



MAISD News

a quarterly publication of the Muskegon Area Intermediate School District

May 2010



IN THIS ISSUE

- Summer Promises Exceptional Student Programs and Powerful Workshops
- Adobe Connect
- Young Entrepreneurs
- On The Cover
- MACTC and Bunker Middle School - Greening Up the Neighborhood
- MACTC Summer Fun
- Wesley School Principal to Retire After Legendary Career
- Convert Books to Digital this Summer
- Local Collaboration in Head Start
- Case for Investment in Early Childhood
- Teaching American History - PD Leads to Sustained Collaboration
- Reinvention of Maple Ridge
- Creating Preventative Educational Cultures
- You Can Win with Co-Teaching
- Response to Intervention
- SB-CEUs - Major Changes

Summer Promises Exceptional Student Programs & Powerful Workshops

A letter from the MAISD Superintendent, Susan W. Meston, Ph.D.

Hold onto your hat – this summer will be a busy one at the MAISD! We will be serving students and school staff with exciting summer programs and powerful professional development workshops that promise to positively impact student learning.

Summer workshop topics range from writing fiction to environmental science. Educators can register online now for workshops on reading, differentiated instruction, early elementary economic literacy, high school finances, social studies, behavior management, epilepsy and more. In addition, sessions on SB-CEU policies, requirements, and procedures will be offered for school staff.

In early August PEAK's eight-day *Teaching for Excellence Summer Institute* for K-12 educators, co-sponsored by Reeths-Puffer Schools, will again be offered. PEAK is well known for increasing teacher effectiveness and student achievement in schools. In mid-August, the MAISD will introduce a new *Co-teaching Summer Institute* for K-12 educators and offer the annual *TLC (Teaching, Learning, and Creating) Early Childhood Conference*. This year's TLC conference will focus on communication and has been expanded to include helpful courses for those serving children birth through age three as well as those serving three- through five-year-olds. Educators will have the rare opportunity to learn

firsthand from Dr. Louis Rossetti, internationally known expert and author of the Rossetti Infant-Toddler Language Scale.

Students from throughout Muskegon County will benefit from two exceptional summer programs as well. The Muskegon Area Career Tech Center's **Summer Fun** program for incoming 6th, 7th, and 8th graders will take place during the last two weeks of June. The **WINGS** program, **Widening Interests through New experiences for Gifted Students**, for 1st through 6th graders, will occur during the last two weeks of July at Muskegon Community College. Both Summer Fun and WINGS provide hands-on, interactive instruction and plenty of course choices.

Let's all make the most of our summer months. Read a good book, enjoy our beautiful lakeshore, and take advantage of the many learning opportunities that surround us. Please visit our website at www.muskegonisd.org to learn more.



Susan W. Meston, Ph.D.

Susan Meston

>>>>> Adobe Connect <<<<<

As technology advances, the ability to connect and collaborate online is becoming more readily available and more in demand. This type of online collaboration can allow educators from near and far to work together without leaving the office; and with advancement of video conferencing capabilities, these types of online collaborative groups can still really meet "face-to-face."

To encourage more online collaboration and to help reduce the strain on travel budgets, the MAISD Technology Services Department has invested in a new product called Adobe Connect. Adobe Connect is web conferencing software that allows for the secure sharing of presentations and multimedia right from a desktop computer. This can be shared with small or large audiences online with participants simply using a web browser to connect and



without the need to download any special software. Anyone securely joining an online meeting through Adobe Connect can hear and see information being presented, can see other participants through the use of web cameras, and can even become the presenter during the meeting, if there is information for them to share with the group. It is almost like being at the meeting in person.

MAISD Technology Services has begun to use this software for meetings that involve partners throughout the state, helping them attend without traveling. This has made attendance more convenient for all involved. This type of meeting structure has proven effective. As we develop more skills in conducting these meetings, we will be able to provide more opportunities to facilitate important collaboration online for all of our local districts.

submitted by Randy Lindquist, Director of Instructional and Technology Services, 231-767-7229 or rlindqui@muskegonisd.org

MACTC Students Recognized as "Young Entrepreneurs"

submitted by Kristin Tank, Public Information Officer, 231-767-7263 or ktank@muskegonisd.org

In March 2010, Muskegon Area Career Tech Center students from five area high schools were recognized as "Young Entrepreneurs" during a luncheon at the Muskegon Country Club. The



students were honored for the business plans they created and presented to members of The Chamber of Commerce Entrepreneur Advisory Council. They shared the spotlight with real-life nominees for the Chamber's annual "Entrepreneur Award."

