

MECOSTA-OSCEOLA ISD DEPARTMENT UPDATES

February 2020

Our Vision: Impacting our community through high-quality educational programs, services, and learning experiences.



“Supporting Schools and Student Achievement”

Career & Technical Education

Director of CTE Mike Miller Reports:

Diesel Technology Students Earn Forklift Certification

Contributed by Toni King

In addition to preparing for the Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) and State of Michigan Medium/Heavy Truck Technician certifications, Diesel Technology students have the opportunity to earn forklift or lift truck certification. The Fork Lift Certification Operator Training Program meets OSHA Regulations for Powered Industrial Trucks (Standard- 29 Code of Federal Regulations 1910.178(1)). Students have to be at least 18 years old to certify.



Colton Sherman (CH) performing his operator driving course to earn his certification

To earn the forklift certification, students must pass written and hands-on assessments. The final exam consists of Basic Operation, Inspection & Maintenance, Safety, Load Handling, Stability, Fueling, and Batteries. This certification makes graduates more versatile and valuable to potential employers. So far, four students have completed all of the requirements and earned their certification: Alston Albaugh (RC), Colton Sherman (CH), Torin Webster (MS), and Tyler Wirth (RC).

IT now CsIT

Contributed by Roger Meinert

Based on input from students, local guidance counselors, and advisory committee members, the Information Technology program will now be called Cybersecurity and Information Technology. The intention of the name change is to better reflect the major components of the course. We found that many students were less familiar with what all IT entailed and that adding Cybersecurity to the name provided some clarity.

On a related note, with semester one coming to a close, CsIT students have earned 160 certifications! Three students have passed the Comp TIA IT Fundamentals+ certification, and one, Kyle Bowen (CCA), became our first IT student to earn his A+ certification by passing the second test on December 18th. This is a great accomplishment for a high school student and Kyle has put in the effort to make it happen.

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Students have earned 110 college credits this semester in dual enrollment courses from Ferris State University and Mid Michigan College: CARE 201 (FSU - 3 credits) helps students become career-ready by developing successful skills and strategies focused on completing job applications, writing resumes, and writing cover letters; UNIV 101 (FSU - 2 credits) assists students in the development and use of effective and efficient study strategies that can be utilized in college courses; and CIS 100 (MID - 1 credit), Introduction to Information Systems.

Lastly, on December 16th, Blaiz Marlow (RC) received an incredible and unexpected surprise email that said:

*“Dear Blaiz,
Congratulations! Because of the exceptionally high score you received on your MOS PowerPoint 2019 exam, you have been named Michigan’s Champion and selected to compete in Certipoint’s 2020 Microsoft Office Specialist U.S. National Championship at the Gaylord Texan Resort and Convention Center in Dallas, TX, June 15-17, 2020.”*

We are still researching details but are excited at the thought of one of our CsIT students representing Michigan at a national competition.

Special Projects

Director of Special Projects Karen Roy Reports:

Happy Valentines' Day to all!

I am pleased to offer the following article about developmentally appropriate practice (DAP)

Contributed by the GSRP teaching team at Weidman Elementary--Anna Weaver, Jessica Snyder, Jenna Thayer, Amie Neubecker, and Jamie Hampel:

Developmentally appropriate practices are a common term for preschool. What does that really mean? In short, it means meeting children where they are developmentally. It can look different for each child in each classroom. For it to be successful, preschool teachers must really get to know their students. All of the practices and activities in the classroom have one goal. We want to nurture each child’s social/emotional, physical and cognitive development. To do this, we want to have our program meet the child where they are and not have the child meet program standards.

To start this off, every child receives a home visit from their teaching team to help us understand the social and cultural context of where the child comes from. Once we have them in our classrooms, we observe and record notes. We use that knowledge to determine what that child needs and plan activities accordingly. Some may need more intellectual skills where others may need more development socially. In creating these activities for the children, we make them open-ended. What this means is that they are flexible and do not have a right or wrong answer. This lets each child be successful at their own level.

Additionally, many families or “outsiders” see us “playing” in our classrooms. This is the best time for our students to learn. They learn skills that help them learn self-regulation and explore in a safe nurturing environment. Children are most comfortable

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and learn best when there are positive relationships with their teachers and peers. As their teachers, we put materials out and let the children decide what they would like to do. Their play is not guided and we do not have “centers” like other programs. They are free to go to each area as they wish. We encourage them to make a plan and ask them what they did at the end of their play.



Our program allows us to have two parent-teacher conferences to connect back with parents to ensure we are all working towards what's best for the child. Many times, these conferences result in assistance for not only the child but also strengthening the family. We discuss the goals and strategies that the family has at home that would benefit the child. Near the end of the year, we return to the household to do a follow-up home visit where we discuss the child's future and help prepare the family for Kindergarten. These conferences and home visits are not the only time we have contact with the family. We are always communicating and making sure the family knows what is going on while their child is at school.



