January/February 2021

Happy New Year

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January

| 11 | Curriculum Ad Staff 4:00-6:00 PM @ PDC |
| 18 | MLK Day - NO SCHOOL |

February

| 8 | Curriculum Ad Staff 4:00-6:00 PM @ PDC |
| 22 | District Professional Development Day |

New School Improvement Process for 20-21 School Year

by Dave Minsker

The state of Michigan has rolled out a new school improvement process starting this school year. **MICIP** (*Michigan Integrated Continuous Improvement Process*) was developed to make the school improvement process more streamlined, more process driven, and keep our thinking focused on the whole child and equity. Several school districts around the state piloted the new process last school year, as the online platform was developed to assist districts. We have been participating in training at the district level in advance of starting our school improvement work in developing goals and strategies for the 21-22 school year.

The online platform will guide districts through a comprehensive needs assessment to identify our strengths and areas of improvement, pull state and local data to help us in that work, and better align our plan to the federal and state grant funds to provide support in achieving our goals.

MICIP focuses on three main ways that we think about school improvement:

- Mindset: How we think about improving student outcomes
- Process: Engaging in a comprehensive continuous improvement cycle
- Platform: Using a streamlined, integrated, web-based software application

Benefits of **MICIP** include:

- Focus on the whole child where areas that influence academic achievement are targeted
- Alignment across compliance requirements results in a greater focus on improved student outcomes
- Consolidates the comprehensive needs assessment
- Builds in conjunction with the consolidated application (grant funding)
- Prepopulated data are integrated into the platform to facilitate the process of assessing needs
- Input time is reduced with the integration of prepopulated data, reducing duplication effort
- Reporting is reduced by engaging in multi-year cycles of continuous improvement

The **MICIP** process will start this winter with the development of the district continuous improvement plan through the new platform by identifying needs, analyzing data, and setting goals. Once the district plan is developed, the buildings will work to engage and monitor the strategies and activities that link to the goals. This new **MICIP** process will make the school improvement process more comprehensive and effective in improving student outcomes. It will simplify the process so that we are not bogged down with paperwork and it will allow us to focus on ideas and improvement. More information to come in early spring.

Superintendent's Corner

by Chuck Hughes

This year has been the most challenging school year in my 30 years devoted to teaching and learning. As the Superintendent, my number one job is to find ways in which I can support staff who are working tirelessly to engage with students, both in person and remotely, asking myself how I can help reduce stress and anxiety. I can only imagine how our teachers, support staff, and building administrators are doing this for children and parents on a regularly occurring basis.

In the October 2020 issue of Educational Leadership, social emotional guru Jessica Minahan shares how schools can better help students who are learning remotely. Her article is titled ***Maintaining Relationships, Reducing Anxiety During Remote Learning***. She starts by affirming that many of us are experiencing anxiety over how we are delivering instruction, and so are the students. Ms. Minahan points out that educators must pay special attention to students who happen to have mental health issues, as they are at risk in the remote learning world. They are at risk because in the past we have been able to support them in school. She states that educators should consider stressing social emotional connections over academics due to the potential long-term impact these traumatic times will have on our children.

The author provides some suggestions for cultivating relationships:

- Reach out individually to students who we might be concerned with (letters, phone calls, email, etc.).
- Create an art folder in Google Classrooms for students to share their creativity.
- Make sure to establish routines for the students you are working with.
- Hold office hours for students to connect.
- Find a way for students to check in daily if needed.
- Provide journaling topics.

What I appreciate about Jessica Minahan's work is that it always seems to be practice appropriate and clearly applicable. As you know, much of our success around social emotional learning stems from her original visit with us and our continued efforts at following her over the years.

"You have not lived today until you have done something for someone who can never repay you."

— *John Bunyan*

"One of the most important things you can do on earth is to let people know they are not alone."

— *Shannon L. Alder*

Math Matters

by Annette Macfarlane

Math Progression

Have you ever wondered how students you teach have gotten to the level they are at in math? Math progression is an essential concept that we don't get to spend a lot of time on, but one that can help us discover where kids have been and where they are going in their math comprehension. As teachers of a specific grade level, we focus only on our specific standards. However, if we put a little time into learning about math progression, it could possibly help make your job easier. Understanding progression helps teachers plan more effectively, monitor instruction, and enhance student learning, which is our main goal.

