

Superintendent's Report

Month: August 2025

Administrator: Dedrick Martin

Update:

Superintendents Instructional Retreat

On July 29, I joined fellow Superintendents from Kalamazoo County for a full-day Instructional Leadership Retreat facilitated by Rachel Feder. The retreat was designed to:

- Strengthening collaboration across districts
- Align around a shared, student-centered goal
- Engage in candid dialogue about successes and areas for growth

WMU Partnership Meeting

Recently, we met with the new President of Western Michigan University and members of their leadership team to discuss current partnership efforts and explore opportunities for growth and improvement. The conversation focused on several key areas:

Identified Regional Gaps & Needs

- **Teacher Pipeline – “Missing Middle”:** There is a significant gap in support for paraeducators, CTE professionals, and early childhood staff who are working full-time but aspire to earn teaching certification. These individuals face barriers such as inflexible and costly licensure pathways and the requirement to complete full bachelor's degrees even when certification is the primary goal.
- **Tuition & Affordability:** Many KRESA professionals lack access to financial support for traditional certification routes.
- **Pipeline Development & Retention:** KRESA is actively working to strengthen the regional teacher pipeline and ensure students in programs like the Future Educator Academy (FEA) remain on track toward teaching careers post-graduation.

Existing Programs & Models

- **Talent Together:** A statewide initiative offering no-cost certification pathways through paid apprenticeships for current school employees and new entrants.
- **Future Educator Academy (FEA):** Provides high school students with foundational teaching skills, classroom exposure, and mentorship. Retention through certification and employment remains a key concern.

Current Partnership with WMU

- A longstanding 30+ year relationship includes:
 - Early Childhood Education coursework
 - Integrated Behavior Analysis programs
 - Financial Literacy workshops in collaboration with Haworth College of Business

Opportunities for Future Collaboration with WMU

- **Credit Articulation & Program Transfer:** Interest in streamlined articulation pathways and training on Transferology, a course equivalency tool.
- **Dual Enrollment / Early Middle College:** No current partnership exists—identified as a significant opportunity.
- **Deeper Engagement with CEHD:** Potential collaboration in areas such as Literacy Essentials, Michigan Science Standards, Project-Based Learning, and Behavior Management.

Career Connect Campus Visit – Congresswoman Haley Stevens

Last week, we had the honor of hosting Congresswoman Haley Stevens at the Career Connect Campus. During her visit, she expressed enthusiastic praise for the facility, noting that it is the most impressive career campus she has visited nationwide.

Congresswoman Stevens is actively working to connect us with individuals and organizations across Michigan and the country who are invested in workforce development. These connections aim to foster collaboration, share best practices, and expand opportunities for our students and staff.

Her visit reinforces the value and impact of our ongoing efforts in career and technical education, and we look forward to building on this momentum through new partnerships and initiatives.