

# INNERViews

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

## Classical Academy Student Wins GISD Holiday Card Design Contest

Congratulations to April Blakley, a tenth grade student at Classical Academy, Flint Community Schools, for winning the 2009 Genesee Intermediate School District (GISD) Holiday Card Design Contest. Ms. Blakley's artwork, selected from dozens of entries, was printed as the graphic on the cover of the 2009 GISD Holiday Card. GISD Superintendent Dr. Thomas Svitkovich will be at the January 20, 2010, Flint Board of Education meeting to present Ms. Blakley with a custom-framed version of her original artwork and her prize, a \$100.00 gift card.

Special thanks go to the Atherton, Beecher, Flint Classical Academy, and GASC Technology Center teachers and students that participated in this year's contest. The varied holiday concepts and mediums used were all fantastic, and made the selection of just one design very difficult.



Featured above is the art for the 2009 GISD Holiday Card, as created by April Blakley.

## School Closure Information

As we experience the season of winter weather, please remember that GISD closing information is available on the web at [www.geneseeisid.org](http://www.geneseeisid.org). If GISD is closed, then all programs, events, and operations are cancelled, unless otherwise noted for specific instances.

## Website Helps Identify High Quality Child Care

Parents looking for child care have a new way to learn about available options through a website just launched by the Michigan Early Childhood Investment Corporation. The Child Care Connect site at [www.greatstartforkids.org](http://www.greatstartforkids.org) will allow parents to identify the geographic area, ages of children needing care, and preferences for program options. Parents have expressed how convenient it is to see the Department of Human Services licensing report on the facility, photos, information about the program, and staff qualifications online. Child care is undergoing significant reform as Michigan streamlines costs for resource and referral and helps parents access information that identifies providers with high quality services and programs. GISD's Great Start Collaborative and the Great Start Parent Coalition are working with area child care providers and parents to help make the transition to the new system. For more information, call Beth Hackett, GISD's coordinator for the Great Start Collaborative, at 810-591-5588.



## Another Amazing Year to Come

### Dear Staff,

Early in November, we celebrated an open house for Marion D. Crouse Instructional Center (MCIC). Parents and community members participated in guided tours of our expanded and renovated facilities. Our students took part in the traditional ribbon cutting ceremony designed for the grand opening of new facilities. I will never forget the smiles of joy I saw on the faces of our students and their parents. What a treat. We want to thank Principal Susan O'Brien and all of the staff at MCIC for their patience, cooperation, and support during the renovation project. We also want to extend our thanks to Deputy Superintendent Michal Moorman and Assistant Superintendent Jan Russell for working with the board of education to bring this project to completion. Both THA Architects Engineers and Wolgast Corporation, construction managers, were outstanding in developing a quality facility for our students.

Just as we completed the celebration at the Marion D. Crouse Instructional Center, our board of education was in the process of reviewing and approving expansion plans for the Elmer A. Knopf Learning Center. Following our facilities plan and utilizing American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds, we will begin construction early this year. Bids for the project have been received and are being reviewed by Wolgast and our district. A recommendation to approve the bids will be made at our first board of education meeting in January, and the initiation of construction will follow. We are very fortunate to have received ARRA funding for this project. In fact, I believe we are the only district in Michigan to be using ARRA funding for construction/renovation of a special education facility. Utilization of this money will certainly help our budget situation and extend support for our outstanding special education programs. We hope to have this project completed by Fall 2010.

In addition to these construction programs, we have had great success with our statewide seat time waiver program. As of this date, all 57 of Michigan's ISDs are active participants in the GenNET statewide seat time waiver. Currently, over 2,000 classes are being taken by over 400 students across the state. We expect this number to grow dramatically during 2010. Last year, our shared time programs continued to expand. These programs and many more highlight GISD's commitment to be a responsive and agile regional educational service agency.

The bottom line is that all of these programs save needed money for the classroom. Additional resources are available for students of our partner districts, as well as the students attending GISD facilities.