One example is tape diagrams, which are introduced in first grade. First graders begin counting concrete objects (like cubes), then transition to pictorial counting (tape diagrams), and then into the abstract numbers). Tape diagrams go from basic addition to missing parts or wholes, ratios, fractions, and percentages. That is powerful information to know. Understanding that a tape diagram is a key math representation from first grade all the way through 8th can show the path a little more clearly. When teachers have a better understanding of math progression concepts, it makes it easier for them to build on student learning. I encourage everyone to check out Graham Fletcher's website. He produces short videos that show the progression of counting, addition and subtraction, and multiplication and division that are worth watching. The videos will expose you to strategies that can help you build upon prior math knowledge with your students, and also help you see the end goal of a foundational concept.
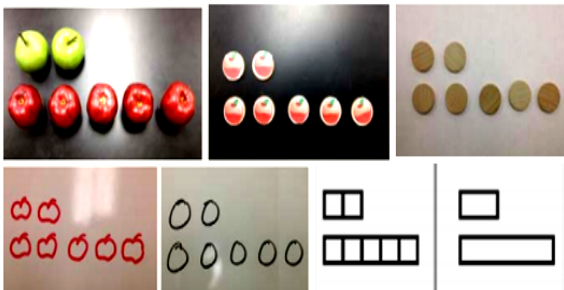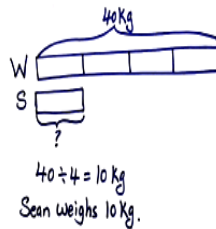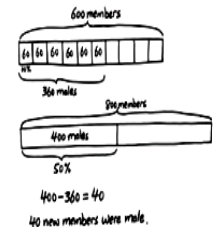
Looking for free SCECH's? Make sure to head over to EduPaths and check out the courses on math workshops and improving the math classroom climate.

If you have an interest in incorporating math talks for the next semester, check out Michelle Rinehart. She will not disappoint with her quick 5-10 minute topics that include a visual for your class to discuss.

Would You Rather: Fraction Multiplication Math Talks

The Lit Bit

by Monique Alberts

Happy Winter! I hope everyone enjoyed their time at home relaxing, reading a few good books. and catching up on all the things that get put aside as the school year is in full swing. I cannot believe we are at our half-way point in the school year. As crazy as everything is, time is still flying by. Cheers to 2021- let's hope it is better than 2020, my fingers are crossed! ~ **Monique**

Literacy Tip #999,999,999

I have been in many classrooms this past month, and have had some wonderful conversations with teachers around Balanced Literacy and component work. I think having the Teachers College videos for both reading and writing has allowed many of us to think beyond the mini lesson and look deeper at lifting the level of what students are attempting during independent work time. If you would have asked me 3 years ago, I would have advocated for a focus on the mini lesson, but now my thinking has changed.

My last trip to the Teacher's College institute, I was part of a powerful conversation about "when students go off to read/write…" The teacher was explaining how disappointed she was by her students, and their lack of attempting the things the mini lesson was teaching them. Of course I was all ears, because I think we can all relate to this! The question that came next from the staff developer blew me away...she asked, "Tell me what your component work looks like?" My initial thought was...What does interactive writing, shared reading, or read aloud have to do with any of this? The staff developer went on to explain, "Your workshop is only as strong as your component work." Think about it this way... mini lesson is considered our "with" time, that is 7-12 minutes of doing a new strategy "with" our students. Would I ever expect mastery from 7-12 minutes of exposure to something? Absolutely not! BUT...how about I add in another 10-15 minutes in my day, where I model and practice that strategy, now I am getting somewhere.

I have had teachers share with me that since adding in interactive writing and shared reading, that their students are completely different during workshop. Those short repeated practices/opportunities to go deeper with a strategy makes all the difference in the world! I encourage everyone to think about your component work (remember it looks different across the grades, but every grade has some component work) and do some reflecting.

Here are some guiding questions to ask yourself…

- What do my students often struggle with? (Common issues year after year.)
- When could I model this again? (Outside of workshop / another time of the day.)
- How could I model this strategy? (What can I do to make it interactive, but guide the students in this learning? Heavy support.)
- What might this look like across the week? (Go deep, not wide with this work.)

