

PRESS RELEASE

February 4, 2008

Contact: Kristin Tank, MAISD, (231) 767-7263

First ever early kindergarten enrollment offered in county

In February, parents of children who will attend kindergarten in Muskegon County will have the opportunity to early enroll their children for the 2008-09 school year. The new kindergarten early enrollment option will give parents more time to iron out busy fall schedules and anticipate child care needs. Parents will learn whether their school offers morning, afternoon, or full-day kindergarten. All schools are offering tours, description of kindergarten classroom options, time to ask questions, and refreshments. Assessments or evaluations for individual student placements will take place at a later time. It will also be a time for parents to connect with their neighborhood public school for other services including on-site child care, preschool programs for siblings, adult education, and other parenting supports. Many schools are already planning additional events to connect future kindergartners with their new classmates before school starts in the fall.

Beginning Monday, February 11, 2008, through Thursday, February 28, 2008, public schools throughout Muskegon County are hosting a variety of parent information nights, kindergarten kick-offs, and parent-child fun nights. Fruitport, Holton, Montague, Muskegon, Oakridge, and Ravenna are encouraging future kindergartners to attend the February event with their parents or guardians. Mona Shores, Muskegon Heights, North Muskegon, and Orchard View are asking for parents and guardians to make it a "night out" without their children so they can better focus on the information provided. Reeths-Puffer and Whitehall schools are offering free child care so children can play while parents attend their session. All February enrollment event dates, times, and locations are posted on www.choosepublicschools.org. There are also links to information about each school district, links to school websites, and tips on helping children get ready for kindergarten.

To enroll parents are asked to bring their child's birth certificate, immunization records, and proof of residence. Parents are asked to submit any hearing and vision test results they may have as well. All school districts have made their enrollment forms available in advance at the school office or on their websites. Parents who cannot attend an event in February, but would like to enroll can call their neighborhood public school office to sign up.

Most of the expected 2,366 kindergarten class of 2008-09 are already connected with the public schools. Currently 1,546 preschool-age children are enrolled in state and federally funded preschool programs within Muskegon County, while 368 parents pay tuition for their children to attend preschool in a public school setting. An additional 596 children between birth to age five receive services that are designed to meet their special needs.

Oakridge **February 12, 2008**
Kindergarten Round-Up for Parents and
Future Kindergartners at 4:30 - 6:30 p.m.
Oakridge Early Childhood Center, 1050 Carr Road, Muskegon
Call (231) 788-5283

Orchard View **February 28, 2008**
Kindergarten Kick-Off for Parents at 6:00 p.m.
Orchard View Early Elementary, 2820 MacArthur, Muskegon
Call (231) 760-1350

Ravenna **February 26, 2008**
Kindergarten Round-Up for Parents and
Future Kindergartners at 6:00 p.m.
Beechnau Elementary, 12322 Stafford, Ravenna
Call (231) 853-2258

Reeths-Puffer **February 12, 2008**
Kindergarten Round-Up with FREE Child Care
Come anytime between 5:30 and 7:00 p.m.
Central Elementary, 1807 West Giles Road, Muskegon
Reeths-Puffer Elementary, 1404 North Getty Street, Muskegon
McMillan Elementary, 2885 Hyde Park Road, Muskegon
Twin Lake Elementary, 3175 Fifth Street, Twin Lake
Call (231) 719-3104

Whitehall **February 28, 2008**
Kindergarten Round-Up with FREE Child Care at 7:00 p.m.
Shoreline Elementary, 205 Market Street, Whitehall
Call (231) 893-1050

###