

***Our Mission:
Supporting Schools and
Student Achievement***

***Our Vision:
Impacting our community through high-quality educational programs, services, and learning experiences.***

Career & Technical Education

Director of CTE Mike Miller Reports:

Manufacturing Week:

Contributed by Wendy Chupp

Manufacturers from across the region teamed up with West Michigan Works! and Grand Valley State University Film students to create a virtual Discover Manufacturing Week experience for West Michigan middle and high school students. A special thank you to Haworth, Hamtech and Yoplait for participating in this year's event! Discover Manufacturing Week is part of the national Manufacturing Day initiative that is held each year.

During the week of Nov. 9-13, this career awareness event showcased modern manufacturing creativity, technology and innovation to students and educators in an interactive way through twice-daily Zoom webinars. The webinars were a combination of employer presentations, facility tours and a Q&A sessions, and were recorded and uploaded to Discover Manufacturing's YouTube channel to provide access to a broader group of students and the general public. Four local middle school districts participated: Big Rapids, Chippewa Hills, Crossroads Charter Academy and Reed

City, which totaled approximately 470 students from our MOISD!

Virtual Discover Manufacturing Week 2020 looked and felt differently but continued to deliver an opportunity to advance students' career exploration journey. Discover Manufacturing Week celebrates the manufacturing industry with events for about 3,000 middle and high school students that showcase the facilities, technologies and people who make the products that enrich our lives and strengthen our communities and economy.

In addition, Discover Manufacturing is offering six \$500 scholarships to high school seniors interested in pursuing a manufacturing-related career in Michigan. The scholarships may be used for skilled trades training or the pursuit of a manufacturing-related degree from a post-secondary institution in Michigan. Business, accounting, engineering, and marketing are examples of degrees that could qualify with language in the essay, tying the degree to a possible manufacturing career. The awards may be used for tuition, training, equipment (including computers), and other expenses at the winner's discretion. More information on the event is at www.discover-manufacturing.com.

Culinary Arts Adapts Curriculum in Response to COVID:

Contributed by Jennifer Upham and Shelli Hallman

Students in Culinary Arts are immersing themselves in the current COVID protocol in the restaurant industry. The students have taken COVID training through ServSafe, which includes de-escalation and conflict training in addition to COVID practices. Instead of the restaurant being open, we, like many restaurants, are brainstorming ways to do business differently. Second-year students have created a student food cart business to use within the career center. The Welding students are helping create this cart. We are also offering a takeout business to our staff, and students are creating a bakery business. Students could make lunch for the local school counselors, where they showcased our senior students' chicken projects.



The students start with a whole chicken and learn how to break it down into useable portions. We discuss the cost of an entire chicken versus buying it pre-cut and then make a meal with it. Students also had to cost out their meal and come up with a menu price.



In the classroom, students have been focusing on knife cuts, making roux, béchamel, and velouté sauces, learning a variety of egg and breakfast dishes; and mise en place. Due to not being face-to-face, students have taken their skills home and continue to practice what they are learning in class. One student shared that she likes to

cook with her mom so that she can teach her what she has learned.



While there are many victories to celebrate, there continue to be many struggles this year due to these unusual circumstances. Many students who have been learning from home for an extended time have not fully participated in classroom requirements or lessons. We have been offering the Zoom classroom to students at home; fewer than 50% of the students on extended homestays have participated. On a positive note, for those students who have called in or missed class, we have provided them the opportunity to participate in class. We just started using the Swivel. Thanks to Mr. Fox's help, we can live feed Zoom meetings and have the camera follow us and another camera set looking down onto the cooktop for demos. This provides students at home a better experience, more like they would if they were in class.

General Education

Director of General Education Tonya Harrison Reports:

The General Ed Team:

The month of November has been a little quiet for the General Education Department.

The next ISD-wide learning day is on February 12, with the MOISD and Big Rapids team meeting for a ½ of learning on January 18. We are accustomed to holding these opportunities through Zoom, allowing us to be prepared for the next set of learning dates.

