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Stockero Named New CCISD Superintendent

The Copper Country Intermediate School District Board of Education recently named George Stockero as their new Superintendent, replacing long-time Superintendent Dennis Harbour, who is retiring at the end of June. Stockero will assume his new responsibilities effective July 1st.

Stockero was among a pool of strong candidates, which included three local Superintendents that were interviewed for the position by the Board of Education. Board President Robert Tuomi indicated that, although the quality of candidates made the decision very difficult, he was delighted with the selection of Stockero to fill the post. Tuomi further commented that Mr. Stockero has a wide range of experiences having served as a K-12 Principal/Superintendent for the Chassell Township Schools. Tuomi went on to say that Stockero had a strong administrative background, as well as experience as a Special Education Teacher, which is critical to the new position.

Stockero began his career as a Special Education Teacher, spending ten years with the Forest Park School District in Crystal Falls, Michigan. He then became the Athletic Director and Special Education Teacher with the Hancock Public Schools, where he spent six years. Mr. Stockero assumed his first administrative job as K-12 Principal in 2005 with the Chassell Township Schools, and was named Superintendent in 2010.

During a recent interview, Stockero indicated that he is looking forward to the challenges



George Stockero

posed by his new position as ISD Superintendent. He further commented that the CCISD has maintained a solid reputation of assisting local schools in the delivery of educational services to nearly 7,000 students and 500 staff in 13 school districts across Houghton, Baraga and Keweenaw Counties. The new ISD chief said his initial focus will center on consolidation of non-academic services, as well as enhancing Career and Technical Education opportunities for high school students.

Article by Dennis Harbour,
CCISD Superintendent



Have a great summer!

Our Hancock main office is open during the summer from 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., Monday – Friday.



Research proves that children benefit for life when they participate in high quality preschool programs. They are better prepared to work and learn with other students as they move into kindergarten and other educational experiences. Quality preschool experiences are available in our ISD and include the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP), through classrooms currently operated by BHK Child Development and Little Huskies Child Development Center.

In short, the GSRP is Michigan's state funded preschool program that provides funding for programs that serve four year old children who qualify based on certain factors that may place them at risk for educational failure. Eligibility is based on income and/or other risk factors. Also, it should be noted that 10% of our preschool children can be over income and eligible for a place in a Great Start Readiness Program.

The focus of GSRP is to offer children hands-on learning experiences, with plenty of time to play while exploring their world. Children will have the opportunity to experience gross motor and fine motor activities, enhance socialization skills through play and language, explore their world and participate in both teacher and child-directed learning experiences. Breakfast, lunch and/or snacks are provided daily, dependent on program hours. Additionally, these programs

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CCISD Health Occupations Students Successful at State Competitions



Pictured left to right: Alysa Kilpela, Leslie Hamar, Atalie Hyrkas, Allison Aho, Katrina Kangas, Kirsten Daavettila, Sara Kilpela, Carlye Johnson, Marah Erickson, Amanda Mattila, Lacy Erickson, Kayla Wakeham, and RyLee Maki

Almost 2,000 Health Occupations students competed at the Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) State Competitions on April 23-25, 2014, in Traverse City. Thirteen local students represented Calumet, Chassell, Houghton, Hancock and Jeffers High Schools at the event. They qualified for the opportunity to compete at the HOSA State Competitions by finishing in the top three in Regional Competitions at Marquette Senior High in January.

Four students finished in the top eight in the State: Amanda Mattila (2nd), Leslie Hamar (4th), Katrina Kangas (6th), and Marah Erickson (7th). Amanda qualified to compete at Nationals with her top 3 finish. National competitions will be held on June 25-28, 2014 in Orlando, Florida.

Rounding out the competitors representing Copper Country HOSA were: Allison Aho, Atalie Hyrkas, Lacy Erickson, Carlye Johnson, RyLee Maki, Kirsten Daavettila, Sara Kilpela, Alysa Kilpela, and Kayla Wakeham.

