



## Career & Technical Education

### Director of CTE Mike Miller Reports:

#### **IT Class Racking Up Credentials!**

*Contributed by Roger Meinert, Information  
Technology Teacher*

Students in the Information Technology program have the opportunity to earn dozens of industry-recognized credentials. Recently, Kyle Bowen (CCA) passed the 1st of the 2 required tests for his A+ certification. Kyle is our first student to pass any CompTIA test. He plans to complete test 2 in 3 weeks and will then have his A+ certification.



*Blaiz Marlow (RC) ringing the certification bell*

Later in the same week, Blaiz Marlow (RC) passed the Excel Expert certification, which means he has passed all seven Office

certification tests and has earned Microsoft Office Specialist Master Certification. Blaiz is the first IT student this year to earn his Master certification. He also broke Kyle's record from last year for the fastest time to finish all of the Microsoft Office Specialist Master certifications. Blaiz completed all seven exams (nine certifications) in 43 days, passing Kyle's record of 44 days.

On a side note, Governor Whitmer's line-item veto of section 64d, which provides 500 certification vouchers annually to each school, is negatively impacting our ability to continue to offer students these certification opportunities. Fortunately, Microsoft and Certiport have provided a temporary extension through next month of these licenses at no cost to us with the hope that 64d will be reinstated in a supplemental funding bill. If this does not occur, we will continue to offer students the opportunity to take these certification tests but will have to cover the costs, an estimated \$15,000-\$20,000 annually.

#### **Culinary Students Garner Local Recognition** *Contributed by Jennifer Upham, Culinary Arts Teacher*

Second-year Culinary Arts students learned about marketing through a project in collaboration with the Fatbelly Deli & Creamery in Stanwood. Students were tasked with creating an original sandwich as well as a marketing plan for it. The project began with Culinary Arts Paraeducator Shelli Hallman taking the students to Fatbelly to talk with owner, Jake Butler, and his employees. After hearing about the students' project, Jake decided to feature the top two

sandwiches as his monthly features. Shelli Hallman and Jennifer Upham choose the top three sandwiches and then invited Jake to the Career Center to choose which ones to feature. He and Mel Nichols came, and the students demonstrated and explained how to put their sandwiches together. After tasting all three, they decided to feature all of them!



*Mr. Miller's favorite, a Thai peanut butter slaw over a fried chicken breast*

The featured sandwiches are the Bomb BLT, a Pesto Mayo spread over a medium fried egg by Brandon Oswald (CH); a Thai Peanut Butter slaw over a fried chicken breast by Hannah Wellman (MS); and a chicken caprese layered with pesto and avocado aioli by Matilda Nikoles (MS). Fatbelly is collocated with the BP gas station in Stanwood near the intersection of Old State Road and 8 Mile Road, just west of US 131.

Also, Culinary Arts students once again took first place in the Big Rapids Fall Festival Chili Cook-off. This was quite a feat with competitors such as Nawal's, Szots, The Raven, and Schuberg's also participating.



*Mrs. Upham, Hannah Wellman (MS), Austyn Badgero (MS), Mrs. Hallman, and Josh Pyles*

### **Career Awareness and Career Exploration**

On Friday, October 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> graders from across the MOISD participated in Manufacturing Day. Students split their day between touring the Career Center and local manufacturers. At the Career Center, students rotated through all 14 programs and participated in hands-on activities led by current MOCC students.



*Casey Riley, an 8<sup>th</sup>-grader from CH, drives a deck screw in Construction Trades*

Our manufacturing partners included Chippewa Plastics, Fluid Routing Solutions, Hamtech, Haworth, FSU Swan Bldg. (Welding and Machining programs), Ice Mountain, Original Footwear, The Pioneer, Reed City Group, and Vitro.



MS 8<sup>th</sup>-graders at Fluid Routing Solutions

Later in the month, MOISD 10<sup>th</sup>-graders visited the Career Center and toured three programs aligned to their career interests. Whether or not these 10<sup>th</sup> graders decide to attend the Career Center next year, this Career Exploration activity is an integral part of their career development. The information they gleaned from these experiences will undoubtedly assist them as they update their educational development plans (EDP) and make decisions about what comes after high school. Additionally, these students will be able to visit the MOCC on a future date to experience a day-in-the-life of a Career Center student if they are still unsure if one of our programs is the right choice for them.



