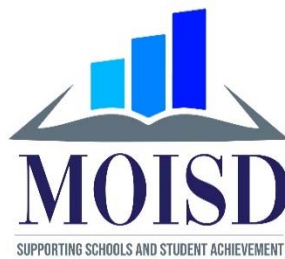


OCTOBER 2020



***Our Mission:
Supporting Schools and
Student Achievement***

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

Career & Technical Education

Director of CTE Mike Miller Reports:

The Mecosta-Osceola CTE Early Middle College Program Begins its Second Year with Enrollment Increase:

The Mecosta-Osceola CTE EMC program is an opportunity for students enrolled in Cybersecurity and Information Technology (CsIT) at MOCC. Students enroll their junior year and commit to a fifth year of high school, during which they're taking 24 college credits that are paid for with state funds. Students take a combined 20 credits during their junior and senior years during their regularly scheduled MOCC class. CsIT college classes are through Mid Michigan College. Additionally, students take six credits in career preparation through Ferris State University. CsIT Instructor, Roger Meinert teach both the Mid Michigan and Ferris classes.

In addition to starting out their post-secondary journey with 44 credits at little to no cost, students have the opportunity to earn multiple industry-recognized credentials. Students who don't wish to commit to a fifth-year can take advantage of the college credits and certifications during their time at MOCC through dual enrollment. Through the Ferris Next Scholarship, any student who earns three credits from Ferris with a C or higher grade while still in high

school will receive \$1,000 per year for up to four years if they attend Ferris.

This year, we have seven new juniors who have enrolled in our EMC program: three from Big Rapids, two from Chippewa Hills, one from Morley Stanwood, and one from Reed City. Additionally, there are three returning EMC students beginning their senior year: one from Crossroads and two from Reed City. In addition to these 10 EMC students, there are 15 dual-enrolled students, some taking the courses for credit and others who are just auditing the course. We're off to a great start and are excited to have students from all six of our districts taking college classes at MOCC!

MOCC and Meceola Tech Enrollment Down Due to COVID:

One of the many impacts COVID has had is on enrollment. Last year around this time, MOCC had 576 students compared to just 458 this year. While it's unfortunate to think that students who might have otherwise participated in a CTE program were unable to due to their circumstances surrounding COVID, the smaller class sizes in most programs have lessened the burden on staff and students regarding COVID compliance and safety.

Meceola Tech is in a similar situation. Although initial interest was in line with previous years, several classes did not run this fall due to low enrollment. Most classes have a five or six student minimum to ensure financial solvency. The good news is that we're planning to run these programs in the

spring as we continue our marketing efforts and strengthen partnerships with local employers looking who are looking to improve their employees' skillsets.

General Education

Director of General Education Tonya Harrison Reports:

The General Ed Team:

The General Education department is continuing to be busy, as we help support our locals with the return to school. We held our first meetings with curriculum directors and principals in September. All local district administrators are focused on understanding the variety of assessments required in these opening weeks of school. Including benchmark assessments that need to be reported to the Board of Education for their ECOLP, data to drive their Individualized Reading Plans, and the secondary testing "requiring" the PSAT and SAT assessments. In light of the adjustments for COVID and working to fight the gaps of missing last spring, the amount of assessments feels overwhelming to our curriculum directors and building administrators.

Mr. Sharpsteen and I have spent time communicating with our pupil accounting auditor at the Clare-Gladwin RESD and relaying the information back to the local administrators and technology staff. Although the time/hours clock reports are no longer needed, there is a great deal of work related to two-way communication with students and how to record it for the 75% attendance requirements and ECOLP requirements. Teachers and principals are being tasked with additional paperwork to meet the new attendance requirements.

Allison Nelson attended the first of our five principal meetings. We reviewed the data collected at the end of our training on August 24th. She laid out the format for our upcoming meetings and explained how the case studies would be conducted. The feedback from this process has been positive. She will return for ISD-wide learning on October 23rd.



Allison Nelson-August 24, 2020

Early Literacy:

Amy is continuing to support literacy by curating/creating resources that can be found in a Padlet at bit.ly/MOISDLitToolkit. She is also setting up opportunities for virtual coaching online/on-demand professional learning. Amy created a Literacy Coaching Opportunity Board bit.ly/MOISDCOACH to help communicate opportunities available to local educators. Amy still maintains MIMTSS School Leadership Team Co-Coach's role in which she supports MTSS and literacy efforts at Weidman Elementary.

