The Michigan Department of Education has begun an evolving discussion on education and technology. I’ve always been an advocate for integrating technology into K-12 education and I am looking forward to leading this discussion in a transparent and inclusive environment.

We have developed a new Facebook page for this discussion: www.facebook.com/EdTechWG. By “Liking” this Facebook page, the public will be able to follow and participate in the Work Group discussion.

This will be a developing discussion that began with a simple survey to help lead a public dialogue on effective and innovative ways to integrate technology to improve learning and outcomes for Michigan students. The online survey will help us better understand what is being done now with education technology and what is seen as needs for the future.

This Work Group is transparent as it’s going “out to the world” so we can see what is going on technology-wise from all stakeholders. We are seeking approaches that will help empower our students to master a wide range of knowledge and skills at their own pace.

The EdTech Work Group Survey #1 is completed and we are reviewing and distilling all of the data and responses submitted. Shortly, we will begin to generate reports, and sharing our analysis and information we’ve collected from this initial undertaking.

I am very encouraged by the preliminary results, as we had over 1000 participants respond to our survey. Respondents include a comprehensive range of stakeholders including educators; parents and students; employers; early childhood providers college instructors; those in the foundation community; education advocates and reformers; and technology experts.

I’m proud that Michigan was one of the first states to require students to successfully complete an online course or learning experience. But the increasing pace of the 21st Century requires us to continue moving forward. This is important not only to me, but to my grandchildren (pictured in this column) and their opportunities in the future. Your input can help us begin building a digital learning movement that provides teachers with better tools to truly provide the highest quality education for every child.

EdTech Work Group Survey #1 was on the first step in this process. As we continue forward, your participation is vital to our success. Your thoughts and ideas may help pioneer some truly innovate changes here in Michigan. And I would like to thank everybody for celebrating innovative teaching, and highlighting practices that will foster the skills that our kids will need in their education, career, and life.

People also can follow the Work Group’s progress on Twitter: https://twitter.com/EdTechWG
Gary Abud, Jr. was named 2013-2014 Michigan Teacher of the Year in an announcement last week by State Superintendent Mike Flanagan.

Abud, a science teacher at Grosse Pointe North High School, with six years of classroom experience, was selected from among 16 regional semifinalists statewide.

Flanagan congratulated Abud on this recognition, saying, “Gary displays every day in his classroom what great teachers in Michigan do – lead by example and help every student find the ways to learn. He sets a high standard not only for himself, but for his students and fellow educators.

“He has followed his passion to continue learning and share what he learns with others,” Flanagan said. “I cannot think of a greater gift a person can give to Michigan’s next generations.”

Flanagan noted that Abud will carry on the valued tradition of Michigan Teachers of the Year who have shared their teaching knowledge, expertise, and skills with educators across the state.

A recipient of the 2012 Science Teacher of Promise Award from the Michigan Science Teachers Association, Abud said that in and outside of the classroom, his commitment to adopting educational practices that foster student success is at the forefront of his career. He uses project-based learning; service learning; digital learning; and social media to give his students with broad learning experiences.

The Michigan Department of Education has used this award annually to honor Michigan’s exemplary educators. The State Board of Education honors the Michigan Teacher of the Year with a seat at the Board table during its regular monthly meetings, and to engage in the discussions on moving Michigan’s system of education forward.

“Change is happening in education, for the better, but the public is unaware,” Abud said. “We need more educators to realize that in order to correct public perception, we must ourselves improve what we do and make that known.

Through the corporate support of MEEMIC Insurance Company, Grosse Pointe Public Schools will receive a monetary award of $1,000 in honor of Mr. Abud’s recognition as Michigan Teacher of the Year (MTOY) to be used for the advancement of education. Also, Abud will receive the use of a car during his tenure as MTOY, along with the opportunity to tell his story and communicate via blog on www.meemic.com.

