

HONEY CREEK COMMUNITY SCHOOL

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March 24, 2016

Dear Parents and Community Members:

We are pleased to present you with the Annual Education Report (AER) which provides key information on the 2014-2015 educational progress for Honey Creek Community School. 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 Al Waters for assistance.

The AER is available for you to review electronically by visiting the following web site
https://www.mischooldata.org/NewAer/CombinedReport.aspx?Common_Locations=1-S,8200,1230,118&Common_LocationIncludeComparison=False&Portal_InquiryDisplayType=None

or you may review a copy in the Director's office at your child's school.

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 in the lowest 5% of all schools in the state.

Our school was identified as a Focus School based on our achievement gap during the 2011-12 School year. We will remain in the Focus School cohort for four years; however, based on our achievement gap, we did not qualify as a focus school for the 2013-14 or 2014-15 school years. According to the State's metrics, we now have "Excellent" ratings for the size of our achievement gap. This is true for all subject areas. Additionally, Honey Creek Community School ranked in the 85th percentile for the 2012 and 2013 school years the state did not rank schools for the 2014-15 school year.

The state of Michigan introduced the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (M-STEP) last spring. Honey Creek students performed exceptionally well on the assessment. English Language Arts (ELA) proficiency rate in grades 3-7 exceeded those of the state, county, and AAPS. Eighth grade proficiency rates exceeded the state and county and were equivalent to AAPS. Math proficiency rates exceeded the state, county and AAPS for grades 6,7, and 8. In grade 3, the proficiency rate exceeded the state and county, and in grades 4 and five the proficiency rates exceeded those of the state. The Science proficiency rate for grade 4 exceeded the state and county, and for grade 7 exceeded the state. Social Studies rates for grades 5 and 8 exceeded both the state and the county. Charts and graphs detailing performance on the M-STEP as well as inequities in funding are included later in this report. You will also find charts detailing class performance on this year's administration of the TerraNova Assessment.

All of the standardized assessments indicate that Honey Creek Community School students are out performing students throughout the state. In its February report, *Accountability for All*, Education Trust Midwest wrote, "Honey Creek Community school of Ann Arbor, consistently ranks near the top of all public schools statewide.

Though our small community school continues to receive acknowledgement for the high achievement levels of our students, we recognize the need for the continued support and remediation of our struggling learners. We will continue to provide remedial support for all students below grade level in reading and math. Additionally, we are completing our first year of training in "Classroom Assessment for Student Learning. This approach focuses on utilizing formative assessments to target instruction toward the individual student's needs. Students learn to monitor and track their growth leading toward the student taking greater responsibility for his or her learning. We have also expanded the Instructional Consultant training to all teachers. Instructional Consulting provides us with the ability to match the classroom teacher with a trained consultant, working together, the two use a research-based approach to find an instructional match for the struggling student.

The School

Honey Creek was started by parents who were interested in finding quality alternative education for their children. In 1995, a charter was granted through Washtenaw Intermediate School District, and Honey Creek opened its doors for its first school year.

Honey Creek Community School is a public charter school designed to guide the students in a multi-age setting emphasizing social skills, technology, literacy, and integrated, project-based learning. Honey Creek is housed at the High Point Center, located on 40 acres with nature trails, where we share a playground, indoor heated pool, interact with High Point students and learn appreciation for those who are different from ourselves. Our students are residents of Washtenaw County's ten school districts and thus supported with state and county funds and federal grants. Our charter was renewed in May 2014 for another five years.

Honey Creek Community School houses grades K-8. The middle school, grades 6-8, was implemented in 2001, beginning with only 6th and 7th grades that first year. 250 students were enrolled at Honey Creek in 2013-2014. Early Elementary had a 18:1 student per teacher ratio. Middle Elementary had a 19:1 student per teacher ratio, and Later Elementary had an 19:1 student per teacher ratio. The Middle School had a ratio of 20 students per teacher.