Ravenna High School Seniors Dion Ferrier and Chad Townsend earned the Chamber's first ever "Young Entrepreneur Award." Each will collect \$500 in scholarships provided by Comerica Bank, West Michigan Power Cleaning, and Baker College. Dion Ferrier is an Internet, Network & Security Technologies student, and Chad Townsend is in the Health Services Program at the MACTC. The two presented their concept for a high-energy social environment that generates excitement for (video) gaming. Other students to complete the rigorous program were Savanna Bankhead of Mona Shores, Cody Morey and Matt Tarte of Orchard View, DeQuarius White of Muskegon, and Blake Whittington of Whitehall.

All participants were required to submit a detailed business plan using a

provided rubric, spend a minimum of one hour in a mentoring session with a SCORE (Service Core of Retired Executives) volunteer, and make a formal presentation to a panel of judges. SCORE is a local group of volunteers

dedicated to helping small business owners form and grow their businesses. Volunteers worked closely with the students, providing insight into the business world and sharing their experience and advice.

Glenn Rank, Vice President of Business Banking for Comerica Bank and a volunteer judge, said the first year of the young entrepreneur contest was an absolute success. "By promoting entrepreneurship to our young people, we are taking the first steps needed toward building a vibrant local economy. These teens impressed all of us with their energy, knowledge, and well-thought-out plans. They are all winners," said Rank.

Dawn Johnson, Muskegon Area Chamber of Commerce Vice President of Member Services, expects the award to be offered again next year and hopes more students will participate. "Because the Muskegon Area Career Tech Center enrolls students from all 17 area high schools and offers entrepreneurship education, it was the perfect partner to help us launch this award," said Johnson.

On The Cover



"Young Entrepreneurs" contest participants with MAISD Superintendent Dr. Susan Meston, MACTC Principal Mike Carpenter and School to Careers Consultant Jean Naramore.

Back row - Cody Morey, Matt Tarte, Mike Carpenter, Dion Ferrier, Dr. Susan Meston
Front row - Jean Naramore, Blake Whittington, DeQuarius White, Chad Townsend, Savanna Bankhead

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MAISD Mission Statement

The mission of the Muskegon Area Intermediate School District (MAISD) is to provide the leadership, programs and services which complement and enhance the efforts of constituent school districts in extending educational opportunities to all students.

It is the policy of the MAISD that no staff member, candidate for employment, program participant, or recipient of services shall experience discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, creed or ancestry, age, gender, height, weight, marital status, disability, or genetic information. The MAISD is an equal opportunity employer. Inquiries related to issues of discrimination on the basis of disability should be directed to the Assistant Director for Special Education at (231) 767-7249. All other discrimination inquiries or requests for special accommodations to participate in a program, event, or activity should be directed to the Human Resources Program Director at (231) 767-7213.



CTC and Bunker School Join Forces for Healthy Living

submitted by Joe Howes, MACTC Assistant Principal
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Students from the Muskegon Area Career Tech Center's (MACTC) Landscape and Greenhouse Management and Construction Trades programs are working with Bunker Middle School and several local organizations on a gardening project. The project has several objectives:

- Application of academic concepts in an authentic learning project
- Introduce productive and healthy hobbies/interests in an effort to keep kids off drugs and on a healthy diet
- Stimulate pride in the Bunker campus and the beautification of the surrounding neighborhood
- Stimulate interest in backyard gardening and local organic food production
- Help provide consumer awareness about quality produce
- Develop self-reliance and economic benefit by growing one's own food

Students from Bunker are creating several raised gardens on the school campus. Bunker's principal, Paul Kurdziel, has assembled an impressive

group of local people and businesses to make this dream come alive. Lowe's Home Improvement Center provided the building material from their "Toolbox" grant fund. The Seed Savers Exchange has donated the seeds for the project from their "Herman's Garden" grant project. Financial consideration and donations for supplies and materials, such as soil and plant starting components, were provided by Barry's Greenhouse and Wagenmaker's Nursery. The Muskegon County Health Department helped out with information/education on healthy lifestyles and substance abuse prevention. The Big Red Ed. Fund, through the Muskegon Community Foundation, is providing the funding for materials and supplies not donated.