During the past several months, our negotiators worked tirelessly to settle our contracts. At this point, the Genesee Intermediate Education Association (GIEA) contract has been ratified by the membership and unanimously ratified by the GISD Board of Education. The contract represents a settlement, which will allow us to continue our work and provide the best possible instructional program for our students. I want to extend my sincerest thanks and congratulations to both the GIEA and administration bargaining teams for a job well done. We are continuing negotiations with the Genesee Intermediate Educational Support Personnel Association (GIESPA) and are hoping for a contract settlement within the next few months. Our teams are working well, following the Win-Win process, and I am certain we will reach agreement.

January and the wrap up of the previous calendar year have always been the time to look back and celebrate accomplishments and plan for the future. Certainly, we at GISD have much to celebrate as we continue to expand our services, build capacity, and improve instruction for students. All in all, 2009 was a great year for GISD even though we continue to be plagued by difficult financial situations. We have found solutions to continue our programs. On behalf of the GISD Board of Education, all of our students and constituents, I wish to thank you for your hard work and commitment. As we start the New Year, we will continue to expand services, help with cost cutting efforts throughout the county, and provide outstanding programs. Many of our projects continue to be recognized at both the state and national levels as outstanding. This tradition of excellence will continue during the years to come with your continued focus on quality and improvement. Working together, we will grow new services, maintaining GISD's tradition of quality performance and excellence. As this new calendar year begins, we extend to each of you, our sincerest appreciation for a job well done. I also want to wish you prosperity, health, and happiness, as well as the warm companionship of friends and family.

Sincerely,

## Special Resolution for Summer Tax Collection Adopted

Summer tax collections for the Genesee Intermediate School District are levied based on individual local district levies. Clio Area Schools started collecting summer taxes last year for the city of Clio and requested that GISD delay its summer tax collections. It is now time for GISD to implement summer tax collection. Grand Blanc Community Schools has also made a request that GISD levy summer taxes for the township of Atlas. Any change in tax rates or new implementation for summer tax collections requires a public hearing. On November 29, 2009, a notice of a public hearing was printed in The Flint Journal. In order to authorize collection of 2010 summer taxes in the city of Clio and Atlas Township, the board of education took action at its meeting on December 8 by conducting the public hearing and adopting a special resolution, and will now file a copy of that resolution with the affected municipalities prior to January 1, 2010.

## Annual Resolution for Summer Tax Collection Adopted

The board of education has previously authorized a summer tax levy. In order to continue with that authorization for 2010, the board of education must take action by adopting a resolution and filing a copy of that resolution with each city and/or township within the Genesee Intermediate School District prior to January 1, 2010. The Genesee Intermediate School District will only levy summer taxes when the local school district is also levying a summer property tax. At its meeting on December 8, the board adopted the annual resolution to levy summer taxes in 2010 and provide proper notice to the taxing units.

## December Bills Payable

The Genesee Intermediate School District Board of Education scheduled its regular December meeting early due to the holiday break. As a result, only one meeting, the December 8 meeting, was scheduled. At the time the board approved the meeting schedule, it was indicated that special action would be necessary to authorize the payment of December bills. At the December 9 meeting, it was recommended and approved that the administration, upon the review of the board treasurer, is authorized to

process the December bills payable and issue checks. The board, as an official body, will approve the December financial reports in January.

## Audit Report Received

During the past several months, Lewis & Knopf, Certified Public Accountants, has been involved in its annual audit of GISD financial records. The audit was very comprehensive and included in-depth tests of various federal programs managed by the district, as well as the normal tests conducted as standard audit practice. Mr. Kim Lindsay of Lewis & Knopf was present at the December 8 meeting and provided an overview of their review of the accounting practices and procedures utilized in Business Services. GISD board members were pleased to learn that the overall GISD 2008-09 audit is rated as excellent. Fund balances meet or exceed the expected fund equities identified in the 2008-09 budget. GISD remains financially healthy and stable for the current fiscal year. The GISD board accepted the report and commended Business Services staff for their attention to quality financial management, and budget administrators were also recognized for doing an excellent job managing their budgets.