Honey Creek Community School's overarching philosophy rests on the assumption that people learn and grow best when the various aspects of their education and experience are integrated and interactive. To that end, Honey Creek Community School bases learning on an integrated curriculum and on combining thinking with doing. In addition, Honey Creek Community School fosters connections among the home, the school, the community, and among children and adults of different ages and backgrounds. The curriculum emphasizes the integration of thought and experience, and the integration of subject areas, by centering learning on themes and projects with meaning and purpose in the students' lives. A model of apprenticeship best characterizes the nature of the learning experience, in which adults with various kinds of expertise, including teachers, parents, and other community members, share in the teaching of the children, and the children's lives inside the school and outside the school are connected by those relationships and by visits to community sites which are important to the projects and themes the students are doing and studying. Within the school, those projects and themes are explored through learning centers, workstations, and through the Curriculum-Based Service- Learning program, which allow teachers to guide

students as they learn through hands-on activities, both individually and in groups.

Registration and Enrollment

The enrollment process at Honey Creek involves several steps. In January, interested parents must attend an enrollment information meeting. In February, enrollment applications for new students will be accepted. Students will be admitted by a lottery system to fill the open spots. Those who do not receive a spot for the following school year will be placed on a waiting list. After receiving a spot, the student and parent make a partial day visit to Honey Creek to experience our normal school setting. After making this visit, families may confirm their spot with Honey Creek for the following school year. Students who are currently enrolled in Honey Creek and their siblings will be offered the opportunity in January to re-enroll for the next year. Those spots which remain after re-enrollment will be offered to community members.

School Improvement

For the past four years, Honey Creek Community School's school improvement efforts have been largely focused on reducing the number of students identified as not proficient in language arts and math as determined by statewide assessments. The state has set the proficiency target for all subject areas at 85%. Schools are to achieve this by 2022. Presently, Honey Creek Students exceed the targets set for the 2013-14 school year, and our full academic year students exceed the 2022 targets in reading. With our present reading proficiency rates averaging 95 percent, the school has begun efforts to increase the number of students scoring in the advanced range in 2013-14, 35 percent of Honey Creek students scored in the advanced range on statewide assessments. We extended the goal to mathematics in 2013, and expect to see similar academic growth in that subject area.

While HCCS continues to address the individual needs of those not yet proficient in both in the general ed classroom and through targeted services, additional efforts are in place to support greater student achievement by all students. These efforts include:

1. All teachers are now part of our Instructional Consultant Team. The school supporting those teachers through the professional development process. The function of the Instructional Consultant Team is identifying an instructional match for struggling learners, thereby creating a pathway for academic success.

2. Trained one Interventionist in the Orton-Gillingham approach to reading instruction.
3. Trained one Early Elementary teacher in Singapore Math methods.
4. Trained one administrator in the Danielson Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument
5. Middle school science teacher attended National Science Conference with workshops targeting differentiated, and project-based strategies for the instruction of science.
6. Provided initial training to all teachers in Assessment Literacy.

Continued efforts will include:

1. Providing continued training on Classroom Assessment for Student Learning to all teachers. Initiate implementation with greater fidelity across grade level and subject areas.
2. Identify materials and professional development opportunities that augment the overall quality of instruction and promote greater levels of student achievement.

Strategic Planning

Honey Creek Community School Board completed the strategic planning process in October 2015. Efforts to address the goals set forth in the strategic plan began immediately. Please visit our website and review our strategic plan.

Curriculum

The Honey Creek Community School curriculum is based on the Michigan's Curriculum Framework and the Common Core Standards and designed to meet each of the Grade Level Content Equivalencies through a multi-year approach. The school's teacher created curriculum is integrated across subject areas, thematically structured, and project based.

Honey Creek's multi-age classrooms integrate grade levels as follows: Early Elementary, Grades K and 1; Middle Elementary, Grades 2 and 3, Later Elementary, Grades 4 and 5; Middle School, Grades 6,7, and 8.

Combining grade levels provides the possibility of greater differentiation within the curriculum and a unique opportunity to meet individual learning needs. Honey Creek believes that this approach fosters greater academic achievement while providing student the benefit of serving as both the mentor and the mentee depending upon individual skill levels.

The faculty of Honey Creek has developed exceptional skill in interpreting and applying the grade level competencies articulated in the Michigan curriculum framework as well as the common Core standards. In an effort to make curriculum meaningful, accessible, and engaging, Honey Creek faculty design lessons and projects that foster in-depth understanding and promote critical thinking among our students. We believe that this approach far out-values rote learning, and that the ability to engage in critical thought will better serve our students through their educational life and work experiences.

For specific information regarding the Honey Creek Curriculum, please contact your child's teacher.

