Education is not preparation for life; Education is life itself.
~John Dewey
This Annual Report is published as a means of communicating the quality of educational programs provided to the local districts and communities within Gratiot-Isabella Regional Education Service District. It is with great pride that we report continuing progress from our organization. Outstanding programs have been provided to both students and teachers. Excellent learning opportunities have been offered in the areas of special services, business services, career education and services, curriculum and school improvement initiatives, professional development, and technology/media.

The 2013-2014 school year culminated in significant achievements for Gratiot-Isabella RESD. Many of GIRESD’s accomplishments are measured in rankings, summaries, grants, and other numbers—collective figures that quantify our services to students, schools, and the community as set forth by our mission.

Guided by our strategic plan, we are an organization committed to creating a clear and shared focus, adhering to high standards, and providing the best possible services and programs to those we serve.

As Gratiot-Isabella RESD moves forward in the months and years ahead, the strategic direction set forth by our plan will guide our way. Technology continues to evolve and expand our horizons. The delivery of our educational services will include political, economic, and cultural frames that are necessary to meet the challenges of student learning in our ever-changing global environment.

You will never do anything in this world without courage. It is the greatest quality of the mind next to honor.

~Aristotle
GIRESD is one of 56 intermediate school districts (ISDs/RESDs/RESAs) established in Michigan in 1962. ISDs are regional service agencies that offer support services to school personnel that are best delivered regionally, as measured by cost, size and quantity advantages.

The mission of Michigan's educational service agencies is to provide visionary leadership and quality services to strengthen teaching and learning for all citizens.

Gratiot-Isabella RESD serves nine K-12 public school districts, two public school academies, and eight private/parochial schools in Gratiot and Isabella counties. In addition to serving various school entities in the two counties, the district provides educational services to special non-school populations and employment services to employers, employees, and the unemployed.

The organization is directed by a seven-member Board of Education which is biennially elected by representatives from constituent school districts. Board member terms of office are six years. Regular Board of Education meetings are customarily held the third Thursday of each month. The public is invited and encouraged to attend.

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Financial management services are provided by GIRESD for 19 local school districts, Intermediate School Districts and Public School Academies comprising nearly 26,500 students. GIRESD staff also provides financial consultation, support, and training services to local districts on an ongoing basis.

Fingerprinting and background review services were provided to over 400 school district employees throughout Gratiot and Isabella counties. To better assist local school districts, GIRESD provides a mobile fingerprinting system, enabling local districts to be fingerprinted on-site at their own school building.

Training and professional development for school bus drivers is provided at GIRESD through a collaborative arrangement with Iosco RESA. Last year, over 100 bus drivers received training and certification instructions at GIRESD.

Student Management Services

Pupil membership accounting is coordinated through GIRESD twice each year. GIRESD provides consultation and support to local school districts and academies in compiling and submitting student enrollment data to the Michigan Department of Education. Student data submissions are critical to local districts, as the student counts form the basis for which each local district receives education aid funding from the State.

GIRESD and Clare-Gladwin RESD collaboratively provide pupil accounting services to certain local school districts in the GIRESD service area. Through this collaborative agreement, Clare-Gladwin RESD and GIRESD help local school districts receive maximum state revenues by providing pupil accounting and auditing services, training, and consultation regarding pupil membership laws and regulations. In aggregate, desk and on site audits were performed at 44 school buildings in 12 school districts during 2013-2014.

As the Michigan Department of Education begins to utilize data analysis as a tool to improve student performance, the accuracy of student records becomes more critical. GIRESD provides student data management and support services for over 13,000 students in 10 districts in the 2-county area.

GIRESD provides truancy services to 19 school districts and academies in Gratiot, Isabella, and Clinton counties. Last year, GIRESD received 386 truancy referral requests from schools covering a 3-county area.
Special Education transportation services are being provided in collaboration between GIRESD and eight of the nine local districts in Gratiot and Isabella counties to reduce transportation costs.

Contracted substitute teacher employment services are provided by PCMI/WillSub on a collaborative basis to our nine local districts to reduce substitute teacher costs and provide a more efficient method for filling those vacancies and tracking the attendance of teachers.

GIRESD provides various levels of accounting, financial, and payroll services to six of the nine local districts in the two county area and one district outside our ISD. Providing business services on a collaborative basis has improved efficiencies and reduced administrative costs at each of the participating local districts.

GIRESD and the nine local districts in the two county area have entered into a consortium agreement to provide instant notification and communication to parents, guardians, and community members. Within minutes of an emergency or other important event, school officials are able to deliver a clear message to anyone with an interest in school activities.