## Annual Website Reporting Update Received

Legislation was passed several years ago requiring Michigan regional educational service agencies to post a great deal of information to their websites by December 31 of each year. GISD is in the final stages of preparing the information for this year's report. Mr. Jerry Johnson, executive director of Communications and Development, was present at the December 8 meeting with a preview of the GISD information to be posted. He noted that the report begins with an introduction centering on the GISD Teaching, Learning, and Service Plan and is followed by district information and data. That data includes general information and must also include information about contracts; contract modifications; compensation; fiber optic and cable equipment; public relations, polling, lobbying, and legal services; IRS 1099; travel; certain ISD expenditures, and motor vehicles. The board accepted the report and noted that the information will be available by December 31 in the Publications area of its website at [www.geneseeisd.org](http://www.geneseeisd.org).

## Three-Year Contract with Genesee Intermediate Education Association Approved

During the 2008-2009 school year and through the fall of this year, representatives from the Genesee Intermediate Education Association (GIEA) and the Genesee Intermediate School District (GISD) Board/Administrative team met to negotiate a new collective bargaining agreement. This was the first extensive bargaining process since 1999, so several areas that had not been reviewed over the last two contract extensions were updated. The contract expired on August 31, 2009.

Both groups continue to hold the belief that long-term agreements are better for planning purposes for both parties, even during these extraordinary economic times. Therefore, a three-year agreement was recommended, which will cover 2009-2010, 2010-2011, and 2011-2012. Of special note is the “reopener” language that has been added to the contract to assist the district and the association in dealing with unforeseen financial circumstances. This language is unprecedented for the district and reinforces the CAPSC process.

On November 10, 2009, the board Personnel Committee received a presentation on the status of all aspects of the contract negotiations. Later that evening in executive session, the full board had the opportunity to hear the same presentation and ask questions of the negotiations team. On November 30, 2009, a ratification vote of the GIEA membership was conducted, which resulted in approval. The board approved the three-year contract with the Genesee Intermediate Education Association, and thanked both teams for their diligence and for seeking creative solutions to issues.

## Amended Resolution for Membership in MISEC Adopted

In November 1997, the GISD Board of Education adopted a resolution authorizing membership in the Michigan Schools Energy Cooperative (MISEC) and participation in its cooperative energy purchase program. The Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators, the Michigan Association of School Administrators, the Michigan Association of School Boards, the Michigan School Business Officials, and the Middle Cities Education Association formed this cooperative known as MISEC. Their combined purpose was to develop a statewide association to take advantage of energy deregulation opportunities. Kimball Energy is the current energy manager.

Initially, MISEC was focused on consolidating the purchase of natural gas so schools could take advantage of large volume discounts and later moved to purchasing electricity with the electric deregulation. Once again, MISEC has sought to provide another opportunity for schools to pool together and take advantage of large volume discounts in the area of diesel fuel. Current members must adopt an amended resolution encompassing this component. However, membership does not preclude districts from purchasing on the open market and/or seeking the best price. GISD currently purchases approximately 80,000 gallons of diesel fuel per year, and anticipates purchasing a portion of its diesel fuel through the consortium to see if savings are realized for both the Special Education Transportation and the Genesee Area Skill Center Transportation consortia. At its meeting on December 8, the board adopted the amended resolution.

## Bid for Head End Equipment Approved

On November 4, 2009, bids were mailed to four vendors for an Eaton Powerware BladeUPS-36 Modular Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) System for the head end room. The bid opening was on November 23, 2009, and seven bids were submitted by vendors. The Building and Grounds Committee met prior to the December 8 board meeting to review the bid documents, and as a result recommended the bid be awarded to the lowest bidder that met all specifications, Eaton Corporation c/o RC Merchant Company, Inc., in the amount of \$38,798.00. At its meeting on December 8, the board approved that recommendation.



## Donations Accepted

Generous donations on behalf of the Elmer A. Knopf Learning Center, Marion D. Crouse Instructional Center, Special Education Services Center – North, and the Transition Center were received by the board. Donations included appliances, instructional aids, and other supplies for classroom use; adaptive equipment; clothing; and cash donations for student activities and a memorial fund.

## English as a Second Language Tutor Services Contracts Approved

Since the 2007-08 school year, the board has approved education and learning services contracts to form partnerships to provide English as a second language (ESL) tutor services for local districts, including the employment of ESL tutors as GISD employees. Without this service, each district would be responsible for implementing compliance frameworks, including the creation of a district-wide instructional program. GISD has taken additional steps to help its constituent districts serve English Limited Language students and families and to comply with state and federal laws. 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. GISD currently has contract agreements with 19 Genesee County districts and public school academies.

