

STATE FISCAL CRISIS

One of the many roles that the CISD has is to be an advocate for our children and the 13 school districts in Calhoun County we serve. There is no question that the State's Financial Crisis is real. There is no question we are at a crossroads in which the decisions we make will have long term ramifications...both good and bad.

A caution to all of us is to be careful with cavalier statements and painting each scene with the same brush. If we are going to build or re-build a 21st Century Michigan it is going to be through an educated or highly skilled workforce. The forum is through the educational process, whatever that looks like. If we say that Education is the key to our future success as a competitive State, our actions are going to have to reflect this; our actions are going to have to be very deliberative.

Politics aside...it is about our kids. Certainly there are institutions and practices that have been embedded in our educational culture that need to be changed, some radically. These changes come easily in some cases...and are very tough in others. Be assured that the CISD as a convener is supporting our local school districts in implementing these changes...sometimes as a partner, sometimes as a lighthouse for those that are having difficulty finding their way.

PODCASTS ONLINE

Have you ever wondered what services are provided by the CISD? Check out our monthly podcast at our website www.calhounisd.org/yourisd/superintendentmessage The goal is to bring you short interviews with staff and those that support CISD programs on behalf of our local districts. Each interview is between four or five minutes if you skip the intro segment.

FEDERAL FUNDING IS IN JEOPARDY

Creating a 21st century Michigan Economy has many approaches, two of which are Education and Economic Development. CISD is the Administrative Agency for Michigan Works! in Calhoun, Branch and Barry County. We are one of two ISDs in the State that perform this function. This is a Federally funded program through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). The U.S. House of Representatives has cut funding for this program. It is now in the Senate and its fate is uncertain.


The reason this is so important is two-fold...retraining of displaced workers and the support that is provided to local employers. We are at a critical juncture as these services have become one of the tools for economic recovery in this region. One concern of note is that not all Workforce Development Agencies throughout the country that are funded through the Workforce Development Act operate at the same level of efficiency and fidelity as those in Michigan.

At the Educational level programs such as Title I and Individuals with Disability Education Act, which support some of our most vulnerable students, are being reduced.

As I have written in past communications to you about the consolidation of services...seek first to understand what is being done and respond appropriately. We need to base our decisions on data and effective practices. First do no harm, and then act thoughtfully.

I say this understanding that our nation simply doesn't have the resources to continue as we have. It is important to recognize that we didn't create these programs because we had excess resources. We created them because there was a need. Again, it is critical that program cuts be thoughtful and purposeful with a clear understanding of the consequences of those actions.

Terance Lunger,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terance Lunger". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "T" and a long horizontal flourish at the end.

CISD Superintendent