Curriculum Celebration

Selecting appropriate assessment tools for any educational program requires aligning the assessment methods with the developmental age of the students, the content of the curriculum, and the understanding of learning that is embodied in the school. This final element, all too often overlooked in the rush to "pick a test and get on with it," is essential if we are to provide a full picture of how, as well as what, our students learn.

Honey Creek has elected to measure our students' learning and to demonstrate that learning to the community through a unique semi-annual Curriculum Celebration at each level. The Celebration embodies all forms of alternative assessment, including performance assessment, product assessment, portfolios of student work, student exhibition, and personal communication. Every student in every classroom participates after the completion of a unit; therefore they tell the story of what and how they have been learning in our school. Visitors to the Celebration see student-made products, watch demonstrations, hear students describe their work, ask questions, and – as they walk through a series of rooms filled with bright displays and chattering children – gain an understanding of both Honey Creek's curriculum and our philosophy.

Conferences

Parent Teacher Conferences are student led. This practice supports our efforts to have the student take greater responsibility for his or her learning. Parent participation hovers at 98-99 percent, and those parents who do not participate are contacted by phone or email to arrange a conference at another time.

Honey Creek Community School 2014 M-STEP Performance

The table below indicates the percentage of students who scored proficient or advanced in each category of the M-Step. Scores in blue indicate the categories where the percentage of Honey Creek students scoring proficient or advanced is equal to or exceeds the percentages in the AAPS, county and the state. Scores in Green indicate the categories where the percentage of Honey Creek students scoring proficient or advanced exceeds the percentages in the county and state. Scores in Yellow indicate the categories where the percentage of Honey Creek students scoring proficient or advanced exceeds the percentages in the state.

M-STEP Proficiency Rates

Mathematics				
	State	ISD	AAPS	HCCS
Grade 3	48	60.2	71.6	64.3
Grade 4	41.4	55.4	68.4	46.4
Grade 5	33.4	50.6	64.2	48.2
Grade 6	33.3	51	60.1	69.2
Grade 7	33.3	51.6	60.1	63
Grade 8	32.2	48.3	62.1	65.2

English Language Arts				
	State	ISD	AAPS	HCCS
Grade 3	50.1	54.6	64.4	78.6
Grade 4	46.6	54.2	64	75
Grade 5	48.7	57	65.9	81.5
Grade 6	44.7	57.7	68.8	69.2
Grade 7	49.1	62.6	68.8	77.8
Grade 8	47.6	60.9	71	70.8
Science				
	State	ISD	AAPS	HCCS
Grade 4	12	18.9	23.8	21.4
Grade 7	23	33.2	41	29.6
Social Studies				
	State	ISD	AAPS	HCCS
Grade 5	22	30.6	38.9	33.3
Grade 8	30	43.4	55.8	50

Better Than State Better Than State/ISD Better Than State/ISD/AAPS
 Than State/ISD/AAPS