Revenues

Total Revenues
Local $15,642,712
Non-education entity or political subdivision $25,002
State $6,305,876
Federal $5,968,346
Other $997,143

Total Revenues $28,939,079

Expenditures

Total Expenditures
Instruction $6,183,582
Support Services $13,040,815
Community Services $1,825,915
Debt Service $84,695
Support to Local Districts $6,367,493

Total Expenditures $27,502,500
Gratiot Technical Education Center - GTEC

GTEC continues to house the Gratiot County Michigan Works! Service Center, serving job seekers and employers in the area. In addition, Gratiot-Isabella Staff delivers services through Michigan Works! in Isabella and Montcalm Counties. As of July 1, 2014, staff also provides assistance to residents in Ionia County, because of the closing of the Michigan Works! office there.

Gratiot-Isabella RESD offers services to unemployed and underemployed individuals and employers through the Workforce Investment Act Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, the Trade Act and Wagner-Peyser employment services. Through these federally funded programs, individuals are assisted with employment and training related services and may be eligible for help with the cost of training or costs associated with beginning employment.

During the year, 41,901 individuals were served at the Michigan Works! Service Centers, with 13,687 of those at GTEC. Employers received a total of 2,758 services. Employer services include job postings, accepting and screening applications, resume searches and interviewing assistance.

Through the Workforce Investment Act, on-the-job training contracts were written with Morbark, Merrill Technologies, Ventra, Erbert & Gerbert’s, and others. 27 individuals received on-the-job training assistance. In addition, 168 Adult and Dislocated Worker and Trade Act participants were helped with classroom (post-secondary) or occupational skills training in such fields as truck driving, (registered) nursing, certified nurse assistant, medical assisting, welding, business management and HVAC.
Dillon Reeves received assistance with the cost of welding training through the Dislocated Worker program of the Workforce Investment Act. Dillon is currently employed as a welder at Avalon and Tahoe. Dillon said “Thanks for Michigan Works! I was able to finish school, get a new skill and move on to get a job right away”.

GTEC is the home base for the Network Director of Gratiot-Isabella College Action Network (G-I CAN). This organization’s mission is to increase the number of youth in the counties of Gratiot and Isabella who enter and complete a post-secondary education. Michigan Rehabilitation Services also stations a representative there to assist individuals with disabilities.

Identifying a need in the community, GTEC successfully provided classes for Certified Nurse Aides. A total of 39 individuals completed and found employment at Masonic Pathways, Wilcox Health Care Center and Schnepp Health Care Center among others. This vital training, not only assists multiple employers in the area, but can prove to be a stepping stone to other career choices for the individual.

Courage is the first of human qualities because it is the quality which guarantees the others.
~Aristotle
Instructional Services

Gratiot-Isabella RESD Instruction consultants offer professional development and instructional services regionally for all local schools in Gratiot and Isabella counties, as well as customized services by district request.

Curriculum and Professional Development

During 2013-2014, 2,007 participants attended 44 professional development events. All Gratiot and Isabella county schools were represented and a number of districts from outside our region were in attendance including teachers and administrators from Clare-Gladwin RESD, Midland County ESA, Bay-Arenac ISD and others. Some of the topics included:

- A Framework for Understanding Poverty
- AAIMS Algebra Progress Monitoring
- Co-Teaching
- DataDirector
- Developing a Common Mathematical Foundation
- Developing Early Number Sense
- Document Based Questions
- DRA2
- Guided School Improvement
- Michigan Model
- Moodle
- New Teacher Training
- Non-violent Intervention Training
- Reading Apprenticeship
- School Counselors Network
- Writers Workshop

Credit Opportunities

- 615 teachers and administrators earned SCECH credits during 2013-2014.
- 40 teachers and administrators earned CMU graduate credit through GIRESD-designed classes and workshops.

Services for Students

Gratiot-Isabella RESD Quiz Bowl:
40 students (from Alma, Fulton, Ithaca, Mt. Pleasant, Shepherd, St. Louis)

German Exchange (LINKS):
50 students and chaperones participated

Competitive Grant Awards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Source</th>
<th>Grant</th>
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<th>Grant Director</th>
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<td>DataDirector</td>
<td>$32,156.00</td>
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<td>Mt. Pleasant Community Foundation</td>
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<td>Tri-County People Fund</td>
<td>Imagination Library</td>
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<td>Great Parents/Great Start</td>
<td>Imagination Library</td>
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<td>Commodities</td>
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<td>Michigan Model and MiChild</td>
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<td>MI Department of Community Health</td>
<td>Michigan Model</td>
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<td>Field Neuro Sciences Institute</td>
<td>ThinkFirst</td>
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Leadership Network
Thirty-three administrators attended Leadership Network meetings where they learned about updates from the MDE and interacted with speakers on current educational topics. The focus for the 2013-2014 school year was to understand and implement the new educator evaluation rules as passed by state legislators.

