

Kearsley Community Schools Annual Report 2013-2014



The Kearsley Community School District is committed to educational excellence. Our mission: to guide students to become literate, lifelong learners and contributing members of society.

August 18, 2014

Dear Parents and Community Members:

We are pleased to present you with the Annual Education Report (AER) which provides key information on the 2013-2014 educational progress for the Kearsley Community School District. The AER addresses the complex reporting information required by Federal and some requirements of State laws; however, our staff is available to help you understand this information. Please contact Patti Yorks, Superintendent for help if you need assistance.

The AER is available for you to review electronically by visiting the following web site www.kearsleyschools.org or you may review a copy in the principal's office at your child's school.

The report contains the following information:

Student Assessment Data – Elementary or middle school assessment results on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP), high school assessment results on Michigan Merit Exam (MME), and assessment results for students with disabilities on Michigan's Alternative Assessment Program (Mi-Access or MEAP-Access)

- The combined report that is posted in addition to this cover letter provides achievement data for all five tested subjects (mathematics, reading, science, social studies and writing) compared to targets for all students as well as subgroups of students.
- Achievement progress within schools and comparisons to district and state achievement is also included in the combined report.
- For information regarding individual building data and achievement progress, refer to each individual building AER. The link to the building annual reports can be found at www.kearsleyschools.org.

Accountability Scorecard – Detail Data and Status

The State of Michigan has implemented a new system for school accountability. Instead of the EdYES report card, a new Accountability Scorecard has been created for all districts and buildings in the State. The scorecard presents achievement data for all tested subjects including mathematics, reading, science, social studies and writing. Achievement targets are set for all students and subgroups of students. There are additional requirements which are also taken into consideration including attendance rate, graduation rate, percent tested on State assessments, and school improvement reporting. Buildings and districts are assigned a color band to represent their status from a range of green, lime, yellow, orange and red. All buildings in the Kearsley district are in the yellow band except for Dowdall Elementary which is in the lime band. Each building's status is found below:

Weston: No scorecard (no MEAP results or Top-to-Bottom ranking for grade span)
Dowdall: 81.25%

Fiedler: 66.67%
 Armstrong Middle School: 73.33%
 Kearsley High School: 67.86%
 Kearsley Community Schools: 68.29%

Review the table below listing our schools. The state has identified some schools with the status of Reward, Focus, or Priority. A Reward school is one that is outperforming other schools in achievement, growth, or is performing better than other schools with a similar student population. A Focus school is one that has a large achievement gap in 30% of its student achievement scores. A Priority school is one whose achievement and growth is the lowest 5% of all schools in the state. Some schools are not identified with any of these labels. In these cases no status label is given.

School Name	Status Label	Key Initiative to Accelerate Achievement
Weston Elementary	No Status Reported	Multi-Tiered System of Support
Dowdall Elementary	No Status Reported	Multi-Tiered System of Support
Fiedler Elementary	No Status Reported	Multi-Tiered System of Support
Armstrong Middle School	No Status Reported	Multi-Tiered System of Support
Kearsley High School	No Status Reported	Multi-Tiered System of Support

Teacher Qualification Data

The attached combined report identifies teacher qualifications at district and school levels. There are no core academic classes taught by teachers not considered highly qualified to teach such classes. 100% of teachers are highly qualified as defined by the State.

NAEP Data (National Assessment of Educational Progress)

- State results of the national assessment in mathematics and reading every other year in grades 4 and 8 are also located in the attached combined report.

District School Improvement

School improvement at Kearsley is a never-ending process. The school improvement process is mandated by the State of Michigan, as is the reporting of data and its dissemination to the public. In addition, the No Child Left Behind federal legislation and Michigan Accountability Scorecard also have implications on the school improvement process and the data that are reported to the public.

The Kearsley School improvement model provides a framework for schools to meet high standards and engage in continuous improvement.

Each building in our district is unique and has its own school improvement plan. These plans address the needs of individual buildings while at the same time, work toward achieving the goals of the district. Building teams meet regularly to implement these plans to increase student achievement. The District School Improvement Team meets regularly to coordinate school improvement efforts and

to provide networking between buildings. This annual report is prepared each year to communicate the district's progress to the community.