Math/Science/Technology:

The MOISD Gen Ed department continues to support the needs of teachers who are working with virtual and in-person learners. In Evart, Justin Fox facilitated a day of learning centered around Google Classroom and other ed-tech tools to help elementary and middle school teachers navigate the new teaching demands in both settings. He also provided online training for MOISD

teacher consultants and satellite teachers related to Google Classroom and calendar training for speech pathologists to help improve communication in an online environment. Justin is also providing learning support for Zoom meetings to our MOISD team.

Behavior/Mental Health Supports:

Beth and Michael are in the planning phases of structuring a Peer Resiliency Support program for all MOISD special education staff. We recently spoke to a group of stakeholders from various discipline groups to provide information, get input, and launch some ideas. The next step is to secure peer facilitators for the small group sessions and work together on a presentation for the program's roll-out on October 23rd.

Special Education

Director of Special Education Christy Miller Reports:

Ayla and I have been busy this month creating guidance to aid teachers, administrators, and itinerants throughout our ISD and supporting students during this partially online COVID era. Recent guidance documents cover topics such as what to do when a virtual student isn't making progress, writing contingency learning plans, reviewing the offer of FAPE, and pupil accounting, among others. As we continue to produce guidance, accompanying videos are recorded to walk staff through the guidance document. These videos are shared with staff and posted on our website, and staff can watch them at their convenience. Hopefully, this will aid in supporting providers while keeping them out of meetings and with students.

Speaking of keeping staff in front of students, CPI instructors Mary Corder, Michael Bausano, and Beth Bond will be delivering evening CPI training in October, at the request of Evert Public Schools. The training is scheduled for four, 3-hour sessions with a back-up fifth date if needed. This is one way that we support local district needs as we try to maximize time with students.

Special Education Secretary Wendy Lyons and I held Medicaid training for local district staff hired to provide services to general education students under the 31n grant. Section 31n of the Revised School Code requires that districts accepting 31n funds engage in Medicaid billing through C4S. Caring for Students (C4S) is a new Medicaid billing system that allows districts to bill for medical services provided for general education students. Medical services include behavioral health services. Prior to October 2019, districts were only able to Medicaid bill for students receiving special education services. The training that took place last week will enable providers to begin billing in October to generate additional Medicaid reimbursement dollars for districts. As districts continue to hire staff, we will continue to meet with individuals to provide them with the needed training.

Last year I took part in Cohort 0. This group consists of eight ISDs that partnered with the MDE Office of Special Education (OSE) to review their General Supervision System and determine areas of growth. Cohort 0 has elected to continue meeting this year, but with a slightly different focus. This year Cohort 0 will be engaging in an in-depth data analysis and use professional learning that will enable ISDs to help districts make the most out of their data and translate it into

actionable findings. The first data process webinar will take place on the 13th.

Special Education Supervisor Pat Craven Reports:

Welcome, Mr. Suemnick!



After working many years in the private sector, Mr. Suemnick made the decision to become a special education teacher. Mr. Suemnick began his career as a High School and Middle School resource room teacher. He also co-taught in Math and English classes before moving into the position of Dean of Students and eventually becoming the Principal at his former school. Mr. Suemnick is very excited for the opportunity to get back into the classroom again. His main goal for this year is to foster a positive learning experience for his students.

Mr. Suemnick holds an Educational Specialist degree from Wayne State University in Educational Leadership, a Master of Education degree from Wayne State University in Special Education, and a Bachelor of Science degree from Central Michigan University in History and Business. Mr. Suemnick also holds professional educator certifications in Educational Leadership (All Levels), Special Education Learning Disabilities (All Levels), and History and Business Education (6-12).

US 10 Corridor Celebrates Another GED Success at Pineview Homes:

The US 10 Corridor Team at Pineview Homes gathered in a socially distanced manner on Friday, October 2nd to celebrate the success of another GED graduate. Mrs. Ray, Mr. Seager, and Mrs. Bancroft all worked tirelessly to help prepare our student to pass the GED sub-tests with “College Ready” scores!



