

**ISOA Executive Board Meeting  
October 2, 2019  
Minutes**

**Present**

Dansville	Mike Kapp	Mason	Michael Kelly
East Lansing	Erin Graham	Waverly	Mary Ann Martin
Haslett	Cammy Wheeler	Webberville	Amy Coe
Holt	David Hornak	Williamston	Jeff West
Ingham ISD	John Wolenberg		
Ingham ISD	Jason Mellema		
Lansing	Nino Rodriguez		
Leslie	Shauna Howe		
Okemos	Dean Bolton		

**Absent**

Holt	Laura Colligan
Stockbridge	Larry Ostrander

**Superintendents' Round Table Debrief**

Dr. David Hornak, Holt Public Schools Superintendent, reviewed the September Superintendents' Round Table meeting:

- Special Education Funding – Discussion took place on a possible Headlee Restoration Millage vote. The ISD millage was last increased to 4.75 in 1988. The superintendents were supportive of a May 2020 vote.
  - There is 2.3 million dollars not being collected right now.
  - We will create a common message from all the districts
  - A May 2020 vote would need to be certified by February 11
  - The vote results would be tallied together from all districts for pass/fail
- Section 25e Agreement – This is the agreement where the foundation money follows the student if they change districts between count days. Superintendents agreed to continue this agreement for 2019-20.
- Teacher and substitute shortage in Michigan – this continues to be an issue in all districts. Dr. Hornak has suggested a monthly submission to the LSJ from the Ingham County Superintendents, and ISOA members, to tell our story of education. If we don't tell the story, it will be told for us. The submissions would focus on promoting the field of education and the positives things happening in our school districts.
- Snow Days – Updated phone numbers in preparation for weather related communication.
- EEE – The ISD shared information on combating the mosquito borne virus
- Discussion on identifying the 504 Coordinators in each district.
- MSU Arts Advocacy Breakfast is on October 23

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## **Presentation – Steps to a Balanced Calendar – Dr. David Hornak**

The traditional school calendar has always focused on Labor Day to Memorial Day, but increasingly that doesn't work for all kids. As families, communities and needs are not the same as when the traditional school year schedule was established between 1870-1890.

Faucet Theory – When children are in school, all children learn at the same rate. When on a recess (vacation), the middle class/upper class child maintains levels and the lower class child loses knowledge (Entwisle, Alexander, & Olson, 1997).

Balanced Calendar – Taking the required 180 days and spreading them out over the whole year instead of condensing them to between Labor Day and Memorial Day.

Districts are spending millions of dollars re-teaching the material that students forget over the summer. Research shows that we have 180 school days, but 20-40 of those days are used re-teaching material. The state testing wants a year growth in student learning with only 140 days. Over time, when you factor in the needed re-teaching each year, students are entering high school a year or more behind their counterparts. (See the presentation PowerPoint)

### ***How does a district make the transition to a balanced calendar?***

Contacts for questions, or help with balanced calendar discussions:

Dr. David Hornak  
[dhornak@hpsk12.net](mailto:dhornak@hpsk12.net)  
517.694.5715

Dr. Melissa Usiak  
[usiakmel@msu.edu](mailto:usiakmel@msu.edu)

National Association for Year-Round Education  
<https://www.NAYRE.org>

Holt Public Schools noticed seven years ago that their Free and Reduced student count kept increasing each year at Sycamore Elementary. The building was heading toward becoming an At-Risk school.

The district proposed a change to a balanced calendar at the elementary, and started with a year-long information campaign which included:

- Showing how PBIS and MTSS can be tied into the positives of a balanced calendar
- Home visits
- Canvassing neighbors
- Parent-teacher Conferences
- Talking to parent groups
- Surveys of the community and sharing the results
- Reduce the Summer Slide program
- Communication to the staff – must have the staff on-board to be successful
- Gave staff and families the opportunity to opt-out.
- Heavy information blitz in newsletters, postcards, surveys and stickers worn by staff
- Emphasis the benefits of switching calendars.
- Addressed the negatives perceptions that people have about the balanced calendar.