Liz Sheldon (CCA) coaches a BR 10<sup>th</sup>-grader on the mill

Happy Thanksgiving!

This month's updates fit into three of the Board identified Core Values: Local Success is our Success; Student-Focused; and Everyone Together.

First up for this month's report is an update from Jessica Wimmer, Great Start Collaborative Coordinator. MOISD was recently awarded a \$20,000 Trusted Advisor Grant from MDE. This grant will provide the resources necessary to bring the Talking is Teaching campaign to life in our communities.

The Mecosta-Osceola Great Start Collaboration [GSC] is currently 31 partners strong composed of businesses, agencies, and community leaders who are hoping to ensure all children thrive from birth to school entry and beyond. In addition to the partners, there are four Parent Ambassadors who have been selected to share a parent's perspectives in order to ensure the action agenda is created to meet the needs of the Mecosta –Osceola family



## Special Projects

Director of Special Projects Karen Roy Reports:



Parents are actively seeking clear child development messaging to help them prepare their children for success in school and life. As a result, the Mecosta County Reads-Early Care group decided to collaboratively integrate the Talking Is Teaching campaign. The campaign impacts Outcomes 3 and 4, children are developmentally ready to succeed in school at the time of school entry and children prepared to succeed in fourth grade and beyond by reading proficiently by the end of third grade.

"Talking is Teaching: Talk, Read, Sing" is a public awareness and action campaign that helps parents recognize their power to boost their children's early brain and vocabulary development through simple, everyday actions - like describing things while walking outside, or singing songs together during bath time. Using books, parent videos, text messaging, social media, and information from expert partners, Talking is Teaching empowers parents and caregivers with fun and easy ways to improve their babies' learning.

Recently, Jessica Wimmer, Coordinator, and Tricia Smith-Bennett, Parent Liaison, became a Talking Is Teaching trainer with hopes to provide four sessions [Early Literacy, Early Math, Social and Emotional Development, and Parent Cafe] on a regular basis throughout the MOISD area. A pilot group, consisting of eight parents of young children, proved to be successful when parents requested the next session as soon as possible. Parents shared, "I can do this" and "Talking Is Teaching makes me feel like I am doing something right for my child". The goal is simple, to provide a clear early childhood message system to ensure all children are ready to succeed in school at the time of school entry.

The GSC explores the current systems, identifies gaps and broken systems, and implements sustainable processes. In addition to the Talking Is Teaching initiative, the GSC is collaborating with partners to increase prenatal care, breastfeeding supports, and affordable, high-quality child care. Thank you for supporting a community initiative that will make a difference.

### **On the Homeless Front**

In October we held the 6th Annual Hands Across Michigan Homeless Liaison conference. We began the day with a Poverty Simulation in the morning and learned more about foster care support and homelessness in the afternoon. There were 82 folks present for the simulation and then only homeless liaisons stayed for the afternoon (approx. 50). All attendees left with hygiene products, underclothes, backpacks/school supplies, books, and book bags. Planning has begun for next year's event!

In the first week of November, I will be traveling to Washington, DC for the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth annual conference. I will be presenting with colleagues across the nation on immersive awareness activities in a pre-conference session. This national conference never fails to provide me with insights and ideas for how to improve what we are doing in Michigan and in our local programs. Thanks for the opportunity!

The final piece for November is a collaboration about Play with a Purpose by GSRP Staff: Lead Teachers- Katie Carey (Eastwood), Aimee Gatrell (Barryton), Sally Park (Reed City), and Associate Teacher-Angela Longberry (Eastwood). It is common for visitors to view what is going on in the

preschool classroom as "just play". In the GSRP classroom, students are required to have a minimum of 60 minutes of uninterrupted "worktime".