Congratulations Student and Team!

Special Education Supervisor Jaime Knape Reports:

As Christy mentioned in a previous update, my role has shifted a bit. I now supervise Early On (providing services for children Birth-3), all itinerants, and I have become a coach for teams who are considering moving a student from their local school into an ISD program.

Coaching Update:

Since the beginning of the school year, I have begun the process for 13 different students at various ISD locations. The teams have been at varying stages, and some teams have determined the need to try additional strategies while others have begun the process to “present” them into an

ISD program. Teams have been contacting me to walk them through the following:

- Organizing behavior plans, assisting with documentation, assisting with graphs/charts for analysis
- Behavior plan ideas
- Ensuring students are receiving an “appropriate” education (what does this look like?)
- Accommodation logs
- Problem-solve doing “enough” at your school- determining anything else you can try.
- Answering the question: “what else do we need to try to consider an ISD program?”
- Goal writing for struggling students
- Assisting with WRITING the FBA/PBSP
- Assigning roles-- (who does what in OUR building with our staff).
- LRE Forms to process through appropriate placement
- Putting together the considerations packet of materials (making sure you have all of the documentation you need).

Itinerant Updates:

The Covid-19 MDE guidelines have had itinerant staff busy with Contingency Learning Plans and preparing their students for virtual services, should the need arise. In addition to that, they have been working diligently to provide students with face-to-face therapy and other students with virtual therapy. We have assisted with this process by providing staff with “DocuSign” accounts so parents could attend meetings virtually and still sign items in “real-time.” Those that have used it have seen great success with ensuring parents still feel very involved with the process, even while attending a meeting, virtually.

Early On Update:

During the shutdown order (March through August), we saw a decrease in referrals. Once school entered into session, a huge influx of referrals came our way. The staff has been working hard to complete these referrals and continue to provide early intervention services to our community, all while striving to maintain social distance (as much as possible) and follow personal protection equipment guidelines for in-home services. It has been a bit of a tightrope walk, but staff have fallen into a new “normal” and are very happy to see the students again.

Special Education Supervisor Jenny Knopf Reports:

October already??? Where does the time go? Students continue to learn and grow each day. Staff continues to be flexible and work together to provide a supportive and safe environment for all students. Our K-8 students have completed or are in the process of completing our first round of benchmark assessments. In addition, our K-3rd grade students have completed their 3rd Grade Reading Assessments. Teachers continue to work to complete student IEPs and CLPs.

Staff continues to be creative when brainstorming safe ways to offer fun Fall learning activities to students. This year, one of our adult transition center teachers, Kathleen Rau, came up with a fun idea to bring a Pumpkin Patch to the Education Center. Next week, students will have the opportunity to pick out a pumpkin placed in the soccer field! Classes will then decide how they will decorate their pumpkins! A big thank you to our maintenance, transportation, and tech staff who work so hard to make good things happen for students!



A student in Mrs. Schlanderer's classroom is learning about what the inside of a pumpkin feels like!



Students and staff are enjoying a warm fall day and the new playground!!!

Respectfully submitted by Jenny M. Knopf

Special Education Supervisor for Evert Public Schools and Planner/Monitor Ayla Lockhart Reports:

As the year is underway, I am able to reflect and appreciate the greatness that is happening around our ISD. I have had the privilege of stepping out into some of our local districts and buildings; it's an amazing thing to see the resilience and support this year. Our students are thankful to be back and are taking the NEW "NORMS" very well.

The staff has been overly flexible as many things about school continue to change. I am thankful to be joining Evert's supportive and welcoming staff as we continue to work together for what's best for kids! As part of the planner/monitor role, I have been able to work with districts on general supervision items as well as walk alongside them for compliance and improvement items; all focused around improving results for kids!

Website Updates:

We have also been expanding our website to include all newly updated guidance to support these trying times during COVID. This also includes NEW video guidance as we help walk through some very NEW expectations in light of COVID. We welcome questions and aim to help guide and support our teams through the process.

Overall, I'm very excited to be a part of our team to support our locals and all students!

