



Education Matters

A Publication of Montcalm Area Intermediate School District

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July, 2015

MAISD Announces New Superintendent Ron Simon

Effective July 1, MAISD turned over its leadership reigns to Ron Simon who was selected by the MAISD Board of Education to serve as its next superintendent. Ron replaces Dr. Scott Koenigsknecht who accepted the same position with Ingham ISD in Mason.

Ron has been with MAISD since 2010 when he was hired as the Associate Superintendent of Finance. He brings a wealth of experience to his new position having served as the superintendent at Pewamo-Westphalia Community Schools for 8 years and business manager at St. John's Public Schools for 5 years. He has also served as a school board member in his home district.

Ron earned a Master's Degree in School Administration from CMU, Bachelors Degree in Accounting and Business from Aquinas College, and Associates Degree in Pre-Accounting from Lansing Community College. He is a licensed CPA and attended CMU's Robert M. Perry School of Banking. He is a member of the Michigan Association of School Administrators and Michigan School Business Officials. Ron and his wife, Carol, live in Pewamo. They have three daughters.

Ron follows the leadership of Dr. Scott Koenigsknecht who had been the MAISD Superintendent since July, 2007. Dr. Koenigsknecht left to serve as Superintendent at Ingham ISD where he will oversee educational services provided to the 12 public school districts in Ingham County and the greater Lansing area. Under his leadership, MAISD was successful in passing a special education millage increase for the first time in 26 years. Dr. Koenigsknecht was instrumental in the implementation of the Early College program at MCC and the creation of MAISD's endowment fund. He is the chair of the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators legislative committee and the board chair of the Michigan Public School Employees Retirement System as appointed by Governor Snyder in 2012. He and his wife, Jennifer, live in Fowler where he was once high school principal and superintendent. They have five children.

Pictured above right is incoming MAISD Superintendent Ron Simon who began his duties on July 1, 2015.

Pictured below is Dr. Scott Koenigsknecht, MAISD Superintendent from July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2015.



Congratulations to the 2014 - 2015 Make a Difference Award Winners



*Cory Mead
Speech Pathologist
Tri County Area Schools*



*Michael Moore
Elementary Principal
Montabella Community Schools*



*Barb Groom
Food & Nutrition Services
Greenville Middle School*



*Kurt Goodman
General Education Teacher
Montcalm Area Career Center*



*Ashley Moccia
Special Education Teacher
Greenville Middle School*

Winners of Student Peer to Peer Support Awards

Tri County Area Schools: Jillian Campbell, Daniel Findley, Hannah Johnson, Shawn Lawe, Jennifer Ludwig, Mackenzie Mooney, Hannah Ostema, Kayla Stevens
Walnut Hills Elementary (Greenville): Landon Christensen and Logan Sowers; Montabella Community Schools: O'Malley Ferguson and Zachary Lahti

Congratulations to the Nominees

Administrator: Jodi Willard

Ancillary Staff: Pamela Boomer, Tonya DeVerney, Amanda Foster, Cheri Krogman, and Michele Ludtke

General Education Teacher: Katie Gordon, Sherry Moline, Trevor Morgan, and Jim Perkins

Special Education Teacher: Chris Bayne, Rachel Lovejoy, Tonya Ouzts, and Mike Taylor

Support Staff/Volunteer: RaeAnne Burke, Luann Eldridge, Jackie MacTavish, Jo Nummer, Teresa Oswald, Starr Tremlin, and Krista Woods

Montcalm Area Intermediate School District

Serving the districts of Carson City-Crystal • Central Montcalm

Greenville • Lakeview • Montabella • Tri County • Vestaburg



PUBLIC NOTICE - Montcalm Area Intermediate School District (MAISD) July 27, 2015

CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE ANNOUNCEMENT

The government has made legal provisions to insure that no person is discriminated against. It is the policy of MAISD that no person shall be subjected to discrimination in any educational program, service, or activity that it provides, nor in any employment for which it is responsible. As such, MAISD and its Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation or transgender identity), disability, age, religion, military status, ancestry, or genetic information. In order to protect these rights and assure compliance, the MAISD has appointed Mr. Ron Simon as Coordinator of Title IX, Title VI, Title II, Age Act, Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act, Section 504, and Genetic Information Non-Discrimination Act.

