

-Providing Leadership in Education-



**BCISD**

BERRIEN COUNTY INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT

**2008-2009**

# Strategic Plan

BCISD...Leading the way for a  
*brighter tomorrow* with a *better start today.*

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## MISSION STATEMENT

**“TO PROVIDE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO OUR CONSTITUENT SCHOOL DISTRICTS WHICH ENHANCE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL STUDENTS.”**

*The purpose of the BCISD Strategic Plan is to review the accomplishments of the 2007-2008 school year and to highlight the major goals of the 2008-2009 school year.*

*The highlighted goals will supplement those services that BCISD continually offers as part of its essential services to constituent school districts.*



## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

*Highlights from the 2007-2008 school year:*

### **Overall**

As part of our commitment to our local public school districts, the ISD promised to return to them a percentage of our special education funding. For the past six years, we have returned an increased amount of money back to Berrien County districts to help offset their individual school costs. This year, we returned a record breaking \$5 million.

This year, the ISD purchased special data warehousing and assessment management software that will allow schools to gather, analyze, aggregate and disaggregate all types of data for students, teachers, parents and administrators at their school. This software is a welcome addition to the many student and business software solutions the ISD already offers to the local districts.

As the Internet becomes a constant in many of our students' lives, it is important that we as educators teach our children how to protect themselves while online. Therefore, in the fall, the ISD teamed with Congressman Fred Upton, Michigan Attorney General Mike Cox, Berrien County Prosecutor Art Cotter, Berrien County Sheriff's Department and the Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, Rho Chapter to provide a community-wide presentation at the ISD called "Cyber-Safety: How to Protect our Children." This event provided practical tools to teach adults how to access the Michigan Sex Offender Registry, search and access social networking sites (FaceBook and MySpace), learn how to view Internet history logs to determine a child's online activity, how to turn on surfing filters and obtain information on parental control software. Parents, educators and community members attended the event.

### **Instructional Technology:**

The Department of Agriculture Rural Utilities Services grant provides equipment, programming and professional development to 35 rural elementary and middle schools in the BCISD service area. Instructional Technology saw the number of connections increase by approximately 20 percent compared to the previous year.

In the spring, the ISD's Mathematics and Science Center underwent an extensive review process as is required by law. The State's preliminary report found the Center to be successful and that they were meeting all of the goals in their strategic plan. Also this year, the Center introduced a newsletter called "The Apple Press" which shares information about student activities offered through the program. The newsletter is published periodically throughout the school year.

### **Career & Technical Education (CTE)**

Superintendents from all 14 Berrien County public school districts, Countryside Academy and Berrien County Intermediate School District signed an agreement this year extending the area's Career & Technical Education Consortium contract for another 15 years. By participating in the Consortium, each District ensures that their students will have access to and will receive academic credit for CTE courses at any participating school in Berrien County.

### **Student Activities:**

The ISD offers educational opportunities to students who have an interest in science and technology, the arts, career exploration as well as a variety of other educational topics. This year, the ISD hosted its second annual Cloverleaf Spelling Competition. The event was a tremendous success with 69 students from 26 Berrien, Cass and Van Buren county public and parochial schools participating. In the spring, students from across Berrien County competed in the 21st Annual Science Olympiad Competition. From a catapult shoot, to a robotic machine showdown to bottle rocket blasts, 23 middle and high schools and 25 elementary schools were able to show-off their science skills during the competition. Also in the spring, nearly 1,500 students participated in the Arts & Science Expo, a county-wide competition featuring pencil drawings, oil paintings, graphic artwork, photography, sculptures, short stories and science experiments.



## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS CONTINUED:**

### **Special Education**

For the fourth consecutive year, the number of students being served through special education in Berrien County has declined, thanks to a variety of Berrien County Intermediate School District sponsored early intervention programs aimed at providing learning services to children before they enter the classroom.

In 2004, Berrien County's special education student population peaked at 4,491 students, according to the 2004 December 1 Count (a state-wide pupil count used to determine the number of special education students in each school district). This year's December 1 Count indicates that there are 4,097 students receiving special education services, a 9 percent decline from 2004.

As part of Autism Awareness Month, the ISD partnered with Lakeland Regional Health Care and ABCSpeaks to host an Autism Fair. The event featured sensory experiences, workshops and information booths.

Also this year, the ISD hosted a special arts activity for its students at Blossomland Learning Center. The event, "Arts for All," featured products created by Zot Artz that offered individuals of all abilities an opportunity for creative expression through arts and mobility. These specialized art making tools have been designed so participants with limited movement or lack of fine motor skills can be successful in using what mobility they have to paint, draw and print. The activity was supported through grants from the Berrien County Community Foundation, the Frederick S. Upton Foundation and the United Way of Southwest Michigan. Thanks to their sponsorship, the grants allowed the ISD to purchase all the equipment the students used as well as additional painting and drawing supplies. The equipment will be incorporated into the students' regular art curriculum.

The implementation of Continuous Improvement Monitoring System (CIMS) has been completed. Now, all local districts and ISD operated programs have been trained to self monitor and use electronic workbooks to record progress.