I would love to come model any component work you are interested in! Let's lift the level of what students are doing together!
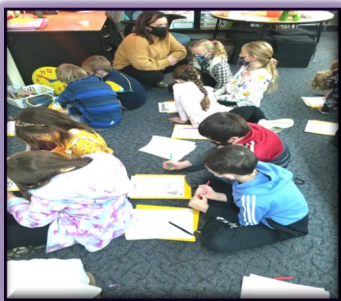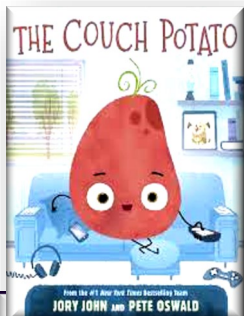
Ms. Clay's 3rd graders engaging in phonics work to support them as writers this year!
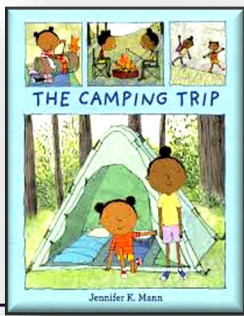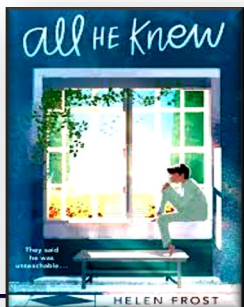
HOT READS

Haven't done this in awhile, so I thought I would share some new book titles I recently purchased and absolutely love!
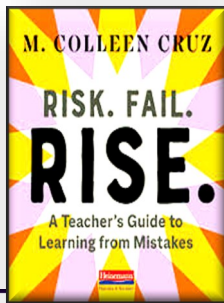
A funny read about the importance of getting out and moving!

A story about being brave when trying something new. This book has so much author's craft for both fiction and nonfiction, it would make a great mentor text!

A great middle school read, inspired by true events that very few people know. It's an overcoming the odds story when someone believes in you.
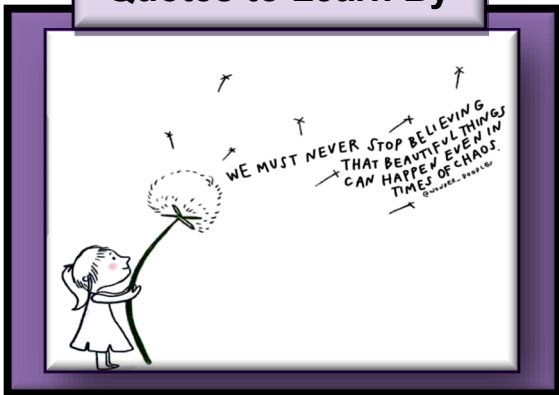
A great professional read about not playing it safe, and stepping out of our comfort zone!

Coming Soon!!

Due to covid, I have not been able to host any after school PD or before school BYOC's. I am missing these and you! So starting mid January, I will be setting up via Zoom…**"Coffee with the Coach!"**

This will just be a time and space for us to get together (virtually of course) as a whole grade level, across buildings, and connect. Come with some questions, some good stories to share, and let's try to build a little bit of normalcy and consistency in this crazy year. Of course, these are not required...only come if you can! You can look for a Zoom invite for your grade level soon!

Quotes to Learn By

WE MUST NEVER STOP BELIEVING THAT BEAUTIFUL THINGS CAN HAPPEN EVEN IN TIMES OF CHAOS.

Technology
by Scott Usher

Chad Evearitt
Computer Tech

Collin Corrion
Computer Tech

David Allward
Network Admin/Tech

Amanda Wright
Grants facilitator/Tech

Scott Usher
Director of Technology

Dave Larson
Network Engineer

Michele Astalos
Data Tech

Stacie Motz
Instructional
Data Tech

Karen Wilson
Student Services Asst.

Jen Grabowski
Help Desk

Are You and Your Students Interested In More Interactive Google Meet Sessions?

     Google Jamboard can help provide more interactive online learning experiences and an opportunity to mix up your sessions with your students a bit. If you have never looked at **Google Jamboard**, take just a few minutes to do so and you may spark lesson ideas that will help enhance your interactions with your remote learning students.

1. To open a **Jamboard**, click on the waffle in the upper right corner of any of your Google windows (Mail, Drive, Calendar).

2. Scroll down until you see **Jamboard** and click on it.
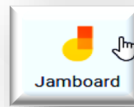
3. Let your creativity take over and create a quick interactive lesson or activity to use with your students.

    *Perhaps pose a question and instruct students to brainstorm, you can add their thoughts using sticky notes, text, or their own writing (if they have a touchscreen) to the Jam.