I am providing learning on the new school improvement platform called MiCIP. I meet individually with local curriculum directors to review the platform, go through the process guide, and have a conversation about who to have on the district teams. Three districts have scheduled meetings to begin their work and learning.

Early Literacy:

Amy Posey is providing ongoing support to the Chippewa Hills District with their Mi-MTSS initiative, as she serves the Weidman team as a system coach. Amy continues to work with the state early literacy team and provides resources to our local elementary schools.

Math/Science/Technology:

Justin continues to support our locals, especially Evert, with their instructional technology goals. He recently provided learning to middle school teachers on Google. We have staff members at the Career Center trying new technology using Swivel, which is a recording device for teachers. The General Education Shared Library has four Swivel's available for use. Then videos available for upload into their Google Classrooms. Justin received accolades from Mr. O'Dell, the Evert Middle School principal, at the last curriculum meeting for his teaching and support.

Behavior/Mental Health Supports:

CPI and TCIS are ongoing offerings supported by Michael Bassano, Beth Bond, and Mary Corder. The last CPI class was

held on December 8-9. We will continue to social distance and keep the class maxed at ten people.

Special Education

Director of Special Education Christy Miller Reports:

This year our special education department revisited the MOISD strategic action plan goals and previous action steps to determine how we can continue to move our department and the ISD as a whole forward in these areas. The three MOISD strategic action goals include:

1. Increasing communication effectiveness
2. Fostering and supporting a positive culture, and
3. Positively impacting student success through programs and services.

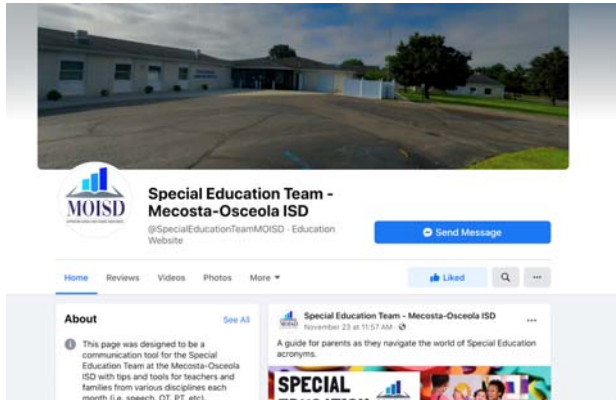
For the next three months, I will be highlighting what the special education department is doing this year to improve in one of these goal areas. This month, I'll be talking a little bit about how we are focusing on increasing communication effectiveness.

GOAL1: Increasing Communication Effectiveness

To increase internal and external communication, the special education department will be releasing a newsletter with the state, ISD, staffing, and guidance updates. This newsletter will highlight "Caught" certificate awardees from the ISD and local districts.

The newsletter will be distributed to all ISD and local special education providers, local superintendents, and principals. The first newsletter was released on November 20th and is linked [here](#).

We will also be upping our game in the social media world by posting pictures and updates on our Facebook page. If you are not already following us, check out our page!



Special Education Supervisor Jaime Knap Reports:

Early On:

Anna McConnell lead the charge to put together 80 bags for our Birth to 3-year-old students and families using the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund grant.

Anna worked with Allyse Ward and all of the Early On staff (Andi Strickler, Cortney Clay, Michelle Welch, Megin Boes, Michelle Seward, Deb Mako, Bri Ballew, and Jodi Snyder) to assemble these bags!



The team got together, filled the bags this week,



and they were delivered on the doorsteps of our families.



The providers will use these bags to deliver virtual therapy to these students. The providers plan to "Zoom" with families, utilizing their materials from the bag to coach families through the communication, socialization, and learning that can be done through playing with the items in the bag. What a wonderful way to show flexibility, teamwork, and service to our community.

Way to go, Early On team!

Special Education Supervisor Jenny Knopf Reports:

Thankful to be able to share some news from the Education Center! Students continue to work hard and progress on their individual goals. Staff remain diligent regarding cleaning protocols, mask wearing, social distancing, and hand washing. On Tuesday, November 24th, through a collaborative effort between Big Rapids food service, our transportation department, and Education Center staff, over 150 bags of food and gallons of milk were safely

delivered to students' homes. Great job, TEAM!

