

# Looking to the Future of Education in Macomb County



## The Role of the Macomb Intermediate School District

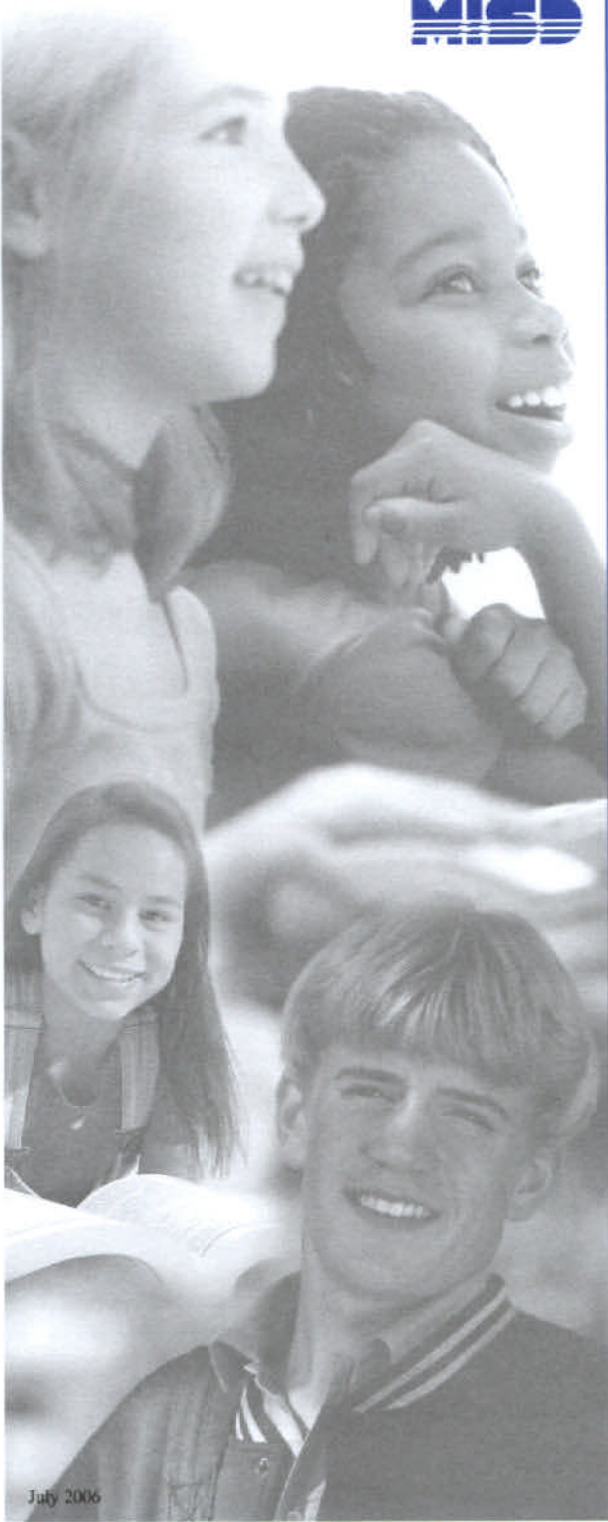
### The Macomb Intermediate School District