While in Traverse City for the competition, the students were able to visit Munson Medi-

cal center's NorthFlight EMS pilot, nurse, and paramedic flight team to learn about air medical transport and participate in hands on skills.

Article by Teresa Shoup,
CCISD Health Careers Instructor

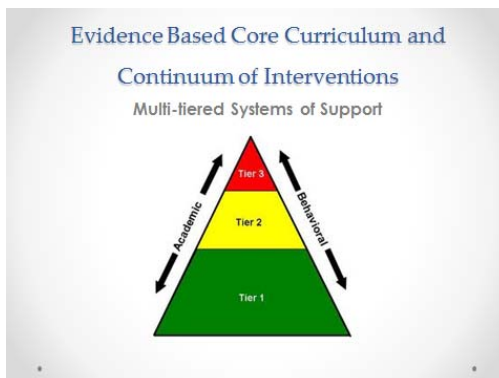


With NorthFlight crew: (Back Row) Alysa Kilpela, Amanda Mattila, Flight Nurse Jennifer Park, pilot David Wetherholdt, and paramedic Luke Goodwin; (Middle Row): Kayla Wakeham, Allison Aho, Kirsten Daavettila, Leslie Hamar, Katrina Kangas; (Front Row) Lacy Erickson, Carlye Johnson, Atalie Hyrkas, Marah Erickson; Missing: RyLee Maki, Sara Kilpela

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

Like many state and national initiatives, Response to Intervention (RtI) has evolved and the term that is now more frequently used is Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). MTSS refers to building integrated systems of instruction, assessment and intervention that will meet the behavioral and academic needs of all students, but especially those at risk of school failure. A critical component of the framework is a focus on using data to determine the level of student need, to monitor progress and to inform instruction and interventions. The Copper Country ISD receives grant funding from a state project (Michigan Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative - MiBLSi) to support the ISD and partnering local districts in their efforts to put systems into place and for training activities. A new district model requires the establishment of a district implementation team. At the ISD level this team includes both general education and special education staff. With help from our MiBLSi Technical Assistance Partner, the CCISD Implementation Team has been working hard to integrate the MTSS framework within the Michigan School Improvement Process to avoid duplication of efforts.

During the 2013-14 school year, the CCISD MTSS team began their work under the new MTSS district model with two partnering districts, Houghton-Portage and Baraga Area Schools, initially helping them establish focus



areas. After reviewing reading data and behavior referrals, our partnering districts identified that efforts next year will focus on implementing positive school culture at the Middle School and High School levels. Staff will also receive training in adolescent literacy. Additionally, Baraga and Houghton will work on strengthening reading and behavior supports at the elementary level.

MTSS information has been added to the CCISD website. You can find the link on the CCISD home page toward the bottom of the menu on the left. The information on the website summarizes multi-tiered systems of support in a succinct manner, provides links to additional resources and identifies the CCISD Implementation Team.

Article by Christine Salo,
CCISD Director of Special Education

PAC Spring Awards Reception

The 12th annual Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) Awards Dinner was held on May 6th at the CCISD, with approximately 65 people in attendance. The PAC awards recognize people who have made outstanding contributions in the area of special education during the current school year. Awards were given in a number of categories, including general education teachers, special education teachers, ancillary staff, support staff and students.

CCISD staff who were recognized included Heather Brinegar-Kinnunen, Early Childhood Special Education Services Provider, and

Tammy Parmentier, Elementary Mild Cognitive Impairment Teacher, who received the Special Education Teacher Award; Glenna Brinkman, Paraprofessional in the Middle School Mild Cognitive Impairment Program, who received the Support Staff Award; and retiring Superintendent Dennis Harbour, received a special recognition at the event.

As always, the PAC Awards Reception was a very heartwarming and positive event enjoyed by all in attendance.