Recently, Beecher Community Schools, Fenton Area Schools, Lakeville Community School District, Genesee Academy, International Academy of Flint, and Richfield Public School Academy have requested contracts for English as a second language (ESL) tutor services from GISD. Each contract has been executed by its superintendent or public school administrator. At its meeting on December 8, the board approved each contract and authorized the superintendent to employ necessary staff and fully define the working relationship with each district and public school academy.

## Michigan Legislature Hears the Voice of Early Childhood Advocates

Parents and early childhood advocates, coordinated through the Genesee County Great Start Collaborative and the Great Start Parent Coalition, were able to work with area legislators and connect with statewide efforts this fall to reinstate funding for early childhood programs in the state budget for 2009-2010. Genesee County's Successful Kids = Involved Parents (SKIP) to a Great Start was able to retain the \$266,346 from the state of Michigan to run the program for children from birth through school entry. The program, which is available to any Genesee County family, serves over 2,000 children each year with monthly home visits and play and learn sessions in each local school district. The funds were able to be matched with additional federal funds to provide \$925,000 to operate the program. The SKIP parent education staff provides

outstanding play-based learning to teach parents how to prepare children for success when they enter kindergarten. The SKIP program is administered through GISD's Health, Safety, and Nutrition Services department.

Helping children come to the kindergarten door ready to learn is the key to children's future school achievement. The Great Start School Readiness Program (GSRP) provides a high quality preschool program, taught by certified teachers, to children who may have two or more risk factors for school success. The program was eliminated from the state budget last spring, but due to the advocacy efforts a total of \$5,793,600 was restored to Genesee County to provide half-day preschool to 1,630 children. The GSRP program is administered by local school districts and community partners.

## EKLC Gives Back

Each year, the Old Newsboys of Flint provides gift packages for thousands of children. A gift package consists of basic essentials including a sweat suit, pairs of socks and underwear, mittens, a hat, and a toy. Many EKLC students benefit from these Old Newsboys gifts. Businesses and organizations that help raise funds for the Old Newsboys of Flint receive a poster-sized Christmas tree that contains 26 ornaments. Funds are raised through the purchase of the ornaments. This past December, EKLC staff and one student purchased 53 ornaments, enough to fill two trees, raising a total of \$1,060.00. Old Newsboys of Flint Executive Director Chris Hamilton and Secretary/Treasurer Ed Campbell were present at the EKLC Holiday Program on December 17 and reportedly were impressed by the talented EKLC students!



Pictured are EKLC staff and students with the fundraiser trees.

## Students Celebrate Veteran's Day

Students at the Elmer A. Knopf Learning Center celebrated Veteran's Day on November 11. The celebration began with the Sing-n-Sign music class performing the *Star Spangled Banner* in American Sign Language. EKLC Principal Jeanne Quinlan shared with the students the history of Veteran's Day and why it is important to honor and remember the men and women who have served our country. The students had the opportunity to meet and thank two veterans that visited EKLC. SPC Leannah Jenkins and Chaplain CPT Brian Martinus told the students about their experience in the military and received thank you cards made by the EKLC students. The students also had the opportunity to try on official military gear belonging to SSG Jeremy Banks, which was brought by Julie Banks, EKLC teacher. Family and friends of students and staff at EKLC were also honored by having their names read during the assembly. Everyone had a great time learning about and honoring veterans on Veteran's Day! Thank you to all that have served our country!



Pictured are EKLC students using American Sign Language to perform the *Star Spangled Banner*.



Pictured are EKLC students trying on military gear.

## New Arrival!

Laurie Potter, para-educator at EKLC, is pleased to announce the birth of her first grandchild. GracieMae Davis Weir was born on November 29, 2009, weighing 6 lbs., 14 oz., and measuring 18 inches long. She is welcomed by parents Dave and Daniyle Weir. GracieMae has made Laurie and husband Dale proud grandparents for the first time. Congratulations to the Potters and Wiers on this new addition to their family!