Developmentally appropriate practices are heavily embedded in our entire day and year. Whether it be lining up to go outside, exploring print in books, holding pencils, or doing our “work” each part of our time together is intentional. As a whole, we take great pride in offering a developmentally appropriate, safe nurturing environment for students in our program.



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We will continue to advocate for developmentally appropriate practices in preschool and have conversations with our kindergarten counterparts around expectations and work together to build bridges between what is developmentally appropriate and what is expected. There is an excellent article covering this topic if you are interested that we are beginning to use in our work with staff as it addresses equity: [Equity and Early Childhood Education: Reclaiming the Child.](#)

Thanks for your continued support!

General Education

Director of General Education Tonya Harrison Reports:

The General Ed Team



MiBLSI Chip Hills: STL Meeting

The MOISD is continuing its support of the Chippewa Hills School District as they maneuver through the implementation of MiBLSI (which is undergoing a name change and will soon be referred to as MiMTSS Multi-Tiered System of Support). The MOISD provides a systems coach for each building to support the staff and administration. Many of the meetings are held in the individual buildings but when joint buildings meet or the district holds a district-wide meeting, the MOISD serves as their meeting place. The goal is to have our coaches eventually “pull back” their assistance, as the schools take over full responsibility for the initiative. Our team supports in the areas of positive behavior supports and literacy.

School improvement is a continuous process for all schools in our state. Goals are set based on data, teachers and administrators work to improve instruction using that data. However, in many schools, the process becomes one of compliance rather than an ongoing “living document” that teachers and principals use in their daily work lives. One of my recent endeavors, as General Education Director, has been to work with the Michigan Department of Education, as a representative for schools, particularly principals on the new school continuous process, called MiCIP.

I currently sit on two stakeholder groups, where my task is to look at the new process from the lens of a building principal and teacher. How can the data systems talk together? How can the plans be more efficient and useful for teachers? What role should teachers play in the development of goals and how can they use the data in their everyday teaching? ESSA requires

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school districts to have a district improvement plan, but the state of Michigan also requires each building to have a plan. MDE's current process becomes very compliance-driven, and I hope that with the voice of educators who are working with teachers and principals, at the table, our new continuous process will have a stronger impact on the classroom. In addition to the work I am involved in with MDE, Morley Stanwood High School is a working partner with MDE to "test" various components of the new MiCIP template. Our department is partnering with the MSHS team in this work, providing more local voice to improve the current system.

Early Literacy

Early Literacy continues to remain at the forefront of our goals. We are happy that is also an important goal/initiative of our state legislatures, as they have increased the funding for ISD-Literacy Coaches, including eliminating the match of \$37,500 for each coach. Our ISD has also been provided with an additional coach, bringing our total to three literacy coaches. Superintendent. Locke, Mrs. Posey, and I are beginning the conversation of posting for the new positions, expectations and training of the coaches, and how to improve the utilization of the coaches by our locals.

Mrs. Posey continues to work closely with both Evert Elementary and Morley-Stanwood Elementary. She spends regular time each week with individual teachers and grade levels, in addition to the early release days.

Math/Science



Friday, December 6, the 6th grade at Big Rapids MS kicked off Computer Science Week with an Hour of Code event, "Dance Party." Students practiced creating code using block coding. Some students more comfortable with coding tried the advanced version and were writing their lines of code! Students were able to share their projects on the big screen and lead the dance party where individuals watching tried to mimic the dances on the screen.

Special thanks to BRMS Science teacher, Darin Hooker, and STEAM teacher, Branden Bennett, for helping facilitate and BRMS Principal Josh Bull for helping make the event a huge success.



BRMS Students: Practicing Coding



Behavioral Specialist/Mental Health Supports

Our team continues to reach out to our local schools providing behavior and mental health supports for their students, along with helping to build capacity for their teachers and administrators. Currently, Ms. Bond is working with students in Evart, Mecosta, and Barryton. She is working with individual students and small groups. We have been offering CPI for our MOISD staff and local teams monthly. We have two people trained to teach CPI in the Gen Ed department, one in the Special Education department, and one in the Special Programs department. All instructors support each other, like lead and support instructors.

As the MOISD has received another round of grant funding from the state, as it relates to 31-N funds (school mental health), Superintendent Locke and Mrs. Harrison have met with all of the local superintendents to create an MOU of funds being released to the local district. The MOISD will remain the fiscal, per grant guidelines, and the local must meet the requirements of the grant, as it relates to hiring and use of the funds. The initiative's goal is to provide more direct services to students and support their mental health needs. We will continue to provide support through our team in Ms. Bond, along with capacity building and learning opportunities for local teachers, administrators, and other support educators.



