



Mindy Nathan, Principal

December 18, 2020

Dear Parents and Community Members:

We are pleased to present you with the Annual Education Report (AER) which provides key information on the 2019-20 educational progress for the Avondale Academy. 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 James Schwarz, Superintendent, for assistance.

The AER is available for you to review electronically by visiting the [MI School Data](#) website or you may review a copy in the main office at our school.

For the 2019-20 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 sub-group. 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 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.

Our school has not been identified within these categories.

We do continue to be penalized for students who enroll here and do not graduate within a 4 year window. The 4 year cohort graduation rate for the 2018-19 school year was 83%. This is an increase from the prior 2 years. Graduation rates are typically erratic and thus impacted because of a transient population we service. We have almost a 25% rate of student mobility. Attendance rates for the Avondale Academy are 86%.

In order to improve student learning, engagement and retention, we continue to focus on the district goal of incorporating project-based learning into our instruction. Our staff is united in this effort and we have been developing new units and modules that are exciting for staff to teach, and for students to learn. All of the work is consistent with State of Michigan standards and the Michigan Merit Curriculum. We are also using growth measures to inform instruction; all of our 9th and 10th grade students took the NWEA MAP tests for the first time this school year. We have been granted some Title I funds for academic interventions, and we are now able to address targeted interventions for our students in a smaller, separate setting, with explicit entry and exit criteria to determine the length of time needed in an intervention setting.

We are focusing our efforts on social-emotional learning as well. We are using the RULER program from Yale University to support our students' ability to focus on their academic goals. In this program they learn to manage their emotions, and in so doing, we expect to see improved academic performance, as well as better cooperative work in our increasingly project-based setting. As an alternative high school program we must assist our students with behaviors that will move them forward academically, in career goals and in life. We are also entering into the process of becoming a trauma-informed school. All of our teachers will participate in a 5-day training to deeply understand, through the education lens, the ways that trauma can be positively addressed in our classrooms, when and as needed.

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Specific instructional interventions include:

- AARI reading program, to build comprehension and fluency
- Multiple math programs, including use of Khan Academy, math games and manipulatives and other online and classroom resources
- Commitment to restorative practices that keeps students in classes instead of suspending them; restorative work provides deeper learning and self-awareness, as well as authentic accountability.
- Mentoring classes that meet every day, and a focus on goal-setting, as well as learning about what credits are, what transcripts look like, and how students can take charge of their own curriculum planning.

In order to ensure that all of our students have every chance possible to graduate, we have partnered with Graduation Alliance, a dropout prevention/intervention program. This program helps us to educate students who are in their 5th or 6th year of high school, or have been labeled a dropout by the state.

State law also requires that we provide the following information for the past two years:

Process for assigning pupils to the school:

- The Avondale Academy enrollment process is as follows. The Avondale Academy is a “Schools of Choice” Alternative High School. Prior to acceptance at the Avondale Academy we require an application, current transcript, updated immunization record, parent driver’s license, student birth certificate, and prior discipline records.
- Once these documents are in the hands of the application review committee, parents will be contacted to set up an interview with the parent, student and the interview committee. At the time of the interview, parents will fill out an emergency card and student behavior contract. It is at this time that the parent and student will be informed of whether or not a student meets the qualifications of Alternative Education. This is especially true for out of district students. We offer both a traditional setting and a virtual environment.

The status of the 3-5 year school improvement plan:

- The goals set forth in our school improvement plan are at various stages of development. Our literacy and writing goals are being addressed every day. Students are reading and writing every day, and focusing on persuasive essay writing as well as reading high school materials for the purpose of discovering inferences, improving fluency, studying plot, characterization etc., as well as non-fiction reading materials to assist with research techniques.
- Math and science proficiency are identified but not defined. We are working to improve the math and science content, and support the students who have gaps in their learning simultaneously.
- We added career and post-secondary goals this year that will be more attainable for our students. We know that our students do not usually go on to college immediately after graduation. We are determined to introduce them to more of the technical training opportunities available in our community. To this end, we are very supportive of the innovative programs at Oakland Schools Technical Campus, Northeast, and we will be promoting their programs and looking for increases in enrollment.

