MICHIGAN Department of Education

November, 2008 • Volume 1

michigan education CONNECTION

Table of Contents

Superintendent's Welcome Message

State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Mike Flanagan's reflection on the outcome of the recent national election.
Front page

Social Studies Alignment Documents

K-8 Social Studies Alingment documents now available on MDE website.
Page 2

Milken Award Winners

Two Michigan Educators were announced for this prestigious award.
Page 3

OSE/EIS Programs Receive National Recognition

Grants that are improving special education services and school culture for all students.
Page 6

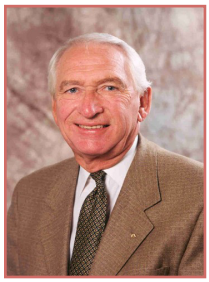
Catch the Vision

"Attain substantial and meaningful improvement in academic achievement for all students/children with primary emphasis on high priority schools and students."

—Michigan State Board of Education Goal

State Board Update

Kathleen Straus, President of the State Board of Education, received the Distinguished Service Award by the National Association of State Boards of Education at its Annual Conference on October 17, 2008. The award is given annually to a State Board of Education member in recognition of outstanding service to public education.



The State Board of Education and Department of Education were saddened by the recent death of **Dr. Herbert S. Moyer.** Dr. Moyer served on the State Board of Education for an eight year term beginning January 1, 1997, through January 1, 2005.

A report, urging for integration of Career and Technical Education into middle and high school curriculum, "*Learning to Work, Working to Learn*," is being published by the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE). **Elizabeth Bauer**, a member of the Michigan State Board of Education, was a member of the study group.

The full report and recommendations are available for $14 by calling (800) 220-5183 or via the Internet at www.nasbe.org.

Evaluating Online Learning

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Innovation and Improvement has released its latest guide in a series of publications highlighting innovations in education. Titled "Evaluating Online Learning: Challenges and Strategies for Success," the new guide is designed as a resource for leaders and evaluators of K–12 online learning programs.

This guide discusses the challenges of evaluating these kinds of programs and features seven examples of evaluations that address a broad spectrum of online learning options from programs that provide online courses to websites that feature education resources. These evaluations can serve as models to help school leaders determine whether online programs and resources are performing as promised, while identifying critical areas for improvement, federal officials said.

http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/academic/evalonline

The events and reaction from the recent elections had me re-visiting my childhood recently. The reaction to President-Elect Obama's victory is a reminder of when an Irish-Catholic, John Kennedy, was elected President in 1960, and the promise it presented to me. It wasn't until then that I believed I could be President, or anything else I wanted to dream if I worked hard enough in school.

This election, whether you voted (R) or (D), has given this same rise in hope to millions of children that they, too, can realize any dream. For educators, a great obstacle has been lifted. All children can now believe that working hard at school can be the gateway to living their dreams. Seeing is believing and you can bet that children across the United States are convinced that opportunities are boundless, with a good education.

This great sociological event has laid a foundation for us to build upon – a tremendous opportunity for Michigan. This will help us eliminate the Static Cling – where we have been clinging to the old static ideas of the past. We can re-imagine a new educational system here in Michigan. One in which ALL means ALL, Once and for ALL. Yes we can!

Mike Flanagan, State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Social Studies Alignment Project

The Social Studies Alignment Project provides information about the scope and meaning of the social studies content expectations and indicates how they will be assessed at each grade level. The resource identifies each content expectation with either a C: assessed at classroom and district levels or an S: assessed at classroom, district, and state levels; and may be assessed on the MEAP or the Michigan Merit Exam (MME).

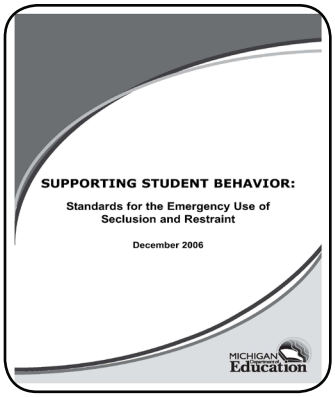
Additionally, this resource provides information about the scope of the standard as defined by the content expectations at each grade level. It also provides a focus question and accompanying short narrative that further define the scope of each content expectation.