Article by Christine Salo,
CCISD Director of Special Education

GSRP, continued from page 2

must meet the quality criteria established by the state, including staff with early childhood credentials and training in curriculum. The GSRP program follows the Standards of Quality and Curriculum Guidelines set by the Michigan State Board of Education and licensing requirements of the Department of Human Services. For the Fall 2014-15 year, children must be 4 years of age on or before October 1, 2014.

For the past two years the Copper Country ISD has been the grantee of the GSRP with responsibility for oversight of the GSRP grant and all of the components. We do this in collaboration with the Copper Country Great Start Collaborative, our sub-recipients, local school district representatives and parents.

Since programs and staffing are determined by the number of eligible children who are enrolled, it is important to apply early so that the number of programs and staff can be determined in a timely manner prior to the 2014-15 school year. So, don't wait! The first step for parents interested in no or low-cost state funded preschool for their child is to complete the GSRP eligibility and enrollment process.

If you would like additional information on GSRP, including eligibility and where to apply for enrollment, please contact your CCISD GSRP Early Childhood Contact, Chris Salo at (906)482-4250, ext. 190, or GSRP Early Childhood Specialist, Elen Maurer, at (906)487-6653, ext. 109.

Article by Christine Salo,
CCISD Director of Special Education
& Early Childhood Contact for GSRP

CCISD Truancy Prevention Program Recognized

Recently, officials from the Copper Country Intermediate School District, Houghton County Probate Court, Houghton County Prosecutor's Office and the Department of Human Services were asked to attend the Marquette Regional Forum on School-Justice Partnerships and present information on the CCISD Truancy program, which has gained state-wide recognition.

The program has been in place for approximately ten years and was developed through a partnership with the above mentioned agencies, as well as local K-12 schools, Houghton County Sheriff's Department and local law enforcement agencies in Houghton, Baraga and Keweenaw Counties. The primary focus of the program was to keep kids in school and provide a means of intervention with students developing excessive attendance related issues.

According to Superintendent Dennis Harbour, the truancy officer is the front line of enforcement for the program. Weekly visits to each school are the standard operating procedure, and being proactive with watch lists has revealed a positive result for depleting the number of cases filed with the court system. Harbour said the program has gained state-wide recognition because of its student retention rate, as well as the cooperative partnership between the local school districts, judicial system, law enforcement and social services.

Article by Dennis Harbour,
CCISD Superintendent

CCISD Transition Services & Activities

The Transition process helps to prepares students who are eligible for Special Education for life after school. Services in this area are intended to promote successful movement from school to adult life through a coordinated set of activities that can be focused on both academic and functional needs of the student with a disability, in line with their interests and abilities. Federal rules and regulations require that transition planning for students with disabilities begin no later than age 16, with annual updates thereafter. However, best practice is to begin planning as early as age 14 or even earlier in some cases.

In the Copper Country ISD, the Transition Coordinator, Lois Weber, coordinates and facilitates many of the activities to promote successful transition for area students in Special Education. One of this year's most popular and successful activities was an Interviewing Workshop held at the Memorial Union Building on Michigan Tech's campus. More than 100 Junior and Senior students in special education had the opportunity to participate in mock interviews and play the "Reality Store" game based on real life situations. In addition, students were able

to visit with local college representatives, complete resumes and learn about safety in the work place. This was a collaborative effort as there were agency representatives from the Michigan Department of Education, Keweenaw Business Professional Women, Michigan Works! and college representatives from Gogebic Community College, Finlandia University and Michigan Tech University.

Another recent activity was the Students Training on Mentoring Peers (STOMP) May event for 7-12th grade students in Special Education. The mission of the STOMP group is to connect students in Special Education with their peers, in an attempt to make sure "no student feels alone and to help every student use his or her unique gifts to make a difference or success". This particular event featured speakers from the community, including former students, who have faced and overcome challenges in school and in the community. For more information about STOMP please contact Lois Weber, Transition Coordinator at the CCISD.