2013-2014 Michigan School Scorecards
Much of the focus of the Instructional Services staff is to assist schools and districts with school improvement initiatives. Michigan recently received a Waiver for some of the requirements outlined in the federal No Child Left Behind Act. One approved action in the waiver resulted in new Scorecards being issued for each school and district in the state. Scorecards were available for public viewing in August. In addition to the Scorecard, using a number of data points, Michigan schools are ranked from Top to Bottom. Both the Scorecard and Top-to-Bottom rankings include data from the areas of academic achievement, participation in state assessments, graduation rates for high schools, and student attendance for elementary and middle schools. In addition, other reporting compliance factors are included on the Scorecard. For further information and an overview of the Scorecard, connect to these helpful links: GIRESD Overview, MDE, and MISchoolData. The following table represents current Scorecard status for area schools as well as Top-to-Bottom rankings for the past two years.

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<td>Luce Road</td>
<td>Alma</td>
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<td>Hillcrest Elem.</td>
<td>Alma</td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>Ganiard</td>
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<td>Alma Alt. Ed.</td>
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<td>Mary</td>
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<td>58</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Pullen</td>
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<td>Ashley</td>
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<td>Vowles</td>
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<td>Ashley</td>
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<td>West</td>
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<td>84</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>Mt. Pleasant HS</td>
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<td>88</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>Oasis MS/HS</td>
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<td>Renaissance PSA</td>
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<td>Carrie Knause Elem.</td>
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<td>Nikkari</td>
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<td>Breckenridge AIM</td>
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<td>St. Louis HS</td>
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<td>89</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>Shepherd Elem.</td>
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<td>Winn Elem.</td>
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<td>Shepherd MS</td>
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<td>GIRESD Programs</td>
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<td>Shepherd HS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ithaca North Elem.</td>
<td>Ithaca</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Odyssey MS/HS</td>
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Forest Hill Nature Area

Forest Hill Nature Area (FHNA) is an outdoor education center for community members of Mid-Michigan. It provides a place to explore the wonders of nature all year. The nature area is available to school groups, scout troupes, and nature clubs for fields trips.

FHNA is operated by Gratiot-Isabella RESD. Everyone is welcome to the Forest Hill Nature Area. It is open to the public at no charge.

Students attending field trips at Forest Hill during 2013-2014 2,315
Number of class visits to Forest Hill 72
Number of adults 584

STUDENTS BY GRADES:
Pre-K K 1 2 3 4 5 K-5 6-12 COLLEGE
57 147 83 106 377 848 113 77 140 375

Winding Brook Conference Centre

Winding Brook Conference Centre in Shepherd continues to play an active role in hosting GIRESD events, local school meetings, and community gatherings. The facility is now the hub for the Special Education Department. During the 2013-2014 school year, 345 events with 5,288 participants were held at Winding Brook.

8240 S. Genuine Road
Shepherd, MI 48883
Gratiot-Isabella RESD is unique within the state by having a major university, a liberal arts college, community college, and Isabella Indian Reservation within our district. Diverse collaborations and programming opportunities have resulted by working with our local partner agencies.

**PROGRAMS**

**Early Childhood** Special Education (ECSE) Programs are located at Luce Road Elementary School, Alma; Bailey Building, Alma; and Rosebush Elementary, Rosebush. (These programs *serviced 66 students*.) ECSE Services for Birth to Three years of age provide home-based services in Gratiot and Isabella Counties year round (this program *serviced 28 students*).

**Project Find** provides early identification of children with special needs. *One hundred fifty-nine referrals* were received resulting in *73 IEPCs*.

**GIRESD Deaf and Hard of Hearing** Program includes Pre-K through High School students. *Twenty students* participated in the full range of school activities located at Nikkari Elementary, Carrie Knause Early Childhood Learning Center, T.S. Nurnberger Middle School, and High School all in St. Louis.

**Students with Mild to Severe Cognitive Impairment** attend programs in the Alma, St. Louis, and Mt. Pleasant school districts. Services were provided to *96 students* total in all programs.

**SXI Programs** (Severely Multiply Impaired) located at Hillcrest Elementary, Alma and Mary McGuire Elementary, Mt. Pleasant provided services to *17 students*.

**SEI Programs** (Severely Emotionally Impaired) are located at the Kinney School, Mt. Pleasant. *Thirty-two students participated* from seven local districts.

