

May 2024

General Education Board Report

Instructional Coaching:

April included a variety of supportive activities, including the continued support of teachers' growth plans. Classroom observations with feedback aligned with educators' goals were a repeated occurrence. There was continued work with new teachers at Emerson Elementary. This ongoing coaching opportunity has led to strong relationships with teaching staff and the principal in that building, and forward planning has already started for the next school year.

Cognitive Coaching training began, and will continue in May. Lakewood K-5 and LECC launched their math curriculum, Eureka Math, and allowed our participation in the training, opening up further opportunities for coaching.

Finally, concern is emerging among leaders in the local school districts regarding the training of teachers who are on alternative pathways to certification. This was discussed in detail with administrators in Saranac, with forward thinking and planning for the next school year.

Great Start Readiness Program:

The ISD has been working with the local school districts in regards to operation of the GSRP programs. Belding, Ionia, and Portland will be operating the GSRP programs in their districts for the 2024-2025 school year. The ISD will continue to operate Saranac and Lakewood GSRP classrooms.

The ISD will continue to be the monitor for all GSRP classrooms in the county for oversight, as well as assign an Early Childhood Specialist to all GSRP classrooms to ensure overall quality.

We are looking at expanding our programs by adding an additional 5 classrooms and serving an additional 103 children in the 2024-2025 school year.

Great Start Collaborative

Spring has arrived and the Great Start Collaborative has started outdoor activity walks on community trails throughout the county. The activity walks focus on early literacy and math, physical and mental health, and social connections. Themed walks include: The Rainbow Walk, Bubble Walk, Safari Walk, and in partnership with 7 local libraries we will be holding the Ionia County Libraries Adventure Walk on May 17th.

RAVE has been very busy with many young children at the shelter. The Great Start Collaborative was able to donate craft supplies, toys, games, and other materials to help keep kids busy and engaged in learning during their stay in the shelter. The RAVE shelter is full and there is a waiting list of families seeking help from abusive home environments.

To promote healthy eating, we will be holding planting parties starting on May 14th in Saranac. Parents learn gardening tips, and children will start seeds to plant in their own garden at home. There is a lot of interest in gardening, and the planting parties fill up quickly. A big thank you to our Family Coalition parents who share their gardening knowledge with others and hold the events for families.

YAC

YAC held its YAC luncheon on April 24th. YAC members gave a review of its year, recognized seniors, and handed out grant certificates. Tom Dickenson, ICCF Board President, and Ethan Ebenstein, Board Trustee, presented each senior a certificate for an honorarium Ionia County Community Foundation (ICCF). The Ionia County Youth Advisory Council (YAC) is a sub-committee of the foundation. The ICCF based the honorarium on the number of years that a senior had participated in YAC. YAC seniors were surprised and pleased to receive the honorarium.

On May 22nd, freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and new members will attend a leadership retreat at the John Ball Zoo in the Bissell Treehouse. Topics covered will include:

- Civic Responsibility
- Communication
- Accountability/Commitment
- Time management
- Character
- Highly Productive Teams

Local YAC teams will meet together by school to discuss:

- Roles & Goals
- Local service project-- decide and plan
- Local YAC promotion (bulletin boards, social media, etc.)
- Each team plans a unique icebreaker for next year.

YAC members will have lunch and conclude their day with a zoo scavenger hunt.

IM Kids 3rd Meal

IM Kids 3rd Meal is winding down to finish programming on May 24th for this school year. The program will not offer a summer program. It is not cost-effective based on the number of meals, running the box truck, and paying a staff person. The program will provide food pantry information for food-insecure students and families. The program will send the food pantry information in meal bags and on social media.

The program will end the year with **843** meals going out Monday through Friday. This is the highest number of daily meals the program has provided since 2014. Food-insecure children in Ionia and Montcalm counties received **652,216** meals since 2014 (December 2023). The program has worked with **26,885** volunteers who have donated **50,304 hours** (December 2023). Volunteers repack items, make sandwiches, pack meals, clean, organize stock, pick up Feeding America orders, and help organize food drives and fundraisers. It is a community effort.

This year is the 10th anniversary of the program. The program is planning a celebration/fundraiser for August 16th.