



For the last ten years our state leadership in Lansing has been finding a way to fix budget woes. They have utilized tobacco settlement money, rainy day funds, changed accounting practices, borrowed from one state fund for another, borrowed from the federal government and so on just to keep our public services running. Now, with nearly a three billion dollar hole that continues to grow, it is time to face the music. The state and it's services must change.

With a declining state population, the nation's highest unemployment rate, declining property values and many struggling businesses, to increase tax rates would seem counterproductive. Even though increased taxes doesn't seem like a good idea, we will still probably see sales tax on services, increased use taxes and potentially a graduated income tax. How does this relate to those of us in education? Even with some level of increased taxes, I would suggest that we will see roughly the same state funding level for education in the year 2020 as we saw in 2009.

If funding levels don't grow as they have traditionally done, what will happen? Even more importantly, if funding levels actually

decrease rather significantly in the next two years before leveling out to return to only 2009 levels by the year 2020, what will happen to education during that time? The answer will come in large part from local communities. Remember, education is not alone as a public service. The problems in the state will extend to cities, townships, libraries, police, fire, health

departments, and the full array of services which are publically funded.

## A Decade of Community Change Coming

My hope in this funding crisis is that the challenge brings us closer as communities, as neighbors and as public servants. Efficiency, collaboration, and new methodology will

come from this situation. The silver lining may be a leaner, more responsive public sector operational model. Let's face this challenge head on. Together, we are more likely to find the answers and create the new public education model.

*Please call Scott Crosby at (231) 876-2260 or email at [scrosby@wmisd.org](mailto:scrosby@wmisd.org) with thoughts or questions related to our services.*

*Focus on the Future is a monthly publication of the WMISD. For additional copies, please contact Jennifer Gaffke at 231-876-2210. Please contact any of our Staff if you have any questions.*  
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## Summer Administrative Planning

On August 18 & 19 the local district superintendents and principals met for the purpose of collaboration, planning and learning together. The administrators had an opportunity to listen to Dr. Mark Rainey discuss the importance of data driven decisions. Mike Harris, McBain Superintendent, also provided an overview of the ASCD (Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development) Whole Child Initiative. This national initiative is important for our children's future. The Whole Child Initiative is focused on things that matter – that children are healthy, safe, engaged, supported and challenged. The web site for further information is:

<http://www.wholechildeducation.org/>

The administrators also analyzed MEAP, MME and Common Assessment data to focus their work for the upcoming year. They also reviewed their goals from the prior year and either adjusted or wrote new goals. They started the work on the action plans and strategies. The common areas of focus are writing, math and science with special attention paid to the sub group populations. Strategies were also discussed. One common strategy was the continued work and implementation of balanced assessments.

The administrators took some time to have a discussion around truancy and attendance policies. This discussion prompted continued work in common policy development and communication with the county court systems.

The administrators had a conversation around the World Language curriculum review coming up this year. They provided some input for who might be involved and what languages could be considered.

Finally, the administrators took time to review their knowledge and understanding of effective school practice by taking a mini-assessment, which they all demonstrated proficiency!

*For more information, please contact Karen Mlcek, Director of General Education at 231-876-2265.*

## “Algebra For All” Statewide Training Offered Regionally

A statewide “Algebra For All” training is being offered this year at Wexford-Missaukee Intermediate School District. It is a training that focuses on meeting the needs of all students and ensuring successful completion of Algebra I. This is an eight-day training with nine sites throughout the state. Each site has at least 100 participants. Instructional strategies along with equipment such as graphing calculators and mentoring, will be included. This training is funded by Michigan Department of Education. We have all districts within WMISD participating. In addition to WMISD this regional site serves teachers from Mason-Lake , Mecosta-Osceola, COOR ISDs.

*For more information, please contact Karen Mlcek, Director of General Education at 231-876-2265.*



## A NEW BEGINNING AT CTC!

The 2009-2010 school year at CTC is close at hand and full of re-imagination and change.

For starters, we are proud to be offering an expanded Allied Health program to accommodate over 90 students who have an interest in health careers. We will be also offering a Public Safety program that will be taught as a college course for students on our campus through West Shore Community College and Baker College. Mr. Frank Dickson, a veteran of law enforcement and a retired state trooper, will be at the reins. Through a partnership with Cadillac Area Public Schools, we will also be offering TV/Media Production to all students within the ISD.

We are continuing to pursue more dual and direct credit enrollment opportunities for our students through Baker College, Ferris State University and West Shore Community College. Additionally, we are moving forward with plans to offer and recommend academic courses and credit recovery options on our campus.