**APE Services** (Adaptive Physical Education) and **Registered Nursing** services are provided to center based programs located in Gratiot and Isabella counties.

**Transition Services** have emphasized the preparation of teachers to support self-determination activities and increase student participation in the Individual Education Planning Team meetings. The goal of the new grant is to build relationships with community agencies and organizations. Ten educators from the RESD and LEA’s attended the annual Spring Transition conference in Frankenmuth. The RESD in collaboration with MMI started a work based placement in Gratiot County for the CBE program. Discussions were started with MRS and Disability Network to be more active in our RESD programs and the local school districts. Transition monitoring took place in the spring of 2014.
The following services are provided by Gratiot-Isabella RESD to all local school districts, Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, Charter and Parochial Schools:

**SLI** (Speech and Language Therapy Services) - Speech Therapists had a combined caseload of **447 students**.

**Teacher Consultant Services** for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Impaired, Autistic Impaired, Physically Impaired, Health Impaired, and Visually Impaired had a combined caseload of **144 students**.

**School Social Workers** - The School Social Workers had a combined caseload of over **235 students** and attended over 300 IEPCs. They also participated in the development and implementation of Behavior Intervention Plans, Functional Behavioral Assessments, Manifestation Determination Review Meetings and Student Staffings.

**School Psychologists** - The School Psychologists did a combined total of over **400 Initial, Re-evaluations, RTI Meetings and Student Staffings.** Psychologists also met with local staff to help implement a new model for the identification of Specific Learning Disabilities. They also participated in the development and implementation of Behavior Intervention Plans, Functional Behavioral Assessments, Manifestation Determination Review Meetings and Student Staffings.

**Occupational Therapists** - The Occupational Therapists had a combined caseload of **384 students**. These students were seen in classrooms and in the students’ homes.

**Physical Therapists** - The Physical Therapists had a combined caseload of **127 students**. These students were seen in classrooms and in the students’ homes.

**School Nurses** - The School Nurses based in Gratiot and Isabella Counties serviced approximately **296 students**.

**Sign Language Interpreters and Interveners** served **31 students** within Gratiot and Isabella counties who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing or Deaf/Blind.

**Early Childhood Special Education Kindergarten Transition Teacher** supports students and teachers in the transition from Early Childhood Special Education to General Education Preschool/Kindergarten. **Thirty-one students** were transitioned into a Public School K-12 Program.

**GIRESD operates** Center-Based Programs, servicing **349 students**. Students range in age from two-and-a-half to 26 years old. GIRESD programs follow local district calendars with the exception of 213 day programs that run year round.

**GIRESD Assistive Technology Team** provided consultation to **205 students**, parents, and staff members while lending out 69 pieces of equipment and software. The team is actively conducting in-services and training for parents, GIRESD and local district staff.

**ASD Team** - The Autism Spectrum Disorder Teams provided input which included, behavior consults, strategies, evaluations, and teacher consults for approximately **418 students** for determination of ASD between Gratiot and Isabella counties. This category of disability continues to be the fastest growing disability area.

**Special Olympics** - Gratiot-Isabella RESD was represented by over **50 athletes** at the Summer Games, hosted on the campus of Central Michigan University. Throughout the year, athletes compete in a variety of Special Olympic sports including basketball, floor hockey, track and field events, and Area Seven activities.
Points of Pride

Strategic Planning Session Comments:

- We have a quality, knowledgeable staff
- Collaboration within and outside the organization
- Service-oriented
- Contemporary perspective . . . visionary
- Network of resources . . . we will find the answer!
- Adaptive and flexible
- We are professional, well organized
- Financially stable
- Nice facilities
- We think outside the box
- Growth oriented
- We create value
- There is passion in the organization
- Good at measuring results

Notice of Nondiscrimination Policy
Gratiot-Isabella Regional Education Service District Board of Education complies with all federal and state laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination and with all requirements and regulations of the United States Department of Education and the Michigan Department of Education.

It is the quality of the moment, not the number of days, or events, or of actors, that imports.
~Ralph Waldo Emerson

Dr. Timm Thorsen
President

Dr. Cheri Booth
Vice President

Ed Lorenz
Secretary

Roger Trudell
Treasurer

William Henderson
Trustee

Elizabeth Miller
Trustee

Tom Steere
Trustee

Dr. Jan C. Amsterburg
Superintendent

Robert Cosan
Associate Superintendent for Special Services

Kathy Stewart
Associate Superintendent for Instruction

Kevin Kolb
Associate Superintendent for Finance

Matt McMahon
Executive Director of MMNET
Gratiot-Isabella RESD is an equal opportunity employer. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

For additional copies or general information, call 989-875-5680 or email info@giresd.net