The ISD assisted the local school districts in their efforts to ensure that their secondary special education teachers were able to become highly qualified by creating a portfolio option for highly qualified verification. The ISD's portfolio option was approved by the State and is available online for local districts to access.

### **Data Center**

The BCISD wide area network now includes fiber to eight districts plus the Lighthouse Education Center. The fiber network provides more bandwidth for Internet, email, video conferences, video streaming, imaging, data applications, and the potential for voice traffic. Fiber not only provides more capacity but has proven to be more reliable than T1 connections. Additional districts may participate with fiber in the future if desired.

### **Building & Grounds projects:**

The Building & Grounds staff members installed a back-up electrical generator for the Data Center, installed replacement energy efficient exterior windows in the Administration Building, installed dry wells for the roof drainage system at Blossomland Learning Center, repaired the drainage system for the Blossomland Learning Center swimming pool, installed wall and floor padding in the time-out rooms at both Blossomland Learning Center and Lighthouse Education Center, and installed exterior and entry security cameras at the Administration Building, Blossomland Learning Center and Lighthouse Education Center.



## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS CONTINUED:**

### **Curriculum & Instructional Services**

Numerous professional development opportunities were provided to area teachers this year. As of April 2008, the Curriculum & Instructional Services Department offered a total of 176 professional development workshops in which 2,747 teachers participated. Of those 176 workshops, 81 were available for State Board-Continuing Education Units (SB-CEU's) or college credit.

ISD staff members partnered with 5 other intermediate school districts across the state to develop the Michigan Citizens Collaborative Curriculum for social studies. This framework provides social studies teachers throughout Michigan with the tools they need to implement a social studies curriculum that meets the state's content expectation standards.

This year, the Academic Coordinating Officials group formed, creating a cross-program approach to provide support for local schools to enhance student achievement. The ACO group met throughout the school year and tackled issues that affect students in general education and special education, teacher qualification standards, high school requirement expectations as well as curriculum. The ACO group provides a direct resource for local districts to have their curriculum needs and concerns addressed by multiple disciplines at the same time, ensuring that all aspects of student learning is considered.

### **Human Resources**

In the fall, Berrien County Intermediate School District's implemented a new substitute teacher coordinating organization, Professional Education Services Group (PESG) and a new substitute teacher placement software system, Automated Educational Substitute Operator (AESOP). Schools have been using the software for the past year and it had been receiving positive reviews.

Over 1,800 area teachers from both Berrien and Cass counties as well as Berrien County substitute teachers were fingerprinted this past school year by the ISD.

Berrien County ISD Consortium's (consisting of most of the local school districts in the County) online employment application system has been assisting job seekers in their search for job opportunities throughout the County. As of March 1, 2008, 1,400 individuals have applied for employment through the system.

This year, BCISD staff members had the opportunity to help support the community through a variety of school supply, clothing and hygiene item collection drives. They also participated in Chrysler Corporation's "Drive for Kids" where they test-drove mini vans to raise money for Blossomland Learning Center. This year's drive raised \$615.



# 2008-2009 Strategic Plan



## STRATEGIC ISSUE: OUTREACH

Goal	Team Leader	Implementation		
		Plan/ Dev.	1st Year	2nd Year
Provide a "Report to the Community" which highlights ISD accomplishments.	Jeff Siegel	X		
Assist in the strengthening of interdepartmental collaboration with common projects, programs and initiatives.	Jeff Siegel			X
Staff will increase participation in meetings by video conferencing and encourage other educational organizations to do the same.	Jeff Siegel			X
Continue to provide information to the community about the ISD's name change.	Jeff Siegel		X	
Assist LEA's with the implementation and technical assistance needs relative to instituting the Data Director student achievement/test builder warehousing system.	Jeff Siegel		X	
Align BCISD services and programs toward the exemplary practices of the Five Strands in the Michigan School Improvement Comprehensive Needs Assessment.	Jeff Siegel	X		
Participate in the county-wide development of an Early Childhood Investment Corporation to ensure continuity of efforts.	Jeff Siegel		X	
Update the departmental sections of the ISD website to highlight programs and activities on a semi-annual basis.	Jeff Siegel		X	
Evaluate eco-friendly opportunities and explore the use of eco-friendly products.	Jeff Siegel	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasize the use of email as a primary means of communication with staff and identify the use of excess paper.</li> </ul>		X		
Review and revise the Administrative Rules to ensure consistency with Board Policies.	Jim Palm		X	
Create opportunities for the ISD to share services with other ISDs, Cass and Van Buren counties, and local school districts.	Jim Palm			X