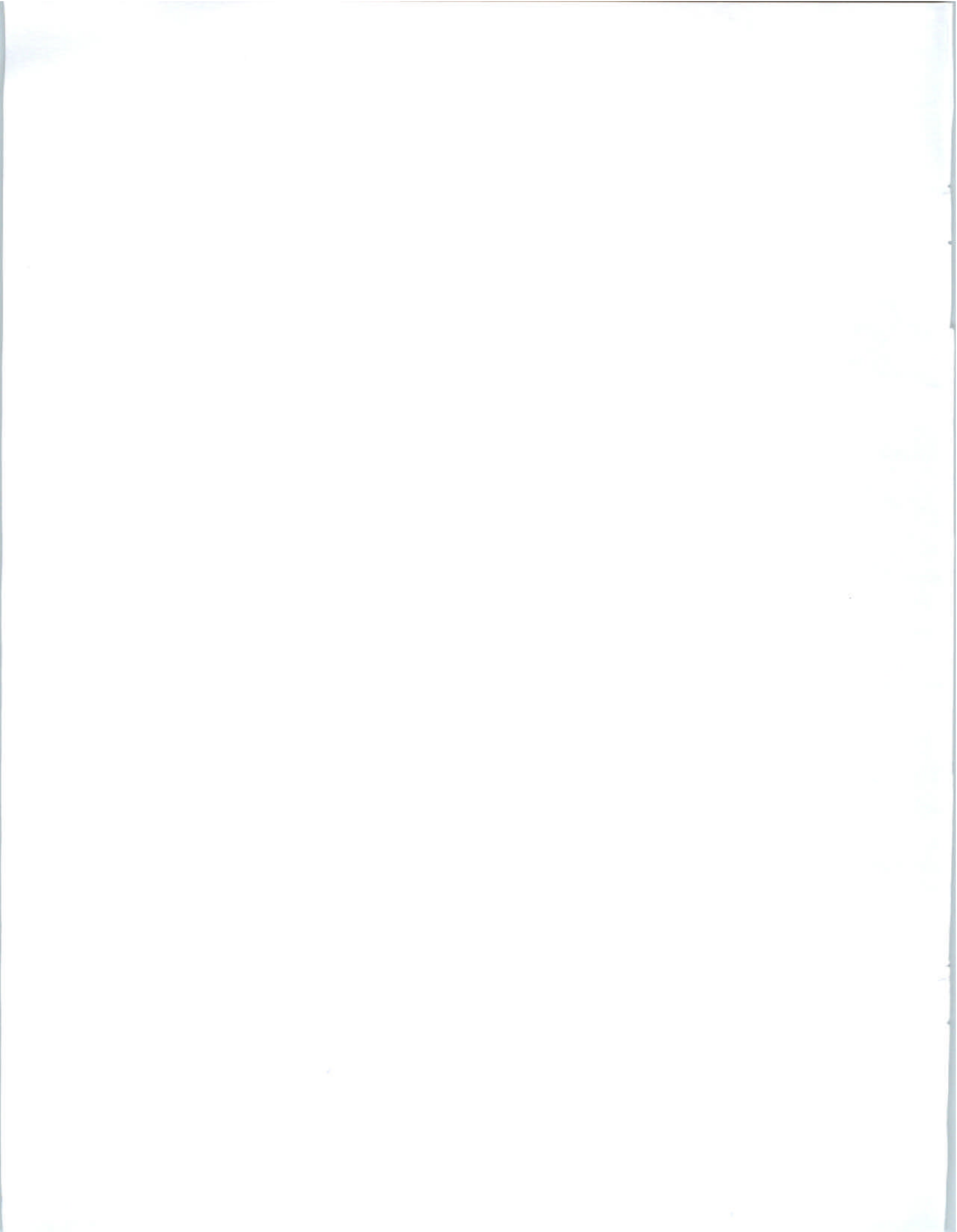
(MISD) serves the 21 public school districts, 11 charter schools and private/parochial schools in Macomb County. It is the largest ISD in Michigan that provides direct services to students.

MISD staff help bring best practices to the classroom, impacting some 150,000 students in both public and nonpublic schools. We help bring education's best to **all** students, including the 20,000 who need special educational services.

The MISD's Educational Service Center is aptly named—we are a center for education. Most days, our training rooms are filled with "students"—educators who themselves are learning. Last year more than 30,000 participants attended workshops and meetings on education-related topics hosted by the MISD. Babies and children too young to be K-12 students come with their parents for assessment and evaluation. School-age students use our distance learning facilities, attend special conferences and take part in events. Our facilities are home to Oakland University—Macomb, and are used by civic, citizen and governmental groups.