Teachers and content experts developed the Social Studies Alignment documents. They were aided by input from committees organized by the Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability. Additional information regarding state assessment of the content expectations (MEAP and MME) will be available in Fall 2009.

You can access these documents on the MDE website at: www.michigan.gov/socialstudies.

Supporting Student Behavior Document Available

The document, Supporting Student Behavior: Standards for the Emergency Use of Seclusion and Restraint is now available on the Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (OSE-EIS) web site. The document:



*summarizes how a positive behavior support approach uses proactive strategies to reduce or eliminate the use of seclusion and restraint;

*defines the terms “seclusion” and “restraint”;

*outlines procedures for emergency use of seclusion and restraint; and

*provides a framework for training.

The document can be found by going to the OSE-EIS Web site at http://www.michigan.gov/ose-eis and selecting the “Laws & Policies” link from the left-hand navigation or by using this direct link: http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-6530_6598_7376---,00.html.

2008 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching

Three Michigan mathematics and science educators have been chosen as state-level finalists for the 2008 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST).

2008 national award nominees include:

Science
Suzanne O’Brien
Fox Elementary
Chippewa Valley Schools

Elizabeth Sutherland
Paddock Elementary
Milan Area Schools

Mathematics
Jon Phillips
Adams Elementary
Waterford School District

A national selection panel of distinguished scientists, mathematicians, educators, administrators, and past awardees reviews the applications of the state-level finalists and makes recommendations to the National Science Foundation, which in turn forwards them to the White House.

“These educators use innovative and interactive teaching methods that reach their students and engage them in learning,” said Superintendent of Public Instruction Mike Flanagan.

The Michigan Department of Education received nominations for 51 science and 37 mathematics teachers.

Secondary school mathematics and science teachers are chosen in odd-numbered years.

Michigan Ranks Second in U.S. For Online Learning

Two years after Michigan gained national attention as the first state in the nation to require online learning as a requirement for high school graduation, the state now is being recognized as second in the nation for its online learning policy and practice.

The Center for Digital Education (CDE) evaluated the overall landscape of online learning and compiled state rankings to reflect the vision, policies, programs and strategies that states have deployed around online learning in an effort to transform their academic environment to meet student needs.

"Michigan has provided significant leadership for the rest of the nation in online learning and is routinely looked to as a pioneer," said Marina Leight, director of the Center for Digital Education. "The creation of the Michigan Virtual School, Michigan LearnPort and the nation's first high school graduation requirement for online learning are all significant milestones that demonstrate Michigan's leadership position in this area."

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Mike Flanagan said Michigan schools need to use a variety of teaching methods to reach every student.

"Online learning can provide a powerful alternative for students who have a need for greater flexibility with their education due to individual learning styles, employment commitments and comfort with traditional school environments," Flanagan said. "There is a significant potential to expand the use of online learning as a practical strategy to help students stay in school and graduate."

Michigan's ranking reflects the growth of Michigan Virtual School® (MVS®), which provides online courses to more than 500 schools throughout the state. Since its inception in 2000, MVS has recorded more than 45,000 online course enrollments in subjects ranging from Algebra to Mandarin Chinese and AP Physics. Accredited in 2005, MVS is one of the largest virtual schools in the nation.

To access a copy of the CDE report visit: http://www.centerdigitaled.com/index.php. For more information about MVU and its online programs for the K-12 community visit http://www.mivu.org.

Michigan Milken Educator Award Winners Announced

Leah Einhaus, a third grade teacher at Collins Elementary School in the Utica Community School District, and Erik Cliff, a teacher at Central Woodlands School in the Forest Hills Public School District each learned last month that they were the recipients of the prestigious Milken Educator Award. They received the news during suprise school visits from Milken Foundation, Michigan State Board of Education and Department of Education officials.