TerraNova Scaled Scores by Grade

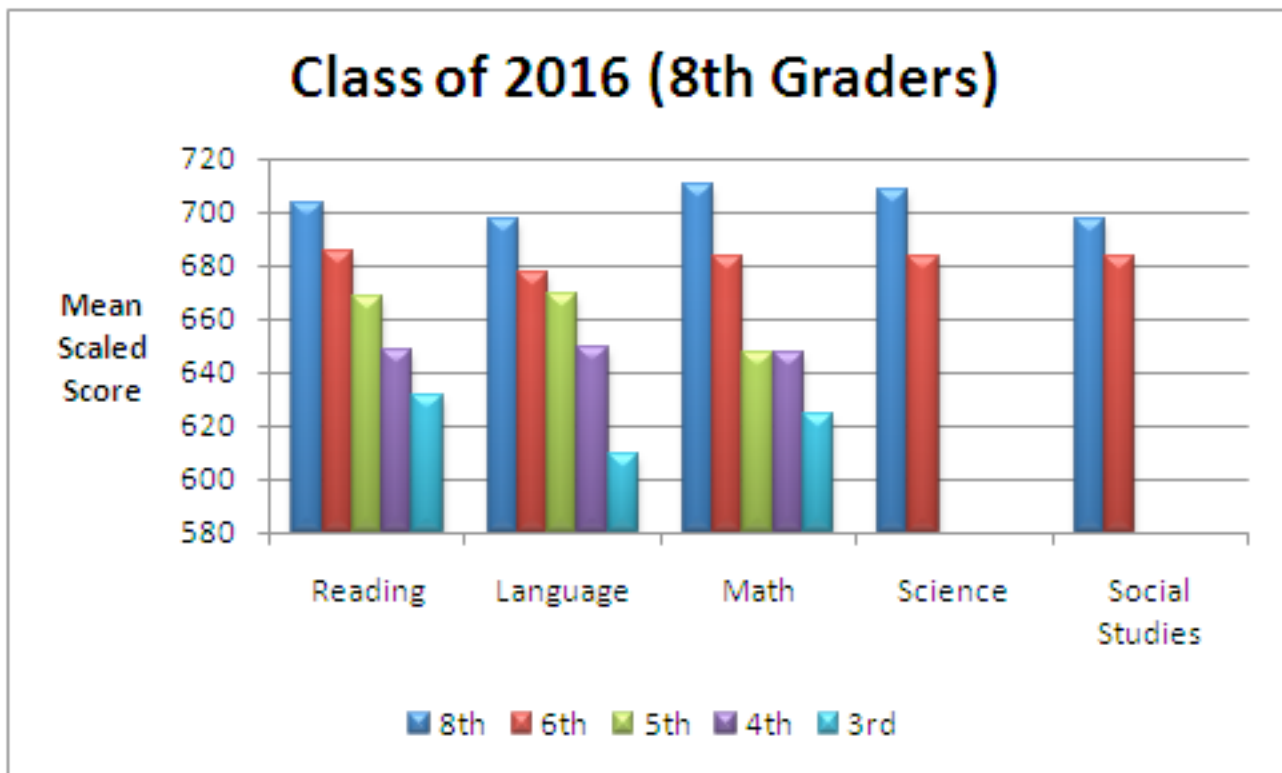
Below are tables and charts that outline student progress as measured by the TerraNova 3 assessment. The table provides you with the aggregate mean of the National Percentile (NP) and Scaled Score (SS). The national percentile is determined by the pool of students taking the exam any given year. As this pool of students changes each year, fluctuations in the NP are common. The scaled score is based on the number of questions a student answered correctly, and is a better reference to measure actual student achievement. A decrease in the scaled score from one year to the next indicates less than one year of academic growth. An increase in the scaled score from one year to the next indicates more than one year's academic growth.

Any one assessment can only give us a snap shot of how a student or group of students is performing on any given day. There is always the chance that other influences can impact a student's performance negatively. It is for that reason that I prefer to look at patterns.

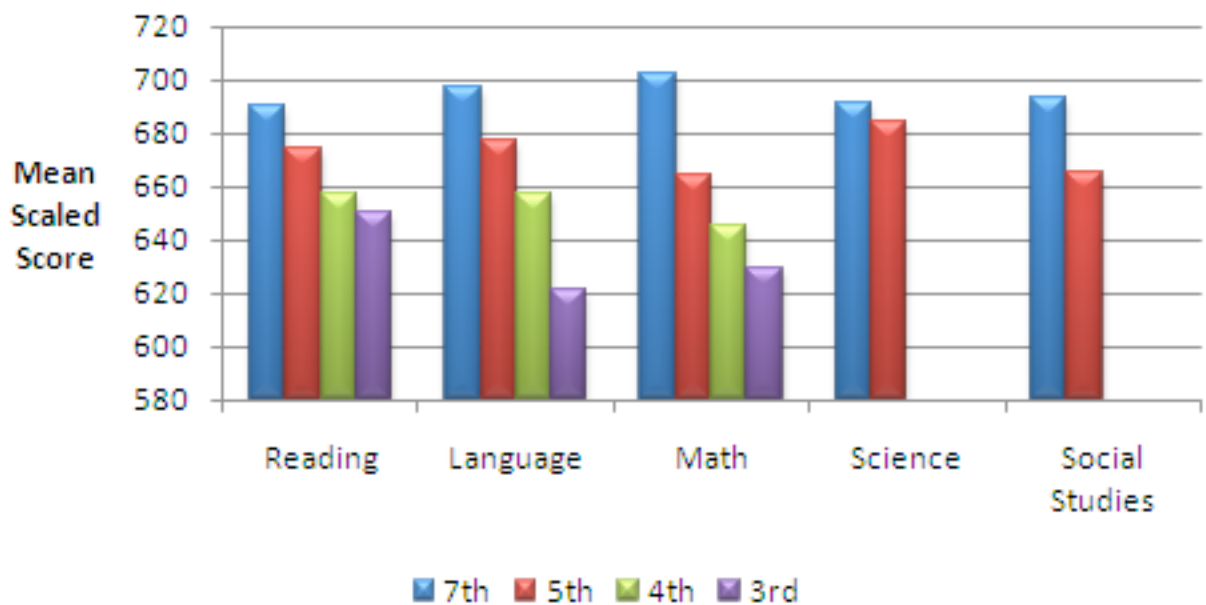
The table below provides mean grade level scaled scores for the four most recent assessment windows. The charts below track a given class's performance for those windows.

