

# INNERViews

PUBLISHED FOR THE STAFF OF GENESSEE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
WITH ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION TO COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND FRIENDS.

## GISD Transportation Services Safety Rodeo National Teams Recognized

GISD had a bus team place first and another bus team place third in the State of Michigan Special Needs Team Safety Rodeo competition held at the Erwin L. Davis Education Center last fall. Ms. Jamie Magness and Ms. Andrea Gerth were first place winners of the state competition, while Ms. Dawn Wineman and Ms. Karolyn Habbershaw placed third.

On February 28, 2009, both teams competed at the 12th Annual National Special Needs Team Safety Rodeo in Indianapolis, Indiana. This national event represents the *best of the best* in special needs bus teams. The competitions tested their skills in student management, wheelchair loading and securement, and proper placement and securement of car seats. The teams also demonstrated proper pre-trip inspections, managing a real-life emergency event, and maneuvering through a driving course replicating unique situations that may be encountered when driving a bus with students aboard.



Pictured are GISD Board of Education members with the GISD Transportation Services staff that participated in the National Special Needs Team Safety Rodeo.

Further, each team completed an extensive, written take-home test.

This year's national competition hosted teams from Arizona, California, Colorado, Georgia, Indiana, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Texas. This is only the second year Michigan has sent a delegation to the national competition. The GISD team of Ms. Magness and Ms. Gerth placed fourth, while Ms. Wineman and Ms. Habbershaw placed fifth in the nation. GISD is very proud of these dedicated staff members and their accomplishment, bringing significant recognition to the GISD Transportation Services department and to the Genesee Intermediate School District.

At its meeting on March 10, the board recognized the GISD teams for their accomplishments at the 12th Annual National Special Needs Team Safety Rodeo.

## April Board Meeting Location Changed

As has been the tradition for many years, the Lakeville Community School District extended an invitation to the GISD Board of Education to conduct its April 28, 2009, meeting in the Lakeville Community School District, followed by their annual end-of-maple-syrup-season pancake supper. The GISD Board of Education accepted the invitation and approved moving the location of the April 28 meeting to Lakeville Middle School.



## Celebrating Accomplishments and Milestone

Dear Staff,

This month, we are preparing to celebrate the excellence of our staff. Employee recognition ceremonies have been scheduled throughout the district, and we are planning to recognize the contributions of all staff. We will congratulate those who have reached milestone years. Our intent is to congratulate staff and recognize the great success of GISD's many outstanding programs. As a regional service agency, GISD's strength is its employees who make it possible to provide the programs and services we offer.

Our organization's ability to meet the needs of our constituents is based on our agility and focus. We have developed an outstanding reputation for service, quality, and excellence because we deliver a great product. Our Teaching, Learning and Service Plan is our guidepost, the basis for our budget and our programs. New ventures and excellent programs are a result of planning that is directed on meeting the needs of our constituent districts.

This year, we have had some great successes. We expanded our shared programs, and we are continuing to develop new services. Shared services in special education and human resources have joined our lineup of cooperative programs. We have also expanded our partnerships to neighboring counties. For the first time, we have signed agreements with a Livingston County district for shared business services and shared human resources. We expanded curriculum support with Lapeer Intermediate School District, and we are discussing more shared programs with other potential partners. Our out-of-county shared programs will provide support for GISD operations, enhancing our viability. We are certainly meeting the challenge established by our state leadership to consolidate services, save resources, and improve educational delivery mechanisms for our students.

We are preparing to celebrate the renovation project completion at the Marion D. Crouse Instructional Center (MCIC). This has been a very complicated renovation project that has resulted in an outstanding facility for our students for the next several years. Thanks to the planning cooperation of our staff, we were able to make these significant changes at MCIC as seamless as possible. Further, MCIC was renovated without a bond issue or a tax increase to our citizens because we were able to save resources to complete this needed and important renovation through the many cost savings we have implemented here at GISD.