A brief description of each specialized school:

The Avondale Academy is an alternative education program, designed to meet the unique needs of its students. We are a small high school, approximately 110 students. This is one way in which we are able to personalize learning. The smaller setting is often preferred by students who simply do not want to be in a large, traditional high school. Other students come because they have failed some classes, or had some

social issues, and other kinds of challenges too numerous to detail. On most days, our school is filled with heroic young people, who have gone through more just to get here every day than most of us can imagine. Our class sizes average around 20-23 students; we have one teacher for each core subject area, and our goal is to get to know our students very well.

We believe that learning relationships are necessary and matter. We have a great support staff - a full time counselor, part-time social worker who has two interns, a learning interventionist, and an art teacher who has created a robust art program. We also have a part-time physical education and health teacher. Our goal is to help our students complete their credits needed to obtain a high school diploma. We have a more traditional, seated program for most of our students, but assist some in our virtual program as well.

How to access a copy of the core curriculum:

The Avondale Academy's curriculum, its description, and an explanation of its implementation may be accessed at any time; we are happy to meet with parents or other stakeholders who have this interest. Our Board of Education has to approve our courses, and we follow the Michigan Merit Curriculum. We also select our courses from the same course catalogue used by Avondale High School. Though we employ many different teaching techniques, the content and standards are the same.

Aggregate student achievement on local tests:

In 2019-20, due to COVID, we had no administration of state testing, however, we administered the NWEA-Map test, which measures student growth in learning. This was given twice in the school year, in Winter (December), and then in the Spring (May). We tested our 9th and 10th grade students, with these results - the RIT scores are the average of all the students tested by grade:

Winter 2018, 9th grade Math: 211.8	Spring 2019, 9th grade Math: 214
Winter 2018, 9th grade Reading: 205.3	Spring 2019, 9th grade Reading: 204
Winter 2018, 10th grade Math: 211.5	Spring 2019, 10th grade Math: 212.2
Winter 2018, 10th grade Reading: 205.4	Spring 2019, 10th grade Reading: 198.1
Fall 2019, 9th grade Math: 209.5	Winter 2020, 9th grade Math: 209.3
Fall 2019, 9th grade Reading: 203	Winter 2020, 9th grade Reading: 209.9
Fall 2019, 10th grade Math: 212.5	Winter 2020, 10th grade Math: 213.6
Fall 2019, 10th grade Reading: 208.6	Winter 2020, 10th grade Reading: 207.2

What we see here is a moderate growth in Math over the course of the year in our 9th and 10th grade students.

Reading was more of a stable measure, with a dip at the end of the year; we will be using our data this year to assess how well our interventions are working for our students, and we hope to see more gains in growth in math and reading. NWEA also offers interventions and resources which we will be using as well.

Identify the number and percent of students represented by parents at Parent-Teacher Conferences:

- 45% or (50/110) of Avondale Academy students were represented by parents at parent-teacher conferences for the 2019-2020 school year.



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- 43% or (47/110) of Avondale Academy students were represented by parents at parent-teacher conferences for the 2018-2019 school year.

High schools report on the following:

- a. THE NUMBER AND PERCENT OF POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENTS (DUAL ENROLLMENT): none
- b. THE NUMBER OF COLLEGE EQUIVALENT COURSES OFFERED (AP/IB): none
- c. THE NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN COLLEGE EQUIVALENT COURSES (AP/IB): none
- d. THE NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS RECEIVING A SCORE LEADING TO COLLEGE CREDIT: none

It is a privilege to be able to work with students who truly need the care and encouragement that we are able to give them at the Avondale Academy. We are grateful for the support of the school district and Board of Education, who take a real and serious interest in seeing our students succeed. Last year (2019-2020) we graduated 18 students, and going with them across that finish line, seeing them walk across the stage at graduation is why we do this work. We always aim to be better, and to improve our numbers, but behind each data point is a real child, a real student, and what we do best is to reach out to each and every one. We have a dedicated staff who operate with an authentic commitment that the students know and feel- so our students reach back. Not all of them, and not at the same time, but most of them do...we are, without a doubt, in this for and with our kids.

Sincerely,

James Schwarz, Superintendent
Avondale School District