The corporate support agreement between the Michigan Department of Education and MEEMIC Insurance Company also includes a monetary award to be presented to the schools of each of the MTOY finalists.

The other educators selected as state-level finalists for the Michigan Teacher of the Year Award are:

• Misty Balkema, social studies and grades five and six teacher, Lawrence Elementary School, Lawrence Public Schools
• Todd Chappa, third grade teacher, Lake Center Elementary, Portage Public Schools
• Michael Medvinsky, music teacher, Oakwood Elementary, Brandon School District

The Michigan Teacher of the Year is selected by a committee that reviews applications from teachers throughout Michigan. Applicants submit biographies and written essays that describe educational history, professional development activities, philosophy of teaching and thoughts on emerging education trends and issues.

For additional information on the Michigan Teacher of the Year program, access www.michigan.gov/mtoy.
Creating State Standards

The Common Core State Standards Initiative is a state-led effort, launched more than a year ago by state leaders, including governors and state commissioners of education from 48 states, 2 territories and the District of Columbia, through their membership in the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).

The process used to write the standards ensured they were informed by:

- The best state standards;
- The experience of teachers, content experts, states and leading thinkers; and
- Feedback from the general public.

The full list of criteria used to develop the standards is available at http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Criteria.pdf.

To write the standards, the NGA Center and CCSSO brought together content experts, teachers, researchers and others. Information about individuals involved in writing the standards through the Work and Feedback Groups is available here, and a list of Validation Committee members is available here.

During the development process the standards had been divided into two categories:

- College and career readiness standards, which address what students are expected to learn when they have graduated from high school; and
- K-12 standards, which address expectations for elementary through high school.

The college and career readiness standards were incorporated into the K-12 standards during the standards development process. The NGA Center and CCSSO received nearly 10,000 comments on the standards during two public comment periods. Comments, many of which helped shape the final version of the standards, came from teachers, parents, school administrators and other citizens concerned with education policy.

- The draft college and career ready graduation standards were released for public comment in September 2009. A summary of the public comments on the college and career ready standards is available at http://www.corestandards.org/assets/CorePublicFeedback.pdf
- The draft K-12 standards were released for public comment in March 2010. A summary of the public comments on the K-12 standards is available at http://www.corestandards.org/assets/k-12-feedback-summary.pdf
- The final standards were released in June 2010.

An advisory group has provided advice and guidance to shape the initiative. Members of this group included experts from Achieve, Inc., ACT, the College Board, the National Association of State Boards of Education and the State Higher Education Executive Officers.

MDE Supports for the Common Core State Standards

MDE has created a web page that houses information regarding the Common Core State Standards and assessments. Some of the documents developed include:

- Common Core Q&A
- Development of Common Core State Standards
- Myths vs. Facts
- Assessment Transition Plans

For these tools and others, please visit the MDE Common Core site at: http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-28753_64839_64848---,00.html or our Career and College Ready Portal at http://www.michiganccr.org/.
Reading Proficiency and the Achievement Gap

Emerging research provides evidence to suggest that there are benefits to an integrated school-wide approach to supporting all students. Models of integrated behavior and reading supports produce larger gains in literacy skills than the reading-only model. Improving the social behavior of student results in more minutes spent in academic instruction. In addition to high quality instruction, parent involvement is key to supporting student achievement.

A Discussion of the Problem

High quality instruction engages students and leads to reduction in problem behavior. Students who have difficulty with reading may find ways to escape or avoid reading activities. Additionally, there are similarities in how behavior and reading supports are implemented at the school level. Both are similar in their use of: (a) a continuum of support; (b) action planning guided by a team; (c) the problem solving process (e.g., identification of need based on data); (d) the use of data for program development, progress monitoring, and evaluation; and (e) reliance on evidence-based practices.