CPI Training-Sharing Time with Participants

Technology

Director of Technology Fred Sharpsteen Reports:



Michigan Data Hub Project

Big Rapids Public Schools has signed up for the MiLearn project, and the MOISD technology team is helping them by installing the MiLearn tools to the Skyward servers to connect to the Michigan Data Hub. The tool is an integral part of allowing data to flow to the Michigan Data Hubs servers. MiRead is another excellent example of how, after completing the initial integration work between Skyward and MiDataHubs, we can share data between systems. Joe Bouman, the Technology Director for Big Rapids, has over 20 years of Skyward experience has been very helpful on these projects.

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METL Cybersecurity

Over the last few months, there were stories covering two Michigan school districts and other agencies who had their information held hostage by cyber-attacks. Michigan Educational Technology Leaders (METL) stepped in to help with this situation. METL is an organization of 56 ISDs across the state.

The METL group developed a cybersecurity best practice manual. MOTech leaders will take some time to break down these best practices and see how this information would be used to help further secure the LEA and MOISD networks and data systems. Many of the LEA and MOISD systems have been brought into compliance. One recent example of this was updating the firewall.

One of the areas that will take some work yet is the training of staff in cybersecurity. In a study by Verizon, the Breach Investigation Report of 2018, they found that emails were responsible for spreading 92% of all malware into technology systems.

A copy of the METL group report can be found at <https://misecure.org/>

Support request from LEA schools

The Evart Public Schools Superintendent and Board of Education recently moved forward with a motion to purchase support hours from the MOISD MOP Co-Op

technology team. MOP Co-Op technician, Ryan Boochard, will help them with their projects. At the last MOTech directors meeting, Three districts expressed interest in getting some support from MOP Co-Op to help fill the need for technical staff.

Morley Stanwood Community Schools K-12 Citizen Scientist Broadband Survey

On January 28th, Merit released the findings of the K-12 Citizen Scientist Broadband Survey at MSU, with the stakeholders. Morley Stanwood school was one of the first four pilot schools in the state to take this survey. The results were discussed, as well as how this information will be shared back with the organization and community. There was also a discussion on the next steps for helping to close the homework gap with the students in the state. Currently, some of the MOISD LEA schools are using Verizon access points that go home with some of the students. This can help to close the gap so these students can complete their homework.

Special Education

Special Education Supervisor Pat Craven Reports:

US 10 Graduation

The US 10 Corridor Schools at Muskegon River Youth Home are pleased to announce the high school graduation of one of their students. The graduating young man will be honored at a small ceremony on Wednesday, February 5th. The MOISD team of educators would like to

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congratulate this young man and wish him all the best in the future.

Graduation Collaboration with Evart High School

Students who arrive in the US 10 Corridor Schools immediately undergo an educational audit performed by our Transition Coordinators. During this audit, students’ Educational Development Plans (EDPs) are reviewed along with transcript reviews. Transition Coordinators will then collaborate with teachers, facility caseworkers, and parents to create a strong plan for the student moving forward. Part of this planning process involves collaboration with Evart High School as EHS eventually becomes the diploma-granting institution when students reach graduation status. Transition Coordinators meet with Evart High School counselor, Kendra Smith, to review graduation status and make any needed adjustments. This collaborative process involves months to even years of communication between the two parties. We are proud to partner with Evart High School in order to meet the educational needs of our students!

State Testing Preparation

The Michigan Department of Education requires that all qualifying students in residential facilities participate in the same testing as their peers in the regular school setting. That means all students who are in the grades that participate in M-STEP, SAT, ACT Work Keys, and other assessments will participate in these same tests at Muskegon River Youth Home and Pineview Homes. This presents a number of challenges to both the school and facility. However, months of planning and

teamwork come together and provide an outstanding testing environment for our students. Students that arrive during the testing window, even if for but a few weeks, will be registered and tested while they are with us. The ability for the US 10 Corridor Schools to test these students provides them with the needed support to be either college-ready or ready for the workforce upon returning to their home district.

Special Education

Special Education Supervisor Jenny Knopf Reports:

Winter Greetings!

Now that the holidays are over, we start thinking forward to a couple of fun upcoming events such as the “100th” day of school and March is Reading Month.

- **100’s Day** was celebrated on Friday, February 7th! Students had the opportunity to rotate to different classrooms and participate in fun 100’s Day based activities, including 100 exercises, building with 100 things, and making a 100 Day crown!
- **March is Reading Month** is always a fun way to focus on literacy! This year’s theme is “Under the Sea”!!! The committee has already met and is busy planning the month’s activities!



I look forward to sharing pictures of these events in the next board report.

Below are a couple of pictures of students who attended the Artworks reception on January 16th. Thank you to Lisa Nielsen, her amazing staff, and the wonderful people at Artworks who helped make this happen. Thank you to all who attended and supported our students!



Students standing in front of their artwork!



If you come to visit the Education Center, you will notice our new tree! Classrooms are each assigned a month to decorate the tree. This month Mrs. Sweppenheiser's elementary MOCI students and staff outdid themselves! Just another fun way to spread the good!!!

*Respectfully submitted by
Jenny Knopf, Education Center Supervisor*

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