Article by Christine Salo,
CCISD Director of Special Education

Simple Kindness for Youth

The 2013-14 school year has been a busy one for the local non-profit, Simple Kindness for Youth (SKY). SKY was fortunate to be the recipient of fundraising events by local students and businesses. The Houghton High School National Honor Society sponsored a ski race in January, "Chili Chase for Charity," with part of the proceeds benefiting SKY. The L'Anse office of the Plum Creek Timber Company won their regional ice fishing tournament, generously donating their winnings to SKY. Future events include an upcoming trail race associated with the Chassell Strawberry Festival.

In addition to fundraising activities, SKY has been bringing the message of philanthropy to several youth organizations. Board members helped Girl Scout Troop 5374 earn their philanthropy badge by speaking to them about the importance of working in teams to help others in the community. SKY, along with

Habitat for Humanity, the Salvation Army, and Big Brothers/Big Sisters also presented at the Student Leadership Conference this April in an effort to encourage student philanthropy.

Since its inception in 2011, SKY has donated over \$32,000 to cover basic needs for over 400 students in Baraga, Houghton and Keweenaw Counties. Successfully helping these students has been the result of collaboration between community members, teachers, volunteer SKY board members and students themselves. We would like to thank everyone for their support and encourage professionals to continue putting in grant requests for students who could use a little extra assistance in meeting their basic needs.

Article by Lynnette Borree,
CCISD School Psychologist & SKY President

How has the Lake Superior Stewardship Initiative Impacted Students? 2012-2013 School Year



Purpose. The Lake Superior Stewardship Initiative (LSSI) provides support for schools in Houghton, Baraga, and Keweenaw Counties to implement environmental stewardship projects. The goal of

LSSI is "to increase understanding and active stewardship of the Great Lakes by K-12 teachers and students working in partnership with community organizations and local units of government" (<http://lakesuperiorstewardship.org>). During the 2012-2013 school year, teachers and students participated in a pre-post assessment of the impact of LSSI on students' environmental awareness, environmental affinity, and interest in environmental learning and stewardship.

Findings. Pre vs. post results indicate the following:

- Participation in LSSI significantly increased fourth and fifth grade students' awareness of the ability for humans to negatively impact nature.
- LSSI student scores for stewardship intentions and nature appreciation showed significant increases with the number of years involved in LSSI.

Qualitative results indicated:

- Ninety percent of LSSI students contribute to decision-making about how they can best serve the community.
- LSSI students are most excited to continue environmental learning and stewardship



work when they engage in activities that align with their unique interests.

Illustrative student responses to the question, "What did you learn from your (LSSI) project?"

- *I learned that we need to keep the beaches clean for us and the future generations to come. I also learned about the invasive species in our area.*
- *I learned that it takes a lot of time to do projects like this, and that it is important to keep the environment healthy.*
- *That it was a real effort to making something and hard to making it a success.*
- *I learned that we need to manage and take care of our wildlife and parks, if we want to enjoy it.*
- *I learned from our project that people really do have an impact on nature.*
- *If we all work together we can make the forest a better place to be.*

Lake Superior Stewardship Initiative is a project of the Western UP Center for Science, Math and Environmental Education and funded by the Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative. For more information, visit <http://lakesuperiorstewardship.org>.



Article by Shawn Oppliger,
Director, Western U.P. Center for Science,
Mathematics & Environmental Education

Yoga Calm Comes to the CCISD

In recent years the concept of mindfulness has spread from medicine and other therapeutic interventions to the field of education. Research has shown that teaching mindfulness in schools can help students to self-regulate emotions and to increase attention and focus which, in turn, helps students to improve memory, academic skills, social skills, and self-esteem.

Yoga Calm is an evidence-based program that incorporates mindfulness, along with yoga poses and social-emotional skill building, to assist students who may struggle with behavioral issues, attention, and anxiety in the school setting. Research has shown Yoga Calm to be particularly effective for students who have been diagnosed with Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Anxiety Disorders, and for those who struggle with low self-esteem.

