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GENESEE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT CONNECTIONS

INFORMATION & RESOURCES FOR GENESEE COUNTY EDUCATORS

WINTER 2019

Leveraging our Passion and Research

Dr. Lisa Hagel, Superintendent

Every day, the wonderfully caring people connected to Genesee County schools give students 100%. From those individuals who welcome children on the buses, support them in the hallways, and teach them in the classrooms -- our adults care. You care to the degree you are exhausted at the end of the day. You spend out-of-school time planning, grading, and thinking about how to further positively impact young lives and meet the many needs we see every day.

This year, a group of superintendents from across the county is working on a special task force focused on our data, research, needs, best practices, and strategies that can support classrooms, buildings, and districts to make all children successful.

Much time and energy has been spent on social-emotional learning, literacy essentials, trauma informed practices, and adverse childhood experiences. The work is far from over, but recommendations and strategies are being formed to provide additional assistance across our county for personnel, training, parent education, student wellness, and addressing challenging behaviors.

We believe everyone is a leader and all of us have a role and opportunity to impact a life, make a change, and provide the best solutions possible. We also realize education is a challenging, yet most rewarding profession that is critical to the well-being of our communities.

As the work continues, more information will be available; however, we thank you for the never-ending expertise you share with children and adults every day.



Professional Learning for You

GISD's Education and Learning department works with districts to support and tailor professional learning to meet their needs. See [these upcoming opportunities](#).

Find more in the [Genesee County Professional Learning Catalog](#).

To offer feedback or topic ideas, please email connections@geneseeisd.org.

Visit the Genesee Intermediate School District website at www.geneseeisd.org to learn more about our programs and services or to find additional resources.



Leadership ♦ Service ♦ Innovation
Partnering for success!

Substitute Teacher Permit Updates

Changes to Daily Substitute Permit Requirements

Public Act 236 (2018) has changed the credit requirement for Daily Substitute Permits to a minimum of 60 semester credit hours, and substitutes must be at least 22 years of age to teach in grades 9-12. The new requirements allow for at least 60 semester hours of satisfactory credit from one or more regionally accredited two- or four-year college or university, and substitutes are limited in a single teaching assignment to no more than 90 calendar days. If your district has a substitute teacher with a Daily Substitute Permit in an assignment that may go beyond 90 calendar days, your district will need to file for an extension. The Michigan Department of Education guide, [About Michigan Substitute Permits](#), explains the full process and requirements to avoid fines or penalties.

How to Register to be a Substitute

Registering to become a substitute teacher requires a completed Live Scan Fingerprint Background Check form from the district in which the candidate will work, or they may complete the Genesee Intermediate School District (GISD) Live Scan form. A valid driver's license, state ID, or passport; official transcripts or teaching certificate; and a check or money order will all be needed at the time of the fingerprinting appointment. Effective January 1, 2019, GISD fingerprint fees are \$52 for volunteers, \$62 for Genesee County public school employees (substitute teachers), and \$67 for all others.

Once fingerprinted as a substitute teacher, information is sent to the MDE for the candidate's Daily Substitute Permit. The candidate will then receive an invoice via email from MDE for the \$45.00 permit fee, which must be paid prior to working in a school.

If your district has a substitute teacher or employee who is interested in working in an early childhood assignment, they may be required to go through additional steps before they can enter those classrooms. Please contact GISD at 810-591-4400 to acquire information about the systematic process for each individual school district.

Help Students Maintain Good Attendance all Winter Long

It's the time of year when the cold blustery weather can take a toll on children's health, causing them to miss school due to illnesses. But, good attendance is just as important in winter months as it is in months when the temperature is warmer. It is important for school staff to regularly communicate the importance of good attendance during these challenging months.

Here are eight facts to share with families about the importance of good attendance:

1. Absences, even if they are excused, can add up to academic trouble. This is true for all students, from kindergarten to high school.
2. Children who miss too much school in kindergarten are less likely to read well by third grade. By middle school, absenteeism can predict who will graduate from high school.
3. A study of weather-related absences in Massachusetts found that each missed day affected a student's test scores and grades. This was especially true on snowy days when school stayed open but some students missed class.
4. There isn't much we can do about the weather, but there are two key steps



every parent can take to help avoid absences this year: make back-up plans for bad weather and keep your children healthy.