The Alternative

It is important that educators and families understand that there are five key skills that students must learn in order to read: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary, and Reading Comprehension. Schools should have reading programs that directly teach these five key skills. In the early grades (K-3), students are “learning to read.” After third grade, students are expected to “read to learn.” Every year there are certain grade-level goals your child should meet. With effective instruction, most students should be able to meet these goals as scheduled. A few students, such as those with language delays or learning disabilities, may need individualized reading goals. However, the five key skills necessary for reading remain the same.

Call to Action

The Common Core State Standards provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn. Educational standards help teachers and parents set clear and realistic goals for success.

Please Continue Reading on Page 7
MDE Loves Eating All Sorts of Books

The Library of Michigan hosted its Second Annual Edible Book Festival on April Fool’s Day. Employees were invited to create an edible interpretation or inspiration of a book. There were 11 entries from different departments in the Michigan Department of Education and the Braille and Talking Book Library.

Entries ranged from a minimalist approach with a bottle of Mountain Dew on ice for Cold Mountain, created by Sue Chinnault of the Braille and Talking Book Library, to edible ink frosted cupcakes of book covers such as Les Miserables and Harry Potter and the Half-blood Prince, made by Anna Burns from the Office of Great Start. Other entries were created by employees from Accounting, the Grant’s office, Low Incidence Outreach, Office of School Support Services, Office of Great Start and the Library of Michigan.

The Edible Books Festival began in 2000 and occurs every year on or around the first of April. Edible Book Day is the birthday of Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, author of Physiologie du goût, a book of clever thoughts on food.


Contributed by Hanna Espie, Student Assistant, Library of Michigan

Anna Burns from the Office of Great Start. Other entries were created by employees from Accounting, the Grant’s office, Low Incidence Outreach, Office of School Support Services, Office of Great Start and the Library of Michigan.

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Michigan Sports Concussion Law

A concussion is a mild brain injury, caused by a blow, bump or jolt to the head that can have serious consequences. It can occur in any sport or recreational activity.

Michigan was the 39th U.S. state to enact a law that regulates sports concussions and return to athletic activity. The law goes into full effect on June 30th, 2013.

The sports concussion legislation requires all coaches, employees, volunteers, and other adults involved with a youth athletic activity to complete a concussion awareness on-line training program.

The organizing entity must provide educational materials on the signs/symptoms and consequences of concussions to each youth athlete and their parents/guardians and obtain a signed statement acknowledging receipt of the information for the organizing entity to keep on record.

The law also requires immediate removal of an athlete from physical participation in an athletic activity who is suspected of sustaining a concussion. The student athlete must then receive written clearance from an appropriate health professional before he or she can return to physical activity.

For more information on concussion awareness please visit the Department of Community Health’s website at: http://www.michigan.gov/mdch/0,4612,7-132-54783_63943---,00.html

Camp Tuhsmehehta

Camp Tuhsmehehta is open for school groups year round. Please call the Michigan Department of Education-Low Incidence Outreach for more information at (517) 373-2887 or visit their website at: http://mde-lio.cenmi.org/Default.aspx

--- Jereme Vanden Heuvel, LMSW.
Jereme is the Site Director at Camp Tuhsmehehta. He is also a certified Trauma and Loss Specialist I (National Institute of Trauma and Loss in Children.)
The standards require the progressive development of reading comprehension so that students advancing through the grades are able to gain more from whatever they read. Teachers should be measuring how well students are learning each of the five key reading skills. Parents or care-givers should ask their children’s teachers how these skills are being measured and where students are performing compared to grade-level goals. Parents should receive information about their children’s progress about three times each year.

Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) is an example of one valid and reliable school-wide assessment system to monitor progress in the early grades. Students who are not meeting grade-level reading goals need to receive reading interventions that have proven results.

School staff should identify which key skills that students need to develop, and target instruction to those specific skills. Students who are somewhat behind need:

- 30 minutes of additional, targeted reading instruction per day.
- Progress monitored at least twice each month.
- Students who are significantly behind (more than one grade-level) need at least one hour of additional, targeted reading instruction per day, progress monitoring at least weekly.