Both receive a $25,000 no strings attached cash award. They make up two of the eighty elementary teachers nationwide this year to receive the Milken National Educator Award, dubbed the "***Oscars of Teaching***" by Teacher Magazine. This marks the 22nd year the Milken Family Foundation has recognized and rewarded excellence in education with public acclaim and up to $2 million in unrestricted cash prizes.

Research shows that the single most important school-based factor impacting student achievement is having a talented teacher in the classroom. The difference between an effective and ineffective teacher can be a full grade level of student achievement in a single year.

Unlike most teaching awards, the Milken National Educator Awards have no formal nomination or application process. Educators are recommended for this prestigious honor without their knowledge by a blue-ribbon panel appointed by each state's department of education.

Recipients will be presented with their unrestricted $25,000 award checks during the Milken National Education Conference to be held April 17-19, 2009 in Los Angeles.

For more information about the Milken Educator Awards, and the surprise notification events held throughout the United States, please access the Milken Family Foundation website at www.mff.org or contact them at 310-570-4775.

"The truth is the kindest thing we can give folks in the end."

~ Harriet Beecher Stowe

School Violence Hotline

The Michigan State Police and the Michigan Department of Education have established a statewide school violence hotline for the reporting of specific threats of imminent school violence or other suspicious or criminal conduct.

The toll-free school violence hotline telephone number 1-800-815-TIPS is operational 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The caller may remain anonymous and information will be forwarded directly to the appropriate Emergency Dispatch Center for action by the law enforcement agency where the affected school is located.

This hotline is not intended to replace the 911 emergency number or any other existing community operated tip lines. The establishment of this toll-free number is another option to report threats of violence on school property.

In nine school shooting incidents in the past two years, Michigan State Police say there were common factors: All occurred in suburban or rural schools, fellow students had recognized warning signs of danger, and had conveyed their fears to parents or officials, and the weapons came from home or from neighbors.

Transition
Michigan Transition Services Association

MTSA 2009 Annual Spring Conference
=OUTCOMES EXPRESS=

NEW THIS YEAR - ONLINE REGISTRATION

The wheels are spinning on the rails, the engine is charging up and the planning is full steam ahead for the 2009 Michigan Transition Services Association (MTSA) Annual Spring Conference, March 18th – 20th. Our theme this year revolves around "outcomes." We are striving to provide sessions that include best practices from the field, as well as, research based evidence demonstrating an effective impact on youth as they Transition from school to adult living.

To register online, you will be able to go to the MTSA website, www.michigantsa.com. In addition to registering for the conference, you will be able to submit a presentation proposal, register to be an exhibitor or present a poster-session, all on-line! Hurry, presentation proposals are due by December 19th! Remember, one free registration available per accepted presentation. Speakers and sessions will be posted to the website, so check in for updated information.

We invite you to join us at the Bavarian Inn in Frankenmuth as an attendee, a volunteer, a presenter, or exhibitor. Share with us your expertise, your unique ideas or programs. All aboard the MTSA "Outcomes Express" for a ride that we hope will prove to be enlightening, educational, and enjoyable!

Linda Ratliff – MTSA Past President and Conference Chair lratliff@east-china.k12.mi.us or 810-676-1713

PBS' Educational Offerings

PBS KIDS raising readers

For many of us it has likely been a while since we've watched PBS' children's programing. Well Sesame Street isn't the only educational offering on the block anymore. In an effort to help parents raise kids who are reading and ready for Kindergarten, PBS has partnered with a number of organizations to offer easy-to-use learning reasources for kids, parents, caregivers and teachers. This includes literacy-promoting content through television programming, exciting games, playful websites, Professional Devopment for teachers, and other multi-media platforms. These programs are designed to allow parents and caregivers to use PBS TV programing as a positive learning experience that is helping children ages 2 to 8 get ready to read.