5. It's important to find a way to get your child to school even when the weather is bad. If you're having trouble getting to school, reach out to other families, or call the school to see if assistance is available.
6. If your children are sick, talk to your doctor to see whether they are too sick for school.
7. To help keep your children healthy, dress them warmly for the cold weather and make sure they wear hats and gloves. Encourage them to wash their hands regularly.
8. Help your child learn to persevere. They are building habits that will help them be successful later in life.

Source: Attendance Works. Find them at www.attendanceworks.org



Workshops. Learn more about The Happiness Advantage and register online at <http://bit.ly/GISDOFW>.

The Genesee Intermediate School District invites schools, organizations, and companies to one of our upcoming Happiness Advantage | Orange Frog



Help Stop the Spread of Flu

Flu season is upon us. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the 2017-2018 flu season resulted in 900,000 hospitalizations, 80,000 deaths, and costs of more than 10.4 billion dollars. Experts say the best way to avoid catching the flu bug is to stop it before it starts.

Ways to stay healthy this flu season from the CDC:

- Get a flu shot.
- Avoid touching your nose, mouth, and eyes.
- Get enough sleep and avoid becoming “run-down”.
- Reduce stress.
- Eat healthy and get regular exercise.
- Avoid crowds and keep your distance from people whom you know are ill.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Ways to stop the spread of colds and the flu:

- While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.
- If you are sick with flu-like illness, stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone (without fever-reducing medicine) except to get medical care or for other necessities.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. After using a tissue,

throw it in the trash and wash your hands.

- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs.

According to the CDC, flu viruses can live for up to 24 hours on objects such as doorknobs and tables. Common household cleaning

products containing bleach or alcohol will kill the flu virus. You should stay home from work or school to avoid passing the virus on. If you feel sick stay home, rest, and get plenty of fluids until you feel better.

Is it a “Stomach Bug” or the Flu?

Many people confuse the “stomach bug” with the flu. The flu is a respiratory virus while the “stomach bug”, also known as Norovirus, includes vomiting and diarrhea. The table below outlines the difference between the flu and “stomach bug”. Source: UW Health, Madison, Wisconsin.

Questions	Stomach Bug	Flu
What are the symptoms?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sudden onset of nausea vomiting and/or diarrhea • Low-grade fever • Chills • Body aches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sudden onset of fever (up to 104° F) • Headache and body aches • Sore throat • Cough • Congestion
How long does it last?	Typically, between 24 and 72 hours	Typically, between 3 to 7 days
How is it prevented?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No vaccine available • Anyone with symptoms should wait at least 48 hours after their last episode of vomiting or diarrhea before returning to work or school • Frequent hand-washing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yearly vaccine available • Avoid work or school while symptoms present & for 24 hours after fever is gone • Frequent hand-washing • Cover coughs and sneezes

New Laws Require Schools to Prepare Students for Careers

In 2018, Michigan legislators passed several bills that will change the way career planning information is delivered to K-12 students throughout the state. The bills require school districts to take a more active role in assisting students as they prepare for their future education, and ultimately successful careers.

To help prepare students, the Michigan Department of Education developed the [Michigan Career Development Model \(MI CDM\)](#). The MI CDM is designed to assist districts in providing all students with the knowledge and skills necessary for success in a career of their choice, as well as lifelong learning. It also provides required targets and suggested instructional strategies to meet these targets.

As defined in the MI CDM, plans for grades K-6 focus on career awareness, grades 7-8 are designated for career exploration, and grades 9-12 for career preparation. The goal of the program is to create learning opportunities that support academic rigor, knowledge and skill development, social emotional learning, and career exploration. Strategies for both students and families are included in the model.

In the past, Michigan classified careers into six Career Pathways. Now, these Career Pathways will be referred to as Career Zones in grades K-6. The six Career Zones are:

- Arts and Communications
- Business, Management, Marketing, and Technology
- Engineering, Manufacturing, and Industrial Technology
- Health Sciences
- Human Services
- Natural Resources and Agriscience

Beginning in grade 7 and continuing through grade 12, students will explore and investigate Michigan's 17 Career Clusters to discover which careers best align with their interests. The Career Clusters are:

- Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources
- Architecture and Construction
- Arts, A/V Technology, and Communications
- Business, Management, and Administration
- Education and Training
- Energy
- Finance
- Government and Public Services
- Health Science
- Hospitality and Tourism
- Human Services
- Information Technology
- Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security
- Manufacturing
- Marketing, Sales, and Service
- Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
- Transportation, Distribution, and Logistic

The legislation also requires that students begin an educational development plan (EDP) and talent portfolio in seventh grade, and both must be reviewed and updated annually. The talent portfolio should include a record of the student's experiences, proficiencies, certifications, or accomplishments that demonstrate talents and marketable skills.