The MACTC Construction Trades class cut and drilled the lumber so the younger students can easily assemble the garden containers. The Landscape and Greenhouse Management class spent two days helping Bunker students with preparing soil and planting seeds, and the seeds are presently germinating at the MACTC greenhouse. 2 Go and Grow



MACTC students Charles Bradfield from Whitehall and Meranda Stone from Orchard View plant seeds with students from Bunker Middle School.

is providing organic liquid fertilizer and application advice to keep the project growing.

Project participants seldom think about the academic work they are doing, but academic opportunities and applications abound in a project like this. Biology/botany, economics, health and nutrition, and math and measuring illustrate only a few of the possibilities.

Let's hope this is the beginning of something big. You can support those who have helped get this project off the ground by contacting Paul Kurdziel at Bunker Middle School, and we encourage you to get involved in your own gardening project, leading to a healthier lifestyle.



Muskegon Area Career Tech Center Makes Summer Memorable

The Muskegon Area Career Tech Center (MACTC) is encouraging middle school students to do more with their summer this year by taking part in the Summer Fun programs at the MACTC. Summer Fun is an opportunity for middle school students, incoming sixth- through eighth-graders, to explore 16 different career areas normally offered to high school juniors and seniors. Students can choose to explore automotive, construction, commercial art, early childhood

education, public safety, culinary arts, the medical field, electronics and computer technology, printing, horticulture, sheet metal fabrication, alternative energy, working with metal, finances, science, and welding.

Morning and afternoon sessions are available, four days a week, during the weeks of June 14-17, and June 21-24, 2010. Each class costs \$25 per week. Lunch is available for an additional \$20 per week to students who attend both a morning and an

afternoon class, or students may bring their lunch.

Morning classes run from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., while afternoon classes are offered from noon to 3:00 p.m. Classes are available on a first-come, first-served basis. More information, including a brochure with class descriptions and registration form, is available online at www.muskegonisd.org/ctc-new/middleschool/ or by calling Toni Schillaci at 231-767-3600.

submitted by Stephanie Hoekenga, MACTC Student Outreach/Resource Specialist, 231-767-3613 or shoekeng@muskegonisd.org

Wesley School Principal to Retire After Legendary Career

By Kristin Tank, Public Information Officer 231-767-7263 or ktank@muskegonisd.org



As the 2009-10 school year comes to a close, so will the legendary career of Sue Ochs, Wesley School Principal. Mrs. Ochs has led the center-based program in Muskegon County for 35 years. She has guided the education of students with disabilities during a time of sweeping change and landmark legislation including the *Education for*

All Handicapped Children Act of 1974 (now known as the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*), the *Americans with Disabilities Act* of 1990, *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2002, and numerous Medicaid reforms.

Her teaching career began before Wesley School as we know it today even existed. Muskegon Public Schools initially hired Mrs. Ochs in 1972 as a Trainable Mentally Impaired (TMI) teacher, a position prompted by the *Michigan Mandatory Special Education Act* of 1971. The University of Michigan graduate excelled at her work and in 1975 became one of two Program Coordinators employed by the MAISD. In 1985 she was named Principal of what is now known as Wesley School. Today about 200 Muskegon County students from 2-26 years of age attend the school. To them, Mrs. Ochs is the only principal they have ever known.

“Mrs. Ochs has been a strong and compassionate leader throughout her career,” said MAISD Superintendent

Susan Meston. “Colleagues and parents agree that she demonstrates a tremendous respect, love, and support for the Wesley students and their families. She and her staff have a mutual admiration for one another. She has ensured they are well trained and able to provide the most current and effective approaches to the educational, physical, and emotional needs of the students,” Dr. Meston added. “Under Mrs. Ochs’ leadership, Wesley students have had opportunities that may have seemed out of reach for those with disabilities. Service projects, study trips, sporting and social events, work and volunteer experiences are topped off each year by a dinner and prom like no other,” said Dr. Meston.

Recognized as an expert in the state, Mrs. Ochs earned the *Michigan Association of Administrators of Special Education Outstanding Leadership Award* in 1995. She has also been a long-time leader of SLIP (Supervisors of Low Incidence Programs), a statewide group for administrators of programs like those at Wesley School. Over the years Mrs. Ochs has worked with the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to better incorporate school improvement and accreditation into center programs. In addition, MDE calls on Mrs. Ochs to review and approve requests for state aid for students placed in out-of-county facilities. Local district leaders seek her counsel, as well, regarding guidance for student placement. In 2001, staff selected her as the *MAISD Outstanding Service Award* winner for Wesley School. Her leadership has made a long-lasting impact on the lives of many.

