Austin Elected President

John C. Austin was unanimously elected President of the State Board of Education at its January meeting. Mr. Austin commented he is eager to continue working in a bipartisan manner on the State Board, and with Governor Rick Snyder, and the state legislature.

The State Board elected others of its members to Board offices. Casandra Ulbrich was elected Vice President, Nancy Danhof was elected Secretary, Marianne Yared McGuire was re-elected Treasurer, and Richard Zeile was elected to represent the State Board on the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE).

Kathleen Straus, the longest-serving President of the State Board of Education, chose not to run for re-election. Elected to the Board in 1992, Straus served as President from 1997-1998; and again from 2001 until the present.

Austin said he wants to focus the State Board’s priorities on “improving academic performance and outcomes for all learners, and helping to develop a true performance-based education system.”

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Recalibration

Everything is starting anew. It’s a new day… U.S. automakers recent resurgence is a great example. They made the hard choices to be more competitive in the 21st Century, and it’s paying off.

Recently, the MDE and the State Board of Education have embarked on the process to illuminate and shape the direction Michigan’s education system will take for our students to succeed in this global society. By recalibrating the proficiency scores for MEAP and MME to demonstrate true career and college readiness; proposing a new school accreditation system to show student growth; and more “light of day” reporting of school information, we are leading Michigan’s turn-around by understanding the reality of our students achievement and growth.

This is a great opportunity for all of us in education to be part of the solution. Together we are committed to doing the the right thing for the children of Michigan.

John C. Austin

Superintendent Flanagan contract extension

With unanimous support, the State Board of Education at its March 8th meeting extended the contract of State Superintendent Mike Flanagan, keeping him on the job until 2014.

Because of the current condition of the state’s economy and state budget, Flanagan did not receive an increase to his salary. The board agreed to Flanagan’s request that if there are future concessions by employees in the Michigan Department of Education due to the state’s budget challenges, Flanagan’s contract will reflect those concessions, as well.

“We are very pleased with the strong leadership he is providing especially in tough times,” Austin said.

Flanagan said while there are challenging issues, it is a pleasure to “have a chance to help Michigan get back and help kids improve and the system change.”

State Board approves of Superintendent Flanagan contract extension

“Significant and meaningful improvement in the academic performance of all students/children with major emphasis on the persistently lowest achieving schools and students.”
—Michigan State Board of Education Goal

Catch the Vision

From State Superintendent Mike Flanagan:

March 2011 • Volume 111

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Welcome New State Board of Education Members

The Department of Education would like to take the opportunity to welcome our newest board members and express our excitement and anticipation in working together to reimagine and accelerate education for the students of Michigan.

Mr. Daniel Varner was appointed by Governor Granholm to the Board on October 27, 2010, succeeding Mr. Reginald M. Turner who resigned. Mr. Varner is a program officer with the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. Mr. Varner earned both a bachelor's degree in history and a Juris Doctor from the University of Michigan.

Ms. Eileen Weiser returns to the State Board having previously served as an elected member of the State Board of Education from 1988-2006. Ms. Weiser holds piano performance degrees from Michigan State University, and the University of Michigan. She is now serving a second term as a general public member for the National Assessment Governing Board which sets policy for the National Assessment of Educational Progress, also known as NAEP or The Nation’s Report Card.

Rev. Dr. Richard A. Zeile was elected to the board in 2010. He has served as Pastor & Headmaster at St. John’s Lutheran Church & School in Taylor, as well as Adjunct Professor of Education at Concordia University, Ann Arbor. Ordained in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, he has served Lutheran Parochial schools for most of his professional life, and also a year as Chaplain Resident at Detroit's Sinai-Grace Hospital.

We also must wish three SBE members farewell, Elizabeth W. Bauer, Carolyn L. Curtin and Reginald Turner. We wish them well in their next chapters and thank them for their service and dedication to Michigan’s students, families and educators.