New Greenhouse at Genesee Career Institute

A new state-of-the-art agriscience greenhouse opened in January at the Genesee Career Institute (GCI), just in time for students to begin growing vegetable seedlings for a Future Farmers of America (FFA) spring fund-raiser. Students will each grow their own crop of heirloom variety vegetables, popular for today's gardener. FFA students will grow tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, and leafy crops and ultimately, students will sell the vegetables that are garden transplant ready.

Students will use the greenhouse to produce seasonal flowering crops for holidays and bulb plants for the spring. Planters, hanging baskets, and starter pots with summer flowers will also be produced.



“The greenhouse is a wonderful asset to GCI,” said Denise Belt, Executive Director of Career and Technical Education. “It will offer an abundance of hands-on learning and fund-raising opportunities for the Agriscience program and FFA.”

The new greenhouse will also aid the Agriscience program in its efforts to continue to supply herbs and vegetables to GCI's Culinary program.

School Improvement Updates and Tips

Changes to School Improvement Requirements

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) announced [amendments to School Improvement Plan requirements](#), effective December 24, 2018. Public Act 231 of 2018 (Senate Bill 685) amended the Revised School Code, Section 377.1280, which details the requirements for School Improvement Plans (SIPs). This amendment will require SIPs to include certain job and career exposure opportunities and experiences for students.

Read more about the job and career exposure requirements in the article, *New Laws Require Schools to Prepare Students for Careers*, [on page 4](#).

Important Dates

[View important School Improvement dates for 2018-2019](#). To stay up to date on all the latest news from MDE, [view MDE's Spotlight newsletter](#).

School Improvement Tips

February and March are a great time to reflect on your current School Improvement Goals. Many times, the year goes by in a blur and we get to the end of the year without pausing to reflect on our goals and make adjustments along the way. Remember, your practices don't have to be implemented perfectly. Implementing a best practice consistently is better than waiting to implement a perfect practice. It is important to check in and see what results you are getting from your strategies, then celebrate the small wins!

Questions to help you assess your goals and strategies mid-year:

1. What are our school improvement goals?
2. What were our strategies for each of our goals?
3. What was our criteria/measure for success?
4. What evidence/data do we have so far? What does it reflect?
5. To what extent are we implementing our strategies?



6. What results/impact are we seeing in our practices and in student success?
7. What is working well? What do we need to adjust?
8. How can we keep consistently implementing these strategies?
9. When will we check in again to keep ourselves accountable?

Finally, remember to celebrate small and big wins with stories of success!

Free Surveys

Do you need a survey that will give you good feedback from staff, parents, or students? All surveys on [eProve - AdvancED](#) are free, even if you are not an AdvancED site!

Application Open for the Class of 2019

In response to feedback from high school staff and students, applications for the Genesee Opportunity (GO) stipend are now being accepted for 2019 graduates! With an earlier application window, administrators, teachers, and counselors will have access and additional opportunities to ensure that all graduating seniors apply for the GO stipend to help with the



cost of education and training after graduation!

Seniors graduating in 2019 can find more details about the stipend and apply online now at <https://www.geneseego.org/>!

Early Literacy Training

The Genesee Intermediate School District (GISD) is running a Year-Long Early Literacy Essential Practices Training for teachers and coaches. Over 60 teachers and coaches are involved in the intensive training to learn and implement the 10 Essential Early Literacy Practices.

Are you ready to begin this journey too? Call (810) 591-4408 if you are interested in being part of our next cohort!

Important Student Competition Dates



2019 Spelling Bee

All districts participating in the Genesee County annual Spelling Bee will need to submit names by February 22, 2019 by 12:00 noon.

The Spelling Bee will be held March 4-12 at the Genesee Intermediate School District.

Flint Regional Science Fair

The 63rd Annual Flint Regional Science Fair is open to all students, grades 4-12, in Genesee and surrounding counties.

The Regional Science Fair is on March 15-17, 2019, at Kettering University. Register individually or as a team online at www.flintsciencefair.org.

Protect Yourself from Phishing Scams

Today's news increasingly features stories about companies and businesses having data breaches. Last fall, Facebook reported that the data of millions of its users had potentially been compromised, and just recently Marriott reported that the personal information of up to 500 million people may have been exposed. Incidents like these should serve as a reminder of the importance of cybersecurity.

