



## **B-H-K CHILD DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

**700 Park Avenue  
Houghton, Michigan 49931**

*'Serving children and families through comprehensive  
early childhood education, health and family support services'*

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Governor announces after-school programs for 5 local schools**

**\$840,000 project will benefit C-L-K, Chassell, Dollar Bay, Lake Linden-Hubbell, Stanton**

HOUGHTON – Starting this fall, children at five Copper Country schools will benefit from enhanced after-school and summer-school programs, Gov. Jennifer Granholm announced today during a stop at B-H-K Child Development Board's main office in Houghton.

Granholm, in town to meet with Copper Country constituents and discuss early childhood education efforts, announced that a partnership of B-H-K and five local schools was among 24 successful applicants in the state's most recent 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers grant competition.

"This is great news for the Copper Country," said Rod Liimatainen, B-H-K executive director. "The 21<sup>st</sup> Century program will provide tremendous academic enrichment and youth-development activities for our area youth."

The \$839,966 project, called Great Explorations, will provide after-school and summer-school enrichment activities for middle-school students at Calumet-Laurium-Keweenaw and elementary and middle-school students in Chassell, Dollar Bay-Tamarack City, Lake Linden-Hubbell and Stanton. B-H-K will serve as the fiscal and administrative agent for the project, which may be funded for up to four-and-a-half years. Contributions from partners and modest user fees based on income will help to operate and sustain the project.

Activities will operate after school during the school year and in a "day camp" setting

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during the summer. Local schools will provide hands-on learning including literacy, math and science; homework help; tutoring and mentoring; youth-development activities; field trips; alcohol and drug prevention activities; character-building; and special-interest clubs in areas such as drama, music, arts, sports and recreation. A variety of activities also will be available to families, including computer learning and family activity nights.

Liimatainen said there was broad community support in developing the project.

“Along with local schools and the Copper Country Intermediate School District’s math and science program, more than 20 local organizations pledged their assistance to the project,” he said. “In addition, local teachers, school administrators and parents of second- and seventh-graders provided valuable input.”

Granholm said collaboration and cooperation are keys to operating successful programs.

“It’s great to have this partnership,” Granholm said. “I think we can leverage a lot more when working together than when we work alone.”

Chassell Superintendent James Frantti agreed.

“I really feel that the cooperation between B-H-K, the schools and service agencies in our area has been of real benefit to all of us, especially the children and families,” Frantti said. “This project is just another piece of how this cooperation benefits the community.”

Liimatainen also said he was encouraged by the governor’s commitment to early childhood education, which she has emphasized since first running for office in 2002. During her stop at B-H-K, Granholm discussed the importance of working together and communicating ideas in developing and operating strong programs for children.

“Gov. Granholm has been a strong advocate for young children since the day she stepped into office,” Liimatainen said. “A large and growing amount of evidence shows that early learning is critical to later success, so it’s very encouraging that our elected officials are committed to programs that work.”