Yearly at spring conferences, a perception survey is given to parents to assess their perceptions of the district. In addition, staff and students are also surveyed yearly to provide insight into the perceptions of these stakeholders. The results were shared with the district team and with building staffs, as well as disseminated to the community in the Community Connection. The district and all buildings were given favorable results from the surveys. In addition, students in grades 3, 5, 8 and 11 were surveyed regarding their perceptions in the areas of learning, climate, and communication. This survey was given online and results compiled by GISD. Staff members were also surveyed through ASSIST, the state school improvement site. Data is used by school improvement teams to provide insight into areas of action.

On the MEAP test, buildings consistently scored above county and state averages. These results will give the district even more data to use to target instruction for all students. Results of these tests are found in the combined report that is linked with this cover letter. It is our goal to continue to strive for excellence for all students.

It is the goal of the district to have 90% of all third grade students reading at or above grade level. Students in grades K-3 are assessed throughout the year in reading using the Developmental Reading Assessment. Below are results for the last three years.

**2013-2014 90% Reading Goal
District Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA2)**

Kindergarten	11-12	12-13	13-14
DRA Level 3 and Above	73	79	82
Below DRA Level 3	27	21	18
First Grade*			
DRA Level 16 and Above	60	62	58
Below DRA Level 16	40	38	42
Second Grade*			
DRA Level 28 and Above			
Dowdall Elementary	59	53	55
Below DRA Level 28			
Dowdall Elementary	41	47	45
Third Grade*			
DRA Level 38 and Above			
Dowdall Elementary	54	71	45
Below DRA Level 38			
Dowdall Elementary	46	29	54

These results represent students reading at or above the identified level on the DRA2 (Developmental Reading Assessment).

This is the fourth year of the district 90% Math Goal. That goal states "Ninety percent of Kearsley Community Schools students will master course content expectations for Algebra 1 by the end of ninth grade." To help address this goal, teams of teachers have been meeting to identify major areas of focus, to create a new scope and sequence for curriculum aligned to the Common Core State Standards, develop and implement district grade-level assessments, identify interventions for struggling students and develop a calendar of instruction for each grade level.

District Goals for the 2013-2014 school year are as follows:

All students will be proficient in mathematics. Students across grade levels will demonstrate mathematical understanding, operational skills, and mathematical communication skills.

All students will improve proficiency in reading across grade levels and across the core areas of language arts, social studies, science and math. Students will demonstrate effective word work skills and comprehension strategies to be effective and strategic readers.

All students will improve proficiency in writing to learn, to share ideas and understandings, and to demonstrate new learning. Students will write effectively across content areas (language arts, science, social studies, math), in a variety of formats, and for a variety of purposes.

All students will demonstrate improvement in the effective use of technology within the curriculum. All students who graduate from Kearsley Community Schools will possess the skills necessary to gather and use information through the use of technology across the curriculum and in a variety of contexts.

Staff Development

Ongoing staff development is an essential ingredient of effective schools. During the 2013-2014 school year Kearsley Community Schools continued to offer many opportunities for professional development. Varying formats were utilized, including staff meetings, early student release half days, after school meetings, and outside workshops or conferences. Teachers met in various configurations as well, including full staff, by grade level, by department/subject area, and by grade spans.

An important staff development component for teachers takes place during district level curriculum work. These sessions, led by district curriculum coordinators, offer the opportunity for staff to increase understanding of curriculum expectations within departments and/or grade levels, as well as the opportunity to collaborate on common activities and assessments for students within the same grade and/or course. Curriculum work was accelerated during the 2013-2014 school year as the Common Core State Standards were integrated into curriculum documents.

The Literacy Coaches worked with K-8 staff members and paraprofessionals, modeling instructional strategies, assisting with analyzing assessment data and providing support in identifying targeted strategies to meet individual student needs. The elementary focus was the Reader's Workshop format. Middle School began an intensive exploration of Balanced Literacy and Instruction. Math was also a target area for the elementary and middle school. Staff continues to work on alignment and pacing to meet Common Core State Standards and support the district 90% math goal. Part of the curriculum / professional development work has been creating and refining assessments to measure skills in these areas. The high school staff continued collaboration to refine alignment of curriculum course expectations and common assessments. Refining assessments will be a focus for the upcoming year.