2011 Women to Women Leadership Workshop

The Delta Kappa Gamma (DKG) is a professional honorary society of women educators that promotes professional and personal growth of its members and excellence in education. Delta Kappa Gamma has improved opportunities for qualified women employed at every level of education, as well as in advancing the status of women educators.

The Michigan Leadership Committee of Delta Kappa Gamma has planned a Leadership Workshop for Women Educators to be held on Saturday, March 19 in Grand Blanc, Michigan. For registration information, please visit the DKG website: http://www.deltakappagamma.org/MI/events.html.

“Life is change. Growth is optional. Choose wisely.”
-- Karen Kaiser Clark

2011-12 Schedule for the Consolidated Application

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) Office of Field Services (OFS) has posted the 2011-12 Consolidated Application Schedule on their website www.michigan.gov/ofos.

This schedule will provide information on the timeline and dates for the Application cycle, as well as details for planning, implementing, and evaluating programs and services to complete a substantially approvable Consolidated Application.

Please note that the 2011-12 Consolidated Application schedule does overlap with the current year schedule for 2010-11. We will notify you if there will be any changes to the current schedule or next year’s schedule.

If you have questions about the Application schedules for the State and Federal supplementary programs, contact your OFS Consultant at 517-373-3743 or Bianca Robertson at RobertsonB@michigan.gov.
Flanagan asks districts to help efforts to assist children of military families

In a recent memo to the field, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Mike Flanagan has asked every local school district in Michigan to voluntarily help assist in a national and state initiative to provide their patriotic support to school-aged children of military families.

Our nation is in the 10th year of deploying our Armed Forces into sustained combat operations. The stress that these multiple deployments and separations have on military families has increased to unheard of proportions. President Obama and the First Lady recently have committed their attention to strengthening our nation’s military families by ensuring that they have the resources they need to be their best. Specifically, they have committed to ensuring excellence in our military’s children’s education and their development.

If each school district or public school academy can voluntarily identify its military-connected children by providing the Michigan Department of Education the unique identification code, last name, first name, gender, and date of birth, we will take a huge step in identifying these students. Once school-aged children of military families are identified, support can be provided.

A formatted spreadsheet has been developed (Military-connected children) for use to enter in the requested identification information. Starting May 1, 2011, districts will be able to upload the spreadsheet into the Michigan Electronic Grant System (MEGS). The spreadsheet and additional instructions will be available on the MDE website, under the Grants page.

If you have any questions about this endeavor, please contact Louis Burgess, Assistant Director, Grants Coordination and School Support at burgessl@michigan.gov or 517-335-3672.

“The least we all can do is recognize the sacrifices our military families make for this state and this nation,” Flanagan said. “The impact on children cannot be underestimated, and we all should work together to provide them with tangible support.”

THE MICHIGAN eLIBRARY (MEL) ACHIEVES ONE MILLION REQUESTS

In December 2010, the Michigan eLibrary’s online catalog, MeLCat, reached a new milestone by handling more than one million user requests in a single calendar year. Driven by Innovative Interfaces’ INN-Reach direct consortial borrowing system, MeLCat allows users to order from more than 43 million items in the online catalog ranging from books, audio books, music, movies and more and have them delivered to participating libraries. MeLCat is the first INN-Reach system to handle more than one million requests in a single calendar year.

Since going live in 2005, the Michigan eLibrary has grown to over 400 libraries with new libraries continuing to join. The INN-Reach technology allows MeL to connect its disparate members and their various library systems into a state-wide resource sharing network by providing libraries with real-time, patron-initiated requesting and the ability to streamline resource sharing between libraries of all types and sizes.