## STRATEGIC ISSUE: SPECIAL EDUCATION

Goal	Team Leader	Implementation		
		Plan/ Dev.	1st Year	2nd Year
Complete Education Yes documents for ISDs as mandated by the State.	Stephanie Mack		X	
Participate in the process to plan, develop and roll-out Performance Plan Indicators for ISDs (educational setting (LRE), disproportionality, suspension/expulsion, graduation/drop-out rates, parent involvement, etc.).	Stephanie Mack	X		
Facilitate the implementation of the state's High School Redesign efforts in regard to Special Education students/programs.	Stephanie Mack		X	
Facilitate the implementation of Data Director for use with special populations and in ISD operated programs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and implement an electronic IEP process.</li> <li>Disaggregate data in ISD operated programs.</li> </ul>	Stephanie Mack		X	
		X		
Participate in the development and implement activities associated with the State's efforts to redesign the Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process to the local districts.	Stephanie Mack	X		
Participate in the implementation of the State's Early On® programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a plan to develop a year-round Early On® program in natural environments.</li> </ul>	Stephanie Mack	X		
Provide a special education intervention system to the local districts in the areas of Reading, Math and Behavior to help reduce the number of referrals made to Special Education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate the use of data and curricula design to improve student achievement.</li> </ul>	Stephanie Mack		X	



## STRATEGIC ISSUE: CURRICULUM

Goal	Team Leader	Implementation		
		Plan/ Dev.	1st Year	2nd Year
Work with Special Education to develop a common intervention model for at-risk students and assist LEA's in the knowledge and implementation of the model.	Becky Meier	X		
Assist LEA's regarding curriculum materials and resources based upon the curriculum purchase cycle.	Becky Meier		X	
Develop and distribute curriculum documents which demonstrate how various grade level and course content expectations are common throughout the various content areas.	Becky Meier	X		
Coordinate the three-year implementation of a student achievement data warehousing and test builder system for school improvement.	Becky Meier		X	
Continue to align the Academic Coordinating Officials agenda to address current curriculum, instruction and assessment issues ( i.e., personal curriculum, instructional best practices, English language learners, etc.)	Becky Meier			X
Facilitate a communication process to ensure information/ proposals discussed by the Academic Coordinating Officials (ACO) are shared with the appropriate parties.	Becky Meier	X		
Continue state-level involvement regarding Adequate Yearly Progress through participation in High Priority building initiatives (i.e., coaches institute, principals fellowships, process mentor teams, etc.)	Becky Meier			X
Provide curriculum, assessment and instruction technical assistance to Berrien County's High Priority buildings.	Becky Meier			X
Participate in the Great Start Collaborative for Early Childhood programming to ensure continuity of efforts.	Becky Meier		X	



## STRATEGIC ISSUE: CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Goal	Team Leader	Implementation		
		Plan/ Dev.	1st Year	2nd Year
Provide technical assistance for local districts for planning and implementation of the state and national high school redesign efforts.	Paul Bergan			X
Provide intensive professional development, orientation and training for new Career & Technical Education directors from the local districts.	Paul Bergan		X	
Be aggressive in ensuring Technical Review Assistance and Compliance (TRAC) audit procedures are followed and documentation is collected.	Paul Bergan		X	
Review Educational Development Plans for compliance with State requirements for the 2008/09 school year.	Paul Bergan		X	



## STRATEGIC ISSUE: TECHNOLOGY

Goal	Team Leader	Implementation		
		Plan/ Dev.	1st Year	2nd Year
Assess the staff's need for technology related professional development.	Dennis Lundgren		X	
Facilitate and expand the use of video conferencing by ISD employees to reduce travel and make better use of time.	Dennis Lundgren		X	
Expand the use of digital streaming video for classroom instruction.	Dennis Lundgren		X	
Create an implementation plan for emerging office management software upgrades (Word/Excel/other).	Dennis Lundgren	X		



## STRATEGIC ISSUE: HUMAN RESOURCES

Goal	Team Leader	Implementation		
		Plan/ Dev.	1st Year	2nd Year
Update employee job descriptions to ensure that they are Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant.	Lynda Hurlow	X		
Develop a systematic mentoring plan to assist new BCISD employees.	Lynda Hurlow	X		
Review and revise staff evaluation forms.	Lynda Hurlow	X		



## STRATEGIC ISSUE: DATA

Goal	Team Leader	Implementation		
		Plan/ Dev.	1st Year	2nd Year
Research, evaluate and recommend a direction for the phone system.	Will Townsley	X		
Pending Universal Service Fund approval, implement fiber Wide Area Network (WAN)	Will Townsley			X
Develop programming to eliminate dual data entry for Early-On students after the state had provided import specifications.	Will Townsley	X		
Revise and implement the recommendations of the Data Center survey.	Will Townsley			X
Coordinate the transfer of data into the Data Director warehouse and participate in the implementation of the program.	Will Townsley		X	
Explore student information/business office systems.	Will Townsley		X	



## ***STRATEGIC ISSUE: BUSINESS SERVICES***

Goal	Team Leader	Implementation		
		Plan/ Dev.	1st Year	2nd Year
Implement purchase card system for Berrien County ISD and local districts.	Gus Damaske		X	
Continue to emphasize multi-district services to provide for optimum efficiency and effectiveness.	Gus Damaske			X
Convert accounts payable and payroll records to digital records retention storage.	Gus Damaske		X	
Continue to advertise the potential cost savings to local districts when using the ISD print shop for their printing needs.	Gus Damaske		X	



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Comments, suggestions or questions may be sent to  
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*The Berrien County Intermediate School District 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 State Department of Education.*



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