Six half day sessions, two full day sessions, and several hours in after school sessions for professional development were built into the school calendar. Various topics were studied at different levels, including the curricular topics already mentioned. K-12 staff utilized many of the half days to collaborate on the building school improvement plans. This included analyzing data, identifying areas of concern, and implementing the action plan to address those areas. Professional development in the area of interventions in reading and math occurred for staff with additional training anticipated. Included in plans also is the Collins writing program as a tool for teachers to manage writing tasks and for students to develop stronger writing skills. Teachers participated in a bi-annual folder review which helped set direction for next year. The scoring of district writing assessments helped identify strengths and weaknesses, which will provide targets for improvement in 2014-2015 as well as areas of focus for professional development.

District-wide training occurred on the topic of Bullying. District counselors led sessions on this topic with transportation and food service personnel. The entire K-12 staff participated in a presentation and training session by Jon Gordon, author of ***The Energy Bus***. A district Positive Behavior Support Team was established to continue follow-through within the buildings for staff and students. Each building renewed efforts to revise Positive Behavior Support plans for the current needs of staff and students.

Kearsley joined neighboring districts (Davison, Kearsley, Clio, Lakeville, Atherton) to offer a variety of professional development experiences to teaching staff during the summer of 2014. Topics include assessment, technology, math instruction, close and critical reading, flipped classrooms, standards referenced grading, brain based learning, and much more. This consortium model allows the offering of multiple professional development experiences in a coordinated and cost-efficient manner.

Training for non-certified staff also occurred. Bullying awareness and conflict resolution training was held for all monitors, aides and bus drivers. Technology employees were trained in Synergy, Smart Board technology, Data Wise, and STAR technology initiatives.

The format and content of these professional development sessions allow for teachers across grades and subject areas opportunities to continue to build skills and stay current with tools and strategies to support district initiatives and to better meet the varying needs of our students.

Curriculum Development

Michigan defines “core curriculum” as the essential curriculum content which all students must learn in order to progress through the various educational levels. There are also the areas which are tested through the Michigan Education Assessment Program (MEAP). Michigan core areas include: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Kearsley Community Schools has continued to review, develop, and implement curriculum in the core areas as well as in the following departments: career technical education, fine arts, foreign language, physical education, and technology.

Curriculum writing is an ongoing process. The continuing development of curriculum is based upon the needs of students and society, recommendations from national educational studies, and state requirements. Ongoing alignment with state standards and trends continues to be a major goal in district curriculum efforts. Kearsley has developed the District Curriculum Council (DCC) process to organize curriculum efforts and to provide communication across grade levels, buildings and departments. Curriculum committees have been established for each content area. Each committee studies current issues, reviews and updates district curriculum, and examines materials (current and new) needed to deliver this curriculum. After implementation of curriculum and materials, committees monitor progress and make adjustments before beginning the DCC cycle again.

Core committees are revisiting developed curriculums to ensure alignment with the new Core Curriculum State Standards that have been adopted by 46 states. In addition, these committees continue to develop curriculum and instructional materials to prepare our students to be successful on local assessments as well as on the challenges of state and national assessments. As the state implements testing changes, the Kearsley Curriculum committees continue to check this alignment.

For information regarding the curriculum at Kearsley Community Schools, please contact April Yorks, Curriculum Coordinator at 810-591-7618 or ayorks@kearsleyschools.org.

Language Arts Curriculum

An aligned language arts program has been implemented in grades K-12. Reading curriculum and instruction focuses on the development of reading skills and strategies as well as the ability to analyze, evaluate, and respond to literature. Students work with a variety of text materials, developing the tools necessary to access and create meaning from both narrative (story) and expository (informational) selections. Emphasis has been placed on being strategic readers, learning how to navigate different text formats and genres. The writing process is also a key focus of the language arts program, as well as writing for different purposes and audiences. Attention continues to be given to the importance of writing within all content areas.