About The Michigan eLibrary
The Michigan eLibrary (http://mel.org) is a long standing project of the Library of Michigan, an agency of the Michigan Department of Education. MeL is supported by federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, enhancing library service to all residents of the state. The Library of Michigan contracts with the Midwest Collaborative for Library Services and partners with a number of Michigan organizations and institutions to provide the MeL service. MeL provides all Michigan residents with no cost access to online full-text articles, full-text books, digital images, and other valuable research information at any time via the Internet; and provides an easy-to-use interlibrary loan system to allow Michigan residents to borrow books and other library materials for free from participating Michigan libraries.
The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and AdvancED Michigan NCA School Improvement Conference will focus on “Effective School Improvement Practices, Creating an Atmosphere of Change.” The conference is being held April 14, 2011 – Lansing Center, Lansing, MI. Registration begins at 7:30 a.m. Conference begins at 8:30 a.m. COST: $150 per person and includes materials, breakfast, lunch and parking.

Our presentation format this spring is on school and district stories of achievement, with some breakout session featuring national and Michigan schools. We will begin the conference with a “Beating the Odds” panel representing national schools. Sessions will also highlight new tools and training for School Improvement, AdvancED Michigan NCA accreditation process information.

Individual and team support will be available throughout the day in our technical support room – to clarify information and answer questions about online tools, the School Improvement process, and AdvancED Michigan NCA updates.

Register: To register by fax or online visit www.gomiem.org.

Overnight room block: Radisson Hotel, Lansing, Michigan. Individual attendees will make reservations for the event directly with Radisson reservations at 1-800-333-3333 or with the hotel at 517-482-0188. Reservations may also be made by logging on to Radisson web address at www.radisson.com/lansingmi. Use the Promotional Code: MDE411 to receive your discounted group rate. Overnight cost: $65.

New Online Educator Certification System Launched

The Michigan Department of Education is excited to announce that the MDE/Office of Professional Preparation Services’ (OPPS) Michigan Online Educator Certification System (MOECS) went live for Pilot users on Tuesday, February 08, 2011. The system will be fully rolled out on April 12, 2011. Please visit http://www.michigan.gov/moecs to learn more about MOECS and for future updates.

MOECS is a fully secured; menu driven, user friendly, role/function based, ecommerce (accepts credit card payments) web application and will be used by:

1. Educators or Educator applicants
   a. Individuals who are applying for or currently hold a valid or expired Michigan
      i. Teaching Certificate
      ii. Occupational Certificate
      iii. School Administrator Certificate
      iv. School Psychologist Certificate
      v. School Counselor License

2. Michigan School Districts and Schools
   a. To apply for Permits and Annual Vocational Authorization (AVA)

3. Michigan Universities and Colleges approved by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to offer Educator Preparation Programs for recommending educator applicants for certification.

4. The staff of OPPS to review and approve or deny the teaching certificates, permits and AVA’s.
Summer Food Service Program Sponsors Needed

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is looking for community sponsors to run summer food programs to prevent more than 546,000 children in Michigan from going hungry when school lunchrooms close for the summer.

The Summer Food Service Program could fill the summer hunger gap for hundreds of thousands of children if more sponsors are signed up to run the food program. Last year, out of the over 546,000 low-income Michigan children who were eligible, only around 92,500 (17 percent) were able to eat free meals or snacks at approved summer meal sites in their neighborhoods.

Research shows a direct relationship between good nutrition and learning. The Summer Food Service Program is a key building block in Michigan communities to develop healthy, happy kids who are ready to learn.

Sponsors receive federal payments for both the meals served to children and the administrative costs of serving the meals. New sponsors will receive free training and technical assistance from MDE.

Sponsors can be public school districts or nonprofit private schools; public or private nonprofit residential summer camps; local, county or state government agencies; colleges or universities; or private nonprofit organizations.

To sponsor the program this summer, organizations need to contact MDE by March 31, 2011. Applications and sponsor information may be obtained from MDE’s Grants Coordination and School Support office, Summer Food Service Program, 608 W. Allegan Street, P.O. Box 30008, Lansing, Michigan 48909, 517-373-3347; or on the MDE website at: www.michigan.gov/sfsp.

Updated Michigan Nutrition Standards for Schools Now Available Online

The Michigan Nutrition Standards: Michigan Department of Education Recommendations for all Foods and Beverages Available in Michigan Schools are available online for every Michigan school to review. The updated standards, approved by the State Board of Education, can be found in the “What’s New” section of the School Nutrition Training and Programs website http://www.michigan.gov/schoolnutrition.

