traffic. In Wisconsin, Maass says, the traffic and roads all go only in the four cardinal directions. Here, however, the roads go everywhere, and it's very easy to become confused and get lost.

Dr. Maass brings a lot to the table in Marblehead. He is a self described "systems guy" and wants to improve Marblehead schools by making more content-based curriculum, improving leadership, and making Marblehead into a problem-solving community, where students can master different subjects on multiple levels, and show their independence. Dr. Maass believes that he applies this to himself as well, "if you have a concern

or question, come talk to me, don't talk to others, come directly to me." He wants to ensure better communication between parents, students, and staff.

Maass has already been making waves in Marblehead High School. He approved an \$88,000 matching grant to install a security system in the school. Maass wants to keep the high school safe and secure, and ensure that no one leaves or enters the school who shouldn't. He says that one can never have enough staff, and the cameras that will be installed will help with the security of the school. He guarantees that no cameras will be in classrooms or bathrooms. Maass also wants to monitor the activities outside the school at night. He has done a nighttime walk around, and has noticed lights punched out and graffiti tagging on the walls. To Dr. Maass, it's not only about security, but also about protecting Marblehead's investment in the building. In his words, "It's about safety, it's about securing the building, and it's about protecting our investment in the school."

ATTENTION ALL SENIORS!

CLASS DUES!

Deadlines for \$25 payments:

-November 1

-December 1

-January 1

The total for Senior Dues is \$100.

Bring checks made out to

"Town of Marblehead" to Mrs. Clough

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