This year, we were granted a countywide seat waiver by Superintendent Mike Flanagan. We are the first county in the state to be granted such a waiver. This means that our students will be able to take a full course load of online courses. Our students, especially those who might

be ready for a different experience from the traditional high school, will benefit from this waiver. We believe that more students will graduate; more students will gain more from their high school experience because of this opportunity, and, certainly, we will reduce the dropout numbers.

All of these programs and many others are supported by the GISD budget. As you know, we are underway to gain approval of all of our budgets from our local districts. At the recent budget hearing, attended by representatives of our constituent districts, we received unanimous approval of all of our budgets. As we explained to board members, our Career Technical Education Fund and, this year, our General Education Fund are revenue neutral. In other words, our expenditures are in line with the revenue we receive on an annual basis. Even though we are spending fund equity in our Special Education Fund, it is in good shape. Our expenditures of fund equity are limited to capital improvements, and when this is done, we will, once again, bring our Special Education Fund into line. Restructured programs, capitalizing on energy savings and shared programs both in and out of the county, have helped us maintain our situation.

Overall, we are facing some difficult times. Tax revenues on the local level are going down, and we know of the difficulties that Michigan faces. The only bright light is the fact that stimulus dollars from Washington, D.C. will help plug holes in the state aid budget, and, at best, we expect to see flat revenues from the state for next year. Federal stimulus dollars will also go to local districts to help with both special education and Title I costs. However, these resources will be very regulated. The key message from Washington, D.C. is that American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds should be used to reform education, and expenditures will be reviewed with unprecedented scrutiny and accountability. Obviously, our task will be work with local districts to help them reach the vision established in Washington, D.C. and in Lansing, and I know we are up to the task.

Continuing to work cooperatively through the budget process with our constituent districts and with internal bargaining unit and board leadership, we will ensure the future stability of the Genesee Intermediate School District. This level of collaboration and cooperation is extremely important as we face the challenges and changes ahead. No matter what the outcome, we will focus on ensuring that we, as an organization, can continue to provide the quality services and programs that have been our hallmark. Wherever you work as a GISD employee, you are part of a great organization, and you are a valuable asset. Thank you for your hard work and dedication on behalf of the students and families we serve!

Sincerely,

## Collaborative Schools of Choice Program for 2009-2010 Endorsed

The Genesee County Superintendents Association took action at its meeting on March 4, 2009, to continue the Collaborative Schools of Choice Program for the 2009-10 school year with a 1% factor for students transferring in and out of districts. Also, a maximum transfer number of 15 students has been established for districts with enrollments of less than 1,150 students. At its meeting on March 10, 2009, the GISD Board of Education endorsed the Genesee Intermediate School District Collaborative Schools of Choice Program for 2009-10.

## Parent Advisory Committee Member Appointed

At its meeting on March 10, the GISD Board of Education appointed Tracey Fowler, representing Davison Community Schools, to serve on the GISD Special Education Parent Advisory Committee.

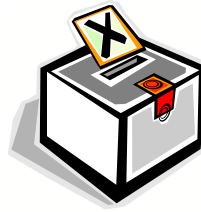
## General Enrollment Information Received

The Business Services staff prepared general enrollment information, including live-birth data and five-year enrollment projections for GISD. The enrollment information was generated from the Single Record Student Database (SRSD). In addition, specific trend data on adult education, special education, and career technical education have been developed. As in the past, detailed enrollment projections for each local school district were developed and distributed to the superintendents for their use. Executive Director of Business Services Cynthia McCain was present at the March 10, 2009, meeting to summarize the report and answer any questions. The GISD Board of Education accepted the report.



## Donations Accepted

Generous donations to Early Childhood Programs and Services and the Marion D. Crouse Instructional Center were received by the board. The donations included student hygiene supplies, a walker, food items, kitchenware, and sewing supplies.



