

# **HONEY CREEK COMMUNITY SCHOOL**

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Dear Parents and Community Members:

We are pleased to present you with the Annual Education Report (AER), which provides key information on the 2016-17 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, Executive Director, for assistance.

The AER is available for you to review electronically by visiting the following web site <https://goo.gl/tJTfkB> or you may review a copy in the main office at your child's school.

For the 2016-17 school year, schools were identified using new definitions and labels as required in Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). A Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) school is one that has at least one underperforming student subgroup. An Additional Targeted Support (ATS) school is one that has three or more underperforming student subgroups. A Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) school is one whose performance is in the lowest 5% of all schools in the state. Some schools are not identified with any of these labels. In these cases, no label is given.

Our school has not been given a label.

The state of Michigan introduced the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (M-STEP) in the spring of 2015. Honey Creek completed its third year using the assessment in the spring of 2017. The school's proficiency rates exceeded the state, county and Ann Arbor Public Schools (AAPS) averages in Language Arts for grades three through eight. In Math, grades seven and eight proficiency rates exceeded state, county and AAPS.

Grades three and four exceeded the county and state averages and grades four and five exceeded the state averages. In Science, grades four and seven exceed proficiency averages in the state, county, and AAPS, and the same is true for grades five and seven in Social Studies. Charts detailing the performance on the M-STEP are included later in this report. You will also find charts detailing class performance on this year's administration of the TerraNova Assessment.

In February, 2018, Metro Parent reported that Niche has rated Honey Creek Community School as one of the Top 100 schools in Michigan. Honey Creek was rated 85 out of approximately 3500 schools in the state.

All of the standardized assessments indicate that Honey Creek Community School students consistently out performs students throughout the state. In its February report, Accountability for All (2016), 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 second year of training in "Classroom Assessment for Student Learning." This approach focuses on utilizing formative assessments to target instruction towards the individual student's needs. Students learn to monitor and track their growth leading towards 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 each struggling student.

### **The School**

The School Honey Creek was started by parents who were interested in finding a 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 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, and recently was re-accredited by AdvancED 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. 248 students were enrolled at Honey Creek in 2015-2016. Early Elementary had an 18:1 student per

teacher ratio. Middle Elementary had a 19:1 student per teacher ratio, and Later Elementary had a 19:1 student per teacher ratio. The Middle School had a ratio of 21 students per teacher. Honey Creek Community School's overarching philosophy rests on the assumption that children 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 between 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. 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 families on the waitlist.

### **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. This summer, we again offer a three-week literacy camp to provide literacy support to rising kindergarten and first grade students. All students identified as not proficient or borderline proficient will be invited to attend. We have also taken the following steps to support the academic growth of all students:

1. All teachers are now part of our Instructional Consultant Team. The school is supporting those teachers through the professional development process. The function of the Instructional Consultant Team is to identify an instructional match for struggling learners, thereby creating a pathway for academic success.
2. Trained one Middle elementary teacher in the Orton-Gillingham approach to reading instruction.
3. Trained one Early Elementary teacher in All Kinds of Minds Math methods.
4. Middle school science teacher attended National Science Conference with workshops
5. Targeted differentiated, and project-based strategies for the instruction of science.
6. Provided continued 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. Identifying 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 2016. Efforts to address the goals set forth in the strategic plan began immediately. Please visit our website ([honeycreekschool.org](http://honeycreekschool.org)) 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 curriculum is created by teachers, 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 students the benefit of serving as both the mentor and the mentee depending upon individual skill levels. The faculty of Honey Creek has developed exceptional skills 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 assessments, 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. 245 of 248 students had parent representation at our fall conferences. This represents 99% of our student population.

### 2016-17 M-STEP proficiency rate comparisons

Cells in green indicate the percentage of students who tied or exceeded state, county and AAPS proficiency rates. Cells in blue indicate the percentage of students who exceeded state and county proficiency rates. Cells in yellow indicate the percentage of students who exceeded state proficiency rates.