4. Click the share button and share it with your class. (For best results, prepare the **Jamboard** ahead of time and place the link to it in Google Classroom or paste it in the CHAT of the Google Meet, so students can join while the meet is occurring.)

Here is an example of what one may look like   >>>

     Jamboard is NOT robust with features yet, but it may be a GREAT tool to use with your students to increase interactivity in your virtual lessons.

Insert Sticky Notes Below Containing Character Traits of the Grinch

Before the Change   After the Change

annoyed

Unhappy

Angry   Mean

Lonely
Sad

greedy

Scary

Evil

Cruel   Small Heart

Nice   BIG Heart

loving

Helpful   Good   Kind

Grateful   HAPPY

Thoughtful   Caring

Avoiding Social Engineering and Phishing

First, some definitions for those who are unaware:

Social Engineering is the act of manipulating someone to do something that may not be in their or their organization's interest.

Phishing is a social-engineering attack where a bad actor crafts and email in such a way to trick the recipient into divulging information that could be used against them or their organization.

Spear Phishing is the act of sending emails to specific and well-researched targets while purporting to be a trusted sender.

Vishing is a form of attack that attempts to trick victims into providing sensitive personal information over the phone.

Ransomeware is a form of malware that encrypts a victim's files. The attacker then demands a ransom from the victim to restore access to the data upon payment (Usually most of the files can be recovered).

Some FACTS:
- Education has the highest rate of ransomware across all industries.
- 94% of malware is delivered via email.
- Phishing attacks account for more than 80% of reported security incidents.
- Schools are a target because IN GENERAL, they have low numbers of IT Staffing, many systems that all run together, low budgets and lots of old hardware and software, and tons of personally identifiable information that can be sold.

Characteristics of the Social Engineering scammer:
- May be in-person or digital. Most of you would encounter a digital attempt.
- An example of an in-person scam would be when a person comes into an organization dressed as a contractor and asks to gain access to the server room.
- A person will call and act as though they have some measure of authority (I'm calling from the helpdesk.)
- The person may try to use intimidation. "If you don't do this thing...bad things will happen."
- May use language such as "Your co-worker did this for me last week, but I forgot one thing."
- Usually, act with a sense of URGENCY and want you to act quickly and not think.
- They may sound familiar or likable.

What YOU should watch for:
- Direct requests for personal or financial information.
- A veiled threat or a false sense of urgency.
- Poor grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
- Unexpected design and poor email quality.
- Instead of addressing you by name, may use "Dear Colleague", "Dear Friend", or "Dear Customer".

      A good rule of thumb is if your "Spidey Sense" is tingling, then you should probably avoid clicking open the email. I'm betting no one has EVER emailed you with something that could TRULY be referred to as extremely urgent. If you have a question as to the authenticity of an email, research the organization and give them a call. Ask if you should have received an email from them. Protect yourself, protect your organization.

Need/Want To Change Your Password?

We have made it easier for you to change your both your computer and your Google password. In the past, you had to change your computer password by using the change password procedure in Windows. Changing your Google password was buried in "Manage Your Google Account" and not always easy to find. Now you can change your password for BOTH by simply browsing to this URL link: password.hartlandschools.us.   After changing your password, (remember to make it a complex password), BOTH your computer and your Gmail password will be synced.

FLASH Is Dead

No, not THE Flash, but rather **Adobe Flash**, the multimedia software platform that was commonly used to create animations, some websites, desktop applications, and more has been discontinued by Adobe. Why? Well, there are several reasons: Flash is inefficient, big, and most concerningly, insecure. Its demise has been coming for a long time and will be made official on December 31, 2020. What does this mean for you?

First of all, you should no longer use any app, game, or website that runs Flash. While some Flash sites and games may continue to be used by older browsers for some time into the future, it is just NOT secure and would be a great opportunity for a bad actor to take advantage of the lack of software security. **All major browser platforms have discontinued the support of Adobe Flash** (This is a great reminder to ensure that your browser is up to date on all your devices). Second, uninstall Flash from any device on which you had it installed.

Illuminate update

Google Classroom Online Test Administrations are now set for Eastern Standard Time. They were set on Pacific Standard Time which was causing a timing issue between Illuminate and Google Classroom.

We have had a few teachers report issues logging in to Illuminate. More specifically, logging in and then being immediately logged out. Clearing your cache should resolve this for you. Another work around is to try logging into Illuminate through MiStar.