

LEWIS CASS ISD: THEN AND NOW...

The Lewis Cass Intermediate School District (LCISD) mission statement, "Providing Services Today for a Better Tomorrow" describes well a long tradition of leadership and service to Cass County schools, students, and community members. Since 1867, Michigan county school districts and superintendents have overseen local districts.

In 1949, all counties in the state were made county school districts and given by Public Act 18, 1955, the authority to levy millage to finance educational programs for the handicapped.

Evolving from the roles of leadership and supervision of rural schools to providing specialized services, the 83 Michigan county school districts, including Cass, were ready for the reorganization into the 57 intermediate school districts legislated by Public Act 190 in 1962.



On February 19, 1963, the Cass County School Board of Education named their newly formed intermediate district after the distinguished statesman, diplomat, brigadier general, and territorial governor of Michigan (1813-1831) **Lewis Cass**.

ISD administration sites, then and now:

- 1963-67 Cass County Court House
- 1967-69 LaGrange Township Library
- 1969-86 Lake LaGrange Building
- 1986- Administrative Services Center
61682 Dailey Road



Superintendency leadership of the ISD has included the following persons:

- 1962-69 John O. Ames
- 1969-74 Mary Lou Corbit
- 1974-79 Art Towe
- 1979-91 Gary Waterkamp
- 1991-97 John Ward
- 1998-02 Ron Mousel
- 2002-present Kevin D. Magin

SPECIAL EDUCATION...

From then until now, the cornerstone of ISD programs and services has been meeting the needs of special students. As early as 1959, the County School District provided some ancillary services to the local school's special needs students with a diagnostician, audiometrist, and Type C mentally handicapped consultant.

The next year brought the addition of a visiting teacher and attendance officer. An actual Department of Special Education was formed by 1964 with Superintendent Mary Lou Corbit named the first Director of Special Education in 1971.

Growing from itinerant services to direct teaching of special needs students, ISD programs have been conducted in the following locations:

- 1969 Salisbury School, Cassopolis
- 1970 Lake LaGrange Bldg, M-62
- 1974 Child Development Center
Dowagiac Catholic Church
- 1975 Brookside Learning Center
- 1992 Community Life Skills Center
Main Street, Dowagiac
- 1997 North Pointe Center

Since the early 1990s, ISD students have also attended classes in the local school districts, as part of a full continuum of services.



The following directors have provided Special Education leadership:

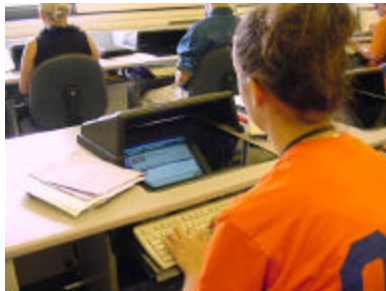
- 1971-72 Mary Lou Corbit
- 1972-73 Joseph M. Clemente
- 1973-74 Wayne A. Jones, PhD
- 1974-77 Carl Komor
- 1977-78 Tom Spratt
- 1978-86 Mildred McGath
- 1986-99 Joanne Carlin
- 1999-00 Ron Chapman
- 2000-02 Kevin D. Magin
- 2002-present Daniel Perono, PhD

CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION...

A second, long existing program conducted by the ISD, Career Technical Education (CTE), began in 1973 with a Director and a secretary. Over the years, CTE services have included counseling for LEA high school students, weatherization and home improvement programs, and a building trades program which built several homes as well as the ISD Administrative Services Building.

Directors of Career Technical Education for Lewis Cass ISD include:

- 1973-96 Ned Sutherland
- 1996-98 Ron Mousel
- 1998-02 Sylvia Stull
- 2002-present Joan Fish



GENERAL EDUCATION...

In the early 1980s, LCISD first began program services in General Education, beginning with a focus on gifted and talented students and expanding to school improvement, Michigan Curriculum Standards and Benchmarks, accreditation, and professional development. Since 1980, Dawn Atkinson has been the coordinator of the General Education services.

COMMUNITY SERVICES...

In the 21st century, LCISD has been a fore runner in providing services outside the typical K-12 population. Moving to the ISD in 2000, the Community Services and Welfare Reform department serves youth and adults with programs that focus on

career pathways, job placement and retention, job and life skills training, high school completion and post secondary education. Tim McGann and Myrna Stevenson are the department's directors.



FAMILY AND CHILDREN SERVICES...

Providing a stable base for children through various family support programs, Family and Children Services became a full ISD department in 2001. Early On, Wraparound, Respite & Resources, Safe Schools/Healthy Students, Zero to Five, and the Families First/Berrien programs all build on families' strengths to promote children that are ready to learn and succeed in school. Barb Johnson has been the coordinator since this department began in 2000.

THEN, 1963

- 5 LEAs and 18 one-room schools
- 11 staff members
- One program site
- Few services for the handicapped
- No Career Technical Ed
- No talent development
- No family support service

NOW, 2003

- 4 LEAs
- 200+ staff members
- 13 program sites
- Full 0-26 Sp Ed services
- 1555 students
- 8 annual events
- 13 programs

Lewis Cass Intermediate School District throughout its growth and changing roles has continued to live out its mission:

"Providing Services Today for a Better Tomorrow."



Historical Perspective



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