The purpose of play is often misunderstood in the early childhood classroom. Unstructured play does not mean that children are let loose in an unstructured classroom. Children at this age use all their senses to acquire information. Therefore, "the more senses that are involved in learning, the more information is retained."

Each classroom is prepared based on the individual needs of each child, which is an important part of having successful free play periods. Open-ended, realistic materials used during these periods provide opportunities for children to engage with and explore materials at their own levels.

It is during these times that staff are able to support student growth and skill development through interactions, intentionally planned workspaces and through anecdotal observations that are collected and analyzed inside our child assessment tool. We think Mr. Rogers was right when he stated, "Play gives children a chance to practice what they are learning."

Thanks for your continued support!



## General Education

### Director of General Education Tonya Harrison Reports:

#### The General Ed Team:

Each year the MOISD “sponsors” the Project Outreach collaborative, with all six of the local high schools. We have changed the format a bit, by adding a few more meetings throughout the school year and holding our main event in the Fall. By holding the event in the fall, schools can work to carry their theme throughout the entire school year, with the additional meetings allowing the students to share ideas and the impact on their schools.



*Project Outreach*

A grant was written, by the General Education department to help cover the costs of the speaker. Without the grant from Mecosta County Community Foundation, we may not have been able to bring in this amazing speaker. Our speaker this year was James Orrigo. Many of our Project Outreach leadership team saw James at state student council conference a couple of years ago. James’ area of specialty is sharing his personal stories of overcoming hardships, like his own traumatic brain injury and coping with his mother’s lost battle to cancer. Along with traveling to high schools around the

country, James, who is also a musician, works with adolescent cancer patients to create a “music video of their special wishes”. Our schools helped produce a music video for a young boy in Boston, whose wish is to travel around the world. Each local high school took on a different country and created props and costumes to wear in the video. After the main event on October 22, James traveled to each high school to share his story with the students and then worked to film their portion of the video. He “stayed with us” for three days to complete the project. We are anxiously awaiting the final video, so we can showcase the student’s work. The young boy in Boston will have “first viewing rights”. If you are interested in learning more about James Orrigo, you can find him at [www.ladinabattle.com](http://www.ladinabattle.com).



*Speaker: James Orrigo with Students*



*Local Students Enjoying Lunch Time*



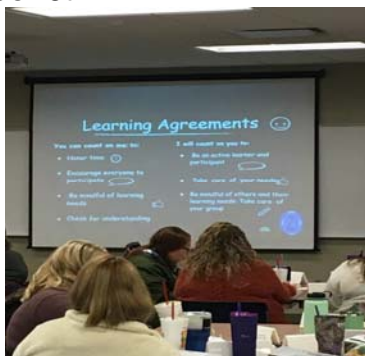


*The Outstanding Culinary Crew!*

The Project Outreach team would also like to thank Mrs. Jennifer Upham and the culinary team for a delicious lunch, the entire facilities/maintenance team and technology team for all the set up work, and the Career Center team for adjusting their daily schedule to accommodate the event! The event can only be described as a complete success, and we look forward to our next project!

**Early Literacy:**

The first MOISD Literacy Leadership Meeting took place on Wednesday, Oct. 23rd. Teacher leaders from five to six of the locals attended and collaborated around best practices in Early Literacy, leading literacy, meeting facilitation, literacy resources and new learning on current literacy research shared from the ISD Statewide Coaching Network. Four more dates were set for future meetings with the next meeting being held on Friday, December 6th.



*Learning Agreements*

Amy led the first of five Pre-K Essential Practices in Early Literacy workshops on Oct. 25th, with 50 of our local MOISD Pre-K teachers, HeadStart teachers, and some childcare professionals. The learning series is providing deeper learning of the 10 Pre-K Essential Practices which has become a requirement for many of our PreK Educators.



*Amy Preparing to Lead our Pre-K Teachers*

**Math/Science:**

Justin Fox has been spending additional time at Big Rapids Middle School in Mr. Bennett's STEM Class. Together, they have been teaching students about coding and programming. The students are using their skills to program Spheros (small robots) to work their way through mazes, created by the students.