PLAN AHEAD

submitted by Jim Kauppila,
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As the 2009-10 school year begins its descent, it is time to consider what books need conversion to a digital format for your students with print disabilities. The MAISD Special Education Department will convert materials at no charge to your school district. The services include scanning and conversion of books to digital text, conversion of existing cassette tape-based materials to digital audio, and a limited service for converting trade books to MP3 audio using volunteer readers. You must submit a copy of the book when making a request. In the case of text or trade book conversion, the copy will be destroyed as part of the scanning process. Submit your books as soon as possible to ensure delivery before the start of the 2010-11 school year.

Books or questions should be directed to Jim Kauppila at the MAISD Educational Services Center. If you would like to become a volunteer reader, please contact Jim directly.

You may peruse our collection at <http://bit.ly/9iDQJb>



Early Childhood

NEWS



Head Start of Muskegon/Oceana:

An Example of Local Consolidation & Collaboration

submitted by Stuart Jones, Program Director for Head Start
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Head Start of Muskegon/Oceana, operated by the Muskegon Area Intermediate School District since 2000, is a prime example of local school districts coming together to provide valuable educational programming in a cost-efficient model. Serving nearly 1,000 three- and four-year-old preschool children throughout Muskegon and Oceana Counties, the program is overseen by the MAISD in partnership with seven local school districts: Fruitport Community Schools, Hart Public Schools, Muskegon Public Schools, Muskegon Heights Public Schools, Orchard View Schools, Shelby Public Schools, and White Lake Area Community Education. These districts serve children from all 16 Muskegon and Oceana school districts.

“Operating as a consortium is far more cost efficient than if each school

district in these counties ran their own Head Start program,” states Dawn Wood, CPA, who serves as Head Start’s Financial Consultant at the MAISD. Management, purchasing, regulatory compliance, and many staff development costs are centralized at the MAISD. Furthermore, a cooperative countywide busing program is provided by Pioneer Resources for Muskegon County children enrolled in Head Start.

Local school districts participating in this delegate model oversee the day-to-day operations which include 31 classrooms throughout the two counties. Several of the school districts serving as delegate agencies serve across school district boundaries. For instance, White Lake Area Community Education is responsible for serving children in five northern Muskegon County districts, while Orchard View

Schools provides Head Start services to Orchard View, Oakridge, and Ravenna families. Hart Public Schools and Fruitport Community Schools also provide services to multiple districts.

The collaboration and partnerships formed during the past ten years of operating Head Start have resulted in a strong program recognized for quality and efficiency. This model has saved much in terms of cost and administrative time, allowing for more dedication of time and financial resources to the Head Start classrooms and supportive services for families.

Head Start is a free, federally-funded preschool and child development program. Recently, Early Head Start was launched to serve children ages birth to three and pregnant women. Recruitment and enrollment is ongoing. Parents may call 231-767-8300 for more information.



The Case for Investing in Muskegon County's Youngest Generation

submitted by Stuart Jones, Program Director for Head Start
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Recently the 40 members of the Great Start Collaborative of Muskegon County released a “White Paper on the Critical Need for Early Investment in Children and Families.” With much state and national policy and budget discussion on where to invest our limited public resources, the time has never been better to make the case that our youngest generation needs investment in order to produce long-term beneficial results for all of society.

Early Investment – the Earlier the Better

The research on early brain structure and development is both consistent and compelling: The brain develops rapidly during the early years of life; the actions of adults caring and interacting with the child profoundly influence the child’s development; and the stage for success or struggle in life is well-established during these critical years.

Early investment has been shown to be a cost-effective strategy with positive long-term societal outcomes. Dr. James Heckman, Nobel Laureate in Economics and University of Chicago professor, has concluded the following regarding investing in young children: “Early interventions promote schooling, reduce crime, promote workforce productivity and reduce teenage pregnancy. These interventions are estimated to have high benefit-cost ratios and rates of return. Early interventions have much higher returns than such other later interventions as reduced pupil-teacher ratios, public job training, convict rehabilitation programs, tuition subsidies or expenditures on police.”

Cost of Doing Nothing

What would the future look like without investing in our youngest children? In other words, what is the cost of doing nothing? The Rand Corporation studied a wide array of early childhood development programs throughout the United States and across a multitude of modalities. They found that for each positive child outcome affected by these programs there was a corresponding monetary benefit to the public.

