



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

BRIAN J. WHISTON
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 3, 2015

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Rick Joseph
Michigan Teacher of the Year

SUBJECT: December Teacher of the Year (MTOY) Report

On November 5th, I presented a session entitled Pay Attention: Meeting the Needs of Students with ADD/ADHD at the AdvancED conference in Novi.

On November 11th, I spent the morning at Deerfield Elementary School in the Avondale School District with Lisa Sarkasian's fifth graders. I read the *Junkyard Wonders* to two separate classes and facilitated a discussion.

On November 12th, I attended a meeting of the Job Embedded Professional Learning (JEPL) Network at Auburn Elementary School, and reviewed the ways different districts in Southeastern Michigan are implementing the JEPL.

On November 16th, I spent the afternoon at Novi High School with Emily Pohlonski's Health Services Internship Program. We toured the Van Elslander Neuroscience Center at Providence Park Hospital in Novi where students were able to visit the lab and examine specimens on the same microscopes used by surgeons from around the world who come to Providence Park to train.

On November 17th, I moderated a discussion about the documentary film *First Generation* that featured two of the four students from the film, the filmmaker, and two first generation college students from Michigan State University.

On November 19th, I spent the day at Grosse Pointe North HS with 2014 MTOY, Gary Abud. I spent time in Gary's chemistry class and the Innovation Lab where students were learning how to write computer code.

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On November 20th, I presented What Can I Say? LGBTQ Discourse in an Elementary Classroom at the National Council of Teachers of English conference in Minneapolis, MN. I also met Terry Blackhawk, Director of the InsideOut Literary Arts Project, which has served thousands of students in the Detroit Public Schools for 25 years.

On December 1st, I spent the day at East Kentwood HS as a guest of Luke Wilcox. I spent time in Luke's AP Statistics class, an AP Biology class that featured a student-run captive breeding program, and ELL Math lab that services students who are refugees from all over the world, the acclaimed Varsity Voices chorus, and a graphic design class.