

February 10, 2023

Dear Parents and Community Members:

We are pleased to present you with the Annual Education Report (AER), which provides key information on the 2021-22 educational progress for Thornapple Elementary. The AER addresses the complex reporting information required by federal and state laws. The school's report contains information about student assessment, accountability, and teacher quality. If you have any questions about the AER, please contact me for assistance.

The AER is available for you to review electronically by visiting the following [link](#), or you may review a copy in the main office at your child's school.

For the 2021-22 school year, schools were identified using definitions and labels as required in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). A Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) school is one that has at least one underperforming student subgroup in 2021-2022. An Additional Targeted Support (ATS) school is one that has a student subgroup performing at the same level as the lowest 5% of all schools in the state in 2021-22. A Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) school is one whose performance was in the lowest 5% of all schools in the state or had a graduation rate at or below 67% in 2021-22. Some schools are not identified with any of these labels. In these cases, no label is given. Our school has not been given one of these labels.

Thornapple is a high achieving student focused school which embraces the work of growing the whole child. In a challenging year of COVID, student achievement remained high, reflected by 44% of our 3rd graders achieving the label Advanced Proficient in ELA and 35% of 4th grade students achieving the label of Advanced Proficient in ELA. While this is one data point, it reflects dedicated work by teachers in combination with a high level of support by our community of parents and caregivers.

Key challenges still exist. Examination of trend data across four consecutive years shows a relative weakness supporting Economically Disadvantaged students. The State Student Growth report shows changes in student scores over time for students who have taken two or more consecutive state assessment tests in Michigan. Not Disadvantaged Students showed 28% achieved Below Average Growth while Economically Disadvantaged students showed 41% achieved Below Average Growth. Comparatively, Economically Disadvantaged students are showing Below Average Growth at greater percentages than Thornapple's Multiple Language Students (MLL) or Students with Disabilities.

At Thornapple Elementary we are addressing these challenges in three courses of action: 1) establishing cycles of collaborative Data Review, 2) coordinated interventions, 3) goal setting with students, and 4) continued professional learning around use of high level strategies.

Data review happens in 3 cycles that occur in Fall, Winter, and Spring. During these data meetings classroom data and MAP are used to celebrate successes and target small group interventions in the classroom. These interventions happen 5 days per week and academic paras support certified staff in teaching these lessons. The goal: to give students what they need based on their zone of proximal development and to eliminate barriers to learning.

Respected Educational Researcher John Hattie's effect size research is now based on nearly 1200 meta-analyses. In his research he found that students set safe targets, and suggests that educator work is to help students exceed their expectations and provide the teaching, confidence and skills to succeed. Student goal setting alongside students based on information revealed in data conversations with colleagues is the high leverage strategy being used to target our Economically Disadvantaged students as well as the rest of the student population. Professional learning from coordinated efforts and support by District Instructional Coaches better ensures that teachers are learning and implementing the strategies effectively. Collective ownership and accountability in combination with targeted professional learning are showing higher levels of student achievement and growth than we have historically see.

State law requires that we also report additional information:

## PROCESS FOR ASSIGNING PUPILS TO THE SCHOOL:

Students are assigned to the school in their attendance area where they live. As part of state law, the district participates in the Schools of Choice (SOC) program for non-resident families. Students admitted to the district through SOC are assigned to various schools on a space-available basis.

## THE STATUS OF THE 3-5 YEAR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN:

Thornapple Elementary continues to use the school improvement process to re-evaluate current goals, establish new goals, and collaboratively work together to improve the school's performance. Our school improvement efforts focus on using research-based approaches to meet the differentiated needs of our students. Through the school improvement process, student performance on State Tests data, available on the [Parent Dashboard for School Transparency](#), shows achieving 12% higher than Average or Similar Schools and 40% higher than the State of Michigan. All subjects combined, even Economically Disadvantaged students are outperforming Similar Schools by 18%. Curricular programs, collaborative responsibility, and professional development are working.

## A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF EACH SPECIALIZED SCHOOL:

Forest Hills Public Schools offers K-4; K-6; 5-6; 6-8; 7-8; and 9-12 buildings. We have three specialized schools:

[Ada Vista Spanish Immersion School \(K-4\)](#) Ada Vista is a Spanish immersion school in which all students are taught the Forest Hills curriculum using Spanish as the medium for instruction. It is amazing the way the students learn to read, write, and speak in both Spanish and English. In kindergarten and first grade, children are spoken to only in Spanish and are taught to read and write in Spanish, too. In January of the first grade year, the students begin to speak only in Spanish during class time. In second grade students begin English language arts for 30 minutes; each subsequent year that time is increased by 15 minutes. Students continue their immersion language learning at Northern Trails 5/6, Northern Hills Middle School, and Northern High School.