## Leaves of Absence Approved

Leaves of absence were considered and approved for: Susan Cyrul, EKLC CHOICE; Kelley Doyle, ECPS; Donald Dunlop, EKLC; Michael Garrett, Transportation Services; Kay Hartl, MCIC; Camille Johnson, MCIC; Patrick Maul, Transportation Services; Kristin Plunkett, Transportation Services; Michele Schwarz, Business Services; Kristen Tanner, EKLC; and Howard Wilson, Business Services.

## Resignation Accepted

A resignation for the purpose of retirement was accepted from Violet Jeffery, Special Education Services Center - North.

## January Birthdays

3	Lara Clarke	Business Services
3	Sandra Mann	MCIC
3	Sandra Wheeler	Transportation Services
4	Mary Howell	Education and Learning
4	Tamara Morrow	SESC-N
6	Jacqueline Mark	Project CHOICE
7	Ashley Livingston	Business Services
7	Patrick McHugh	Mott Middle College
7	Allyson Mills	SESC-N
7	Cindy Verbeke	SESC-N
8	Adrienne Hardimon	SESC-N
8	Kristy Mohr	Business Services
8	Judith Pannick	Project CHOICE
9	Denice Lepczyk	Transportation Services
9	Dwayne Odneal	EKLC
9	Regina Ondovcsik	Transportation Services

9	Julie Salim	MCIC
9	Pamela Weisenburger	Project CHOICE
10	Juliet Hardwick	Project CHOICE
10	Major Harper	EKLC
10	Lori McLean	Transition Center
11	Pamela Marsack	EKLC
11	Tracey Tortorice	Project CHOICE
11	Crystal Wright	Transportation Services
12	Christopher Combs	Day Treatment
12	Charlotte Gambrel	Transition Center
12	Camille Johnson	MCIC
12	Karl Lang	Transition Center
13	Michelle Grifka	EKLC
14	Valerie Allie	ECPS
14	Judith Fulkerson	Project CHOICE
14	Margaret Lapeen	Transportation Services
14	Rhoda Read	Business Services
15	Allison Emmerling	SESC-N
15	Stacy Hodges	Business Services
16	Donna Dean	Project CHOICE
17	Karen Dutil	Transportation Services
17	Marisa Ulmer	HSNS
18	Ulysses Tara McNeal	EKLC
19	Ida Allen	MCIC
19	LuSinda Johnston	MCIC
19	Kimberly Latoni	MCIC
19	Debra Marien	ECPS
19	Linda Phillips	Project CHOICE
20	Matthew Osmon	Mott Middle College
20	Mandy Thomas	Project CHOICE
21	Christine Emmendorfer	Transportation Services
21	Stephanie Gay-Strawsburg	EKLC
21	Gus Jefferson	Transportation Services
21	Randy Wilson	Transportation Services
22	Kimberly Drury	EKLC
22	Deborah Isham	MCIC
23	Tomiko Fisher	Office of the Supt.
23	Patricia Pillen	Transportation Services
24	Kristi Chilson	Transportation Services
24	Kathleen Dinnan	Transportation Services
24	Bradley Norman	Transportation Services
25	Harvey Porter	Project CHOICE
25	Candice Wagner	Project CHOICE

25	Dawn Wineman	Transportation Services
26	Sheila Gafney	EKLC
26	Patrick Maul	Transportation Services
26	David Skinner	Transportation Services
28	Mary Behm	Education and Learning
28	Valerie LaCarter	Transportation Services
29	Joanne Blimka	MCIC
30	Deborah Baird	Transportation Services
30	Stacy Dowd	Transportation Services
30	Ruth Rosenberger	Day Treatment
30	Donald Vanhorn	Mott Middle College
31	Deborah Washburn	ECPS



## February Birthdays

1	Kathy St. James	Transportation Services
2	Diane Burt	Business Services
2	Deborah Lannom	MCIC
2	Laura Rainey	Mott Middle College
3	Amy Lowell	Transportation Services
3	Windel Robinson	Transportation Services
3	Adrian Wright	Transportation Services
4	Eileen Jackson	Comm. and Development
4	Robert Snyder	EKLC
4	Genevieve Weber	EKLC
5	Kathleen Bell	ECPS
5	April Miller	HSNS



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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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and Development Department**

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