

# LOWELL AREA SCHOOLS

---

300 High Street  
Lowell, Michigan 49331

Phone: 616.987.2500  
Fax: 616.987.2511  
www.lowellschools.com



## Central Administration

**Nate Fowler**  
Superintendent

**Dustin Cichocki**  
Director of Human Resources

**Dan VanderMeulen**  
Director of Curriculum

**Sonia Hodge**  
Chief Financial Officer

**Liz McCall**  
Director of Special Education

## Board of Education

**Brian Krajewski**  
President

**Laurie Kuna**  
Vice-President

**Tom Kaywood**  
Treasurer

**Pat Nugent**  
Secretary

**Jennifer Dougherty**  
Trustee

**Jared Blough**  
Trustee

**Jessica Curtis**  
Trustee

February 1, 2024

Dear Parents and Community Members:

We are pleased to present you with the Annual Education Report (AER), which provides key information on the 2022-23 educational progress for Murray Lake 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 Molly Burnett, Murray Lake Elementary Principal, for assistance.

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

For the 2023-24 school year, schools were identified based on previous years' performance using definitions and labels as required in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). A Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) school is one that had at least one underperforming student subgroup in 2022-23. An Additional Targeted Support (ATS) school is one that had 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.

Our key initiatives revolve around our mission of high-quality learning, for every student, in every classroom, every day with primary interventions focusing on the bottom 30% of our students in regard to achievement as well as our students with disabilities. These students are identified as having achievement gaps, their specific performance is analyzed, and an individual plan is established to assist them in achieving effective growth expectancies and proficiency norms.

### Process for Assigning Pupils to the School

Lowell Area Schools assigns pupils to specific school buildings by home address. Parents may also use the "Internal Schools of Choice Program" to attend any of the elementary schools. Approval for this program is based on student numbers at each building's grade level.

### Status of the 3-5 Year Continuous Improvement Plan

Each building team within the District establishes goals for continuous improvement stemming from a variety of data sources including but not limited to M-STEP, SAT, PSAT 10, PSAT 8/9, NWEA MAP, classroom assessments, perception surveys, and demographic data. The District School Improvement Plan and Building Improvement Plan go hand in hand in regards to services provided and action steps that will be implemented during the next 3-5 years. Our focus is on providing high-quality learning for every student, in every classroom, every day. Progress monitoring of student learning on a frequent and continual basis assists us in accomplishing goals. We have also implemented a Positive Behavior Intervention Support System (PBIS). This is part of a comprehensive Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS). In addition to academic needs, building plans are developed to meet the physical, social, and emotional needs of students

**We Value Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, Citizenship**

### **Description of School**

Murray Lake Elementary is a school where a high level of student achievement and quality student character are a focus each day. Although test scores will validate high achievement at Murray Lake, it is the day-to-day emphasis of best practice in the classroom and quality character development that ensures that each child reaches their highest potential.

At Murray Lake Elementary each child is expected to reach his/her highest learning potential. Teachers are constantly improving their lessons to ensure that all children in their class achieve at his/her highest potential. Differentiated instruction is a focus at Murray Lake, which allows teachers to meet the needs of all learners. Students typically score in the top 5% of Michigan's M-STEP test. They also score significantly above average on the Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP), and grow at a greater rate than the average growth of students across the country. Students are asked to set goals for themselves and work toward the achievement of these goals.

The staff believes that a student/teacher/parent relationship is an essential piece in student achievement. There is a strong Family Links parent group who are involved daily at the school. Volunteers can be seen throughout the building on a daily basis. Communication between school and home is not taken lightly. Weekly newsletters from the school and many classrooms, online classroom websites, online parent mailing, and frequent progress reports are some of the ways that communication is put into action. A true family atmosphere can be felt when you are at Murray Lake.

Although academic achievement is held in high regard, student character does not take a back seat. Modeling and exhibiting good character are equally valued at Murray Lake. Each month Murray Lake focuses on Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS). Students at Murray Lake are Respectful, Responsible, and Safe. These focus areas are woven into the core academic areas. At the end of each month, staff members nominate students who have modeled those traits on a daily basis. We also have school-wide celebrations and prizes to recognize positive behaviors as well. When walking through the halls at Murray Lake, it will quickly become evident that positive behavior is truly emphasized.

### **Core Curriculum**

Lowell Area Schools uses the Michigan Merit Curriculum as provided by the State at [www.michigan.gov](http://www.michigan.gov). Lowell Area Schools has implemented the Michigan Academic Standards which can be found at [www.michigan.gov/mde](http://www.michigan.gov/mde). Lowell will continue to strive toward high-quality learning for every student. Providing an avenue for success of the essential content and skills each child needs for postsecondary experiences in a globalized world will be the focus. Each Building Leadership Team works with its teachers to provide collaboration time centered on individual student data of the curriculum to be learned. Planning for future instruction is centered on each student's mastery of the essential content and skills and demonstrating behavior expectations as identified within our Positive Behavior Intervention Support System (PBIS).

### **Student Achievement Results**

Lowell Area Schools uses the Measurement of Academic Progress (math, reading, and language usage) for students in 1st through 7th grade. MAP tests are unique in that they are computerized, adaptive tests. The more questions students answer correctly, the more difficult the questions become. When students incorrectly answer a question, the test becomes easier. The test is adapted and responsive to his/her learning level. This is different from the State of Michigan's M-STEP tests, which were criterion-based tests, with the same questions for each student in a particular grade. Information on M-STEP tests are aligned with the Common Core State Standards, implemented in Lowell. The MAP test is given to students in fall, winter, and spring. This assessment allows staff, parents, and students to see growth over a given time period. The MAP test provides valuable data that directly affects instruction within classrooms. Comparison percentages are given to show how each individual student compares to other students within his/her grade level. A 50% score means that a student scored above 50% of the students at his/her grade level who took this test nationally. Lowell students do very well on this test. In general, they score well above the national percentage average, and make larger than average gains from fall to spring. Lowell Area Schools is proud of the achievement that takes place in our District, and the MAP test is another source of data that proves this high level of achievement.

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

2021-2022: 98% (426) of parents attended Fall conferences. 98% (426) of parents attended Spring conferences.  
2022-2023: 98% (443) of parents attended Fall conferences. 98% (443) of parents attended Spring conferences.

Congratulations to Murray Lake Elementary for a highly successful school year. Students, staff and community can be proud of the continued academic achievements that Murray Lake students experienced during the 2022-2023 year. Murray Lake students continue to score well above average in summative assessments. Murray Lake's combined academic success and service awards, such as the "Green Schools" award, make it an exceptional school. It is no wonder that on a recent survey 99% of parents said that their child received a "good" or "excellent" education at Murray Lake!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Molly Burnett". The signature is written in a dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Molly Burnett  
Principal