At CTC our mission is simple, *“Preparing Students for Career Success.”* The entire staff at CTC is very passionate about the value of career and technical education. We will not be scared to take the road less traveled in attempt to reach our mission. Furthermore, we will continue to make the necessary changes and re-imagine ways to keep the bar high when it comes to delivering quality career and technical education programs.

The new school year officially starts Tuesday, September 8. Feel free to stop in the Wexford-Missaukee Career Technical Center and see first hand the power of career and technical education and why the CTC is *“The Place To Be.”*

*For more information, please contact David Cox, WMCTC Director, at 231-876-2200.*

All Elementary and Middle School Public Schools within Wexford-Missaukee Intermediate School District met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Accreditation Standards for the 2008-2009 school year.

## CONGRATULATIONS!

Please visit Michigan Department of Education website for more information regarding AYP at:  
[http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-22709\\_22875---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-22709_22875---,00.html)



## MIOSHA Training Institute (sponsored by the WMISD)

**What:** Fundamentals of Safety and Health

**When:** October 6-8, 2009 (8:30am—4pm)

**Where:** Wexford-Missaukee CTC  
9901 E. 13th Street, Cadillac

**Cost:** \$210 per person, includes lunch and course materials

**Who Should Attend:**

Managers, Employees and Business Owners

*For more information, please contact Jennifer Gaffke at 231-876-2210 or [jgaffke@wmisd.org](mailto:jgaffke@wmisd.org)*





## ***Substantial Savings for Mesick & Marion Public Schools with WMISD Business Services***

In an effort to provide efficient and effective education services, the Wexford-Missaukee Intermediate School District is providing business office services to Mesick Consolidated Schools and Marion Public Schools. The WMISD Business Services Department is providing all of the financial services normally provided by an in-house business office including payroll, accounts receivable, deposits, budgeting, and financial reporting at a lower cost, saving the district money. This new program increases the services the ISD is able to provide to local districts.

While Mesick and Marion may not realize significant savings in the current year, future savings will be substantial. There has been a clear trend in consolidating business services within Intermediate School Districts across Michigan. The agreements with Mesick and Marion have jump started this program at the WMISD. Due to continued budget constraints on the local districts, there is some interest from other local districts to contract financial services in this manner.

*For more information, please contact Tom Armstrong, Director of Business Services at 231-876-2312.*

## **Summer Curriculum Work**

Middle school math teachers met for two days to revisit their pacing guides and make necessary adjustments. Teachers also spent time enhancing their instructional and curricular practices through the use of inquiry strategies and graphing calculator technology.

Elementary and middle school science teacher met for two days, creating K-7 Science Units based on the new K-7 Science Companion Documents. Each grade level used completed units at the beginning of the summit for review, instruction and guidance. Lesson plan templates with Standards and GLCES, balanced assessment resources, teaching and learning resources and flash drives were provided for participants. Each participant produced a Grade Level Science Unit to be used this school year.

Fourth and fifth grade teachers met for two days reviewing current reading assessment data, studying a literacy block template for reading instruction, producing strategy posters to be used across core content areas, planning for literacy instruction using a literacy block template, resource and producing plans for literacy work stations.

High School English Language Arts Teachers met for one day using Macomb ELA units, lessons, and assessments (Learning Life's Lessons through Literature) the teachers aligned assessments to their instructional plan and develop an implementation plan for the upcoming school year.

*For more information, please contact Karen Mlcek, Director of General Education at 231-876-2265.*

## ***Special Education***

### ***Did You Know?***

- The taxpayers voted 1 ½ mills dedicated to supporting special education programs and services within the Wexford-Missaukee Intermediate School District (WMISD) back in 1992. The voters were also informed that ½ mill of this levy would come directly back to local school districts to support their locally operated special education programs. For the 2008-09 school years, WMISD paid out more than \$906,900 to its local school districts to fulfill this promise to the voters.
- Most intermediate school districts serve as a collection and distribution point for Medicaid reimbursement for their area. For the 2008-09 school year, WMISD paid out more than \$225,000 to its local school districts in Medicaid reimbursement. At present, WMISD pays all of the fees for itself and its local school districts to a third party in order to collect this reimbursement at a cost of more than \$55,000.
- For the 2008-09 school year, WMISD paid out more than \$327,800 to its local school districts for special education preschool transportation to the WMISD campus, room rent to local school districts, teacher assistants for the visually impaired, tuition and transportation costs associated with the Michigan School for the Deaf, and reimbursement to local school districts from American Restoration and Recovery Act (ARRA) Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) federal funding for special education. For the 2009-10, it is anticipated that about \$835,000 in ARRA IDEA federal funding for special education will be distributed to its local school districts.
- WMISD pays the annual subscription fee of more than \$20,700 in order to use the EasyIEP system for itself and its local school districts.
- WMISD will take a portion of its ARRA funds to expand its Response to Intervention (RTI) efforts in literacy and math to occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech, and behavior management.
- WMISD operated summer programs for Early On eligible students as required. It also operated summer classrooms for the Severely Cognitively Impaired, the severest Moderately Cognitively Impaired and severest special education eligible preschool students as required.

