



The Superintendent's Monthly Musings...

A monthly communication for the staff of the Montrose Community Schools

April 2015

And the Hits Just Keep Coming!

While the Montrose Schools are blessed with many successful programs, it has been a banner week for Mr. Jamie Kitts and the Digital Media Program.



On April 15, the Michigan High School Athletic Association announced that the Digital Media Program was selected as the **School Broadcast Program of the Year** for the second year in a row. If that were not enough, we also learned on Friday, April 17, that the Digital Media Program has received a **2015 Education Excellence Award** from the Michigan Association of School Boards and the SET SEG Foundation.

Congratulations to Mr. Kitts, Mr. Tom Skinner, and all of the digital media students. *We're proud of you!*

So Far, So Good...


or at least that's how it appears in regards to our first encounter with the new M-STEP assessment. Thankfully, our technology has cooperated for the most part and other than some of the testing sessions taking much longer than anticipated (same issue reported around the state), our students seem to be handling the transition well.



While the M-STEP was originally projected to be a one-year "fix," the Michigan Department of Education just inked an agreement with Data Recognition and Measurement Incorporated for the continuation of the test for at least the next three years.

While there is no shortage of opinions regarding the amount of mandated testing placed upon students these days, we will continue to work in this environment until there is some reconsideration of school accountability factors at the federal level. Until then, your patience, cooperation, and encouragement of students is appreciated, as are the hours and hours of work invested behind the scenes by our building principals to ensure that the testing sessions are as trouble-free as possible.

What does \$103.7 million buy?
Michigan's three-year contract for the M-STEP assessment



Non-Homestead Millage Renewal - August 4th

As an awareness issue, at their next meeting on April 28, the School Board will consider a resolution to place language on the August 4 ballot for the renewal of the district's 18-Mill Non-Homestead Millage. This is not a new millage (in fact, it has been around for nearly two decades since voter's approved Proposal A back in 1994) and only affects industrial, commercial, some agricultural, and non-primary residences or "second homes." **It does not include a family's primary residence.**

Most importantly, this Non-Homestead Millage generates \$610,714 annually for our school district. Should the millage not pass, the State will not replace the funds.

While it is certainly not the position of the District to tell our community how to vote on an issue, we will be sharing important information over the following weeks and months.

Tech News

Hopefully you have been taking advantage of the technology expertise and resource we have with **Mr. Casey Schaub** from the GISD.

Most recently, Casey sent out an email regarding how you can create your own Google account. Please remember that Casey is also available to help you begin using the Illuminate program and Reflector software.

Casey is in the district at least two days per week and is available to work with small groups or individuals. Feel free to contact him directly at cschaub@geneseeisd.org.

In addition, hopefully you have read about how our newest School Board member, Mr. Chris Zolinski, has been helping to reconfigure our cache of old desktop computers into "super thin-clients." To date, Mr. Zolinski has rebuilt over 20 of these machines and we hope to begin deploying them back into classrooms as soon as possible.

Let the Countdown Begin!

- ⇒ **Last day for Seniors— May 15**
- ⇒ **Choice Graduation— May 28**
- ⇒ **HMHS Graduation— May 29**



PD Rescheduled but Not Forgotten



As you already know, the professional development day originally planned for April 23 had to be cancelled in response to the excess of instructional days lost due to inclement weather and the water main break.

While the cancellation of the training was unfortunate, we have already rescheduled the same topic (***Designing Teaching and Learning Goals and Objectives***) and trainer for September 1.