

Putting bullies in their place

Intermediate school district OKs anti-bullying policy; eyes Local College Access Network grant

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MANISTEE — The Manistee Intermediate School District Board of Education took action this week to join other districts in the county in approving an anti-bullying policy.

Approval was unanimously given for the policy following a public hearing that didn't draw any comment. Manistee ISD Superintendent Scott Crosby gave a brief overview of the policy, and pointed out that the state is requiring all districts to adopt these new guidelines.

"We make the policy available to all students and parents upon request," Crosby said. "The state does require now that we have a bullying policy in place. According to the legislature, we need to have a public hearing on it before we approve it."



CROSBY: State has mandated new anti-bullying policy.

Under the communications portion of the agenda, two letters of resignation were presented from Suzanne Henn and Michelle Larsen of the business office. The board later accepted those resignations during the action items portion of the agenda.

The meeting also focused on monthly reports that were given to the board by the various departments at the ISD, beginning with one from Crosby. One of the first things touched on was the local college access network to bring college into the schools.

A grant was recently received by the

Manistee Area Community Foundation to provide a start up for the Local College Access Network. The goal of the program is to increase the number of students who enter and complete college.

"There was some great work done by the foundation to get that in place," Crosby said.

Crosby informed the board the community can design activities to fit into that program. He said examples could include arranging college visitation days, hosting a college application completion program on Saturdays, and working with community colleges to offer classes on the high school campus. Statistics show that Manistee County is below the state average of graduating students who enter college.

The board also heard that Crosby will be appearing on a local television show as part of a panel with the Traverse City and Suttons Bay school district's superintendents to discuss school funding.

"We are going to talk about funding in education and the disparity across the state," Crosby said. "A good example is the Michigan Public School retirement system. The governor put in the state aid this current year an amount of money that was to help offset the increase in cost of retirement."

Crosby said it was supposed to be an average of \$100 per student. However, only one district in the county was close to getting the \$100 because the amount was arrived at based on property taxes.

for them, and you come here and it is \$90 for us," Crosby said. "So, it is widening the gap in inequity for us and because they pay more they got more."

He said the same situation is taking place with special education. It is a subject he hopes to bring up on that televised panel.

"One of the things I would say to this panel was there is \$46 million to equalize Special Education and vocational education costs across the state," Crosby said. "It is called millage equalization, and is based on per pupil counts and SEV (state

equalized value of property).

"There is \$150,000 distributed north of U.S. 10," Crosby said. "Two thirds of the \$46 million goes to Wayne County ISD to offset the cost of special education because they are most in need based on their per pupil/SEV."

He told the board if it was spread around on per capita income instead of the way it's being done, it would be spread around better to all the ISDs. Right now, all the local ISDs in northern Michigan lose out because of the formula.

"Maybe our legislator (State Sen. Darwin Booher) that is worried about the kindergarten start up date could be worried about the inequity money, instead of when kids are going to start school something could get done," said board member Mary Becker-Witt.

Booher co-sponsored that legislation for chang-

ing the age of students starting kindergarten. They presently have to be five years old by Dec. 1 and if this legislation passes it would change it to Sept. 1.

In other items from his report, Crosby announced that the spring county-wide professional development organized by Kay Salyer and the general education staff is coming up in Onekama. They will be reviewing the Career and College Ready Standards that soon all school districts will need to follow.

Director of Special Education Jim Scranton delivered his report to the board. It included the following items.

■ The severely cognitively-impaired classroom will be located in Onekama.

■ Sharon Hayden was reassigned to the severely cognitively-impaired classroom.

■ The Medicaid reporting has improved. The state requires districts to

maintain documentation levels sufficient to maintain an above 85 percent claim level compared to the previous year. He said their current level is at 103 percent and well above the 85 percent level.

Director of general education Kay Salyer reported on the following items:

■ County principals continue to work on professional learning.

■ The county-wide professional learning day was

to be held Thursday, when they will be looking at assessments from last year and determining the focus of the next school year's improvement plan.

■ They are trading staff days with Mason-Lake ISD. They are also in discussions with the Wexford-Missaukee ISD for expanded collaborative general education work in 2012-13.

Manistee ISD director of technology Roy Anciso reported to the board that the MISD has standard-

ized on Join.me for remote assistance software.

Anciso said that they interviewed several applicants for the computer technician position and in the end the position was offered to Kris Krantz. He will be primarily working at the KND schools assisting with the day-to-day technology operations. He said they have also solidified contracted support for Pearson PowerSchool at both Bear Lake and KND Schools.