



Wexford-Missaukee Intermediate School District

9907 East 13th Street
Cadillac, MI 49601
231.876.2260
231.876.2261 fax
www.wmisd.org

Board Members

*Harold Kibbe
Gerald Koester
Chris McCrimmon
Daryl Morr
Jacqueline Ruppel
Dean Smallegan
William Sparks*

Administration

Scott Crosby
Superintendent
scrosby@wmisd.org

Karen Mlcek
Director of General Education
kmlcek@wmisd.org

David J. Cox
Director of Career Technical Education
dcox@wmisd.org

John Bretschneider
Director of Special Services
jbret@wmisd.org

Tom Armstrong
Director of Business Services
tarmstrong@wmisd.org

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12-23-2008

To: Presidential Transition Team
From: Scott Crosby, Superintendent
Karen Mlcek, Director of General Education
Subject: Early Childhood Education - Head Start

As we move into a new administrative team and work on current and upcoming needs, we would like you to consider the following issues and possible solutions for the future of Head Start.

Issues:

1. Regional distribution formulas need to be applied to the specific location of the children identified.
2. Sub Regional boards need to be transparent with formulas for distribution.
3. Head Start teachers are not all certified teachers.
4. Standards, guidelines and policies need to align and collaborate with other entities to assure ALL children receiving quality preschool programming (Head Start, Local School, private and faith based Early Childhood Programs).
5. Rural Michigan must have door to door transportation to enable ALL students access to quality programs.
6. Not enough funds to fully serve all identified students.

Solutions:

1. Federal distribution formula forces the funds to the specific students – not to a region to decide who gets the service vs. who does not.
2. Sub Regional boards are required to make decisions in collaboration with other local Early Childhood service providers on programs, registration and recruitment, professional development, common curriculum, screening, assessments, transition services.
3. Require all Head Start teaching staff to be fully certified.
4. Develop common standards, policies, guidelines for all Early Childhood programs to reduce duplication of resources.
5. Set a common standard and policy for transportation of students – in rural areas make it mandatory.
6. Provide full funding based on data, not on what funds are available.

The issues and solutions are provided to you for consideration. We have reviewed the CRS Report for Congress and believe that while our local sub region have the best intentions, it seems as though we may not be putting the policies and guidelines into consistent practice that would lead to cost efficiencies, common quality preschool programs and higher student success.

If we can help in anyway to support the transition, we are more than willing to provide information and further discussion when needed.

Thank you of your time and consideration of this critical area.