Monetary Savings (or Costs) from Affected Child Outcomes

Effect on Child Outcome	Benefits (or Costs) to Government
Reduced child maltreatment	Lower costs to child welfare system
Reduced incidence of teen childbearing	Lower costs for public health care system and social welfare programs
Reduced grade repetition	Fewer years spent in K-12 education
Reduced use of special education	Lower costs for special education
Increased labor force participation and earnings in adulthood	Increased tax revenue
Reduced use of welfare and other means-tested programs	Reduced administrative costs for social welfare programs; reduced welfare-program transfer payments
Reduced crime and contact with criminal justice system	Lower monetary costs for the criminal justice system
Improved pregnancy outcomes	Lower medical costs from fewer low birth weight babies

SOURCE: Adapted from Lynn A. Karoly, M. Rebecca Kilburn, and Jill S. Cannon, *Early Childhood Interventions: Proven Results, Future Promise*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, MG-341-PNC, 2005, Table 4.1.

Muskegon County has a track record investing in our children. The Great Start Collaborative of Muskegon, formed in 2006, has membership of over 40 schools, agencies and individuals. The Great Start Parent Coalition includes more than 400 individuals – all working diligently to preserve and increase the resources available to our children in order to assure that every child in Muskegon County is safe, healthy and eager to succeed in school and life. A lot has happened economically in our community and our state since the publication of our long-term strategic plan and call to action, **Creating Young Stars**, but the premise of our passionate and dedicated work is the same – for Muskegon County to prosper on a long-term basis, our youngest generation needs to develop the essential cognitive and social skills necessary to compete in an increasingly complex world, and this begins at birth.

We hope that our leaders in government, business, and education will be our partners and help our youngest children reach for the stars and achieve their fullest potential. Copies of the Great Start Collaborative’s white paper can be accessed at www.greatstartmuskegon.org or by calling Jane Clingman-Scott at 231-767-7285.

Consortium Professional Development Leads to Sustained Collaboration

submitted by John Johnson, Project Manager, West Shore Consortium for Dynamic History Instruction
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More than 200 fifth through twelfth grade US History teachers in Muskegon and Ottawa Counties have taken part in events offered by the West Shore Consortium for Dynamic History Instruction in the past four years. Since the outset of the project a strong emphasis has been placed on fostering meaningful and sustained collaboration through intense, high-quality professional development. Participating teachers commit a substantial amount of their personal and professional time to work with historians, pedagogical experts, and master teachers from across the United States throughout the school year as well as during the summer. In addition, they accept the challenge to stretch the boundaries of both their historical and pedagogical knowledge by working collaboratively with teachers from other grade levels, buildings, and districts. This has resulted in the formation of a large community of professionals -- a tremendous resource to teachers as they continue their efforts to ensure that every student learns historical content and thinking skills at a very high level. West Shore Consortium events are

funded by a federal Teaching American History grant that was awarded to the Muskegon and Ottawa Area Intermediate School Districts in 2008 and will continue until summer 2011 and perhaps longer. The 2008 award was preceded by a 2005-2008 award which was similar in structure and ambition. "We have created the foundation and context in which real collaboration can take place," said Consortium Co-Director David Klemm of the Muskegon Area ISD. "It's at the teacher level, across districts. This isn't just being in the same room at the same time." Continued substantial funding has allowed for continuity of content and audience between events which fosters strong professional relationships between teachers. That collaborative spirit can be seen in materials and comments shared through a consortium wiki at www.tah.muskegonisd.org.

The Teaching American History Grant program, as administered by the US Department of Education, is primarily a teacher-focused program with the ultimate goal of improving students' historical knowledge and thinking skills. The West Shore Consortium has pursued this challenge by seeking out presenters and professional development partners who model varied approaches of teaching in their own work with teachers. Consortium events are also scheduled at varying times throughout the school year and summer to



From left to right: Whitehall Ealy Elementary teacher Marjorie Dorr, Allendale High School teacher Jennifer Hodges, and Orchard View Middle School teacher Kelli Arnold. These three outstanding teachers teamed up to present how they have worked together to strengthen what they teach individually, even though they teach in three different districts at three different grade levels.

accommodate teachers' personal and professional obligations and to ensure they have an opportunity to participate in some capacity. "Our structure lends itself to differentiated learning styles as well as the busy schedules of the teachers we serve," noted Cathy Feyt, Consortium Co-Director and Ottawa Area ISD representative, "and the collaboration that occurs within the events results in the continuation of relationships at the teacher level outside of grant events."

