



February 6, 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 the Diploma and Careers Institute (DCI). 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 Todd Biederwolf, Chief Academic Officer (Todd.Biederwolf@Avondaleschools.org) 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 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, like many alternative education programs, was identified as a Comprehensive Support and Improvement School (CSI).

Despite this continued designation, we are pleased to report that our data shows an overall positive trend line. Our overall index score rose from 13.47 in the 21/22 school year to 20.46 in the 22/23 school year, a raw score improvement of 6.53 and a comparative improvement of 51% (20.46/13.47). Similarly, our school quality score rose from 63.49 to 67.38 over the same period, a raw score improvement of 3.89 and comparative growth of 6% (67.38/63.49). Unfortunately, while our overall number of graduates hit a record high of 138 during the 22-23 school year, our graduation rate dropped from 30.96 to 25.74, a raw decline of 5.22 and a comparative decline of 17% (25.74/30.96).

DCI is a full virtual, alternative education school. We also have an enrollment age exception authorization from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) that

allows us to enroll older non-graduates who are between 18 and 21 years of age. As a result, this creates two unusual characteristics in our data. The first (1) is that the percentage of our students that are traditional high-school aged students (ages 14-18) is approximately 60 percent of our enrollment and the second (2) is that approximately 40% of our students are not of traditional high school age, they are aged 18-22 and are therefore, by definition, no longer part of their original 4-year graduation cohort.

Together, these two student population characteristics position us in an unusual situation relative to our graduation rates under the 4/5/6-year graduation cohort measurements. For the four-year graduation cohort, our challenge is helping students who predominately enroll with us while behind on credit attainment, to meet the graduation requirement within the traditional 4-year timeframe of high school. Often, that isn't an attainable outcome. So, our 4-year graduation rate is lower than is typical. The corollary to this is given the age characteristics of our students, our 5th and 6th year graduation cohort rates are significantly higher than is typical, which is a positive performance indicator under our alternative school status. Nevertheless, as indicated by our CSI status, improvement in graduation rates is a priority improvement need for DCI.

In response to our need for improvement, we have identified three components under our CSI School Improvement Plan: (1) an enhanced Student Recognition Program which is intended to accolade the achievements of our students and as a result motivate their long term engagement and success, with graduation as the intended outcome. (2) As an extension of this, we are also beginning to implement characteristics of Student Led Conferences into our Two-Way-Interactions with our students, with the goal here being additional student ownership for their progress and direct student input into goal setting and the associated timelines. (3) Our third component is to improve the socio/emotional support available to our students, so they are better empowered to overcome their individual potential barriers to success.

Finally, please be assured that the DCI curriculum has been approved by the Avondale School District Board of Education and meets the requirement of the Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC), as defined by the MDE. Our standardized testing participation, proficiency and proficiency growth in the 21/22 school year were all improved, but, consistent with our CSI designation, remain low. We are committed to continuing and accelerating this positive trend line in the now ongoing 23/24 school year.

We are very proud of our DCI students and the success they are having, as well as awed by their ability to meet and overcome the challenges many of them face on a daily basis. We remain confident that together, our dedicated staff and our absolutely fantastic students, can and will realize their graduation goal!!!

Sincerely,

Todd Biederwolf
Chief Academic Officer