



## Gier Park Annual Education Report (AER) Cover Letter

April, 2016

Dear Parents and Community Members:

We are pleased to present you with the Annual Education Report (AER) which provides key information on the 2015 – 2016 educational progress for Gier Park 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 Rebecca Stephens, Principal, for assistance.

The AER is available for you to review electronically by visiting the following web site <https://goo.gl/96uqyw> or you may review a copy in the main office at your child's school.

Though our achievement data indicates student performance is holding steady, our key challenges for students at Gier Park rest in the area of Mathematics, specifically in Communicating and Reasoning, and Modeling and Analysis. To accomplish our goals of improving achievement in Mathematics, we have dedicated federal and state grant monies to intensify our professional learning and instructional improvement. The Gier Park Staff has focused on implementing Guided Math in each classroom this year, and has worked with a highly qualified facilitator during our professional learning time in order to implement this program with fidelity. As a staff, we will continue to work with a facilitator in the coming year, on a close and critical basis to ensure a deeper and more permanent implementation of this approach to math instruction and remediation. Gier Park third grade has met performance targets in the area of math for the past three years.

Key challenges in English Language Arts include comprehension with expository text and informational writing (responding to text). The Gier Park staff has used some of our professional learning time this year to work in grade level teams with student writing samples in order to improve writing instruction at all grade levels. We continue to work in grade level dynamic groups for a dedicated and sustained period of time each day, and this program has been successful in helping Gier Park meet our performance targets for the last three years on the statewide assessment.

The staff of Gier Park has implemented a building-wide Positive Behavior Intervention System to identify and provide support to students whose behaviors interfere with their academic progress. PBIS supports all learners, but specifically targets those in need of additional intervention.

Enrollment and assignment of students to buildings is processed centrally, and based on geographical boundaries within the city limits of Lansing. Students are assigned to Gier Park School based on these attendance areas, as well as Schools of Choice openings (offered once a year). During the academic school year, you may enroll your child at each building.

Gier Park's continuous School Improvement Plan focuses on strategies to improve academic performance as identified by the ongoing review of data, provided by state, district and building level

formative assessments (DRA, WIDA, MLPP, unit assessments, M-STEP, AimsWeb). All staff work in grade level teams to review data and revise goals and strategies that combine for the building-wide plan. Gier Park added an additional goal to solidify our focus on health and wellness. As a building, we have integrated strategies at the classroom and building level to consistently provide opportunities for students to engage in sustained physical movement, as well as integration of nutrition lessons to extend their learning and provide real-world connections from school to home.

Positive Behavior Intervention is embedded in each of the 4 goals, and is continuously revised as needed to serve our population.

Gier Park implements the Common Core State Standards, which can be found at <http://www.michiganccr.org/>. All staff have access to Curriculum Crafter (a Web based tool) to supplement core curriculum and grade level content expectations. Staff also utilize district level Pacing Guides for core content areas to inform planning and collaboration at each grade level.

Parent-teacher conferences are a very important time for teachers and parents to come together, face-to-face, and discuss the academic progress of their child(ren). Although this conversation begins prior to the November and March conference dates, these connections begin the first event of the year, the Meet the Teacher Night held prior to the first day of school. During the fall conferences for 2015, parent participation was at the 90% level, and our three year trend indicates a consistent 88% parent participation for each year. This percentage represents approximately 297 families represented. Communication is key, and the staff of Gier Park works diligently to ensure that parents know how their children are progressing.

Gier Park is devoted to providing an outstanding learning community, positive climate and supportive culture for each child and family. We appreciate the continued support of parents, staff and community in this effort. The Gier Park Staff looks forward to working with all students, and their families this coming school year. We welcome your questions, and encourage your presence in order to provide the best possible learning experience for everyone.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'R. Stephens', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Rebecca Stephens  
Principal, Gier Park School