One way hackers seek to compromise both individual and organizational security is through phishing. For those not familiar with the term, "phishing emails" are fraudulent email messages from someone pretending to be from a reputable source, but in fact they are attempts to have you share your password, credit card number, or other personal information. These messages are designed to trick the recipient into thinking the request for information is legitimate. While SPAM filters try to block these messages and prevent them from reaching your in-box, some manage to get through.

The following questions and tips can help protect you from being tricked by phishing email messages:

1. Do you recognize the sender? If not, don't click any links or attachments.
2. Does the email ask for financial or personal information like your password? A legitimate technical support representative would never send a message asking for your password or login information. Also, any message asking you to provide your credit, debit, or checking account information should be viewed with caution.



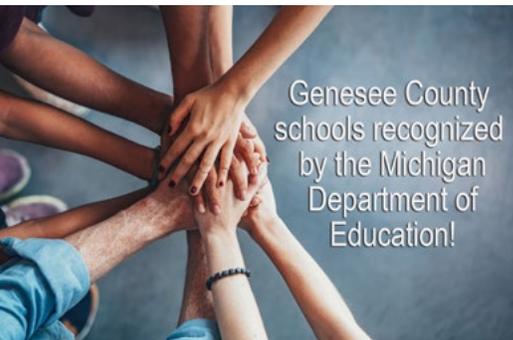
3. Does the message say it is urgent that you respond now? Phishing messages often try to trick you to click a link by creating a sense of urgency for you to respond. While at times you may get a message that is truly urgent, do not rush to click a link or open an attachment unless you are certain the source of the message is legitimate.
4. Does the message have typos or grammatical errors? While legitimate senders can make a typo or error in their message, it is common for phishing messages to include typos and other errors.
5. Is there a hyperlink the message asks you to click on? If you hover over a hyperlink, it should reveal the full web address of where the link will take you. If the actual web address is different than what you would expect, you should be cautious.

Remember, when in doubt as to the legitimacy of a message, it never hurts to investigate further before clicking a hyperlink or attachment. If you have questions, you can reach out to your technical support team for help with evaluating a message.

Promoting Positive School Climate

A Look at Behavioral Health Integration

The Genesee Intermediate School District's Promoting Positive School Climate project (PPSC) is well into the fourth year of implementation supporting school districts and students in Genesee County. Participation in PPSC is comprehensive, progressive, and will be a long-standing initiative as it is an identified priority with the U.S. Department of Education and the Michigan Department of Education. The fundamental purpose of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is for schools to establish a more effective and equitable learning environment, as recommended by Dr. Rob Horner, Co-Director of the OSEP Technical Assistance Center for PBIS.



The Michigan Department of Education recently recognized Genesee County school districts and the Genesee Intermediate School District (GISD) and noted the importance and priority of PBIS in the state as part of Michigan's Top 10 in 10 state education goals. GISD was recognized as the largest ISD implementing PBIS and the significant reduction of suspensions for students with disabilities, as well as the overall impact for general education students.

The progression of PPSC is implemented through a tiered approach. Within each tier, schools

have the opportunity to be supported by community stakeholders, including outside agencies. This process will become more formalized within a structure called the Interconnected Systems Framework (ISF). For participants of GISD's Promoting Positive School Climate project, an additional layer of support has been established called Promoting Positive School Climate with Behavioral Health Integration. At the national level, this work is referred to as the Interconnected Systems Framework. Regardless of what this process is called, the key concepts lie within a multi-tiered system of support.

The Interconnected Systems Framework (ISF) is a structure and process for education and mental health systems to interact in an equitable, effective, and efficient way. The process is guided by key stakeholders in education and leaders of community mental health systems who have the authority to reallocate resources, change the role and function of staff, and change policy. The ISF aligns with a multi-tiered system of support within a school's environment and has several similar characteristics. There are tiered prevention logic and cross system problem-solving teams that meet regularly. The meetings involve using data to decide which evidence-based practices to implement, and monitoring overall progress and impact in the school system. This process also contains active involvement from youth, families, and other school and community stakeholders.

There are six features that exemplify the core of ISF work. Core features include effective teams involving community mental health providers working with PBIS



Promoting Positive School Climate

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

teams. Collaborative teams look at data-based decision making to create formal processes for the selection and implementation of evidence-based interventions for students. Another core feature includes early access through the use of comprehensive screening and rigorous progress-monitoring for both fidelity and effectiveness of the interventions. As a part of this work we continue to provide a coaching model, supporting both the systems and practice levels.

This very important work, and collaboration with community and educational institutions, creates successful and safe environments for all learners. Through this work, we promote effective decision-making and improved school climates.