Staff is thinking about creative ways to safely spread the holiday spirit! Kathleen Rau's adult transition program is beginning to work on creating holiday centerpieces. In addition, classrooms will be creating different types of artwork that will be shared with local nursing home residents.



Students from Mrs. Nielsen's high school classroom worked together and got the Christmas tree put up in the cafeteria for all to enjoy!



Young adult students in Mrs. Rau's program continue to work hard on creating the holiday centerpieces!



Special Education Supervisor for Evart Public Schools and Planner/Monitor Ayla Lockhart Reports:

Even during the time of COVID, timelines do not change, stop, or alter in the world of compliance. Our students depend on their services and programming. Local district teams have worked diligently to complete and almost fully close out B-13, Transition Corrective Actions, and Corrective Action Plans.

Our next venture is updating and supporting teams regarding which state assessments students should participate in based on individual circumstances. Each member district will fall in Tier 1-3 based on their participation rate.

After the New Year, there will be new releases of compliance areas to review, Child Find, and Early Childhood Transition.

I look forward to learning and supporting our teams as we make our way into 2021.

Special Education Supervisor of MOISD Satellite Programs & Big Rapids Public Schools Cheryl Wright Reports:

Flexibility has been key for our satellite programs this month. Staff has rallied to help students and parents cope with the uncertainties they have faced. Our teachers, behavior techs, and paras have taken on new roles and responsibilities to provide supports in-person and remotely, helping families with technology needs, food delivery, social-emotional support, as well as academics.

The Program for Students with Emotional Impairments at Big Rapids Middle School returned to in-person learning at the start of the month. Staff renewed their focus on CHAMPS to help students settle back into the routines of school. When switching to remote learning again, the staff was ready. They implemented plans to provide students with support throughout the day to increase engagement. A big thank you to MOISD Technology staff who ensured Chromebooks and hotspots were able to be distributed where needed.



Students at the Riverview Resource Room made their first pivot to remote learning. The teacher and staff worked with students, general education teachers, and

parents to prepare for this change. Students and parents were ready to log in to Chromebooks to use SeeSaw and Google Classroom. Students learned to access materials and navigate sites ahead of time to reduce stress when switching to at-home learning. The staff has provided online support to keep students engaged and making progress in both their academic and social skill development.

While the big news for the other Big Rapids satellite programs was the pivot to remote learning, the Early Childhood Special Education Program continued on in-person. Individualized learn at home materials were delivered to students who needed or chose to work at home temporarily. The team has been busy implementing strategies to support the development of language and motor skills.



Special Projects

Director of Special Projects Karen Roy Reports:

Well, 2020 is rapidly coming to an end and no one seems to take issue with that this year! All that is currently going on will likely continue for a while, it seems. Our early childhood teaching staff are doing a great job of taking it all in stride, whether virtual or face-to-face. The team has really come

together once again to share resources and talents and to support one another regardless of teaching mode. The folks in Chip Hills have found their groove--families are encouraged to join as often as possible. Staff recognize (and are living) the challenges of virtual education in family situations and have adjusted their schedules and offerings to be responsive to parent needs during this time.

Currently, only our classrooms in the Chip Hills district are virtual. All others remain open for face-to-face instruction, even when the rest of the district is down in some cases (RC, for example). We are grateful for the districts continuing to provide food and/or transportation support to our programs. Many of our families have thanked us for remaining open as without being able to send their children to our programs, they would not be able to work and lose their jobs. Scary times for folks on so many levels. We are fortunate that we have not had significant COVID issues causing total closures in our classrooms. It takes everyone doing their part to keep it that way--this is that "village" at work once again!