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) recommends that districts provide a campus-wide environment supporting adoption of healthy eating behaviors. A growing number of research studies have identified specific health benefits that result when children consume energy-balanced dietary patterns where most calories come from a variety of nutrient-rich foods and beverages.

The updated standards recommend that schools provide a diet rich in fruits and vegetables, dietary fiber and whole grains, lean protein, low-fat dairy, and low sodium. A reduction in the intake of added sugar, refined carbohydrates, and total and saturated fat also is necessary. Students should be given the opportunity to learn and practice these behaviors by having access to healthy food and beverage choices at school.

The standards provide a great complement to a school’s, or school district’s Local Wellness Policy. School districts are encouraged to adopt these standards and can receive guidance and technical assistance by contacting the School Nutrition Training and Programs Office at mde-schoolnutrition@michigan.gov.

For additional information, please refer to the Playbook for a Healthier School Environment, which provides additional resources, including sample menus.
Project WILD is interdisciplinary and supplementary program that can be used to teach basic skills in science, social studies, language arts, math, art, music and physical education.

The Goal of Project WILD is to assist students of any age in developing awareness, knowledge, skills, and commitment to result in informed decisions, responsible behavior, and constructive action concerning wildlife and the environment in cooperation with the Michigan Alliance for Environmental and Outdoor Education (MAEOE).

WILD encourages children to get outside.
Numerous studies have shown that when students are provided with hands on, inquiry based, cooperative learning strategies their retention of information is longer, they are better able to make connections between different sets of knowledge and consistently score higher on standardized tests.

Project WILD uses a variety of tested and accepted teaching techniques to provide basic information. Games, observations, discussion, graphing and art are some of the techniques used to allow students of differing interests and knowledge to learn about wildlife their environment.

Finally, kids just love wildlife. What better way to get kids excited about learning then by introducing them to the natural world. Using the outdoors as a living laboratory provides both physical and mental benefits to kids. Project WILD is an excellent avenue to reconnect kids with the living world around them, while building a sense of place within their local community.

Going WILD
There are 3 levels of involvement in Project WILD: Facilitators (who are trained by the state coordinator to spread their knowledge to Educators), Educators (who attend a workshop where they receive their selected activity guides, and are trained in how to use them with their students), and Students (who receive training from Educators and participate in WILD activities in their classrooms or outdoors).

Educators interested in obtaining Project WILD materials must attend a workshop. Workshops are held throughout the state at various times and places. Check the Upcoming Workshops pages to see if a workshop has been planned near you at:

http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,1607,7-153-10369_51120_51190--,00.htm

Or please contact Natalie Elkins, Project WILD Coordinator, 517-373-6919, or E-mail: DNR-ProjectWILD@michigan.gov.
McDonald’s has partnered with the Michigan Department of Education by inviting 60,000 Michigan high school juniors to boost their brain power with a free breakfast before their Michigan Merit exam, including the ACT test, taken earlier this month. The collaborative effort was launched to help parents and students learn about the impact a daily, nutritional breakfast has on a student’s academic performance.

About 300 McDonald’s restaurants throughout Michigan sent students coupons good for either a free Egg McMuffin® or a free Fruit & Maple Oatmeal, and one free Minute Maid® orange juice or a free milk. McDonald’s owner/operators chose these breakfast options because of the healthy benefits they offer.

Recent scientific research indicates that children who eat breakfast show improved cognitive function, attention and memory, which leads to improved academic performance. With a healthy breakfast, we even the playing field and ALL students gain the energy they need to be ready to learn, and develop healthier lifestyles that will benefit them for the rest of their lives.

McDonald’s new Fruit & Maple Oatmeal provides two thirds of the recommended daily servings of whole grains while the Egg McMuffin® is high in protein and vitamin A. The orange juice is full of vitamin C and the milk provides students with more than 300 milligrams of calcium. The program’s coupons are good through March 31.