Recently, such collaboration was put on display when an elementary teacher from Whitehall District Schools joined an Orchard View Middle School teacher and an Allendale High School teacher to present the collaborative work they had done at the National Council for History Education's Annual Conference in San Diego, California. In all, eleven teachers from eight separate school districts attended the conference. Eight of those teachers were selected to present their teaching innovations, further highlighting the hard work and dedication that teacher participants consistently bring to Consortium events as well as their relationships with other educators.



From left to right: Fruitport High School teachers Amy Dixon and Adam Carlson, Oakridge High School teacher Diane Kent, (all conference presenters) speak with MAISD Social Studies Consultant David Klemm - who also presented at the conference - about the new video "Up from the Bottoms" which examines history and impact of African Americans who migrated from the old south to the prosperous north in the 20th century.

MAISD to Reinvent/ Expand Real-Life History Experience; Simplify Use

This fall a new and improved real-life history experience will open its doors to 1st through 4th grades. With help from local teachers, MAISD Social Studies and School Improvement Consultant David Klemm has re-invented the Maple Ridge One-Room School program to focus on lessons and activities that deepen understanding of numerous content expectations in grades 1 - 4.

To simplify things teachers will no longer be required to attend an orientation session to learn how to lead their own experience. A new on-site curator will provide all of



the expertise, supplies, materials, and guidance needed to ensure a comprehensive, interactive, and fun historical experience. A more condensed format will shorten the history lesson to just over two hours.

This is a shift from the full-day, teacher-led experiences traditionally offered to 4th and 5th grade classes. According to Mr. Klemm those students are still welcome, but the rich learning environment of Maple Ridge is really ideal for the Social Studies grade level content expectations of the earlier grades. "We will offer multiple activities that will allow for same student visits in different years if desired," said Mr. Klemm. "Teachers will have online access to pre- and post-visit experiences, directions and requirements," he added.

The shorter program will allow classes to take advantage of other related local resources, like the Lakeshore Museum Center (formerly the Muskegon County Museum), to create a more complete historical experience. "The goal is to make a visit to Maple Ridge and other local sites like the Lakeshore Museum a fun and powerful way to meet grade level content expectations," said Mr. Klemm. "And being able to accomplish this in one day can be a big money saver for schools."

submitted by Kristin Tank, Public Information Officer
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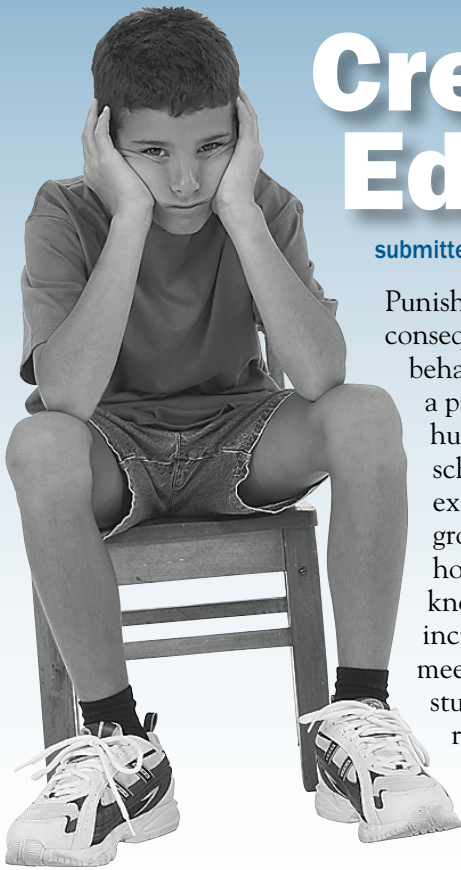
The History of Maple Ridge One-Room School

Maple Ridge School was built in 1887. At the turn of the century, it was one of nearly 100 one-room schools in Muskegon County; and its alumni went on to become doctors, teachers, carpenters, poets, business men and women and industrialists. Until the early 1960s Maple Ridge served as the schoolhouse for School District #7 of Laketon Township in Muskegon.

Eventually the Reeths-Puffer School's Board of Education generously agreed to deed the Maple Ridge School and donate the original school bell to the MAISD for one dollar. In 1977, a crew of Manpower training participants from the Muskegon Area Skill Training Center began restoring the school building. The entire restoration was completed in 1979. Since then thousands of students have visited Maple Ridge and experienced first hand the realities of life in the 19th century one-room school.

In 2004, Miss Alice Gates, who graduated from Maple Ridge in 1934, established an endowment fund through the Community Foundation for Muskegon County for the long-term restoration and maintenance of Maple Ridge. This fund continues to grow with contributions from people who wish to support the school.