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Problems Holt experienced in the beginning stages of implementation:

- A/C wasn't ready when they opened the first year
- Families continued to take vacations in August
- Curriculum wasn't ready from supplier – vendor assumed district started after Labor Day.
- Lost some families, but eventually saw an increase in student enrollment.

Holt Public Schools has two different calendars; the traditional calendar which has a 10-week summer vacation (instead of normal 12) and a balanced calendar.

Some added benefits of the balanced calendar:

- The two week breaks are good for staff. Relax and refocus
- Deep cleaning can be done during the school year during breaks. This means less sickness for students and staff.
- Parents love the two-week breaks
- The research and data support the balanced calendar – it's what is best for kids.
- During the breaks, Holt offers Intersession which is a chance for students who need help with school work, to get additional help. Teachers can also earn extra pay by working the intersessions.

Districts currently with a balanced calendar:

- Davidson (similar size as Holt) gained 100 students
- Flint K-12 started this year
- Flint Beecher K-12
- Baldwin School District

These districts moved to the balanced calendar and are still participating in athletics. You find ways to adjust. Most kids are back in August due to athletics and other commitments.

## *How do we do this as a county?*

- The superintendents need to commit to do this together.
- Ingham ISD sets the common calendar. Make a switch to Holt's traditional calendar as a way to transition. Summer break is eight weeks, but if you can do 10 instead of 12, that is still better.
- Present to boards of education and community groups.
- We have two more years on the county-wide pre-Labor Day waiver, so we have the ability to change winter/spring breaks.
- A first step can be to look at all the calendars across the district and see how we can coordinate now and start from there.
- Can we create a community information portal which would be a central place where community members, school board members, staff and students can get information?

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## **District Updates:**

- Williamston: Enrollment is at approximately 1900, which is up 50 students. The fund balance has gone from less than one percent to 6.9 percent now. The district has been able to add electives like Spanish for eighth grade students. Working on traffic flow issues at the buildings by experimenting with designated drop-off locations throughout the district where busses would pick up students.
- Haslett: Homecoming events were rescheduled due to the weather. The district has new administrators in three out of the five buildings. Construction work will continue in the district next summer.
- Webberville: The school year has started without any problems. The FFA held their annual Chicken BBQ and it was a great success. The FFA chapter now has their own bees, and sold honey at the event.
- Leslie: Leslie has established a “Caring Closet” for those students who need clothes and other resources. There is discussion on a future bond for building additions. They are also beginning to discuss the balanced calendar and a district strategic plan.
- Mason: The new school buildings opened. The district is working out the various issues that come with new buildings and transportation, but the year has started well.
- East Lansing: New buildings are open and the other construction continues on schedule. The administrative team is doing great work around district priorities, increasing the district's focus on equity and implementing initiatives to address students' social emotional health and well-being. Yesterday the high school was closed due to an emailed threat, but police discovered that the threat was meant for a ELHS in North Carolina.
- Waverly: The campus is closed for lunch this year and so far things are going well. Contract talks will be starting soon. The district has suffered some losses this year with a student suicide and a parent volunteer at band camp who died.
- Okemos: The district has 53 new students. They will be starting to update their strategic plan in the fall.
- Ingham ISD: Shared a video of WTC teacher Jeff Grossman who has been teaching for 47 years. The state budget was signed, but with 147-line item vetoes equaling one billion in cuts. That includes 128 million in the School Aid Fund. A supplemental budget will come next. The field in front of the ISD (Hagadorn and Howell Road) is an ongoing project to create a pheasant habitat.
- Dansville: The district will be going for a Sinking Fund renewal. The CMAC annual meeting was hosted at Dansville.

## **2019-20 Meeting Schedule:**

All ISOA meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month from 7:30-9:00 am at Ingham ISD. The next meeting will be held on November 6, 2019.