During the 2013-2014 school year, teams of teachers in grade K-8 continued to work on aligning the curriculum and materials with the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The CCSS guide the focus of district study of story types/genres, writing forms, and grammar elements among other language arts components. State assessments also guide curriculum and instruction, with reading assessments of narrative and informational text. The MAISA (Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators) Language Arts materials have been adopted by the Kearsley district in grades K-8. Curriculum work focuses on unpacking the lessons, pacing the units of student, and developing common assessments. Emphasis continues on both reading and writing conferring to target student skill development. All grade levels continue to look at common assessments to gather data to inform curriculum and instruction.

Kearsley Community School District teachers in grades K-8 continue to implement reading workshops in their classrooms. This method of instruction allows for students to receive instruction and select books at their own level. During the 2013-2014, teachers participated in Lab Classroom professional learning. This lesson study format allowed teachers to visit model classrooms within the district with a focus on reading workshop. Teachers then debriefed and made plans for implementation in their own classrooms. Teachers in grades K-5 continue to develop a deeper understanding of the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA2) and its impact on instruction. This assessment gives important reading data across classrooms, buildings and grade levels. More importantly, the assessment guides reading instruction as teachers are able to target small group reading lessons based upon information gathered through the DRA2.

During the 2013-2014 school year, teachers continued to implement the Words Their Way program in grades K-5. This program helps students to understand how words work from letter recognition and phonics to spelling patterns, affixes, and word origins. Students are assessed within the

program, and small, flexible instructional groups are formed based on individual student abilities and challenges. This program develops skills and understanding in both reading and writing.

This year, realigned courses for 9th and 10th grade were implemented as well as a new "World Literature" course for 11th grade. Building student reading strategies was also an important focus this year. A student's ability to think critically and make meaning from varied text is a key to success, not only in language arts, but also across the core curriculum areas. Honors and AP classes will also be revisited in the coming year.

Use of the *Collins Writing Program* continued to help teachers to organize and analyze building writing curriculum. High School teachers across curriculum areas also focused on reading strategies and activities. These strategies help students to build understanding even as reading materials become more challenging and complex.

Science Curriculum

Curriculum is aligned for grades K-12. Further curriculum revision continues to be needed as we respond to state and federal changes in curriculum expectations and assessment. The K-8 Michigan Educational Assessments are administered in the fall, with science assessed at grades five and eight. High school juniors are assessed in science in the spring, as part of the Michigan Merit Exam. Science teachers have made many adjustments to curriculum and instruction in order to meet the expectations established by the No Child Left Behind federal legislation and State requirements.

The eighth grade curriculum is currently aligned to High School Content Expectations (HSCE's) for earth science and also some units from the life science expectations. Eighth grade teachers met throughout the year to align materials, set pacing units, and plan consistent instruction across the grade level.

At the high school level, teachers continued the successful implementation of curriculum materials to meet the district's three-year science requirement which has since become a law at the State level. A Michigan high school student is required to take biology; physics or chemistry; and a third science course. Content expectations (HSCE's) have been provided by the State for each of these courses. Teachers continue to analyze curriculum, materials, and instruction in response to state graduation requirements. We have also worked to update common assessments for each of the required courses, aligning the exams to the HSCE's.

All grade levels K-12 continued to examine the Core Curriculum Literacy Standards for Science during the 2012-2013 school year.

In 2013-2014, representation from all science levels participated in county efforts to develop awareness of the Next Generation Science Standards and the related Science and Engineering Practices. These tools were developed in a multi-state effort and are under consideration for adoption by the State of Michigan to replace the existing GLCE's and HSCE's. All grade levels are reviewing Next Generation documents as well as awareness and implementation timelines that will be put into place pending State adoption as well as proposed state assessment adjustments. Beginning this transition and expanding Science Literacy efforts are expected to be the major areas of focus for the Kearsley Science Department K-12 in 2014-2015 and in upcoming years as State curriculum and assessment expectations undergo major revisions.

Math Curriculum

A major focus of our mathematics department during the 2013-2014 school year was the revision and alignment of the math curriculum with the new CCSS (Core Curriculum State Standards). Professional development was provided at some key grade levels to help staff become familiar with the shift of content and the change in standards. More professional development will be provided next year to support staff in the implementation of these new standards and the 8 mathematical practices.