## Biennial Election Date Set

The Revised School Code specifies procedures for the election of ISD board members. The election, which is conducted biennially, is designated for the first Monday in June. A body comprised of one member from each constituent district board is responsible for electing the ISD board members. Not earlier than 21 days before the date of the biennial election, each local constituent board of education must adopt a resolution designating its representative for the biennial meeting and identifying the candidates the board supports for each position. The Revised School Code also provides that the ISD secretary shall provide notice of the biennial election to each constituent district board by certified mail at least ten days before the meeting. It has been the practice of GISD to send notice to the districts of the election and terms to be filled by the end of March. This year, there will be two positions on the ballot. There is one six-year term, currently held by Dale Green, which expires June 30, 2009, and there is one partial term to fill the balance (four years) of the full term created by Mrs. Peggy Tortorice's resignation. This partial term will expire on June 30, 2013. The board secretary and superintendent will complete details of notifying the constituent districts of the election. At its meeting on March 24, the GISD Board of Education set the biennial election for June 1, 2009, at 5:30 p.m. in the Conference Area ABCD of the Erwin L. Davis Education Center.

## Summer Programs Approved

### Elmer Knopf Learning Center (EKLC)

For many years, GISD has successfully operated a summer recreational day camp program at EKLC. The program has provided activities for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and Moderate Cognitive Impairments (MoCI). The EKLC summer program will run three days a week (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday) from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., beginning July 7, 2009 through August 6, 2009. The duration of the program will be five weeks. Staffing will be determined by student enrollment and transportation will be provided for students whose resident district participates in GISD Transportation Services. A hot lunch program will be available through the Carman-Ainsworth Community Schools food service program. Additionally, Grand Blanc Community Schools

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has again requested that GISD provide a program for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders who attend GISD's ASD Project CHOICE classrooms in Grand Blanc. The program will run four days a week, from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., for six weeks. Transportation will be provided by GISD's Transportation Services department and lunches will be provided by the parents of the registered students.

### **Early Childhood Programs and Services (ECPS)**

Early Childhood Programs and Services has proposed a 2009 Summer Enrichment Program for birth to seven-year-old children that are enrolled in the program during the current school year. A program for students ages three to seven years of age is proposed for five weeks, three days per week for two hours and 45 minutes from July 7, 2009 through August 6, 2009. Staffing will be determined by student enrollment. GISD will provide transportation, and daily snacks will be provided by the parents of the registered students. A parent/child program for students birth-to-36 months of age will be offered again for five weeks, one day per week for two-hour sessions and will include adaptive, cognitive, physical, social, and communication activities.

At its meeting on March 10, the board approved the summer programs for EKLC and ECPS.

## **Resolution Adopted to Support Genesee County Rotary Clubs Literacy Initiative**

Increasing literacy is a major focus of Rotary International. This is the third year that the eight Rotary Clubs of Genesee County have engaged in a cooperative effort to provide resources to enhance literacy skills in the children in Genesee County. In 2007, the clubs purchased sets of ten books for each third grade classroom in the 21 Genesee County school districts. In 2008, the clubs provided 6,000 DVD's entitled, *Language is the Key*, to local childcare providers and Project SKIP to a Great Start programs. This year, the Rotary Clubs will provide each elementary building with a set of ten character education books that teachers can use to help children build important character traits necessary to be productive participating members of society.

In order to support this program for students and acknowledge the importance of the Rotary Clubs of Genesee County, the GISD Board of Education approved a resolution that thanks and recognizes the work of Genesee County's Rotary Clubs in support of literacy.

## **Shared Business and Human Resources Contract with Howell Public Schools Approved**

Since the 2006-07 school year, the GISD Board of Education has approved shared business services contracts with 12 Genesee County school districts. Since the 2007-08 school year, the board has approved shared human resources contracts with one Genesee County school district, as well as Lapeer Public Schools. Recently, Howell Public Schools requested the first joint shared services agreement to include business services and human resources. The board authorized the superintendent to continue to take the necessary actions to address requests for services as these relationships are expanded and further defined. The services being defined are customized based on the request of the local district.