The inquiries concerning the application of, or grievances for, these regulations should be addressed to:
Mr. Ron Simon, Superintendent
Montcalm Area Intermediate School District
621 New Street - P.O. Box 367
Stanton, MI 48888
Telephone: (989) 831-5261

Any parent or guardian of a student or any employee who feels that the rights of the above mentioned persons have been misused in relationship to the provision of equal opportunity in education programs and activities, or in employment, may contact Mr. Simon.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Title IX, Title VI, Title II, Age Act, Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act, and Genetic Information Non-Discrimination Act

Section 1: If any person believes that MAISD, or any part of the school organization, has inadequately applied the principles and/or said regulations or is in some way discriminatory on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation or transgender identity), disability, age, religion, military status, ancestry, or genetic information, he/she may bring forward a complaint, which shall be referred to as a grievance, to the local coordinator at the above address.

Section 2: The person who believes he/she has a valid basis for grievance shall discuss the grievance informally and on a verbal basis with the coordinator, who shall in turn investigate the complaint and reply with an answer to the complaint within two (2) business days. If this reply is not acceptable to the complainant, he/she may initiate formal procedures according to the following steps:

STEP 1: A written statement of the grievance signed by the complainant, shall be submitted to the local Coordinator within five (5) business days of receipt of answers to the informal complaint. Coordinator shall further investigate the matters of grievance and reply in writing to the complainant within five (5) business days.

STEP 2: If complainant wishes to appeal the decision of the local Coordinator, he/she may submit a signed statement of appeal to the Superintendent of Schools, within five (5) business days after receipt of Coordinator's response. The Superintendent shall meet with all parties involved, formulate a conclusion, and respond in writing to the complainant within ten (10) business days.

STEP 3: If the complainant remains unsatisfied, he/she may appeal through a signed written statement to the Board of Education within five (5) business days of his/her receipt of the Superintendent's response in Step 2. In an attempt to resolve the grievance, the Board of Education shall meet with the concerned parties and their representative within fifteen (15) days of the receipt of such an appeal. A copy of the Board's disposition of the appeal shall be sent to each concerned party within ten (10) days of the meeting.

STEP 4: If, at this point, the grievance has not been satisfactorily settled, further appeal may be made to the Office of Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C. 20201.

The Montcalm Area Intermediate School District, in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding discrimination against the handicapped adopted by the Department of Health and Human Services, publishes the following complaint procedures.

A compliant is defined as alleged action prohibited under the Act identified above, and a complainant is a student or employee who submits a complaint. All complaints should be referred to the Section 504 Coordinator at the above address.

STEP 1: The complainant must submit to the administrator designated to receive and investigate complaints alleging noncompliance with the Rules and Regulations, a signed, written, "Statement of Complaint". The "Statement of Complaint" shall name the complainant; shall state the facts giving rise to the complaint; shall identify all the provisions of the Rules and Regulations alleged to be violated; shall state the contention of the complainant with respect to those provisions; shall indicate the relief requested; and shall be signed by the complainant involved. The Coordinator shall give the complainant an answer in writing not later than five (5) business days after receipt of the written complaint.

STEP 2: If the complaint is not resolved in Step 1, it must be submitted within five (5) business days to the Superintendent or his/her Deputy. The Superintendent or his/her Deputy and the complainant shall meet within a reasonable time, not to exceed fourteen (14) business days, in an attempt to resolve this matter.

STEP 3: If a satisfactory disposition of the complaint is not made as a result of the meeting provided in Step 2 above, either party shall have the right to file said complaint with the Secretary of the Board within five (5) days of the meeting provided in Step 2. The Board shall have thirty (30) days to render its decision, in writing, to the complainant.

Any complaint submitted under the procedure shall be filed at Step 1 within twenty (20) business days after the complainant became aware, or reasonably should have become aware, of the complaint. If the complaint is not served within that time, the complaint will not be considered. Failure by the complainant to appeal the complaint from Step 1 to Step 2 within the time limit provided shall also bar the complaint.