It is also important to consider the behavior of adults, and to promote the reduction of punitive approaches to student misbehavior or deregulation. This framework leads to educationally important outcomes both behaviorally and academically.

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The project provides the framework for the opportunity to align intensity of support with the need. We plan with districts to establish a strategic system improvement and a more organized and efficient implementation of mental/behavioral health integration. By investing in a small number of more effective practices, we aim to have a big impact on students in Genesee County.

On December 27, former Governor Rick Snyder signed Senate Bill 149 (H-1), which funds over \$30 million for school mental health support services. The addition of these crucial resources to help children in need will align perfectly within current PPSC initiatives and framework.

Over the next few years, GISD will continue to support and expand evidence-based practices enhancing

the comprehensive PBIS and behavioral health system.

For more information on PPSC and Behavioral Health Integration, contact Nicolette Cheff, MTSS Implementation Specialist, by email at ncheff@geneseeisd.org or by phone at 810-591-4935.

Utility Rebates Give Money Back to Schools and Homeowners for Making Improvements

School officials in Michigan are taking steps to make energy saving improvements to their buildings. By upgrading mechanical systems and lighting, the learning environment is much improved in terms of space temperatures, air quality, and better lighting. These improvements provide energy efficient equipment, resulting in lower energy usage and lower energy bills. There are also financial incentives schools can take advantage of, such as energy rebates offered by utility companies.



Consumers Energy and Detroit Edison both provide energy efficiency programs. Those interested in cashing in must first submit an application to reserve funds for an energy improvement project in a number of categories, such as:

- Envelope and Insulation
- HVAC Mechanical
- Kitchen, Refrigeration, Laundry

- Lighting
- New Construction

There are also opportunities to create a custom energy saving project. In Michigan, there are Utility Energy Advisors that help schools determine if certain projects will qualify for their incentives and they also help with the application process. District operations, architect and engineering firms, and contractors all work with an assigned project Utility Energy Engineer. The engineer works with school officials to determine if the equipment meets all requirements. They also calculate the incentive and make sure all the needed documentation is submitted.

Additionally, mechanical and lighting contract companies, also known as Trade Allies, can submit incentive applications to the utility on the school's behalf. For some projects, such as equipment tune-ups, the approved Trade Ally contractor can be paid the incentive directly by the utility so that schools avoid any out of pocket costs. By applying for these utility incentives, districts have been able to receive thousands of dollars in rebate checks that go to the school.

Homeowners can also benefit from the Residential Energy Efficiency Rebate Programs offered by the utility companies. Residents can submit applications online to apply for the incentives. Rebates are available for multiple categories, including:

- Appliance Rebate and Recycling
- Heating and Cooling
- Insulation and Windows
- New Home Construction
- Lighting

Both Detroit Edison and Consumers Energy have created a way to find instant rebates online on energy saving items, like smart thermostats and LED lights. For more information on energy efficient products visit www.dtemarketplace.com and www.consumersenergystore.com.

Before starting an energy improvement project at school or at home, it makes sense to first check to see if the project will be able to qualify for a rebate from the local utility company by visiting www.consumersenergy.com or www.dteenergy.com. Incorporating this first step into your plan and calculating the incentive into the total project cost may allow even more energy improvements to be made.



Internal Revenue Service 403(b) Changes

Employees can Increase Retirement Contributions

The Internal Revenue Service has increased the 403(b) tax deferred annuity contribution limit for 2019. Employees can now make an elective deferral of income to a 403(b) account. As of January 1, 2019, the annual limit increased from \$18,500 to \$19,000. At the end of the calendar year, employees 50 years of age and over are also eligible to make catch-up contributions up to the amount of \$6,000.

Experts say this is a way to set aside pretax dollars and allow your investment income to grow over time. Employers who offer 403(b) plans must have a written plan document with an approved list of vendors the employee must select from.

In general, 403(b) contributions are available to employees when they reach 59½ years of age. If you are interested in opening a 403(b) annuity or custodial account, please contact your payroll office and request a copy of the approved vendor list.



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- Mary Behm, Assistant Superintendent - Education and Learning 591-4408
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- Denise Belt, Executive Director - Career Technical Education..... 591-4446
- Tricia Hill, Executive Director - Center for Countywide Programs 591-5609

For more information about Genesee Intermediate School District's programs and services, visit our website at www.geneseeisd.org. Send comments or feedback regarding the *Connections* newsletter to connections@geneseeisd.org.