**Michigan College Access Portal (MichiganCAP) Online Training**

The Michigan Department of Education’s (MDE) College Access and Outreach Unit is offering online training in the use of the Michigan College Access Portal. MichiganCAP is a statewide initiative which provides free support for all users in Michigan to simplify the process of transitioning from high school to college and career. MichiganCAP offers students, parents, counselors, and adult learners easy-to-use web-based, personalized tools to insure that each step in the process of choosing and applying for college is completed successfully. It is a comprehensive one-stop shop for users to plan, apply, and pay for college.

Please pass this information along to your middle and high school counselors so that they can mark their calendars for one of the training sessions listed below. For their convenience, training is offered over a full week and at a variety of times. Each session will offer the opportunity to ask questions. Training can be presented in a group setting, such as a gathering of area counselors and local college access network staff, or viewed individually.

- **Monday March 21** 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.
- **Tuesday March 22** 8:00 – 10:00 a.m.
- **Wednesday March 23** 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
- **Thursday March 24** 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.
- **Friday March 25** 8:00 – 10:00 a.m.

Registration information and links is posted to the MDE web site under “Current Topics.” View the MichiganCAP at www.michigancap.org.
MLCC Announces “PSA Challenge”

Capitalizing on young people’s enthusiasm for capturing moments on video and posting them all over the media, the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC) is sponsoring a “PSA Challenge” for all Michigan middle and high schools.

Students are encouraged to produce 30-60 second video public service announcements (PSAs) with the tag line “We All Lose When Kids Buy Booze.” Prizes of $500, $300 and $100 will be awarded to the top three schools that demonstrate best creativity and communication of the theme.

Guidelines and FAQs are available on the MLCC website, www.michigan.gov/lcc under the header “We All Lose When Kids Buy Booze PSA Challenge.” MLCC emphasizes that sophisticated cameras, editing software and experience are not required. Entries must be postmarked no later than April 29, 2011.

The “MLCC PSA Challenge” is funded by a grant from the National Alcohol Beverage Control Association (NABCA). The cash awards will be issued to the winning schools to support underage drinking and high-risk drinking prevention efforts.

This is just one activity that the MLCC has planned for Alcohol Awareness Month in April. For an ongoing list of activities hosted by the MLCC and supporting industry groups, please visit the MLCC website: www.michigan.gov/lcc.

ACT Honors Michigan High Schools

The Michigan ACT State Organization and ACT® recognized 32 Michigan high schools with one or more students in the graduating class of 2010 who earned a top composite score of 36 on the ACT college admissions and placement exam.

Only 588 of the more than 1.5 million 2010 graduates nationally who took the ACT earned a top score. In Michigan, 35 high school graduates out of more than 121,000 tested in the graduating class of 2010 earned a top score on the ACT.

The ACT, a curriculum-based achievement test, consists of tests in English, mathematics, reading and science. Each test is scored on a scale of 1-36, and a student’s composite score is the average of the four test scores. The average composite score for the national high school graduating class of 2010 was 21.0. Some students also take ACT’s optional Writing Test, but the score for that test is reported separately and is not included in the ACT composite score. ACT scores are accepted by all major U.S. colleges and universities.

The Michigan ACT State Organization is composed of secondary and postsecondary educators, agency personnel and leaders of statewide associations. The State Organization provides advice to ACT and support for ACT programs and services in Michigan.