Mr. Fox has been becoming acclimated to a variety of state organizations, including the MAISA Math/Science Coaches Network. It is a group that allows Justin to connect with other coaches around the state and network resources.

**Behavioral Specialist/Mental Health Supports:**

**Behavior Supports:**

We continue to provide CPI training, with registration numbers for November at capacity level, but another round of

trainings are open in December and January.

Michael has been training the Evert Reads volunteers on Trauma. The training has been well received, there is a second session scheduled for November.

Michael and the CMH team will be offering Critical Incident Stress Management training in December for school staff interested in providing 1:1 CISM support for students and staff following critical events. The collaborative team have met with Superintendents and Building Principals to share the news and encourage registration/participation.

There is continuous coaching/consulting in both Emotionally Impaired programs, with the goal of building program and staff capacity. In addition, more requests for onsite behavior support are coming in from our locals.

In October another successful Paraprofessional training took place at the MOISD. The October topic was: Professional and Personal Boundaries. These “trainings” will be a monthly endeavor, with November’s topics focusing on Staff Resiliency, Adverse Child Experiences and Building a Trauma Informed Classroom.

### ***Mental Health Supports:***

Beth Bond has been called to assist between four to six local districts with multiple classrooms and/or students in some of the schools She continues to become familiar with current community resources by attending agency meetings. We are also happy to report that there are a variety of agency participants committed to providing support to our students/families in Mecosta and Osceola Counties. Beth successfully completed

four days of CPI instructor training and is ready to become part of the awesome team we have to train district employees in non-violent crisis intervention.

## **Technology**

### **Director of Technology Fred Sharpsteen Reports:**

#### **MOP Co-Op Notes:**

We welcomed a new member to our team in October. Ryan Boochard has lived in the area his entire life, and is a Ferris graduate.

We are helping Crossroad Charter Academy with their new phone system and working to implement Paper Cut for their copier fleet.

Pictured below is our intern, Kyle Bowen, working on the Joey Chromebook cart for the Career Center.



### **Equity for Students & the Homework Gap:**

We were recently contacted by a service provider making us aware of their efforts to bring fiber to the homes in rural areas of Mecosta County. They are looking to help bring some more Internet options to the



community. Late last month, I went to the Merit Broadband Conference with Big Rapids Township Trustee, Jerry Everett. During the sessions, they talked about community opportunities to get better Internet connections to the rural areas of the state.

### **Cyber Security Meeting:**

The month of October was Cybersecurity month. The Michigan Educational Technology Leadership group (METL), of which we are 1 of 56 members, released their Essential Cybersecurity Practices for K-12 Guide to help all K-12 partners with best management practices. This informational book will help all schools to keep student data secure and safe. The MOISD technology team is working with the LEAs to set up informational opportunities for students and parents regarding online safety. At our last MOTech meeting, we talked about the availability of “common sense media” which would be a K-12 curriculum helping students learn to be safe while online. The E-rate program requires that we present information on the Child Internet Protection Act to the MOISD Board in a public hearing.

### **Xello/Career Cruising and MiRead:**

The MOTech leaders have been working with the Career Center and LEAs to help set up MiDataHubs as they connect to Xello/Career Cruising and MiRead. These systems have a direct impact on the students' learning path. They allow multiple data points to be used to assess the students' progress and, in the case of Xello, help them to look at their career opportunities after they graduate from school.

## **Special Education**

### **Director of Special Education Kim Tufnell Reports:**

We welcome our new Parent Advisory Committee representatives who join Diana Bitler from Chippewa Hills and Doug Barnes from Morley Stanwood: Amy Grandy, representative from CCA, Dave Scharlow, representative from Reed City, and Shavon Jane, representative from Big Rapids. Their first meeting is scheduled for November 11, at 4:30, there will be a presentation from Michigan Alliance for Families, and set the annual goals for the 2019-20 school year.

Our partnership with Chippewa Hills and MIBSLI (Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative) continues with Chippewa Hills with both cohorts fully immersed in PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports) and layering on reading interventions. The district is beginning to see how their hard work is paying off in both behavior and academics and they are using multiple sources of data to make intentional decisions. MOISD continues to be the regional hub for MIBLSI with teams from Chippewa Hills and Montcalm participating in monthly work on campus.