Special Education Supervisor of MOISD Satellite Programs & Big Rapids Public Schools Cheryl Wright Reports:

All of our teachers have been working hard to partner with parents in developing Contingency Learning Plans for each student. All IEPs, including those from last spring, are current.

Our program for students with Emotional Impairments at Big Rapids Middle School is working to improve transitions to general education and promote success for students. Teacher Denise Fehrenbach, who is new to the program, has been increasing academic opportunities to ensure access to general education content. She has implemented the use of Edgenuity for science and social studies. She has also begun hands-on activities that allow students to engage in teamwork where they work on social skills, including collaborating and communicating. These opportunities will provide students with the knowledge and skills to be successful in general education classes.

The Early Childhood Special Education staff has upgraded their picture communication boards. The picture boards are used throughout the day to reinforce routines and develop communication skills. They now include a top portion that can be changed to include words for the weekly story or student-specific skills. This change will support both literacy and skill development.

The resource room at Riverview has been establishing routines with new students and re-establishing them with students who experienced a longer than usual break from school. They continue to use visual cues to support communication as well as independence in daily tasks. They have added paraprofessional Cheryl Aris to their staff.



Fall is certainly upon us, and the year is progressing nicely! This week marks the fifth week in school for our face-to-face preschool students and week two for our virtual classroom. As a team, we decided to shift our “marking periods” to better align with the work we want to accomplish with our students and recognize that we may need to go full virtual at some point. Therefore, we shifted to a short (five-week) initial baseline data collection period. Then we divided the remainder of the year into two equal time periods for data collection for ongoing student assessment periods. The staff has been working hard to collect this data, so they have a great place to begin measuring our progress moving forward.

October brings fire safety presentations to our students; the format is different this year. The information is invaluable as they all learn about being safe. You know they share the whole “stop, drop and roll” activities with their families.

I am looking forward to working with Jennifer Vidak to get our budgets more final now that we have actual allocations. It always feels better, safer to have actual numbers to work with as we plan for our program, and supporting staff growth and development.

I reached out to Joni Thompson, Executive Director of Angels of Action, to get some information from her on the “Rock the Crock” project we have partnered with her to make available in the community. The following is what she shared:

I have attached a couple of graphics we have made with some of the awesome comments we have received so far. Next week will be our halfway point, and we will be sending out a survey after that distribution. We have so

Special Projects

Director of Special Projects Karen Roy Reports:

Pumpkins, colorful leaves, and masks...
Oh My!

much interest that we already have a waitlist for the next round when we start one. We have learned so much with starting this program, and we look forward to continuing our community outreach with this program. We have found a way to fulfill the need for food, family all while helping with literacy. We are extremely blessed to have such amazing community partners like you, this is how our community will thrive and grow! I am sending you a video we created that shows the whole process of this program. Please only share this video with our board at this time as we are looking to finalize a few things with it before it is shared with others. ()The video is not currently available. I have included Jesi Wimmer in this email as she is such an amazing piece of this program, and I am beyond blessed to be able to work and collaborate with her and her group.*

Together we can do GREAT things.



We have been fortunate to have a gift of “extra staff” on hand to help out with the virtual program, to fill in for folks who have been absent, and to help with other special preschool classroom projects. You will note that “extra staff” is in quotations as there is no such thing! We do still have one closed classroom, but those staff are actively engaged. Heather Wilkinson is filling in as the Lead Teacher in Evert until we can find a candidate to fill that role permanently. Bethany Wieber has been working in all the classrooms to help with behavior and putting in visuals, exploring new practices, techniques, and strategies with all the staff. Bethany recently completed her Master’s Degree and also has an Applied Behavioral Analysis certification--so we are putting her new skills into practice! I asked her to share with you some of what she has been doing. **Here’s Bethany!**