The following reveals how the MISD helps county school districts look to the future through leadership, instructional and administrative services.





## **Special Education**

The MISD is unique among large ISDs because it directly operates programs for moderately to severely disabled students. One of every seven students in Macomb County has a special educational need. These 20,000 K-12 special education students require extra attention to help them succeed in school, receiving special assistance in their own district or attending one of the MISD's Center Programs. In 2000, the MISD was named "best in the nation" for service to disabled persons by the National Organization for Disabilities and the National School Boards Association.

**NOTE: In addition, MISD Center Programs are among the most efficient in the state and are lowest in cost for comparable programs in the Detroit metropolitan area.**

### **Special Education: Direct service to students**

- Providing testing and assessment services to determine the educational needs of children with disabilities.
- Operating schools and special programs for 3,000 students up to age 26 with moderate to severe disabilities. Our schools include:

<b>Keith Bovenschen School</b> <b>Robert G. Lutz School for Work Experience</b> <b>Glen Peters School</b>	For students with cognitive and physical impairments
<b>Bozymowski Center for Education</b> <b>Maple Lane Elementary</b> <b>Neil Reid High School</b> <b>Rockwell Junior High</b>	For students with severe emotional impairments
<b>Bozymowski Center for Education</b>	For Autistic Impaired students. We have 14 other sites throughout the county for AI students.

- Providing special education support services to more than 6,000 students with disabilities in local districts. Occupational and physical therapy, nursing services, transition services and services to the visually or hearing impaired are examples. These services are provided at the request of the student's local district. Services may be provided directly to the student or as specialized training for the local district staff, depending on the student's needs.
- Providing services for newborns to 3-year-olds who have disabilities. The Macomb Infant Preschool Program (MIPP) serves approximately 700 babies and families at four different sites in the county.
- Operating a learning materials center, parent resource center and lending library of assistive devices for students with disabilities. Last year, the MISD loaned out 700 items, including loans made to parents over the summer.

### **Special Education: Service to school districts**

- Providing leadership and support in the implementation of special education programs and services throughout the county.
- Providing support to local districts to ensure special education staff have the appropriate certifications and endorsements.
- Collaborating with districts to coordinate services and support to local districts, charter schools and parochial schools throughout the county. Examples of this collaborative effort in this past year include:
  - ✓ Initiating and facilitating planning meetings involving all local district special education directors in the county to review MISD services and ensure their alignment with local needs and the general education curriculum.
  - ✓ Partnering with local districts to resolve disputes arising between district staff and parents over the provision of services to special education students.
  - ✓ Partnering with parent and advocacy groups to ensure positive outcomes for students.
  - ✓ Providing specific training to local district staff in areas such as educating students with autism, speech and language services and using electronic forms for individual education plans.
  - ✓ Ensuring consistency across districts as special education rules are implemented.
  - ✓ Working with local districts to address programmatic issues as the county population expands northward.
  - ✓ Providing online training manuals.
  - ✓ Providing support and training for over 50 schoolwide behavior prevention intervention teams.
  - ✓ Assisting districts in applying for reimbursement for special education therapy sessions that are eligible for coverage under Medicaid.
- Supporting locally operated special education services for students with physical and other health impairments, such as hearing, vision, language and behavior. Seventy-five MISD itinerate staff work directly with students in local district programs to ensure their success. Last year this mobile staff served over 2,700 students. Most caseloads involved multiple sessions each week. Itinerate and consultant staff serve as invaluable resources to parents and teachers.

## ***Curriculum and Instruction***

The MISD provides specialists to work directly with teachers to provide professional development and improve classroom instruction for the county's 150,000 students. Assistance is available in content areas, such as language arts, math, science and social studies; MEAP testing; and specialty areas like bilingual education, early childhood education, curriculum development, career/technical education and homeless students.