[Meadow Brook Mandarin Chinese Immersion School \(K-4\)](#) Meadow Brook Elementary hosts a 50/50 model Mandarin Chinese immersion program where students learn half the core content (math, science and Mandarin literacy) in Mandarin with English language arts and social studies taught in English. From the vast amount of research available, we know students can acquire any language faster and more easily if we begin as early as possible. Students in the Mandarin Chinese immersion learn to speak, read, and write at scaffold levels in each subsequent grade. Teachers in all grades begin the school year with no English and encourage students to only use the target language in class. Students continue their immersion language learning at Northern Trails 5/6, Northern Hills Middle School, and Northern High School.

[Goodwillie Environmental 5/6 School](#) Since 2001, Goodwillie Environmental School has offered fifth and sixth grade students a model educational program based primarily on learning in the “living classroom,” the great outdoors. While this sounds easy on the surface, it is extremely difficult to adapt a challenging state mandated curriculum to meaningful and engaging lessons in nature. The awareness, dependency, and flexibility upon the weather are critical for weekly/daily planning. Phonology, Magic Spots, journaling, sketching, observing, writing, understanding, and of course, just enjoying nature is a special gift that these teachers are happy to share with their students.

[STEM Academy \(9-12\)](#) STEM is a four-year specialized program for high school students who are interested in pursuing post-secondary studies in Science, Technology, Engineering, and/or Mathematics. Students in the STEM academy undertake a capstone design project in their senior year. The academy is based in Northern High School and utilizes an interdisciplinary curriculum grounded in community-based partnerships.

[IDENTIFY HOW TO ACCESS A COPY OF THE CORE CURRICULUM, A DESCRIPTION OF ITS IMPLEMENTATION, AND AN EXPLANATION OF THE VARIANCES FROM THE STATE’S MODEL:](#)

The Forest Hills Public Schools Core Curriculum is aligned with academic standards adopted by the Michigan Department of Education. Curriculum committees comprised of teachers and administrators, work to align and update content at the district level. Further information related to the FHPS curriculum, its development, and implementation, may be obtained by contacting the Forest Hills Public Schools Instruction Office.

[THE AGGREGATE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT RESULTS FOR ANY LOCAL COMPETENCY TESTS OR NATIONALLY NORMED ACHIEVEMENT TESTS:](#)

NWEA MAP Growth 2021-22 School Year

Grade	Test Window	Average Reading Scale Score	Students Tested (Reading)	Average Math Scale Score	Students Tested (Math)
K	Fall	140.9	78	148.3	77
K	Winter	146.8	77	153.8	77
K	Spring	154.0	77	158.3	76
1	Fall	163.1	75	165.5	75
1	Winter	172.4	74	174.3	73
1	Spring	178.8	76	183.2	76
2	Fall	175.7	70	176.1	70
2	Winter	185.4	68	183.6	68
2	Spring	188.9	69	188.7	69
3	Fall	194.6	85	193.3	85
3	Winter	200.2	82	200.4	80
3	Spring	201.7	86	204.1	86
4	Fall	207.0	67	206.9	66
4	Winter	211.1	66	218.2	63
4	Spring	214.3	66	222.3	66

## IDENTIFY THE NUMBER AND PERCENT OF STUDENTS REPRESENTED BY PARENTS AT PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Semester	Number of Students	Percentage of Students
Fall 2020	348	99%
Spring 2021	352	100%
Fall 2021	398	100%
Spring 2022	398	100%

Thornapple teachers and staff are highly committed to personal relationships with students and families. Increasing a sense of belonging is a focus that has been at the forefront of conversations this year. Student climate and culture survey shows that 99% of students believe that their teachers are encouraging. 85% feel a sense of belonging, and 93% feel they have an adult that they can talk to at school if they have a problem. Research shows that positive relationships provide psychological and social safety that allow learning to take place more effectively. Thornapple Elementary is committed to working in partnership with families and our community to provide deep, comprehensive educational opportunities. It cannot be overstated that the Parent Teacher Organization is a key component of Thornapple's success. The PTO Board works tirelessly to communicate and support parents. They also support the teachers and staff by providing access to funds through educator grants. These grants allow teachers to tailor classroom and student needs with things such as real world learning in field trips, professional development materials, technology, and perhaps the most important, the gift of time to collaboratively plan. The PTO is also a significant player in maintaining staff and student morale by planning school events such as Art Night, musicals, Book Fair, 4th Grade Send Off, Family Fun Night, Fun and Fitness Day, and random acts of kindness. They also plan gatherings that provide parents time to enjoy each other while supporting school fundraising efforts such as Parents Night Out. Thornapple's parent community is second to none. Thornapple Elementary School is dedicated to supporting all learners in achieving their individual potential and we welcome you to join us in that pursuit. It's an amazing place to work and learn.

Sincerely,

David Lyon  
Principal