Teachers can visit www.muskegonisd.org/development to learn more and select a date for this living history experience.



Creating Preventative Educational Cultures

submitted by Steven Vitto, M.A., Behavioral Support Consultant, 231-767-7279 or svitto@muskegonisd.org

Punishment and negative consequences for undesirable behavior have been a part of society for hundreds of years, and schools have been no exception. However, with growing information on how children acquire knowledge and skills, an increasing emphasis on meeting the needs of all students, and the current reliance on data-driven or evidence-based approaches, it appears that the

use of punishment to treat behavioral challenges is short-sighted and, at best, a “quick-fix” approach. Through the leadership of national behavioral experts, George Sugai and Rob Horner, a national blueprint for success called Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) has been established that relies on teaching, mentoring, positive relationships, therapeutic staff approaches, evidence-based classroom management strategies, acknowledgement of desired

behaviors, positive home-school partnerships, and data-driven decision making as the keys to long-term behavior change and successful student outcomes.

Since 2001, Michigan Intermediate School Districts have acted as leaders in supporting this approach throughout our schools. The MAISD has provided support to over 25 elementary schools and over 2,000 educational staff and families in implementing PBS initiatives in their

You Can Win With Co-Teaching

Co-teaching is a validated, research-based method for granting access to the general education curriculum for students with disabilities in the general education classroom. It is a very effective and diversified means to allowing the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for students with disabilities.

Co-teaching provides a variety of styles for teachers to explore and implement. Through the experience of sharing valuable classroom space and air time, teachers develop an enriched atmosphere for student learning. Through the process of collaboration, teachers gain a wealth of knowledge from one another to share with their students. They have rich conversations about beliefs, philosophies, and attitudes. They work collaboratively in planning lessons, classroom management, parity, and expectations, thereby limiting fragmentation of instruction. Not only do they set the stage for expectations concerning student achievement but expectations for each other.

Co-teachers build partnerships that are like a marriage. They work on pitfalls and celebrate successes. They laugh and cry together. They endure hardship together. They face the good and the bad. They are there in sickness and in health and for richer or poorer as budgets get tighter each year. They are watching students grow by providing the essentials of learning. Co-teachers embrace new challenges

everyday. They divide up the responsibilities, and they are equally accountable for every student in the class. The students become ours, not mine or yours.

Students benefit greatly from co-teaching in that they receive equal access to the curriculum. Students are not separated into groups educated away from their peers. Students with disabilities are included in every facet of learning. They get the benefit of heterogeneous grouping, extra teacher support, and access to learning the general education curriculum. Students gain respect and dignity that boost self-esteem. They feel included versus the excluded method of self-contained classrooms. They are no longer in Wing B on the second floor but rather unnoticeable as they blend in with the rest of the students. They learn the proper way to engage in cooperative groups and partner work. Their learning is maximized in both behavior and academics. It also provides support for struggling students without disabilities. Co-teaching is a win/win situation for all students.

Co-teaching is an essential component for educating our students. As teachers throughout Muskegon County continue to travel the road of co-teaching, the MAISD is here to support those efforts. Extensive training will be provided in upcoming professional development sessions for ongoing support.

submitted by Tina Harmon, Special Education Curriculum Consultant, 231-767-7268 or tharmon@muskegonisd.org

Response To Intervention

We have all had students in our classrooms or schools who “need help.” These may be students who have struggled throughout their school careers or students who were making good progress but suddenly seem to be “stuck” or are beginning to fall behind their same-age peers. How do we ensure that students receive the help and support they need to make progress and to successfully master challenging grade-level expectations?

For the past four decades, our primary tool for supporting struggling learners was a referral to special education where students received more individualized attention and targeted instruction. With the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, our attention has been drawn to the idea of designing instruction and interventions for all students based on their needs (Response to Intervention). The goal of Response to Intervention (RtI) is to offer all students specific, targeted attention whether or not they have a formal IEP and before they fall so far behind that a referral to special education is necessary.

Schools implementing RtI are finding it is not something new that must be added to already overflowing and demanding schedules for teachers. Rather, RtI is a way of approaching how we plan for and structure daily instruction in the classroom and across the school for all students.

Although RtI stresses early intervention, it is not just for elementary students. Recently, over 110 middle and high school teachers, special education staff, and building administrators gathered at the MAISD for a workshop presented by Dr. Mark Shinn. Dr. Shinn is known in Michigan and throughout the country for his knowledge related to RtI, particularly in curriculum-based measurement (benchmark assessment and progress monitoring), re-designing delivery systems for secondary special education, and implementing RtI at all levels.