		Reading 2012S	Reading 2013S	Reading 2015F	Language 2012S	Language 2013S	Language 2015F	Math 2012S	Math 2013S	Math 2015F
Grade 2	NP	70.5	71					75	68	
	SS	623	621					607.8	589	
Grade 3	NP	86	68	86	49.7	55	68	77	78	75
	SS	650.7	642	648	620.8	615	633	629.4	630	613
Grade 4	NP	69	68	79	64.7	70	69	66	70	68
	SS	648.7	657	655	649.3	656	646	647.2	645	629
Grade 5	NP	76	77	80	79	77	81	77	59	69
	SS	661	668	672	663.3	669	664	666.6	647	659

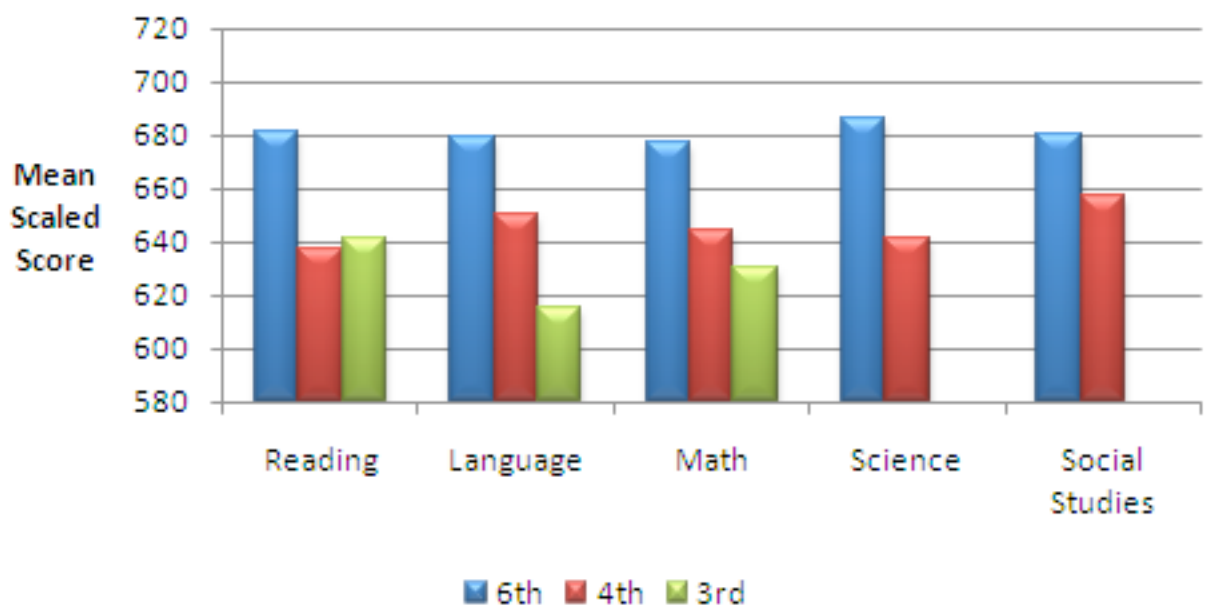
TerraNova Scaled Score by Class



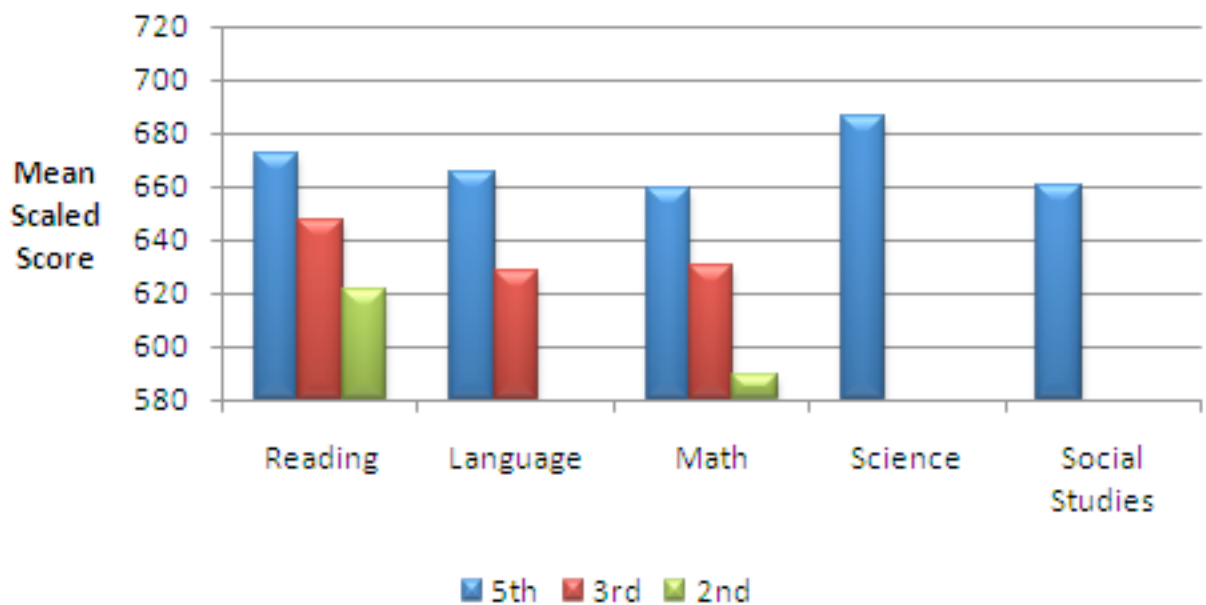
Class of 2017 (7th Graders)



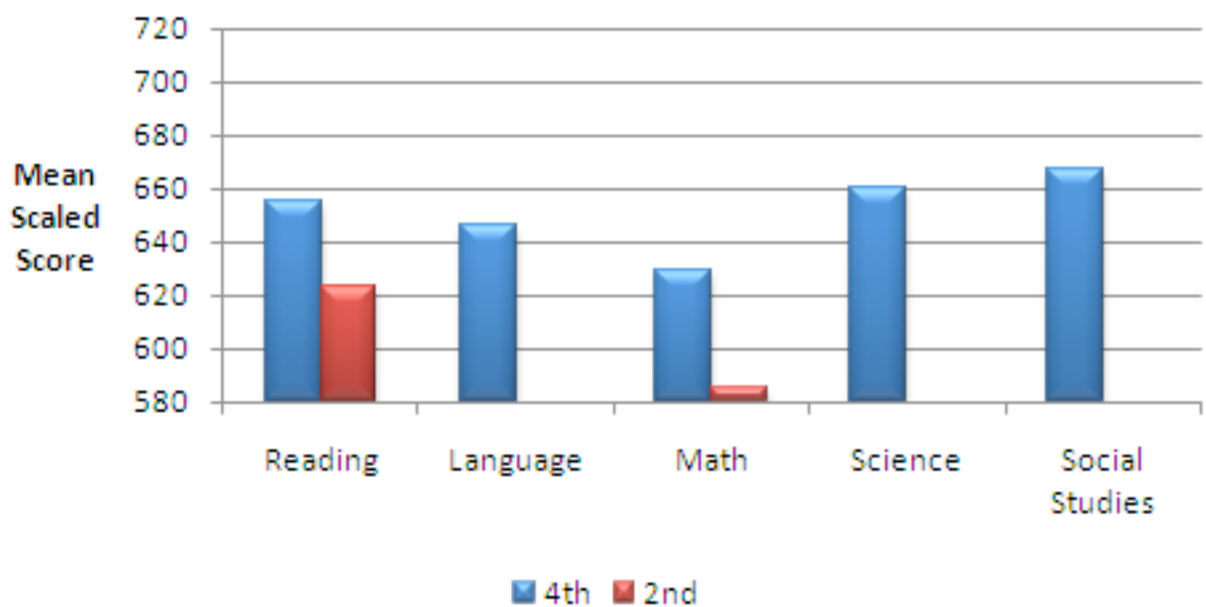
Class of 2018 (6th Graders)

