

E.P. Clarke Elementary School Annual Education Report (AER) Cover Letter

April 11, 2019

Dear Parents and Community Members:

We are pleased to present you with the Annual Education Report (AER), which provides key information on the 2017-18 educational progress for E. P. Clarke Elementary 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 Kelly Gaideski, St. Joseph Public Schools' Curriculum Director for assistance.

The AER is available for you to review electronically by visiting the following web site <http://bit.ly/2IwN6r0> or you may review a copy in the main office at your child's school.

For the 2017-18 school year, schools were identified using new 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. 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.

- Please note, the labels of TSI and ATS will have a new definition beginning next year per federal requirements. **TSI** will be a school that has at least one student sub-group performing in the bottom 25% within each applicable accountability index component. **ATS** will mean the school has met the criteria for TSI and has at least one subgroup performing at the same level as a CSI School.

For the 2017-18 school year, Clarke School was not given any of these labels.

Our 5-year school improvement plan was created in the spring of 2018 to specifically address our goal to meet the needs of learners at all levels in math and reading. Assessment results over the course of the last two years indicate we are on the right track with the strategies we have identified in our school improvement plan, which include small group math and reading instruction, a focus on collaboration among teachers, and developing a system of support / intervention for our students. Our school staff is deeply committed to working together to close the achievement gap at our school. As a result, student engagement has increased overall. Our local assessment data collected throughout the 2017-18 school year indicates our students are making strides toward reaching their growth targets in reading, math, and language.

We are optimistic that our ongoing school improvement work and professional development plan will help us expand learning opportunities for students building-wide. Key areas of focus moving forward include: expert lesson planning to maximize engagement, implementing a

comprehensive multi-tiered of system of support (MTSS), and fully implementing the principles behind the Professional Learning Community framework to ensure expert collaboration in our school.

State law requires that we also report additional information.

PROCESS FOR ASSIGNING PUPILS TO THE SCHOOL

Clarke School is one of three elementary schools in the St. Joseph Public Schools. Students are assigned by their resident address. In addition, families have the option to request attendance at another in--district elementary and students may also apply for School of Choice from the other school districts during an annual application window.

THE STATUS OF THE 3-5 YEAR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

St. Joseph Public Schools is a continuous improvement district. E. P. Clarke Elementary School Improvement Plan is revised annually using student achievement data. Our 3-5 Year School Improvement Plan was developed in the spring of 2018 with input from school stakeholders and is reflective of our district strategic plan. As we enter the final year of our plan, many strategies have been implemented and monitored. New strategies are being researched and developed as we are currently creating a new five year plan. Parents and stakeholders are kept informed about the progress of our school plan through electronic communication and updates at our PTO meetings.

SPECIALIZED SCHOOLS

Specialized schools provide educational alternatives and opportunities for handicapped students as well as meeting their special needs. These programs are an integral part of the continuum of educational services available to special students in Berrien County. Following is a brief description of the specialized schools that serve St. Joseph Public School District students.

- **BLOSSOMLAND LEARNING CENTER BERRIEN REGIONAL EDUCATION SERVICE AGENCY BERRIEN SPRINGS, MICHIGAN** The purpose of Blossomland Learning Center is to provide services to students who have been diagnosed as moderately to severely mentally impaired up to age 26 who reside within the Berrien Regional Education Service Agency. The school assists students in preparing for entry into their respective communities. Nineteen (19) St. Joseph Public School District residents attended this program during the 2017-18 school year. Students are placed in the program through an Individual Educational Planning Committee composed of local district and Berrien RESA diagnostic and educational staff.
- **LIGHTHOUSE EDUCATION CENTER BERRIEN REGIONAL EDUCATION SERVICE AGENCY ST. JOSEPH, MICHIGAN** The Lighthouse Education Center program is operated as a therapeutic and educational program for students diagnosed as severely emotionally impaired up to age 26 who reside within the Berrien Regional Education Service Agency. These students exhibit a severity of emotional difficulties, which prohibits them from regular attendance within the resident district. During the 2017-18 school year, ten (10) St. Joseph Public School District residents attended this program, with the goal being eventual re-integration into the resident district's educational system.

- **HEARING IMPAIRED PROGRAM BERRIEN SPRINGS PUBLIC SCHOOLS BERRIEN SPRINGS, MICHIGAN** The Berrien County Hearing Impaired Program provides educational services for hearing impaired students from Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren counties. During the 2017-2018 school year, zero (0) students from St. Joseph Public School District attended the program, which includes children from pre-school age through 26 years. This program is operated by the Berrien Springs Public Schools and is funded by the Berrien Regional Education Service Agency. In addition to classroom and teacher consultant services, the program also serves as a diagnostic center and employs an audiologist for the purpose of assessing severity and type of hearing loss. Some students, when determined educationally appropriate by an Individualized Educational Planning Committee, are educated in their resident district with the support of a teacher consultant provided by the Hearing Impaired Program.
- **SOUTHSIDE PROGRAM NILES COMMUNITY SCHOOLS NILES, MI** Niles operates center based programs for low incidence special education students needing a full time placement. The program for the Severely Emotionally Impaired (SEI) includes students with severe emotional or behavioral problems. These students receive a very strict, highly structured program designed to change inappropriate behavior patterns and allow learning to take place. Expectations for performance are high with the goal being the students successful readmission to their former school. Classroom programs serve students ages 6 through 25. Students in the Pre-Vocational program have below average ability levels, making success in their local high schools extremely difficult. Often their low ability is compounded by a weak self-concept and inadequate social skills. Once at Southside a few may pursue a diploma, but most will follow a curriculum designed to promote independent living. Classrooms are available to serve ages 16 through 25. During the 2017-2018 school year, three (3) students from the St. Joseph Public School District attended this program.

SJPS CORE CURRICULUM

St. Joseph Public Schools staff members are working under the direction of our Curriculum Director, Kelly Gaideski, to ensure alignment with the CCSS in ELA and Math and follow the Michigan expectations for Science and Social Studies. Teachers work to create clarity around the essential standards from the CCSS, MSS, and Michigan expectations in other content areas. Aligned materials and proven instructional strategies which are targeted at achievement of the standards have been implemented. Our report cards and grading practices are revised frequently to reflect student progress towards standards. For a better understanding of the SJPS curriculum, please contact the school office or visit the website (<https://www.sjschools.org/st-joseph-public-schools/curriculum>).

St. Joseph's core curriculum exceeds Michigan Department of Education requirements in all subjects and integrates core national standards. In addition, the district offers opportunities to challenge high achieving students and a comprehensive special education program.

NATIONALLY NORMED ACHIEVEMENT TESTS

Elementary buildings within St. Joseph Public Schools administer the Northwest Educational Association's (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests to all students in kindergarten through fifth grade. Students take the reading, language, and math assessments in the fall and in the spring. Students in grades 3-5 are also assessed using by our state using the M-STEP. Our achievement results are presented in the documents attached.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

Attendance at Parent/Teacher Conferences in the fall of 2017 was 99% - a clear indicator of the level of involvement and support at our school.

The E. P. Clarke Elementary school community is dedicated to working together to fulfill our school mission of "Preparing every child for a successful tomorrow." The achievements of our students result from a strong home---school partnership and outstanding commitment to learning on the part of students, staff and parents. Together we strive to make Clarke School a great place to learn and grow.

Sincerely,

Michelle D. Allen
Principal, E. P. Clarke Elementary School
St. Joseph Public Schools