Some of the websites available include:
PBS KIDS and PBS KIDS GO! are multimedia websites desgined to give children activities and games to play with their favorite PBS KIDS characters developing reading and writing skills: http://pbskids.org and http://pbskids.org/go/

PBS Parents gives parents games, activities and advice for raising their PBS kid: http://www.pbs.org/parents/.

PBS TeacherLine offers high quality, professional development opportunities accessible for teachers in an online format that makes learning fun, flexible and collaborative. Teachers can earn graduate credit, PDPs, or CEUs while gaining strategies and resources to bring directly to the classroom: http://www.pbs.org/teacherline/.

These are the national websites for these particular programs. Check your local PBS Station website for programs and TV scheduling and to learn how your district can partner with PBS KIDS to help your community RAISE READERS!!

Direct Certification Program

Direct Certification helps to ensure that eligible children get free school meals through the National School Lunch, School Breakfast, Afterschool Snack, and Special Milk Programs without an application. Children directly certified are eligible for free meals because their households are approved for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (the former Food Stamp Program).

In 2004, the Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act mandated Direct Certification for all schools in the School Meals Programs. In 2006, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) awarded the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) a Direct Certification and Verification Grant for $702,427. The goal of the grant was to streamline the Direct Certification process in Michigan so that all schools could meet the mandate for Direct Certification.

To implement the grant, a multi-agency task force with representatives from MDE, Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI), Department of Information Technology (DIT), Department of Human Services (DHS), and local school districts was created to develop the Direct Certification Program.

The Direct Certification Program matches records from the DHS Food Assistance Program database and the student enrollment files from CEPI's Single Record Student Database (SRSD). Once the match process is completed, the report is available to authorized school personnel via the SRSD.

Not only does the Direct Certification Program help children by increasing the accessibility of free school meals, it helps schools improve program integrity by reducing the number of paper applications that have to be processed and verified. The new report also is more secure because it does not use social security numbers.

The Direct Certification Program received one of the 2008 Recognition Awards for Outstanding Achievement in the Field of Information Technology from the National Association of State Chief Information Officers (NASCIO). The Direct Certification Program was recognized in the category of Digital Government: Government to Citizen (G to C).

For more information on the Direct Certification Report, visit www.michigan.gov/cepi, click on MEIS Data Services, and then click on Direct Certification Report.

GREAT PARENTS, GREAT START

Every Intermediate School District has an opportunity to apply for funding through Section 32j of the State School Aid to implement Great Parents, Great Start (GP, GS) programming. GP, GS works with parents of children, birth to kindergarten entry, to provide information about child development, enhance parent-child interaction through providing examples of learning opportunities, and connecting families to needed community services.

As one of the intermediate school district contacts states, "GP,GS is a perfect program that fills much-needed gaps in our community. In GP,GS, we can choose "target" families and do some universal outreach. We have so many "target" families that need services, so it was easy for our Great Start Collaborative (GSC) to identify gaps and target GP,GS resources in our planning efforts. GP,GS is sort of the "glue" holding our EC pieces & system together…"

For more information about GP, GS, contact Colleen O' Connor in the Office of Early Childhood Education and Family Services, 517-373-8483 or oconnorc1@michigan.gov.

Michigan Projects Recognized Nationally

Three grant-funded projects overseen by the Michigan Department of Education, **Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services** (MDE, OSE-EIS) are being nationally recognized for their work in improving special education services and school culture for all students. The grants, referred to as Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Mandated Activities Projects (MAPs) are being rewarded with federal funding and requests for collaborative work with projects from other states. These honors represent the high regard the projects are earning nationwide.

1. **Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative** (MiBLSi) received two grants to assist in its expansion across the state. MiBLSi began implementing school-based programs in 2003 to provide support for improving behavior and reading among students within 22 elementary and middle schools. The project has since grown to more than 250 schools.