We continue to lean on technology to assist us in ensuring staff has access to the right tools to do the work they are doing and simultaneously support their capacity to learn new skills and test them out in a way that feels safe and supported. Staff is asking for additional training on how to use their Google tools, so we have begun having short mini-sessions on the basic functionality of email, calendar, files, managing contacts, Google Drive (organizing, searching, sharing, permissions, etc.), Google products (sheets, docs, forms, Keep, jamboard, etc.). The sessions only cover 1-3 topics each, so no one will feel overwhelmed, which gives

them time to practice the learning before moving on to the next topics.

As you can imagine working with our homeless students and youth when much of what schools are doing is virtual adds an additional layer of complexity to this work. In our consortium, almost 50% have turned over in the last 15 months, increasing the technical assistance workload for our grant support work a bit. There are some interesting cases coming out of these times, particularly related to FERPA, unaccompanied youth, and identifying who has a say in what gets shared with whom. When there are contentious familial relationships, this gets even more tricky. Luckily we have some great support from our national organizations that provide guidance, resources, and support from the MDE Office of Special Populations. They have really helped me navigate these waters so that barriers to working with these students can be ameliorated within both federal laws. It is like peeling an onion--tears and all!

The holidays bring along their own stress, coupled with our COVID "friend" we see higher levels of stress on families--especially given how long this pandemic has been hanging out with us. Our family engagement supports are full-on, working on strategies to keep families connected with us, the community, and with each other. Facebook pages, online parent cafes', frequent check-ins, Facebook live events, and connections to community happenings. We pushed out a fall "virtual book walk" since we could not hold the book walks in person this fall. They are also planning to continue offering our annual family traditions holiday workshop--only this year it will be virtual and supported with Facebook live events of

families creating their holiday crafts and sharing that with others. Items will be going home with some families so they can participate, and some will be part of porch drop-offs/food pick-ups throughout the region.

Here's wishing you all a very **Merry Christmas** and a safe and healthy **New Year!**

Thank you for your continued support.

Technology

Director of Technology Fred Sharpsteen Reports:

Having just celebrated Thanksgiving, the MOISD Technology Team can't help but be thankful for the patience and understanding of staff and families, as we assist them with new technology challenges. The technology teams at every local school and the MOISD are pivoting almost daily. This has changed the way we handle technology support. This is especially true as instruction may move back and forth between remote learning and face-to-face instruction delivery. Justin Fox has help bridge the technology and education challenges with some instructional coaching of staff. Justin has provided both team and individual training opportunities. We are thankful for his support and work.

Google Classrooms and Remoting Learning:

Working with MOCC principal Caleb Martz and his staff, we helped implement Google Classrooms for remote learning along with Google Meetings and recordings. This system can be used for student assignments, instructors collecting those assignments, and tracking the students'

progress with their assignments. This past week staff implemented classroom recordings so that if a student misses class, they don't fall behind. This is what we call asynchronous learning versus synchronous learning, where a student has to be at a specific place at a specific time. Asynchronous learning allows for students to learn any time and almost anywhere. With the general education expertise from Mr. Fox, this project was a success.

MI-Connect Funds for MOISD LEAs:

The MOISD technology staff is helping to coordinate the MI-Connect state funds (<https://mi-connect.org/>). The Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA) and the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) have put ISDs in charge of overseeing local and internal distribution of the money. The total funding for the MOISD area was \$148,361. We are in the final stages of this grant, and most of the districts have put out purchase orders, and they will have the applications for reimbursements by mid-January.

Michigan State Education Network (MiSEN):

Michigan State Education Network (MiSEN), the state fiber network currently connecting all 56 ISDs in the state of Michigan, is moving to phase II. This will include connecting all local schools to the state fiber optic network. As identified by MiSEN, there are some high need schools within the MOISD area. Over the next year, we will work with local schools and public libraries that are not yet on MiSEN.

MOP Placement:

Zeke Holley is now providing technology support to Ewart Public Schools. He did his initial training at the MOISD and at the end

of the first week, we felt he was ready to help Kevin Beilfuss in the support of technology at Ewart.

Mike Schonert will be doing some network support services one day a week at Reed City Area Public Schools to help them with meeting their mission.