As a district, math data was analyzed in an effort to determine how to best support students in math. In looking to improve our students' understanding of math and their math achievement, this year teachers in grades K-5 implemented the Georgia Department of Education Math Units of Study. In addition, Weston teachers completed a book study on Math Work Stations by Debbie Diller in an effort to deepen their understanding of math workshop and math workstations. Several Weston teachers also imitated another book study on Nicki Newton's book Guided Math. Teachers attended professional development sessions led by Dr. Nicki Newton to further understand the depth of knowledge that the CCSS requires of our students. More professional development will be provided next year to support staff in the continued implementation of math workshop and workstations, new math units of study, common math assessments, and tiered math interventions. In addition, students will be provided seventy minutes of math instruction and intervention or enrichment throughout the school day.

The high school has fully implemented a series of mathematics textbooks from Glencoe Publishing. The titles of these programs are Algebra: Concepts

and Applications, Algebra 1, Geometry: Concepts and Applications, Geometry, Algebra 2, and Advanced Mathematical Concepts: Precalculus with Applications. This range of materials was chosen to better meet the learning needs and goals of our diverse Kearsley High School students. Eighth grade and high school Algebra I teachers continued to develop common assessments and curriculum materials for use at the middle school and high school. Teachers of Applied Geometry, Algebra 2, Algebra 2a and 2b worked to unpack the Core Curriculum State Standards and revise the existing curriculum documents to better align with the new standards.

Teachers shared resources and assessments and discussed pacing issues. A focus on integrating more real world and application problems in the classroom was a topic of discussion during department meetings and will continue to be addressed in the upcoming school year. All core math courses and applied math courses in grades 9, 10, and 11 have been aligned to the CCSS. Common exams have also been aligned to the CCSS and were field tested during the 2013-2014 school year.

In response to the increased graduation requirements by the state of Michigan Kearsley schools has implemented a 90% mathematics goal. That goal states "Ninety percent of Kearsley Community Schools students will master course content expectations for Algebra 1 by the end of ninth grade." To help address this goal teams of teachers have been meeting to identify major areas of focus, a new scope and sequence for curriculum, a calendar of instruction for each grade level, and assessments for each major area of focus. This project will continue during the 2014-2015 school year as we monitor our progress toward preparing our students to be successful in Algebra 1.

Social Studies Curriculum

Social Studies curriculum development at all levels K-12 continues to be focused on the GLCEs (Grade Level Content Expectations) and the HSCEs (High School Content Expectations) and their impact on curriculum and instructional alignment. In addition, the new CCSS (Core Curriculum State Standards) have been adopted by the state. Although there are no specific CCSSs for social studies, there are standards focusing on literacy that have an impact in this area. Focus this year was placed on understanding the Literacy Standards and the impact on classroom instruction.

The Michigan Citizenship Consortium Curriculum has been used as a framework for curriculum at Kearsley. This framework allows for an aligned curriculum K-11 in social studies with each year building a foundation for students for the next year.

During the 2013-14 school year, the instructional units and supplementary materials continued to be implemented in grades K-7 and used as a framework for 8th grade US history, 9th grade US History and Geography, 10th grade World History and Geography, and 11th grade Civics and Government and Economics.

At the high school, common exams have been created for US History and Geography, World History and Geography, Civics and Government, and Economics. Courses have been aligned with the High School Content Expectations. A new AP World History course was developed during the 2013-2014 school year with plans for implementation in the fall of 2014. The student text, Ways of the World by Strayer was purchased for the course.

Non-Core Curriculum

Students are fortunate at Kearsley to be offered a variety of opportunities outside of core academic content. Kearsley World Language teachers have revised district curriculums to balance the focus between written and spoken communication within a language other than English, listening and reading comprehension within the target language, and understanding of cultural elements related to these languages and the countries/regions that speak them. Focus has been on creating meaningful contexts for developing and using these student skills to prepare students for real-world application. In recent years, Michigan world language requirements were adopted requiring that *all* students successfully complete two years of study in a selected world language, demonstrating proficiency at the "novice-high" range. This has been a curriculum and instructional transition for Kearsley. World languages have consistently been offered as elective courses, though changes have now been made to the expectations and course progressions in Spanish and French focusing on the new State performance targets and the broader student participation. Assessments have also been revised to meet these guidelines. A section of Spanish and a section of French has also been offered for qualifying eighth grade students.

