



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 14, 2005

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EPIC – MRA RELEASES EDUCATION ACCOUNTABILITY STUDY IN GENESEE COUNTY

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EPIC–MRA Vice President and Founding Partner Ed Sarpolus was in Genesee County today to present findings of an education accountability study. The Genesee Intermediate School District commissioned the study at the request of the 21 local public school districts it serves. The study involved interviews with 508 adults (ages 18+) in Genesee County during November 2004. The study has a sampling error of ± 4.4 percent.

The study found that Genesee County residents want stronger curriculum, a way to address teacher apathy, more parental involvement, more discipline, character development and greater emphasis on career/job training from their schools. Education leaders stated during a press conference that these key priorities represented the community’s assessment of what their schools need to focus on to do a better job of meeting the needs of the communities they serve.

When asked what they liked most about their local public school district, respondents ranked “teachers,” “quality education,” and “opportunities for students” the highest. However, as suggested by the key areas needing improvement, respondents may generally be pleased but they are not satisfied. The study shows that the community wants more from its schools.

A characteristic that was evident in several instances,” noted Sarpolus, “was a weak connection between the school and community. Many respondents just ‘didn’t know’ enough to provide an informed answer. That means the kinds of communication and the

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- Market
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relationships that serve as vehicles for that communication have to be more focused and meaningful.” One respondent in four said the quality of education in their local school district has worsened in recent years and the same percentage said the quality of education in their district is not as good as that in surrounding districts. Specifically, a 38 percent plurality of respondents said the quality of education provided by their local school district has “stayed about the same” in recent years, 25 percent said it was “worse” and just 20 percent said “improved.” When asked to compare the quality of education in their district to that of surrounding districts, 34 percent said “about the same,” 34 percent said “better” and 25 percent said “worse.”

The Genesee County Superintendents Association President Barbara A. Goebel and Genesee Intermediate School District Superintendent Dr. Thomas Svitkovich outlined a series of key strategies that would be implemented to make good on the commitment to respond to the community. Examples included cooperative efforts with the community and higher education, specialized use of technology, career/job development programs and strategic partnerships with staff and union leadership. Both Goebel and Svitkovich stated that regular reports and updates will be presented to the community during the months to come.