The MISD also provides leadership and support to local districts facing federal and state mandates, such as *No Child Left Behind*, *Education YES!*, and the newly legislated requirements for high school graduation. This support includes:

- Offering intensive staff training to low-achieving schools, targeted at improving scores on statewide reading and math tests.
- Assisting local testing specialists, principals and teachers to understand and use demographic data and test results to improve their teaching and learning for all children.
- Assisting districts with developing and aligning local curriculum with state standards.
- Implementing training programs for all high school teachers so students will continue to receive reading instruction throughout the high school years. In the last year, 742 teachers have been trained.
- Providing intensive training to math and science teachers so students will be able to meet the newly approved Michigan Merit Curriculum, required to earn a diploma.

In addition, the MISD and Oakland University have a partnership to support teachers in programs leading to bachelor's, master's, education specialist and doctorate degrees. The MISD helps promote Oakland University programs with 11,000 teachers countywide and provides training rooms for the programs.

MISD personnel are key partners with county agencies, collaborating in areas such as early childhood, child care, community mental health, juvenile justice, social services, law enforcement, rehabilitation, and crisis management and emergency planning.

### **Curriculum and Instruction: Service to students**

- Chartering an arts-focused public high school academy. Students have won state and national recognition for art endeavors.
- Operating an alternative middle school housed at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, honored with a 2001 Educational Excellence Award by the Michigan Association of School Boards.

- Conducting summer camps for students to enhance and enrich learning. This past summer 10 camps at three locations were offered, providing direct support to 600 Macomb County students. Camps in reading, writing, math and science/engineering were held as well as a camp for homeless students.
- Hosting a Head Start Program.
- Conducting virtual field trips at the MISD Educational Service Center, enabling students to “visit” places they wouldn’t get to for years, if ever.
- Hosting a full-day symposium on science and technology careers, attended by 350 middle school girls from both public and private schools.
- In partnership with the Macomb County Workforce Development Board, both school-year and summer programs are run for youth at risk of dropping out of school.

**Curriculum and Instruction: Service to school districts**

- Conducting an academy for 1,500 new teachers annually. This academy targets teachers that are in their first three years in the classroom and offers topics of interest to new professionals.
- Conducting staff training in content, classroom management, instruction and other areas reflecting current best practices in education. During the 2005-06 school year, the MISD’s content specialists provided training for 13,700 participants.
- Providing expertise in testing and assessment, the MEAP, MEAP High School Test (HST), and the ACT. MISD consultants help districts understand performance data and how to use that data to adjust the curriculum and improve instruction. MISD staff also advise districts about other forms of testing, such as the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) and SAT.
- Providing assistance with evaluation of grant projects and accreditation activities through North Central Accreditation.
- Recognizing exceptional teachers countywide through the Outstanding Teacher of the Year awards since 1985.
- Operating an education program for homeless students. Staff work in coordination with local districts to keep homeless students in school by establishing a stable school environment. This includes assistance with enrollment, transportation, provision of school supplies and clothing, tutoring and a summer day camp. MISD staff also serve as

a liaison for the family with local agencies to help with medical, dental and housing challenges.

- Providing Safe and Drug Free Schools education services focusing on helping schools put prevention programs into place. These include conflict resolution, bullying behavior, peer mediation, violence prevention and crisis intervention. Additionally, MISD staff provide districts and community service agencies with trend data on Macomb youth regarding alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, and violence. The MISD collects data from students every two years and report findings to districts. The data is used by local districts in making program decisions.
- Providing assistance in the area of school health programs. A full spectrum of health services is provided, including helping districts determine healthy policy, curriculum training for classroom teachers, technical support for all school professionals and outreach to parents and community agencies.
- Providing leadership, training and support for high schools as they restructure to meet the increased graduation requirements. Particular attention has been paid to supporting ninth graders in the first year of high school and improving the ability of teachers, regardless of subject area, to assist struggling readers and writers.

## ***Technology***

Technology is an important tool for both classroom instruction and school management. The MISD offers information technology services, training, and support to staff and students in local districts and for its own use.