Teachers of Career Technical Education continued work on aligning curriculum and materials to meet the course content expectations identified for Michigan students and to avoid duplication from grade to grade.

Technology

All of our buildings are part of a countywide, Genesee Intermediate School District area, network connected by fiber optic cable. Each grade 2-5 building has two computer labs; Armstrong and the high school have multiple labs. There are also computers in each classroom. Currently, there are approximately 1300 computers in the district. The high school has a Distance Learning room, enabling us to offer a

varied curriculum through the Gen Net consortium as well as access professional development sessions for teachers and administrators. A distance learning interactive television is in place at the middle school and the elementary buildings as part of the consortium which can expand opportunities for students and staff. The district partners with the GISD in management of the server system which is more efficient and cost effective. We have technology support personnel assigned to each building.

Much of the district data is managed through technology. Student accounting, the lunch program, and communications with staff are handled through computerized programs. Grant programs are now managed through state websites. Technology is also utilized to assist in reporting and analysis of student data. This directly impacts decisions regarding curriculum, instruction, and student interventions. Work continues on creation of an effective database. Scores for local assessments are entered for reading, writing, and mathematics as well as high school exams. The DataWise program enables us to score assessments electronically and provide varied reports for classroom, building, and district analysis. The district will be transitioning to Illuminate as a data warehouse for the district during the 2014-2015 school year.

Secretaries, building administrators and classroom teachers received training in use of Synergy (our new student information system report builder. STAR testing was also implemented in grades K-9. This allows teachers to have access to student achievement data in reading and mathematics in order to adjust instruction and provide interventions for struggling students. These tools will facilitate more efficient collection of data and will lead to more in depth analysis of data.

A district website is available to update the community and others on events occurring in the district as well as provide basic information about our school and community. Parent View and Student View portals are in use at all buildings as an avenue to communicate with parents. SynerVoice allows us to electronically execute mass communication by phone and/or email in the case of a district emergency or as reminders to parents about events, etc. An electronic employment application system is utilized by the district, and AESOP is used to secure substitutes for classroom teachers. An electronic program is now being used in the transportation department to plan bus routes efficiently. Technology is allowing us to *go paperless* with such things as payroll, meeting reports, and other district informational handouts such as high school schedules, code of conduct books, etc.

Technology is utilized to enhance instruction and support student learning. A growing number of staff members are utilizing data projectors, docu-cameras,

SmartBoards and iPads. Many are using Discovery Education to enhance classroom instruction. Word processing and keyboarding skills are taught to students, beginning as early as third grade. Students are taught how to access the Internet and are given structured opportunities to utilize this resource.

Students are also instructed in the use of programs for organizing and presenting information such as Power Point, and Inspiration; these skills are then applied in instructional activities for core classes. Smart Response and Quick Click sets are available at each building. Software that targets necessary skills for reading was fully implemented in the 2-5 buildings. Student use of tools such as graphing calculators and science probes has enhanced instruction in math and science at the middle school and high school.

Software and hardware is continuously updated in the Career Technical (Voc Ed) classes to stay current with industry standards. Software to support credit retrieval for high school students is being utilized in our credit recovery program at the high school, as well as during summer school and 7th hour (after school program) to help students get back on track to graduate. Microsoft 2010 was implemented district-wide in the fall of 2011. An Acceptable Use Policy for technology is in place district wide for staff and students. All computers in the district were moved to Windows 7 during the summer of 2014.

Teachers continue to seek training in technology. Staff development has been provided in use of Blackboard, Discovery Education, Synergy, iPad apps, STAR, Moby Max and quick response tools. Staff will continue to receive training in the database tools being implemented. Ongoing support is provided to staff in the use of the electronic grading systems that are used for K-12. This support is provided by our tech department, curriculum department, and GISD staff.

We are proud of the efforts of all staff at Kearsley to focus on student learning and success. Together we can make a difference.

Sincerely,
Patti Yorks
Superintendent, Kearsley Community Schools