2. Michigan's Integrated Technology Supports With the support of an OSEP-funded grant, **Michigan's Integrated Technology Supports** (MITS) is actively working within the state and in collaboration with other states to improve the process of providing accessible instructional materials (AIM) to students with print and reading disabilities. Accessible instructional materials are alternatives for students who are unable or struggle to gain meaning from printed text. Federal mandates entitle eligible students to be provided with AIM in a timely manner.

3. **STatewide Autism Resources and Training** (START) Michigan was one of three states chosen by the OSEP-funded National Professional Development Center (NPDC) on Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs) to participate in a training and technical assistance program. The OSE-EIS grant STatewide Autism Resources and Training (START) represented Michigan in its bid to be selected.

For more descriptions and contact information related to these programs, you can download this document: http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/OSE_Awarded_Programs_256085_7.pdf. You may also visit the Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services website at: www.michigan.gov/ose-eis.

Rockin' Reader

In 2004, Linda Minor, a guidance counselor once honored as North Carolina's Guidance Counselor of the Year, created and organized a reading program that matches volunteers with elementary school children. Inspired and encouraged to have a positive impact on her school, Ms. Minor created ***Rockin' Reader***, a time when children discover the joys of reading and listening to a good story. Partnering with Cracker Barrel to finance the supply of two double rocking chairs, a "barrel bookshelf," and a collections of books, to date; volunteers and students have read more than 2,000 books during these one-on-one interactions.

Rockin' Reader was started in Tennessee through the Reading First program, and has partnered with six other states, targeting these materials to needier schools. For the the 2008-09 school year, they contacted the Reading First program here in Michigan, and we were able to get 15 Elementary schools signed up. The pictures provided here are from Erickson Elementary in Ypsilanti.

Beginning in January 2009, Cracker Barrel will accept applications from elementary schools interested in becoming a part of the Rockin' Reader program. New programs will be added at the start of the 2009-10 school year. To find out more information about the Rockin' Reader Program, please visit: www.rockingreader.org.

We are grateful for Cracker Barrel giving Michigan the resources to provide our students with another opportunity to read for fun and share their ideas.

Michigan State Board of Education

Kathleen N. Straus
President
Bloomfield Township

John C. Austin
Vice President
Ann Arbor

Carolyn L. Curtin
Secretary
Evart

Marianne Yared McGuire
Treasurer
Detroit

Nancy Danhof
NASBE Delegate
East Lansing

Elizabeth W. Bauer
Member
Birmingham

Reginald M. Turner
Member
Detroit

Casandra Ulbrich
Member
Rochester Hills

Governor
Jennifer M. Granholm
Ex Officio

Michael P. Flanagan
Chairman
Superintendent of Public Instruction
Ex Officio

Newsletter Contacts:

David Head
headd@michigan.gov

Director of Communications
Martin Ackley

www.michigan.gov/mde-newsletter

ON THE HORIZON...

- Near Future

Fall School Improvement Pre-Conference, November 24

Fall School Improvement Conference, November 25

MEMSPA State Conference, December 1-3

MVU 5th Annual Online Learning Symposium, December 3

MAS/FPS Principals Boot Camp, December 2

Network of Michigan Educators Annual Conf, December 4-5

State Board of Education Meeting, December 9

- Distant Future

MASA Midwinter Conference, January 28-30, 2009

MCSS State Prof. Development Conf, February 9-10, 2009

MI Reading Association Annual Conference, March 14-16

2009 MACUL Conference, March 18-20, 2009

Spring School Improvement ISD Workshop, March 23, 2009

2009 AdvancED Conference, March 29-31, 2009

Spring School Improvement Pre-Conference, April 21, 2009

Spring School Improvement Conference, April 22, 2009

MSBO 2009 Annual Conference, April 28-30, 2009

Educational Technology Leadership Conference, June 22-23

MASCD Curriculum Leaders Institute, August 2009