



News from GISD . . .

**Genesee Intermediate School District
THOMAS SVITKOVICH, Ed.D., SUPERINTENDENT**

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#1029

Genesee Intermediate School District Responds to Accountability Study

The Genesee Intermediate School District Board of Education commissioned EPIC-MRA, a statewide research firm, to conduct an accountability study in Genesee County at the request of the 21 local public school districts it serves. The GISD board approved the study based on the recommendation of Superintendent Thomas Svitkovich to measure the implementation of GISD's Teaching, Learning and Service Plan, which focuses on the following five goals: increase student achievement, provide staff development, implement technology, support instruction, seek collaborations to improve student outcomes and focus on career education for all students. Genesee County residents responded saying they want a stronger curriculum, a way to address teacher apathy, more parental involvement, more discipline, character education and a greater emphasis on career/job training from their schools.

In addition to many questions asked about local districts, Superintendent Thomas Svitkovich indicated he was disappointed that nearly a quarter of the respondents indicated that they were undecided or did not know enough to rate GISD's management of finances. Thirty-three percent gave the ISD a positive rating, while 26% rated financial management as just fair, and 18% gave a poor rating. This year, for the first time, Public Act 234 of 2004 requires that each local district adopt a resolution expressing its support for, or disapproval of, the proposed intermediate school district General Fund budget. In light of the results of the survey, the GISD Board has decided to review all of GISD's budgets, including the General Fund, Special Education, Career Technical Education, Capital Projects, Debt Retirement, Enterprise Fund and School Lunch Services budgets. As of this date, the Genesee County Superintendents Association has reviewed

and unanimously approved all of the above-mentioned budgets. In addition, the first step for all of the local boards to review the GISD budgets is the annual budget hearing scheduled for March 17 that hosts a board member representative from each constituent school district.

Superintendent Thomas Svitkovich also pledges that he will enlist the cooperation of local media to tell the GISD budget story in detail. Annually, GISD uses over 90% of its revenue and resources to support programs for students. Since 2000, ISD staff providing direct services to students throughout the county has increased by 43% for a total of 910 staff members. In the same period of time, the administrative staff was reduced by 13%. Svitkovich said, "We have not done a very good job in communicating the details of our budgets to our community. Plans will be enacted to remedy the situation." Presentations at local board meetings have been initiated to answer questions and provide detail regarding budget facts, the district's Teaching, Learning and Service Plan and a review of GISD's systems. In addition to the reports, under the leadership of President Paul Newman and Treasurer Jerry Ragsdale, tighter controls exceeding current laws and accounting standards are continuing to be implemented to ensure fiscal responsibility and excellent services. The GISD Board and staff were pleased with the citizens' majority of responses to questions that indicated that the intermediate school district serves a useful purpose in providing a quality education for children and that, "If intermediate school districts did not exist, districts would be worse off."

Genesee ISD pledges its support to work collaboratively with local districts to build a stronger curriculum, address teacher apathy, strengthen parent involvement, increase discipline, address character development and place a greater emphasis on career/job training in all schools. The resources of the ISD will be committed to these programs consistent with the GISD Teaching, Learning and Service Plan. Genesee County residents can expect regular reports on new initiatives over the next several months.

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