In February of 2014 the Copper Country ISD received a grant from the Michigan Association of Administrators of Special Education (MAASE) to purchase five Yoga Calm kits. The Yoga Calm kits were distributed to the elementary, middle, and high school Mild CI classrooms, the elementary Social Skills classroom, and one kit travels with the School Social Worker

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Yoga Calm Comes to the CCISD, continued from page 5



(SSW) to various districts for work with individual students. The SSW and teachers are just getting started with implementation of the program. It is hoped that students will apply the skills learned during Yoga Calm sessions in ways that foster emotion regulation, improved focus and attention to academic lessons, decreased anxiety, and an overall increase in self-esteem.

Article by Shelly Smith, CCISD School Social Worker

Copper Country Connections is published twice per year by the Copper Country Intermediate School District as a means of informing the educational community and the public of programs and services offered by the district. This publication is provided free of charge and is available for download in the "About Us" section of our website. To be added to our mailing list to receive printed copies of this newsletter, please contact:

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We're On The Web!
<http://www.copperisd.org>

2013-2014 CCASB Awards

Students, school employees and community members were recognized at the Copper Country Association of School Boards annual awards dinner at Michigan Tech on April 23rd. CCISD award recipients were as follows: Phillip Paavola, Social Skills student



Pictured from left to right: CCISD Board Treasurer Rob Roy, Cindy Figures, Christine Salo, Nels Christopherson, Phillip Paavola, and CCISD Board Trustee Robert Loukus

received the Student Leadership Award; Cindy Figures, Chairperson of the CCISD Parent Advisory Committee for Special Education, received the School Service Award; and Christine Salo, Director of Special Education, received the Outstanding Educational Employee Award. Also, CCISD Board Vice-President Nels Christopherson received the Michigan Association of School Boards President's Award of Recognition at the event, which is the highest level awarded in MASB's Certified Board Awards program.

Congratulations to all of the award recipients!

Article by Peggy Myllyoja, CCISD Executive Secretary to the Superintendent

Tech Ready?

With the implementation of mobile devices and the onset of high-stakes online assessment, many school districts are asking themselves, "Are we tech ready?" Most have realized that although steps have been taken, they and their students are far from being completely prepared for the recent and upcoming changes. To assist local schools, REMC is sponsoring several professional development programs at little or no cost. The first program, which many local educator are already familiar with, is the 21Things4Teachers course <http://21things4teachers-2013.weebly.com/>. This program explores the 21 "must have" technology resources that all teachers should be proficient in. REMC1 has offered this course in the past and plans to offer it again in the winter of 2014-15.

A second program, is the Blended Learning in the Classroom (BLiC) course. This program assists participants with incorporating online elements into their existing classrooms. Eleven local educators recently completed this course that was offered over the winter/spring semester. REMC1 plans to offer this course again in the fall. More information can be found at <http://www.remc.org/projects/blendedlearning/>

[remc.org/projects/blendedlearning/](http://www.remc.org/projects/blendedlearning/)

Another program that is being offered is the TRIG Teacher Technology Training (T3) Classroom Readiness Course. This course is part of the Technology Readiness Infrastructure Grant which is simply referred to as TRIG. 2013-14 was a pilot year and five REMC1 schools participated. The second year of the grant will be starting this July with another five REMC1 schools participating. The grant is expected to be available for an additional year and schools will have the opportunity to apply next spring for 2015-16 participation. Additional information can be found at <http://22itrig.org/activities/activity-three/>

All three sponsored programs offer teachers the ability to acquire SCECHs for license renewal. In addition to these programs, REMC1 offers customizable technology professional development sessions. If you are interested in participating in any of these programs or having a custom session provided to your district, please contact Steve Kass (steve@remc1.org) or Mike Richardson (mike@remc1.org).

Article by Mike Richardson, Director, REMC #1