The schools honored:

Ann Arbor Pioneer HS  Ann Arbor  Notre Dame Preparatory  Pontiac
Catholic Central HS  Grand Rapids  Okemos HS  Okemos
Chelsea HS  Chelsea  Pennfield HS  Battle Creek
Clarkston Senior HS  Clarkston  Pinckney Community HS  Pinckney
Community High School  Ann Arbor  Plymouth Canton HS  Canton
Detroit Catholic Central HS  Redford  Plymouth HS  Canton
Detroit Country Day School  Beverly Hills  Rockford Senior HS  Rockford
Frankenmuth HS  Frankenmuth  Saginaw Arts & Sciences Acad  Saginaw
Grand Blanc Community School  Grand Blanc  Saline Area HS  Saline
Grand Rapids Christian HS  Grand Rapids  Seaholm HS  Birmingham
Grosse Pointe North HS  Grosse Pointe  Traverse City West Senior HS  Traverse City
Henry Ford II HS  Sterling Heights  Troy HS  Troy
Herbert Henry Dow HS  Midland  University of Detroit Jesuit HS & Acad  Detroit
Lake Orion Community HS  Lake Orion  Walled Lake Western HS  Walled Lake
Midland HS  Midland  Waterford Kettering HS  Waterford
Northville HS  Northville  Winston Churchill High School  Livonia
IGNITE Launches 3rd Annual Statewide Youth Business Plan Competition

What: IGNITE, the K-12 entrepreneurship volunteer action team in the Prima Civitas Foundation’s Moving Ideas to Market initiative, has launched its “3rd Annual Statewide Youth Business Plan Competition.” This year’s competition includes a new division for best science/technology business and increased pre-seed award amounts.

Categories and Awards:
Middle School Division (Grades 6-8):
• First Place ($400)
• Second Place ($200)
• Third Place ($100)
• Best Science/Technology business ($100)
High School Division (Grades 9-12):
• First Place Product ($400)
• Second Place Product ($200)
• Third Place Product ($100)
• First Place Service ($400)
• Second Place Service ($200)
• Third Place Service ($100)
• Best Science/Technology Business ($100)

All participants will receive written feedback on their business plans from the judging panel. Finalists will be featured on the IGNITE website and/or have the opportunity to be highlighted in the Future CEO Stars magazine as a Michigan entrepreneur: http://www.fcsmag.com/.

Additionally, sponsoring teachers and educators will receive 1 entry into a drawing for a gift certificate to purchase classroom supplies. The application submission deadline is Friday, March 25th.

Who: The statewide competition encourages young Michiganders, in grades 6 - 12, to write a business plan and submit to the IGNITE team for a chance to win pre-seed awards to help with startup costs.


English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) Online Pilot

The Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability (OEAA) is pleased to announce the online pilot of the Spring 2011 English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) is ready to kickoff on Monday, March 7, 2011. We are pleased to have 28 districts participating as partners in the ELPA online pilot.

The online pilot will run from March 7 - April 15, 2011. Representatives from all pilot sites participated recently in training webcasts to help them prepare for their important role in the pilot.

A successful ELPA online pilot is a critical step toward eventual implementation of online testing in other assessment programs. The data obtained and lessons learned during this pilot will help drive informed decisions as we pursue the path of online assessments statewide.

Information about the ELPA online pilot can be accessed on the ELPA website at www.michigan.gov/elpa. Should you have any additional questions regarding the pilot, please contact Jennifer Paul, ELL Consultant, at 517-355-3967 or paulj@michigan.gov.
ON THE HORIZON...

- Near Future

2011 MACUL Conference, March 16-18, 2011
MASB/MAISA Joint Legislative Conference, March 16, 2011
Michigan Bullying Prevention Conference, March 30, 2011
MiAEYC Conference, March 31-April 2, 2011
Michigan PTSA 93rd Annual Convention, April 8-10, 2011
State Board of Education Meeting, April 12, 2011
Spring School Improvement Conference, April 14, 2011
Governor’s Education Summit, April 25, 2011
MSBO Annual Conference, April 26-28, 2011

- Distant Future

State Board of Education Meeting, May 10, 2011
2011 Michigan Youth Arts Festival, May 12-14, 2011
MI After-school Collaborative Summer Summit, May 13, 2011
MAISA Summer Conference, June 16-18, 2011
MASSP Summer Institute, June 27-29, 2011
62nd MCTM Annual Conference, August 3-4, 2011
MASSE Summer Institute 2011, August 10-12, 2011