Collette Bauman (L) with presenter Susan Bradley, MDE, receiving the David and Joann Search Lifetime Achievement Award at the MAER Conference

Each year the Michigan Chapter of the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (MAER) accepts nominations for the David and JoAnn Search Award for Lifetime Achievement. The MAER Award shall be given to an individual(s) or organization(s) who has/have made a significant contribution to the field of blindness and/or in the service of persons who are blind or visually impaired in Michigan.

MDE is proud to announce that Collette Bauman recently received this prestigious award for her significant contribution to the field of blindness and in service of blind and visually impaired persons in Michigan. Her colleagues nominated Collette for the David and JoAnn Search Lifetime Achievement Award because of her passion, caring and lifelong dedication. This is her 40th year in the field.

Collette has demonstrated a lifetime committed to serving blind and visually impaired persons in Michigan. Ms. Bauman is well respected by colleagues, parents and students throughout the state. The MAER Board unanimously agreed that she was most deserving of the David and JoAnn Search Lifetime Achievement Award.

The MDE would like congratulate Collette on this deserved and esteemed recognition!
The Office of Career and Technical Education honored 26 students on May 22 at the State Library of Michigan. They were recognized for their outstanding achievement in a Career and Technical Education program that was non-traditional for their gender.

To be considered, a student had to be nominated by school personnel, complete an application, including an essay, and submit letters of recommendation. Students were congratulated by the keynote speaker, Paula Cunningham, President and CEO of Capitol National Bank, who encouraged them to continue to follow their dreams. The 10th annual event was attended by parents, teachers, administrators, families, and legislators.

MDE would like to congratulate all of the award recipients. For a list of the awardees, visit the MDE website at: http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140--303575--,00.html

Digital Literacy National Projects

The COSLA (Chief Officers of State Library Agencies) has recently released an updated guide to national projects concerning digital literacy, broadband adoption, and digital inclusion.

The “Reference Guide to National Projects: Digital Literacy, Broadband Adoption, and Digital Inclusion” allows users to find out about projects relevant to their work in this quick reference guide.

Each project profile features a summary followed by project details and reference information. Project profiles are arranged in alphabetical order by project funder, then by project name. An overview chart captures the focus areas for each project to make it easy to find projects of interest.

This version of the guide is current as of May 2013. The guide will be updated at least semi-annually to provide the latest information on the projects profiled as well as any new projects that emerge at the national level. Please contact Karen Strege at kstrege@msn.com if you have any questions or suggestions for this reference guide.

The Library of Michigan has a digital literacy page accessible from the Michigan eLibrary (http://mel.org) or by going directly to http://everyoneon.michlibrary.org.
WHAT’S NEXT

MI School Improv Facilitators Network . . . . . . . . June 12-14
Relate, Reflect, Reframe . . . . . . . . June 13, 2013
MI State Board of Education Meeting . . . . . June 18, 2013
MAASE Summer Institute . . . . . . Aug 11-14, 2013
MI State Board of Education Meeting . . August 18, 2013
2013 BAA Fall Conference (GVSU) . . . . . . Aug 19
2013 BAA Fall Conference (SVSU) . . . . . . Aug 23
2013 BAA Fall Conference (EMU) . . . . . . Sept 11
2013 BAA Fall Conference (NMU) . . . . . . Sept 16

ONTHE HORIZON

MASA Fall Conference . . . . . . . . . September 24-25, 2013
MASB Fall Conference . . . . . . . . . . . October 24-27
MiAEYC Infant Toddler Conference . . . . . Oct 25, 2013
2nd Annual Michigan Project Lead The Way . . . . Nov 4
MDE Fall School Improvement Conf . . . . Nov 18-19
The Michigan Department of Education would like to wish all of you a fun, healthy and constructive summer. Please enjoy your families and all the natural splendor Michigan provides.

Relax, refresh and enjoy. We look forward to continuing our work together helping Michigan students to reach higher levels of achievement.