

TO: PARENTS/GUARDIANS, FACULTY, STAFF
FROM: STEPHEN PIERESON, SUPERINTENDENT
DATE: FEBRUARY 14, 2012
RE: INFORMATION UPDATE

1. **Board of Education.** The Board of Education held a regular meeting on Monday, February 13, 2012. Among the items considered by the Board were:
 - Heard a report from the Policy Committee on draft Board Policy 5517.01 Bullying and Other Aggressive Behavior Toward Students that complies with Section 1310b of the Revised School Code.
 - Held a Public Hearing on Board Policy 5517.01.
 - Reviewed 20 new and revised Board policies as reported by the Policy Committee.
 - Heard a report from the Interdistrict Committee on the topic of formation of a cooperative under the MARESA for support services.
 - Acted to release Mr. Dominic Tasson from employment as provided for in the IESPA bargaining unit agreement.
 - Acted to appoint class advisors:

Mrs. Julie Solka	Class of 2014
Mrs. Tracy Matson	Class of 2015
Mrs. Shelly Stetson	Class of 2015
 - Acted to approve Ms. Tara Truscott and Ms. Amanda Salo as volunteer coaches in the Ishpeming High School dance team program.
 - Acted to go into closed session as permitted by Public Act 267 to review IEA contract negotiations.
2. **IESPA Bargaining Unit.** The Board of Education has ratified a 3 year agreement with the IESPA support staff bargaining unit.
3. **Professional Development Day.** Friday, February 24, 2012, is a scheduled professional development day for teachers. Students are not in session.
4. **Interdistrict Committee.** Board Members Robert Nadeau, Angela Kiviniemi, and Paul Olson are serving on the Interdistrict Committee with Board representatives from the NICE, Negaunee, and Republic – Michigamme. The Interdistrict Committee is investigating ways in which the districts can cooperate in the consolidation of services to provide greater curriculum options for students and to reduce operating costs in order to shift funds to student programs. Governor Snyder and the Legislature are emphasizing consolidation of services in order for schools to receive State funds. Ishpeming and Negaunee have been in the lead with consolidation of services in bus maintenance and in food service. For Ishpeming, this has resulted in \$86,000 in State Aid funds that would otherwise not have been received. The reality is that the future holds more consolidation and contracting of non-instructional services. Committee meetings are posted and are open to the public.

5. **Food Service Reminder.** Parents/Guardians are reminded to please check their children's accounts regularly to ensure they have adequate funds available for them to purchase their breakfast and/or lunch.

The cost of breakfast at all schools is \$1.00. Lunch prices are as follows:

Birchview Elementary
Lunch: \$2.25

Ishpeming Middle School
Lunch: \$2.50

Ishpeming High School
Lunch: \$2.75

The cost of a reduced price lunch is 40¢ and the cost of a reduced price breakfast is 30¢ at all schools.

You may add funds to your account two ways:

1. **ELECTRONICALLY VIA "SEND MONEY TO SCHOOL"** - Instructions on how you can log into the Send Money to School (www.sendmoneytoschool) system in order to create an account, add funds, and check balances is available by going to: www.ishpemingschools.com click on "Meal Magic". If you choose to add funds via Send Money to School there is a \$2 transaction fee. The funds will be available for use approximately 4 hours after your transaction is made, please plan accordingly.
2. **AT SCHOOL** - If you do not have access to the internet or if you choose not to add funds via internet, you or your child(ren) may add funds to their account(s) at school. You may also contact Mrs. Bertucci @ 485-5501 to check your balance and/or your free and reduced meal application.

There is not a transaction fee and the funds are immediately available for use when you add them at a school location.

Personnel will be available at school to add funds to accounts during the following times:

Birchview Elementary
7:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.
10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Ishpeming Middle/High School
7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.
11:00 a.m. – 11:20 a.m.

Personnel will not be available at any other time to add funds. Checks should be made payable to: **Negaunee Public Schools.**

6. **Excellence in Education.** Excellence in Education Week (EEW) is scheduled for April 23-27, 2012. On Monday, April 23, 2012, 5 Ishpeming High School seniors will be honored with \$1,500 scholarships at the EEW recognition program at Northern Michigan University. The scholarship students have selected their "Influential Educators" who will also be honored. The students and teachers are:

<u>Student</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
Whitney Barry	Scott Syrjala
Hannah Kohtala	Sheila Grazulis
Alexa Laurin	Holly Letson
Margaret Loman	Timothy Clancy
Mary Zhulkie	Timothy Clancy

In addition, teachers Sheila Grazulis and Scott Syrjala have been selected to receive \$500 professional development awards.

Congratulations to the students and teachers!

7. **Board Organization.** Board of Education officers for 2012 are:

- President Geno Maino
- Vice-President Angela Kiviniemi
- Secretary Robert Nadeau
- Treasurer James Smith

Trustees are: David Leverton, Paul Olson, Todd Kauppinen

The Board has scheduled regular meetings for 7:00 p.m. on the second Monday of each month. Meetings are held in the Ishpeming High School library.

8. **State Aid Act.** Governor Snyder has proposed that State Aid for schools in 2012-2013 be generated off the base foundation for 2011-2012 with any additional funds distributed based on meeting the Governor's new set of best practices and student academic performance metrics. It is, in my judgment, very likely that some form of the Governor's proposal will be enacted by the Legislature.

9. **Kindergarten.** Effective for the 2012-2013 school year, Section 6 of the State Aid Act requires districts to provide kindergarten children, including young 5's, with a minimum of 1,098 hours of instruction in order to receive the full allocation of state aid. This is the same number of hours required for grades 1-12. In effect, kindergarten programs are required to be all day, every day to receive full state aid. Kindergarten programs with less than 1,098 hours of instruction are subject to a pro-rata reduction in state aid. The Ishpeming kindergarten program is currently a 550 hour program (every day, half-day). Staying at 550 hours in 2012-2013 will mean a 50% per student reduction in state aid for the kindergarten program.

If Ishpeming continues to offer an every day, half day program, the loss of state aid as compared to an all day, every day is approximately \$134,000. As a district, it is just not possible to absorb such a loss.

On Wednesday, February 22, 2012, at 5:00 p.m., at a special meeting, I am recommending that the Board of Education act to approve the all day, every day kindergarten (including young 5's) for school year 2012-2013. Districts such as Negaunee and NICE have also made this decision.

10. **Homeless Students.** If you are aware of an Ishpeming student at any grade level who is homeless, please contact me at 485-5501. We are aware of some homeless students and believe that there may be other homeless students of which we are not aware. As the district McKinney – Vento Act homeless student liaison, I may be able to offer assistance with academic support and connections with social agencies that have homeless student obligations.