I am able to support the GSRP teachers by helping them learn what the children are trying to communicate through their behavior since behavior is a form of communication. So far this year, I have been able to create visuals to help ensure the teachers are creating clear, objective expectations for each piece of their day. I am able to go into their classrooms and

observe; during my observations, I am looking for areas where we can add clearer expectations and where we can add functional communication training as well as behavior skills training to give the students a chance at a brighter future. The skills we will be focusing on teaching will help the children learn to communicate with everyone they encounter in their future. We will teach them how to join a group of children already engaged in an activity, how to ask for help or a break, what to do when they are upset, as well as how to ask for clearer expectations when given a task. I am providing the staff with different antecedent strategies to help avoid conflicts from ever becoming an issue. I am guiding them on how to use the High Scope Steps in Resolving Conflict for when those conflicts do arise. From that process, the children will learn how to work through those conflicts and self regulate on their own, and they will possess a skill they will use for the rest of their lives. Essentially, I am supporting schools and student achievement, which is our mission. When a teacher's antecedent strategies aren't working, and we have a student who exhibits challenging behavior, I will enter the classroom and observe. I will begin taking data to try to find the function of the behavior, and then I will create a behavioral definition. From that, we can come up with goals for this student and a behavior intervention plan (BIP) on how to meet those goals, while still continuing to take data to learn if our interventions are successful. If the data is showing that it is not successful, we will find an alternative approach. This BIP can follow the child into Kindergarten, and their new teachers will be able to provide the same consistent plan that we found to work, if necessary.

With the passage of the school budgets, the income caps were lifted for GSRP, so we can accept all children that apply (up to our allocated slots). Our numbers are growing in our classrooms daily. We are

working with our partners to ensure that we do not take students away from other tuition-based programs or local child caring centers as the last thing we want to do is cause the existing child care field to be more disrupted or to suffer financially. We are proceeding with caution and touching base with families on our current waitlist. All programs are being held harmless this year, with the expectation that we work to fill our slots, just like any other year. Business as usual in an unusual year!

Thanks for your continued support!

Technology

Director of Technology Fred Sharpsteen Reports:

The technology team has moved from the start of school mode into the full swing of fall activities.

Wi-Fi Access for Local Schools:

We worked with Ferris State University (FSU) to help get Wi-Fi access points located on their campus. Michigan's K-12 map shows open Wi-Fi access across all communities. Ferris graciously opened up access to Internet Wi-Fi so local students can connect if they need that access.

Opportunities and Challenges of Remote Learning:

I had some conversations with FSU's Chief Technology Officer (CTO), Bhavani Koneru, about trying to create equity for all students. We agree that this is needed and that all students should have equal opportunity no matter what their zip code. We are reaching out to the folks at Merit regarding their project "The Michigan

Moonshot", trying to get a community plan in place. The project had a setback on October 1st when House Bill 4288 passed, keeping K-12 and higher education from directly getting any of the state broadband funds. This bill does not allow funding to go to government or educational units. We were hoping to get some funds for the Michigan State Education Network to build connections to the local K-12 schools. We also discussed researching Washtenaw and Oakland counties to see if we can use some of their work to help Mecosta and Osceola counties move forward.

Technology Support Member Leaves our Team.

Support technician Ryan Boochard is leaving our team. Ryan is not going far, being hired on as the Technology Director for Crossroads Charter Academy. He has been a real asset to the team, and we wish him the best. We are grateful that we will still be able to work with Ryan as part of the MOTech team.

Zoom and Remoting Learning:

Some new skills are being developed as we adapt to remote learning. Students are learning that there is proper etiquette to remote meetings and communication. This will likely prove to be a valuable skill as businesses continue to use virtual meetings in the future.

This Month's Challenge:

Our team's latest challenge has been finding technology education resources such as headphones, conference webcams, Chromebooks, and other technology peripherals. Because of remote learning and what is outlined in the Continuity of Learning Plan, there has been more demand for these types of products. Items are flying off the shelves, and suppliers are setting limits as to how

many of these items a business may procure. It is a constant challenge to find ways for equal and equitable access to the Internet for students at their remote learning locations.

MOP Placements:

We continue to have three MOP placements at the local schools, Reed City, Big Rapids, and Evart. The MOP workers are helping with Level 1 and Level 2 support. They all are doing a great job in helping move education forward. We are in the process of hiring a tech for the Evart location as a result of Mr. Boochard's departure.

Many of our local districts are finding more issues that arise with introducing one device to one student (1:1) ratio. Things like repairing accidental damage to devices or helping students connect devices, on and off-site, demand the technology teams' attention. With these challenges, there are also great opportunities. They create an environment where we all have to work more closely than ever with the local school IT staff to resolve them. This is leading to greater communication and community.