MICHIGAN HANDICAPPERS' CIVIL RIGHTS ACT

The Michigan Handicappers' Civil Rights Act, as amended, provides you with certain rights. If you believe that MAISD has failed to accommodate your disability, you must notify the District, in writing of your need for accommodation within 182 days after the date on which you knew, or reasonably should have known, that you needed an accommodation to perform a job which you hold or seek. Written notification of the need for accommodation and/or questions regarding this notice should be directed to the MAISD Superintendent at the aforementioned address.

RIGHT TO ACCESS AND PRIVACY OF RECORDS

All parents and guardians of students under 18 years of age and all students 18 years of age or over (if no legal guardian has been appointed) have the right, pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, to: (1) inspect and review the student's educational records; (2) request the amendment of the student's education records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights; (3) consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that the Act and regulations in this part authorize disclosure without consent; (4) file with the U.S. Department of Education a complaint under Section 99.64 of the Act concerning alleged failures by the agency or institution to comply with the requirements of the Act and this part; and (5) obtain a copy of the policy adopted under Section 99.6 of the Act.

Copies of the Board of Education policy and procedures pertaining to the privacy of student records may be obtained by writing, or contacting MAISD as indicated above.

THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITY EDUCATION ACT (I.D.E.A.)

The I.D.E.A. is a federal source of funds for the education of students eligible to receive special education programs and services. It is necessary to apply for said money annually. Applications are available for public review at MAISD during regular business hours.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

MAISD complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Public Law 101-336 (ADA), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. The ADA, as applied to school districts, requires that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of a disability, be denied the benefits of school district services, programs, or activities.

Accordingly, MAISD will not refuse to allow a person with a disability to participate in a School District service, program, or activity simply because the person has a disability.

MAISD will not provide services or benefits to individuals with disabilities through programs that are separate or different, unless the separate programs are necessary to ensure that the benefits and services are equally effective.

MAISD will not subject individuals with disabilities to discrimination in employment under any service, program, or activity conducted by the School District.

MAISD will take appropriate steps to ensure communications with applicants, participants, and members of the public with disabilities are as effective as communications with others.

MAISD will make reasonable accommodations in policies, practices, or procedures when necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless a fundamental alteration in a School District program would result.

MAISD will operate its programs so that, when viewed in their entirety, they are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND COMPLIANCE ANNOUNCEMENT

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) is federal education legislation that was signed into law on January 8, 2001. This act is also known as the No Child Left Behind law or NCLB. NCLB holds all schools to high levels of accountability. Please contact your local school district, public school academy or MAISD if you have any questions about this legislation. Inquiries, concerns or complaints from parents of students attending programs operated by MAISD regarding any aspect of NCLB should be sent to the above address.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: In particular, you are encouraged to contact MAISD Superintendent, at above address, if you have questions in any of the following areas:

PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY

Parents of students that receive special education may request nomination to MAISD's Parent Advisory Committee (PAC). MAISD, public school academies in the county, and each of the seven local school districts have representatives on the PAC. Additional information on the PAC is located in the Parent Handbook. The Parent Handbook is given to parents of special education students (at a minimum) at all initial IEP team meetings, and at each three year re-evaluation team meeting. Additional copies can be obtained by contacting MAISD.

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MAISD's Purpose
Leading, Collaborating and Serving to Create Education without Boundaries



Walnut Hills Elementary Students Create Birthday Boxes for CASA Program

Submitted by Kristi Jeffrey, Montcalm County CASA Interim Coordinator

Students at Walnut Hills Elementary School in Greenville completed a special service-learning project to help celebrate birthdays. The students packaged and wrapped twelve birthday boxes for children in Montcalm County foster care.

