

## Alcona board hears about 'Salmon' project

By **JASON OGDEN**  
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LINCOLN — Alcona Community School's first venture with Salmon in the Classroom, a Michigan Department of Natural Resources program, was deemed successful by Brandon Schroeder, Michigan State University Extension Sea Grant administrator.

Schroeder discussed the project Monday during the Alcona Community Schools Board of Education meeting.

The program, which was sponsored by the Oscoda-based Lake Huron Sportfishing, Inc., brings gear and live salmon eggs into Michigan schools to teach students biology lessons.

This was the first year for the program in Alcona, STEM teacher Gail Gombos, who led students through the project at Alcona's elementary, said.

"Teaching this STEM class this year was rewarding and Schroeder was vital in getting this started," she said. "We worked with several different people throughout the year to make this a great experience."

According to Gombos, the students received the salmon eggs in November and used gear to raise the eggs into small salmon, which eventually were released into the Harrisville Harbor.

Gombos said according to data, students did really well in raising the eggs because after calculations done by sixth grade students, they were able to release 190 fish into the harbor.

"That was really awesome, and that almost never happens," she said, adding that students only got 200 eggs to start with.

Schroeder said in his experiences with working with Salmon in the Classroom, Alcona's students did re-

ally well. He said the community support was very good, and he attributed that to part of the student's success to community interest and work by the elementary staff.

"The great thing in this whole project was all the partnerships in the community," he said. "We were able to get a lot."

Schroeder said the students' work with the fish included everything with working with the fish with the younger grades, to dissecting them in the higher grades before they were released to study how well the fish grew.

Schroeder said he was glad students also went to the release area and tested the waters to see that it was a good area for the young fish.

Gombos said data was taken back to students and shown how it affected the fish planting. Schroeder said that went a long way to getting students more involved with the

project. He said he hopes they can do a similar project for students next year.

In other business, Superintendent Shawn Thornton gave a brief information update on the school's upcoming sinking fund projects that are slated to take place for the high school building during the summer.

"Our board had an opportunity to meet with some of the architects last we and had some discussions," he said. "The bids (for building contractors) should be going out in approximately a week to two weeks at the latest."

She said as per the discussion for construction priorities, the school roof will be the top fix priority.

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