### ***Technology: Service to students***

- Providing access to award-winning distance learning content for students and staff. During the 2005-06 school year, almost 23,000 students participated in MISD-provided distance learning events through video-conferencing technology.
- Providing a free, curriculum-aligned distance learning activity to every 4th or 5th grade student in the county each year. In the 2005-06 school year, over 7,100 students participated in MISD's groundbreaking "Fieldtrip Fridays" program.
- Providing high-speed Internet access.
- Providing Internet filtering/content blocking software that filters all Internet queries from school computers. Any inappropriate responses are prevented from reaching school computers.

- The MISD provides spam and virus filtering on all email accounts for the MISD and 14 local school districts in Macomb County. Spam and virus filtering help to keep our districts' computers and networks safe and secure. During the 2005-06 school year, the MISD blocked approximately 22 million spam email messages and kept almost 350,000 viruses from reaching our users.
- Making classes available online for high school students, particularly important with the new graduation requirements. Currently over 200 courses are available.
- Converting books to large print format for students with visual impairments. During the 2005-06 school year, over 500 books—252,000 pages—of enlarged materials were provided to students.

### **Technology: Service to teachers**

- Bringing experts and direct life experiences into classrooms via distance learning. Project ASK—Authors, Specialists, Knowledge—typically connects three classrooms to one expert during a session. During 2005-06, over 6400 students and their teachers participated in MISD provided ASK events. Project ASK was recognized for excellence by the Michigan School Boards Association in 2004.
- Providing Macomb Online for Students and Teachers (MOST)—a web-based system that provides an online resource area for teachers to share information, homework assignments, and communicate with students and parents, as well as administer quizzes and tests. In 2005-06, over 4,000 instructors had MOST course sites and nearly 40,000 students had active MOST accounts.
- Developing innovative ways to use technology in the classroom to improve students' skills. Begin with ME! (a program for improving elementary writing skills) was acknowledged as “best in state” by the Michigan Association of School Boards in 2003.
- Providing every classroom in the county unlimited access to a library of over 40,000 educational videos via streaming video over the MISD's fiber optic network.
- Bringing virtual field trips into the classroom. Hundreds of field trip “destinations” are available to teachers, including visits to zoos and museums, as well as videoconferencing-based “face-to-face” exchanges with artists, scientists and other experts worldwide.
- Facilitating and supporting free videoconferencing-based meetings and professional development for teachers and school staff. In 2005-06, over 2,200 participants used our capabilities to improve education for students.

- Providing a variety of collaborative and specific online instructional programs across the curriculum. In 2005-06, over 3,400 students participated in everything from Michigan's LAPS program to Read Across America.
- Creating and executing the acclaimed Macomb Technology Summer Academy for teachers and technology leaders. The Academy is an immersive, intensive program that quickly builds capacity for technology usage in instruction within a school.
- Offering thousands of unique educational videotapes for classroom use. Through MISD's Classroom Media Library, tapes can be ordered online and delivered directly to the school, saving teachers valuable time.
- Conducting ongoing training for teachers and staff on a wide variety of technology topics.
- Providing a unique, focused professional educators' library.
- Providing a Teacher's Workshop that makes hard-to-find materials and tools readily available to enable more time- and cost-efficient preparation of classroom materials.

**Technology: Service to school districts**

- Constructed, at no cost to local school districts, a countywide, highly available, high-performance, fiber optic network to interconnect all districts to educational systems and resources both locally and globally.
- Operating the fiber optic network in a cost-efficient manner.
- Constructed, at no cost to local school districts, a state-of-the-art "distance learning" classroom in every high school in the county. These classrooms allow access to high-impact educational resources from all over the world.
- Providing, at no cost to local districts, critical core business automation software: payroll, personnel, accounts payable, inventory, etc.
- Providing software for managing critical student and staff records:
  - ✓ SASIxp for school records management, including attendance and grades for general education.
  - ✓ Processing and printing payroll checks, W2s, etc., for districts, charging only for the cost of paper and forms.