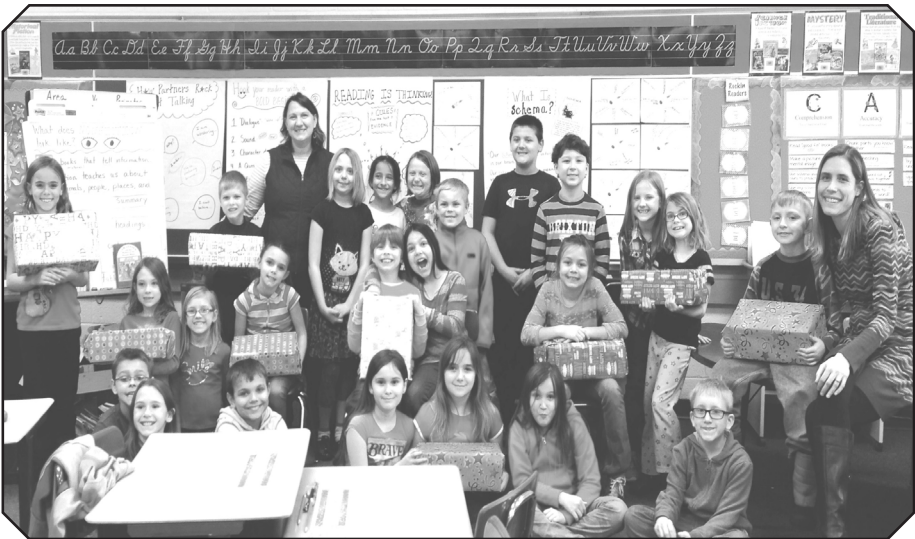
Kristin Jenkins, a third grade teacher at Walnut Hills, coordinated a school-wide drive throughout the month of January to collect supplies needed to create special birthday boxes that included cake mix, frosting, candles, small gifts, shoe boxes, and wrapping paper. The idea behind the project was to help disadvantaged children in the community have the opportunity to feel special and have a gift to open on their birthday as well as to teach students empathy and concern for others.

“Our service-based learning project was discussed and brainstormed by my students,” Jenkins said. “They eventually chose to create the birthday boxes for children in foster care. They determined what should be placed in the boxes and designated certain grades at Walnut Hills to gather the requested items, which ultimately engaged the entire school in a project that stressed community involvement.”

“I believe this service-based project fostered concern for others and demonstrated how everyone can contribute to make their own community a better place,” said Jenkins. “At the same time, my students learned how to work as a team to establish the process necessary to develop such a project.”

Montcalm Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Program Coordinator Kristi Jeffrey was thrilled to receive the birthday boxes on behalf of CASA, which is a program where volunteers are appointed by a judge to watch over and advocate for abused and neglected children, and help make sure they don’t get lost in the over-burdened legal and social service system. Volunteers stay with each case until the child is placed in a safe, permanent home and their case is closed. For many abused children, their CASA volunteer will be the one constant adult presence in their lives.

“We work with so many children whose birthdays often go unnoticed and our volunteers cannot wait to share these gifts with them on each of their birthdays,” said Jeffrey. “These gifts will remind the kids that there are people truly care about them. We cannot thank the school and the students enough for their generosity.”



Pictured above far right is teacher Kristen Jenkins and students in her three grade classroom at Walnut Hills Elementary School in Greenville. Standing in the back is Montcalm County CASA Coordinator Kristi Jeffrey.



Above, third grade students at Walnut Hills proudly display the birthday boxes they created and wrapped for foster care children in Montcalm County.

At left, a group of students work together to pack small gifts, cake mix, frosting, and candles to create a birthday in a box.



Child Advocates Needed in Montcalm County

The Montcalm Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program is seeking volunteers to serve as advocates for abused and neglected children. CASA volunteers work as the ears and eyes for a child and advocate for them while in court. Volunteers receive specialized training and direction from program staff. Apply now and be ready for the next training session.

For more information, contact Montcalm County CASA via email at montcalmcasa@8cap.org or call 989-831-3561. Visit the website at www.montcalmcasa.org to download the volunteer application. You can make a lifelong difference in the life of a child.

Montcalm CASA began assigning children to volunteers in 2004. Since then, they have advocated for over 110 children who were removed from their parents due to child abuse or neglect.

The average age of children served by Montcalm CASA volunteers is 7 - 8 years old.

Volunteers are always needed.

*All kids need is a little help, a little hope,
and someone who believes in them.
-- Earvin “Magic” Johnson*





MAISD Welcomes Two New Associate Superintendents

Jodi Willard

Associate Superintendent for Special Education

MAISD is pleased to welcome back Jodi Willard who returns as the Associate Superintendent of Special Education.



Jodi is a graduate of Lakeview Community Schools. She has seventeen years of special education experience working within Montcalm County. She began her educational journey at Lakeview Community Schools where she taught for four years in a resource program at the early elementary and middle school levels.