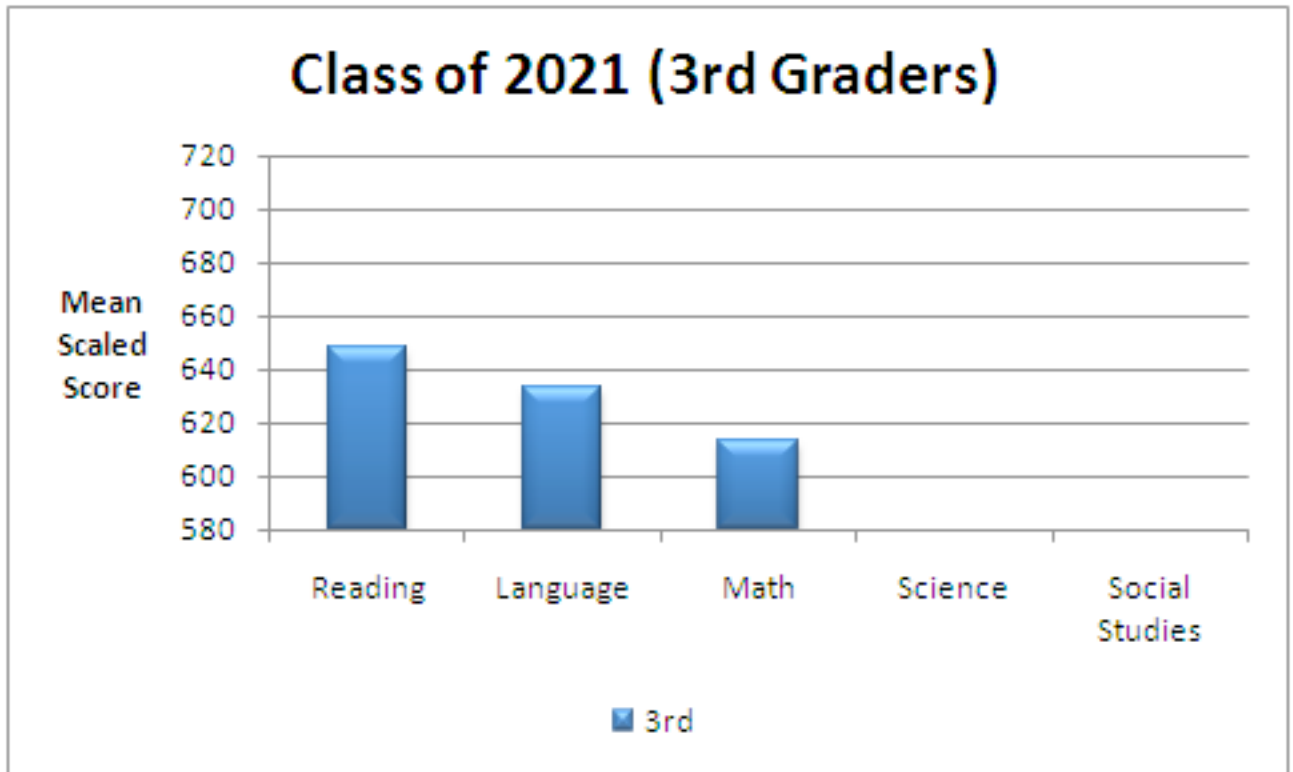


Class of 2019 (5th Graders)



Class of 2020 (4th Graders)





Summary

As can be seen in the above paragraphs, as well as the attached data tables, students at Honey Creek Community School exceed the State's academic performance expectations in all areas; however, simply judging a student or a school based on a set of test scores provides a narrow perspective on both. At HCCS, we believe it is our culture, which is built around providing a safe and nurturing environment for students and families, that sets us apart from other schools. Our small class sizes and strong student teacher relationships foster greater growth both socially and academically. If you would like to learn more about Honey Creek Community School, please attend one of our enrollment meetings in January. Our calendar can be found on our website, honeycreekschool.org.

Sincerely,

Al Waters

Al Waters
Executive Director
Honey Creek Community School