*For more information, please contact John Bretschneider, Director of Special Education at 231-876-2275.*



## From the Desk of CTC Principal, Charlie Schwarz



### CTC Summer Camps

*June 15-18, 2009*

The CTC offered seven summer camps this year for students entering the 6-9 grades within the WMISD area. The camps included: Computer and Technology, Culinary, Diesel Power Mechanics, Electronics, Floral Design, Health Careers and Introduction to Welding / Metal Fabrication. Over 100 students participated in the 2 or 3 day camps.

The spring of the year is such a busy time. As we close out one year, we have already begun planning for the next year's challenges. Recently, these planning challenges have been compounded by the Michigan Merit Curriculum that this year's juniors have had to follow since entering high school. Our dilemma is how do we ensure that career and technical education remains a viable option to interested students, while providing help to improve their reading and math levels and also provide accelerated learning for other students.

One way to address credit needs is something new to the Wexford-Missaukee Career Technical Center. It is with a software product called Odysseware. Odysseware is an internet based program that will allow our LEA students to take required curricular offerings while attending a CTC program. Because local school schedules or student credit accumulation sometimes don't leave room in a student's school day to fit in CTC, Odysseware provides them the opportunity to attend one of our programs and still take on-line credits necessary for graduation from their sending school.

In our Work-Based Learning Lab, students have an individually paced program available to them to remediate and/or advance their Math, Reading for Information, and Locating Information performance levels. It is called KeyTrain and it is a computer-based training program for the WorkKeys employment system. Workkeys, along with the ACT test, make up the majority of the Michigan Merit Exam all students enrolled in a public school must take in the spring of their junior year.

The WMCTC also provides acceleration/advancement through dual enrolled and direct credit instruction. These are provided through Baker College, Ferris State University, and West Shore Community College and allows interested seniors to begin earning college credit while attending our center.

It is our hope that these opportunities will allow students to attend CTC who otherwise wouldn't be able to do so. We are very happy to provide all of the above mentioned educational opportunities at absolutely no cost to students, parents, or sending schools!

We are also extremely proud of the students, schools and communities we serve. We continue to strive to do the best we can for all that attend our center and invite everyone to stop in for a visit. We are the "best kept secret in the area" and it is our intention to change that!

*For more information about any of our programs or to arrange for a tour, please contact me at 231-876-2203.*



## District Collaboration on Software Purchase

As students spend the next few months enjoying summer, staff members in districts across the ISD will be working hard to implement a new student information system (SIS). District Technology Coordinators, secretaries, and teachers from every local school district will all be working hard to ensure that the new SIS is up and running in September when school starts.

Over the course of the last year, district representatives have been meeting together to write a formal request for proposals, review submissions, and select an SIS that met the needs of the entire ISD. After reviewing the features of several SIS systems, PowerSchool was selected as being the best match for our area schools. PowerSchool leverages an internet based solution, providing access to student information anytime, anywhere.

Governor Granholm has been encouraging this type of collaboration since her 2007 State of the State address, stating, “It doesn’t make sense to have ten school districts in a single county buying separate software when they can save dollars and cents buying it together.” In fact, we have identified several areas of cost saving. Through a collaborative bid and volume pricing, districts were able to capitalize on lower price points on both hardware and software. WMISD offered additional support by covering the initial startup cost of the project. Staff training costs were reduced by offering coordinated centralized training hosted at the ISD. Additionally, PowerSchool support will be built into meetings throughout the school year, providing sustainability and ongoing internal support for this collaborative project.

State Superintendent Mike Flanagan has supported this type of collaboration, noting, “Challenges to the budget are driving the need for efficiencies in the non-educational operations in school district so that classroom instruction is not compromised.” The schools within the Wexford-Missaukee Intermediate School District have stepped up to the challenge.

### *What is a Student Information System?*

A SIS is a computer application used in schools to manage student data. In addition to providing required State reporting information, PowerSchool will manage:

- Student enrollment information
- Attendance
- Student demographics
- Grades
- Assignments
- Student schedules
- Graduation requirements
- Transcripts