



## Upton Middle School Annual Education Report (AER) Cover Letter

February 1, 2022

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 Upton Middle 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, Interim Superintendent for assistance.

The AER is available for you to review electronically by visiting the following web link: [Upton Middle School Combined Report](#) or you may review a copy in the main office at your child's school. Note that student assessment and accountability data are not included in the 2020-21 AER due to federal waivers.

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. 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. A Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) school is one whose performance is in the lowest 5% of all schools in the state or has a graduation rate at or below 67%. Some schools are not identified with any of these labels. In these cases, no label is given.

*For the 2021-22 school year, Upton Middle School was not given any of these labels.*

The key challenges for Upton Middle School are closing the gaps for our low achievers and making sure that all students are successful intellectually, physically, socially, and emotionally. Initiatives being undertaken to support these challenges include developing a RTI model that works in coordination with the high school. Our staff is also developing essential standards with common assessments, pacing, and a district focus on raising achievement for the lowest 30%.

State law requires that we also report additional information.

### **PROCESS FOR ASSIGNING PUPILS TO THE SCHOOL**

Upton Middle School is the only 6-8 middle school in the district. Upton accepts all in-district students and students may also apply for school of choice from other Berrien County 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. Upton Middle 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. Thirteen (13) St. Joseph Public School District residents attended this program during the 2021-22 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 2021-22 school year, seven (7) 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 2021-22 school year, nine (9) 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 2021-22 school year, zero (0) student from the St. Joseph Public School District attended this program.

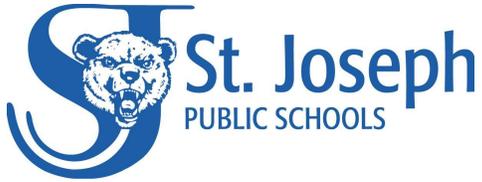
### **SJPS CORE CURRICULUM**

St. Joseph Public Schools staff members are working under the direction of our Interim Superintendent/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. Professional learning communities are responsible for creating, monitoring and revising pacing guides and developing units that meet the 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 by offering high school credit in the areas of world language, algebra and geometry as well as a comprehensive special education program.

### **NATIONALLY NORMED ACHIEVEMENT TESTS**

St. Joseph Public Schools administers the Northwest Educational Association's (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests to all students in 6-8th grade. Students take the reading, language, and math assessments in the fall and again in the spring. A random group of Eighth graders also take the NAEP test in math and reading. Additionally, all 6-8th grade students are assessed by the State of Michigan using the M-STEP. Our results are presented in the attached documents.



**PARENTS AT PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION**

In the fall of 2020, UMS teachers met with all parents whose daughter/son had below a 70% in their respective class/classes. Each teacher also opened up the opportunity to have a phone conference, email correspondence, or Google meet as well.

The staff and students of Upton Middle School are proud of our achievements and are always striving for continuous improvement. We consider our success to be a partnership between home and school.

Sincerely,

Mr. Chad Mandarino, Principal  
Upton Middle School  
St. Joseph Public Schools