Our General Supervision Grant was approved by MDE this year, which again was not an easy process. Christy has done an exceptional job of revamping what we will be focusing on this year by reviewing the Office of Special Education's (OSE's) remarks about our Final 2018 Report and data and making the necessary changes to align the activities with lead measures that

will provide the outcomes necessary to show growth in our focus area, which was Graduation Rates. We continue working with our local districts on the State Performance Plan indicators (SPP) and processes that the districts will need to have in place as we work through our other monitoring activities with Cohort 0.

### **Special Education Supervisor Pat Craven Reports:**

#### **MOISD Leadership Collaborates With Youth Opportunities' Community Board**

Youth Opportunities Investments, the corporate office that maintains Muskegon River Youth Home, is working within the Evert community to establish a Community Board. This group will collaborate with local stakeholders to provide the best experience for the youth served in the Youth Home. Mr. Craven was invited to be a key member of the group and work to grow relationships already created through student transition programs previously created by the US Corridor School staff. The purpose of the community board will be to provide growth opportunities for students in areas of job and skill training, resume building, interviewing skills, and many more areas rehabilitation.

#### **US 10 Corridor Staff Receives Trauma Training From Youth Opportunities Staff**

Friday, October 18th, found the US 10 Corridor Staff partnering with trauma trained staff from Youth Opportunities Investments to grow our learning in areas of trauma-responsive practices. Staff participated in activities and discussions while working to better understand how we can appropriately respond to students struggling through trauma. Training will

continue during the next two early release Friday professional development opportunities.

#### **US 10 Corridor Staff Bring Joys of Halloween to Their Students**



Staff from both US 10 Corridor facilities worked to bring the Halloween spirit to their students! Fun costumes and learning-related games brought cheer and optimism to our students. Seeing the smiles on our students' faces as they join in on the excitement of Halloween is a special experience. Opportunities such as this help to grow and foster strong student-teacher relationships of trust and help to break down barriers to educational growth and achievement. Happy Halloween!

## Special Education Supervisor Jenny Knopf Reports:

### MOEC Upcoming events:

- **Harvest Dinner** is scheduled for **Friday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> at 1:00p.m. in the gym.** In collaboration with Jennifer Upham and students from the MOCC culinary program, students (and staff) have the opportunity to sample several traditional Thanksgiving Day foods including turkey and pumpkin pie. Students from the Adult Transition Center downtown campus (Ellen Kanitz, teacher) help serve in the kitchen and help out in the cafeteria.
- **Santa Shop** is scheduled for **December 18<sup>th</sup>** in the gym. Students will have the opportunity to shop for their family and friends with their classmates and help from MOISD staff. This event is a great way for our students to practice social skills such as choice making, turn taking, and good manners, along with math/money skills. Santa Shop is a student only activity and participation by students is completely optional.

This month, I am featuring our resource room teachers/classrooms:

**Cindy Swymeler, Secondary RR** – Cindy teaches middle and high school age students who mostly have autism and require more support than can be found in a middle school or high school MOCI classroom. She works on communication and building independence and self-advocacy. Cindy and her students are

supported by paras Gina Durfee and Michele Paulson.

**Mary Kromer, Elementary Resource Room Teacher** – Mary’s students are in grades kindergarten through 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Again, the majority of her students have autism and require more support than can be found in a typical elementary building. Students at this level are learning how to “do school” by working on positive behavior strategies such as following directions and staying on-task. They also work on communication and independent functional skills. Mary is supported in her classroom with two paras.

**The last member of our Resource Teaching Team is Katie Rice.** Katie’s classroom is also an elementary resource room classroom and shares similar strategies and goals as Mary’s class. Students work on a variety of academic, communication, and functional skills at their appropriate level. Katie and her students are also supported by two paras.

*Respectfully Submitted, Jenny Knopf –  
MOEC Sp. Ed. Supervisor*