Business Services worked with the Thrun Law Firm, P.C., to develop a standard contract, including options for defining the specific details of customized services and payments in the contract attachments. Howell Public Schools Associate Superintendent, Richard Terres, worked with Business Services to customize business- and human resources-related services for Howell. The contract will include management and oversight of payroll functions, payroll processing, administration of the section 125 cafeteria plan, open enrollment processing, and coordination of COBRA and FMLA requirements. One of the reasons GISD is able to provide this service is due to the fact that Howell utilizes SchoolsOPEN software, the same software package that is used in Genesee County. A contract was submitted to Howell Public Schools and has been signed and returned. At its meeting on March 24, 2009, the GISD Board of Education approved the contract for GISD to provide business and human resources services for Howell Public Schools through the 2008-09 fiscal year. Further, the board authorized the superintendent to employ necessary staff and fully define the working relationship with the district as outlined in the agreement.

## **Employees Hired**

At its meeting on March 24, the board approved the employment of: Shannon L. Reynolds, Teacher, Early Childhood Special Education; Crystal J. Sprague, Teacher of Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders; and Keri M. Stafford, Teacher, Early Childhood Special Education.

## GISD Budget Hearing Evaluation Results Received

Each year, at the end of the annual Budget Hearing, constituent district board members and the audience are asked to complete an evaluation form. GISD's practice is to use the results of the evaluation to tailor the presentation and make improvements. GISD staff members are very proud of the evaluation results. Of the 29 total respondents, 97% gave an overall grade of A. In addition to the grades and comments included on the actual evaluations, GISD received many positive telephone calls and messages complimenting the high quality of the Budget Hearing presentation. This year, the evaluation contained a new question regarding the implementation of a paperless Budget Hearing. The results were two-to-one in favor of moving forward with that concept. Staff will evaluate the results and begin working on a pilot. Options may include providing next year's budget hearing delegates with a choice of how to receive materials and/or offering a hybrid version of the presentation.

Superintendent Dr. Thomas Svitkovich extended his thanks to staff and members of the board of education for their work to make this year's Budget Hearing a great success. The board accepted the evaluation results.

## Leaves of Absence Approved

Leaves of absence were considered and approved for: Dawn L. Carlson, Transportation Services; Cheryl A. Klinert, Elmer A. Knopf Learning Center; Lisa A. Kotarski, EKLC – Flint Durant-Tuuri-Mott Classroom; Susan C. Irelan, Transportation Services; Amy L. Scherrer, Elmer A. Knopf Learning Center; and David L. Skinner, Transportation Services.

## Multicultural Festivities at MCIC

The Marion D. Crouse Instructional Center (MCIC) held its multicultural festivities on Friday, March 13. Ethnic foods were enjoyed by all in the newly-completed multipurpose room. The guest speaker was award-winning storyteller, LaRon Williams, whose music-filled tales encouraged community, fostered cooperation, and promoted self-esteem. Jill Richardson's classroom concluded the festivities with a joint interaction between MCIC students and eighth grade students from Davison Community Schools. They used the GenNET system to share activities that featured Black History.

## Take Our Kids/Grandkids to Work Day at GISD

National Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day is Thursday, April 23, 2009. GISD staff are welcome to participate by bringing their child/grandchild to work with them (see criteria), pending the approval of their immediate supervisor. This national event encourages parents to take their kids to work and show them the wide range of jobs and career choices available. The event also offers GISD a great opportunity to promote the importance of career technical education and career exploration at a young age. The following criteria have been established for Take Our Kids/Grandkids to Work Day at GISD:

- Child must be at least nine years old or in the 4th grade.
- Child must remain with parent/host the entire day.
- Parent/host will complete a work plan that describes the activities/experiences the child will engage in.
- The work plan must be pre-approved by your immediate supervisor.

Submit the work plan to your immediate supervisor, along with the Request to Participate form below.

NOTE: Transportation Services is excluded from participation in this activity, due to liability issues.