Dr. Shinn presented teams with ideas for both long- and short-term actions that can be taken to move toward implementing RtI. Long-term goals include developing a special education mission statement. He encouraged school teams to examine the instruction and support secondary students with IEP's receive, to move away from “homework help” toward more intensive basic skill interventions or content area class support using common instructional routines. Examples of these include course and unit organizer routines, concept comparison routines, and vocabulary routines. Research on these strategies shows a positive impact on student achievement, particularly when implemented across content areas. Information on these routines is available at <http://www.ku-crl.org/sim/content.shtml>.

In the short-term, Dr. Shinn encouraged teams to ensure each course has a detailed syllabus communicated to students and parents. Syllabi should include high-quality grading plans to prevent surprises for students and parents. Developing common assessments and using formative assessment to guide instruction were other themes of the workshop. Dr. Shinn also discussed the importance of building relationships with students, their families, and the community, and establishing a positive school culture through implementing a system of school-wide positive behavior supports. This is already a major initiative in most schools in Muskegon County.

To find out more about RtI at the secondary level, visit Dr. Shinn's web site (http://web.me.com/markshinn/Mark_Shinn_Professional_and_Personal_Webpage/Homepage.html) or the RtI Action Network web site (<http://www.rtinetwork.org/>).

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schools, (including Reeths-Puffer, Mona Shores, Muskegon Heights, Muskegon, Orchard View, Holton, Ravenna, and Fruitport) at the elementary and middle school levels, along with all Head Start classrooms. The MAISD Behavioral Support Consultants have provided coaching, consulting, and materials to these schools in order to facilitate the development of school-wide PBS initiatives, trainings in evidence-based classroom management, processes for assessing the function of challenging behaviors and developing prescriptive plans to teach replacement skills, and strategies to insure the safety and well-being of all students. Most recently MAISD has supported the development of program-wide PBS initiatives at Wesley School (a center-based facility for children with developmental disabilities) and at the “You Turn” program (an educational program available for expelled youth in Muskegon County). MAISD has also provided specialized focus de-escalation training and materials for the staff at the North/East Education Center and Craig School (programs serving severely emotionally impaired students). In addition, the MAISD has provided over 30 years of consultant support for the most intensive behaviorally challenged students. It is through these MAISD efforts that countless administrators, educators, support staff, paraprofessionals, and parents have been provided with the tools, strategies, and supports needed to meet the behavior needs of all students.

For more information on PBS, please contact Steven Vitto or Sue Mack (231-767-7259 or smack@muskegonisd.org), or visit PBIS.org.



Major Changes in State Board Continuing Education Units (SB-CEUs)

submitted by Rochelle Barr Sartorius, SB-CEU Coordinator, 231-767-7267 or rsartori@muskegonisd.org

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has designed a new, secure central registry (SCR) for those educators receiving SB-CEUs. The SCR allows educators to track SB-CEUs awarded after January 1, 2010, in one central location on the Michigan Department of Education website.

The new SCR requires the completion of a common online evaluation. After completion of a workshop or activity eligible for SB-CEU credit, the MAISD SB-CEU Coordinator will upload all qualified participants' information to the MDE. At that time, participants will receive an email from the MDE to complete the required evaluation. Participants will have 30 days to complete the evaluation. If not

completed within 30 days, SB-CEUs will be forfeited.

- As of January 1, 2010, workshops and activities qualifying for SB-CEU credit will be recorded electronically on the MDE website. The MAISD will no longer provide participants with paper certificates. Records prior to January 1, 2010, will be maintained at the MAISD.
- SB-CEUs will be automatically awarded after completion of the online evaluation and immediately listed on the MDE Secure Central Registry. The information listed will contain all required information needed for certificate renewal.
- As of May 1, 2010, for the first time, the MDE is imposing fees for processing SB-CEU applications

and participant records. To cover the fees, as of May 1, 2010, the MAISD will be charging \$20 for each participant requesting SB-CEU credit for a given workshop or activity.

Each month, the MAISD holds an informational workshop on SB-CEU policy and procedures. Dates and times are listed in the Best Practices/Current Issues section of the MAISD Professional Development Flyer or at www.muskegonisd.org/development.

To locate workshops offering SB-CEUs throughout the state, go to www.solutionwhere.com/mi_sbceu.

Please direct questions to Rochelle Barr Sartorius, SB-CEU Coordinator, at 231-767-7267 or rsartori@muskegonisd.org.