She then worked as a Teacher Consultant for MAISD for seven years where she served five of the seven local districts. Over the past three years, Jodi has obtained leadership experience as the Director of Special Education and Early Childhood Center for Tri County Area Schools.

Jodi holds a Masters Degree in Educational Leadership with Special Education Administration Emphasis from Grand Valley State University. She will receive State of Michigan approval as a Special Education Director in August. Jodi has a Bachelors Degree in Elementary Education from Central Michigan University with a major in Emotional Impairments and a Reading Specialist minor.

Jodi lives in Stanwood and has two children.

Stephanie Weese

Associate Superintendent for Finance

Stephanie Weese joined MAISD in early July as the Associate Superintendent of Finance, filling the position vacated by Ron Simon when he became the MAISD Superintendent.

Stephanie served as the Director of Finance for Kent ISD for the past nine years. Prior to that, she spent four years as the Fiscal Services Coordinator at Ionia County ISD.

Stephanie earned a Bachelors Degree from Michigan State University and will complete her Masters Degree in Educational Leadership from Grand Valley State University in the winter term of 2016. She holds a certification as a Chief Financial Officer through the Michigan School Business Officials Association.

She is a member of the Association of School Business Officials International and Michigan School Business Officials Association.

Stephanie and her husband, Marty, live in Greenville. Marty is a high school chemistry and biology teacher at Carson City - Crystal Area Schools. They have three daughters, ages 17, 15, and 11.



MAISD Public Notice (continued from page two)

STATE ASSESSMENT

All students enrolled in MAISD classrooms will participate in the Michigan Education Assessment System. This involves testing using assessments, and accommodations if necessary, as determined to be appropriate by each students' Individual Education Plan. Beginning in the 2015-2016 school year, every student will be assessed each year with state assessments in grades 3-8 and grades 9, 10, and 11. Parents will be provided the results of these assessments.

TEACHING BY NON-QUALIFIED INSTRUCTOR

No Child Left Behind delineates specific requirements for teachers in order for them to be considered "highly qualified". If a student in a special education classroom operated by MAISD is taught for four weeks or longer by a teacher that does not have the necessary credentials to be considered highly qualified, MAISD will provide timely notification to parents, by sending information home with students. If a parent wants additional information, they should contact the MAISD Superintendent at the aforementioned address.

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY NOTICE

No later than 30 days after the start of the school year, parents of students placed in classes designated specifically to enhance English language skills shall be notified. At this time, MAISD does not operate any such classes. Notification following the law shall be made should such a program become operational.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Each school must develop a school-parent compact describing how parents, school staff, and students share responsibility for student achievement. Notice of this compact shall be provided annually.

IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT STATUS

Parents will be notified if programs operated by MAISD become identified as being "In Need of Improvement." This designation is based on student achievement on state assessments and other factors, such as dropout rate, graduation rate, school safety, and parent involvement.

If a program operated by MAISD is designated as needing improvement, the MAISD will inform parents:

- What it means to "need improvement."
- What the reasons are for this status.
- What is being done by the program, school district, and state to change the status.
- What parents can do to become involved.
- How parents can access options to transfer or receive supplementary services for their child.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: In accordance with Section 35.106 of the ADA's Title II Regulations, all applicants, participants, beneficiaries, and other interested persons are advised that further information may be obtained from MAISD and the Office on the Americans with Disabilities Act, Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, D.C. 20035-6118 (202) 514-0301 (Voice) or (202) 514-0381 (TDD). Braille, audio cassette, and computer diskette versions of this Public Notice are available from MAISD.

MAISD Board of Education

Steve Foster, President
Mark Christensen, Vice-President
Bud Longnecker, Secretary
Brian Corwin, Treasurer
Kurt Peasley, Trustee

MAISD Administration

Ron Simon, Superintendent
Stephanie Weese, Associate Superintendent Finance
Jodi Willard, Associate Superintendent Special Education
Celena Mills, Associate Superintendent Career Technical Education
Michelle Goodwin, Associate Superintendent Curriculum & Instruction

For more information, questions or comments, contact:
Penny Dora, Administrative Services Coordinator
989-831-5261 or 616-225-6136
pdora@maisd.com
www.maisd.com

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Inquiries related to discrimination should be directed to:
MAISD Superintendent
621 New Street, PO Box 367
Stanton MI 48888
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