**If you would like a Certificate of Participation for your child/grandchild, please make a copy of the signed approval form and send it to Eileen Jackson in GISD's Communications and Development department.**

**- Request to Participate -**

**Take Our Kids/Grandkids to Work Day**

Thursday, April 23, 2009

**You must meet the criteria and have your building/program supervisor's pre-approval to participate.**

Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Employee's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Building/Program: \_\_\_\_\_

GISD phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## Sports Achievement

Tyler Hook, Flushing High School sophomore and son of Education and Learning staff member Lisa Hook, placed third in his weight class of 155 lbs. at the Power Lifting State Finals held at Whitmore Lake High School on March 21. Tyler also broke the state record for dead lift at 425 lbs. Congratulations, Tyler!

## Transportation Services News

### Training Pays Off

While out for dinner recently, Dee Stone and husband Walt Demell, GISD Transportation Services employees, encountered a woman who had collapsed and was not breathing. Dee and another patron of the restaurant administered CPR. They revived the woman, who was then taken by ambulance to the hospital.

Dee stated that while administering the procedure, her training took over and she “just did it.” “After the incident was over is when you feel the impact of what just happened,” she said. Congratulations and great job to Dee for her part in saving this woman’s life!

### Food Drive a Success

Recently, GISD Transportation Services conducted its first annual food drive that was very successful. When representatives arrived by bus to deliver the collected food at the Salvation Army facility, they saw empty shelves where food should have been. After the buses were unloaded, the shelves, although not completely full,



Pictured are GISD Transportation Services employees unloading the bus filled with food that was donated to the Salvation Army.

were looking much better. Thank you to all who made the food drive a success. Transportation Services staff members are planning to try and fill all of the shelves during next year’s food drive.

## Student Essay Contest

The Consortium on Child Abuse and Neglect invites all Genesee County sixth through eighth grade students to participate in the Power of One: I Can Make a Difference essay contest. The essay should describe how the student can make a difference to end child abuse and neglect in the Genesee County community, and must be submitted by April 15. For facts about child abuse and neglect, contest rules, entry forms, prize information, and submission details, contact the Consortium on Child Abuse and Neglect at (810) 234-3680 or visit [www.ccan-genesee.org](http://www.ccan-genesee.org).

## Ligon Children’s Garden Wakes Up!

Spring weather is almost here and planning for this year’s season at the Ligon Children’s Garden has begun. The season will start with a bang at the first annual spring festival at Ligon.

**Bridges for the Future: Earth Festival**  
**April 25, 2009**  
**Ligon Outdoor Center**  
**10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

The festival will be part of the Global Youth Service Day that is taking place in Genesee County. The event will be hosted by Bridges to the Future and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers after-school students from a variety of grade levels and schools throughout the county. Sticking with an Earth Day theme, the festival will feature trash-to-art crafts, a solar cookout, a reptile rescue program, nature story telling, and the main event, the opening of the children’s garden for the season. The event will have a student-led garden walk to view the bulbs planted by SKIP to a Great Start and Lakeville Garden Club students this past fall. If you are interested in participating or want to learn more about the event, please contact Nicole Raymond, outdoor education facilitator, at (810) 591-5123 or by e-mail [nraymond@geneseeisd.org](mailto:nraymond@geneseeisd.org).

## Students Enjoy Little Creatures

On Wednesday, February 12, 2009, the Early Childhood Programs and Services students were visited by Little Creatures Presentations. The children were able to touch several of the animals including an Albino Burmese

*(Continued on page 7)*

Python, a Blue Tongue Skink, and a Chinchilla. The children were also able to see a Honduran Milk Snake, a Giant African Bullfrog, a Bird-Eating Tarantula, a Green Iguana, a Snapping Turtle, an American Alligator, and an



An ECPS student comes face-to-face with a Chinchilla.

African Grey Parrot. Everyone seemed to enjoy watching the animals move and listening to the sounds they made!