#### English Language Arts

Grade	State	County	AAPS	HCCS
3	44	51	61	82
4	44	50	59	82
5	51	62	70	82
6	44	57	67	75
7	45	59	66	66
8	48	61	70	78

#### Math

Grade	State	County	AAPS	HCCS
3	47	58	68	62
4	42	56	69	67
5	35	56	67	37
6	34	52	61	46
7	36	52	61	66
8	34	50	64	65

#### Science

Grade	State	County	AAPS	HCCS
4	15	19	25	52
7	23	33	40	41

## Social Studies

Grade	State	County	AAPS	HCCS
5	22	31	41	44
8	31	44	55	61

### TerraNova 3 Assessment

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 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 score for the five most recent assessment windows. The charts below track a given grades performance for those windows.

		Reading 2013 Spring	Reading 2014 Spring	Reading 2015 Fall	Reading 2016 Fall	Reading 2017 Fall
Grade 3	NP	68	76	86	82	94
	SS	642	646	648	646	657

Grade 4	NP	68	59	79	86	76
	SS	657	653	655	664	660
Grade 5	NP	77	68	80	70	78
	SS	668	674	672	669	681
Grade 6	NP	80	84	78	88	76
	SS	689.5	686	680	690	686
Grade 7	NP	78	81	84	79	80
	SS	691.5	693	689	695	696
Grade 8	NP	76	84	89	89	74
	SS	707	712	703	704	706

		Language 2013 Spring	Language 2014 Spring	Language 2015 Fall	Language 2016 Fall	Language 2017 Fall
Grade 3	NP	55	51	68	61	87
	SS	615	628	633	624	654



Grade 4	NP	70	77	69	80	76
	SS	657	656	646	664	652
Grade 5	NP	77	87	81	74	72
	SS	669	677	664	668	670
Grade 6	NP	85	80	71	80	69
	SS	693.5	678	679	690	684
Grade 7	NP	71	86	93	85	83
	SS	682	700	697	695	718
Grade 8	NP	82	85	83	89	73
	SS	705	700	696	705	699

		Math 2013 Spring	Math 2014 Spring	Math 2015 Fall	Math 2016 Fall	Math 2017 Fall
Grade 3	NP	78	63	75	74	96
	SS	630	630	613	617	644
Grade 4	NP	70	75	68	77	67
	SS	645	658	629	649	646

Grade 5	NP	59	72	69	68	70
	SS	647	663	659	662	666
Grade 6	NP	72	67	73	74	68
	SS	688	683	677	685	679
Grade 7	NP	84	81	90	82	71
	SS	707	704	702	706	701
Grade 8	NP	84	82	81	93	81
	SS	719	723	710	710	724

Grades 4-8 Social Studies and Science Scores: *These assessments were first administered to 4/5 students in 2014.*

		Social Studies 2013 Spring	Social Studies 2014 Spring	Social Studies 2015 Fall	Social Studies 2016 Fall	Social Studies 2017 Fall
Grade 4	NP		78	82	91	84
	SS		666	666	668	670
Grade 5	NP		76	69	77	75
	SS		666	660	674	671
Grade 6	NP	79	85	69	77	77

	SS	694	684	680	680	690
Grade 7	NP	74	74	79	81	81
	SS	694	694	692	695	700
Grade 8	NP	76	85	84	75	81
	SS	698	707	697	694	708

		Science 2013 Spring	Science 2014 Spring	Science 2015 Fall	Science 2016 Fall	Science 2017 Fall
Grade 4	NP		82	84	93	78
	SS		670	659	664	665
Grade 5	NP		67	83	76	73
	SS		684	686	681	650
Grade 6	NP	72	72	80	89	77
	SS	685	683	686	689	690
Grade 7	NP	73	64	80	78	77
	SS	696	685	691	697	699
Grade 8	NP	74	74	80	77	81

	SS	712	713	708	712	725
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### **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](http://honeycreekschool.org).

Sincerely,

*Al Waters*

Executive Director