## GISD Employee Appreciation Dates for 2009

EKLC	April 22	2:15-4:00 p.m.
EKLC Project CHOICE	April 22	4:30-6:00 p.m.
MCIC	April 23	12:00-2:00 p.m.
ECPS	April 24	1:00-3:00 p.m.
Transition Center	April 27	10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
Erwin L. Davis Ed. Center	April 28	2:30-4:30 p.m.
HSNS	April 29	2:30-4:30 p.m.
Transportation Services	May 1	8:00-11:00 a.m.
SESC-N	May 1	2:00-4:00 p.m.
GEC/MMC	May 6	2:30-4:00 p.m.

## April Birthdays

1 Eric Brugger	Genesee Early College
1 Deborah Driskill	Transportation Services
2 Denise Evert	Project CHOICE
2 Deborah Hooper	SESC-N
2 Sharlene Howe	EKLC
3 Susan Adkins	Transportation Services
4 April McNally	ECPS
4 Robin Somers	Project CHOICE
5 Bobby Caldwell	Transportation Services
5 Walter Demell	Transportation Services
5 Lisa Hook	Education and Learning
5 Janice Shumaker	Project CHOICE
6 Kimberly Howd	Transportation Services
8 Edward Shumaker	EKLC
9 Karen Lapan	Transportation Services
11 Gail Kern	MCIC

11 Carla Schoenauer	EKLC
12 Rochelle Bila	EKLC
12 Nancy Glady	MCIC
12 Margaret Wallace	Transportation Services
12 Martha Wrigley	EKLC
13 Mary Ann Kost	Genesee Early College
13 Amy Taylor-Richardson	EKLC
14 Michelle Benson	HSNS
14 Lerlean Campbell	Transportation Services
14 Caroline Fechik	Project CHOICE
15 Serina Ross	EKLC
15 Tracy Valentine	Education and Learning
16 Andrea Bartholow	Business Services
16 Sheryl Perry	Transportation Services
16 Allan Walt	MCIC
18 Barbara Gould	MCIC
19 Elaina Conklin	HSNS
22 Debra Kelley	Project CHOICE
22 Cheri Owens	Transportation Services
23 Jessica McCallum	SESC-N
23 Jill Richardson	MCIC
25 Jeanette Miller	Project CHOICE
26 Cathy Stewart	MCIC
28 April Hampton	ECPS
28 Nicole Moore	Project CHOICE
28 Diane Scrimger	Project CHOICE
28 Anne Zanger	SESC-N
29 Sandra Angell	Project CHOICE
29 Stevan Natzel	Transportation Services
30 Rebecca Barbat	MCIC
30 Theresa Koval	Transportation Services
30 Tina Ray	Transportation Services

## May Birthdays

1 David Hoover	Transportation Services
1 Ryan Johnson	EKLC
1 Tricia Young	Transportation Services
2 Becky Finkle	ECPS
2 Laura Hawks	Day Treatment
3 Evelyne Brown	MCIC
3 Dana Jones-Shaw	Education and Learning
3 Gary Lewis	Transportation Services
3 Dawn Lindstrom	EKLC
3 Vicky Piazza	EKLC
3 Margaret Prosch	HSNS
4 Donald Gauthier	EKLC
4 Kenneth Sirignano	MCIC
4 Cynthia Workman	Human Resources
5 Angela Gittings	Transportation Services
5 Jessica Prast	Transportation Services
5 Steven Taddei	Human Resources



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## GISD Jobs

The Human Resources and Operations department at Genesee Intermediate School District is accepting applications for numerous positions. **To view openings and complete an online application, visit the "employment" link at: [www.geneseeisd.org](http://www.geneseeisd.org).**

If you need additional information, please contact Cindy Workman at (810) 591-4404.

## InnerViews Submissions

InnerViews is published for the staff of Genesee Intermediate School District with additional distribution to community partners and friends.

Please submit articles and information to Eileen Jackson, Communications and Development, by mail, fax at (810) 591-7570 or email: [ejackson@geneseeisd.org](mailto:ejackson@geneseeisd.org). Be sure to include your name and contact information.

Articles will be reviewed for information that is appropriate for the publication, timeliness, as well as relevance to the InnerViews newsletter audience.

# INNERViews

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School District's Communications  
and Development Department**

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