



Public Schools / One Sylvester Avenue / P.O. Box 130 / Berrien Springs, Michigan 49103
Phone (269) 471-2891 Fax (269) 471-2590 Website www.homeoftheshamrocks.org

School Annual Education Report (AER) Cover Letter

January 15, 2021

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 Success - Alger Heights. 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 Kristi Teall, Executive Director for assistance. I want to make a note that our name changed to Link Learning- Alger Heights on July 1, 2020, but for the purposes of the 19-20 AER, we are being referred to as Success - Alger Heights.

The AER is available for you to review electronically by visiting the following web site <http://bit.ly/2RxHdwW>, or you may review a copy in the main office at your child's 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 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. Our school has not been given any of these labels.

Our key challenges in data are the following: We have an entire population of at-risk and underserved youth. This has caused the following:

1. Achievement is not where we would like it to be in math and EBR. We are below the state average. Our EBR is much closer to like schools but we do have a significant gap with math. We have hired math interventionists, updated our course offering and courses themselves to include courses that contain intervention practice for both math and ELA. We had simulated testing situations to help prepare our students in test taking skills. We offer



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office hours, go guardian, zoom, and google hangout sessions to improve face to face support for classes.

2. Due to the at-risk nature of our population, we have another challenge with student engagement and motivation to "do school". We are currently providing many support services for our students including SSW, Special Education Support, ELL Services, MTSS Intervention Support and creating strong relationships with students. Our average caseload ratio is 1:35 mentor to student. This seems to be a nice number to keep our staff challenged and our students engaged. Leadership positions have been given professional development to increase leadership capacity to help guide our staff to improvement in both behavior and instructional support. Another focus of our Professional Development has been doing work around the 5 Psychological needs for at-risk youth. Our School improvement strategies include providing staff support through Professional Learning Communities, Mentor/Mentee groups, and Building Bridges for new staff.
3. Our students can turn off engagement in a moment so we need to be prepared. We have done that by creating a communication rubric for staff to be trained on and live by. We need to reach kids before we teach them. This training has given our staff the confidence in how to talk to students without the benefit of having the "captive audience" due to our virtual nature. Our dashboards drive what we do and how we focus on teaching and learning. We continue to be data driven and data informed.
4. Our demographics are fairly similar to other schools but our population is extremely transient. We service students up to the age of 22 and in some cases later than 22. Many of these older students work, so it can be difficult to reach them during school hours. We work around this by providing staff support after hours and on weekends.

State law requires that we also report additional information.

Process for Assigning Pupils to the school

Our school is an alternative education program that is delivered virtually. We do have drop in centers for students to come into at any time for additional support by certified staff. Any Michigan resident in grade 9-12



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may attend our program. Each student who enrolls in provided a comprehensive EDP so their educational goals can be achieved.

Status of the 3-5 Year School Improvement Plan

During the 19-20 school year we did the best comprehensive needs assessment ever done and included the entire organization in the process. We had over 150 staff members involved. Math, ELA, communication and leadership capacity are the highlights of our plan. We continue to be focused on the needs of our students and are actively monitoring our plan. We continued our intervention positions and professional development that focused on our populations. We added building leadership capacity by teaching our leaders how to use data, the dashboard, and our PULSE system to guide what we do and improve student engagement. We increased our professional development on communication by introducing a new tool, our communication rubric. Our courses were updated and improved. We continued with our summer school offerings to keep students engaged and motivated to gain additional credits toward graduation.

Our ELL students continue to be serviced by a certified ELL teacher. We use interpretalk, and imagine learning programs to help our ESL students and their families overcome the language barrier. Several paraprofessionals and teachers on staff have the ability to speak Spanish which is the majority of our ELL population.

Students may qualify, and also have a need for special education programs and/or services. The Link Learning of Berrien Springs Public Schools is continuing to develop their Multi-Tier Systems of Supports (MTSS) model, providing general education options for struggling students and monitoring their progress over time. For interventions, students being referred for special education programming/services may begin this process through a request for an evaluation or Child Study Team (CST) meeting. Should a student qualify for special education programs and/or services, a team of individuals will develop and Individualized Education Plan to help assist the child progress within the general education setting.

Current special education programs include secondary resource room support. Students follow a general education curriculum with the common



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core state standards. In all cases, classroom instruction is provided by a general education teacher along with interactive co-teaching from a special education teacher. Students determined to need more support are given additional supports to meet their needs. All students in Link Learning Programs are given instruction primarily through an online platform. Part of the IEP process includes the determination of appropriate aids, supplementary services, accommodations, and modifications for success in general education. Ancillary services are available for students who qualify. These services may include speech-language therapy, occupational therapy and physical therapy.

As we continue in the 20-21 school year, we will continue on the path originally stated in our SIP, but will add more supporting systems for our staff to be successful in their teaching/mentor role. The PLC, MM, and BB groups as well as the PD for how to communicate and setting goals, monitoring, and supporting again will be an added benefit for the 20-21 school year. Support for students and staff on HOW to get better and reach set goals is key. The culture is shifting quickly with our new mindset. We are moving from compliance to teaching and learning. The big picture goals listed here are definitely our points of pride: 1. School Improvement process and plan. 2. Communication rubric creation, training and implementation. 3. Data Dashboard analysis, training and guidance on how to improve using the dashboard.

Accessibility of Core Curriculum, Implementation, and Variances from State Model

Our school utilizes Edgenuity's core curriculum, aligned with the standards required under the State of Michigan's school law, and which is available on Edgenuity's website at:

<https://www.edgenuity.com/course-lists/Edgenuity-Michigan-Course-List.pdf>

Our course guide is available on our website:



www.linklearning.org/courses

Aggregate Student Achievement Results for Local Assessments

All students are required to complete the NWEA both at the time of enrollment and at the end of the school year. The following are the growth metrics for the last two years:

| Alger Heights | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Math - Grade Level | Change in Mean RIT | Fall 2019 | Spring 2020 |
| 9.0 | -20.2 | 231.9 | 211.7 |
| 10.0 | 0.8 | 216.6 | 217.4 |
| 11.0 | 15.4 | 218.9 | 234.3 |
| 12.0 | -10.3 | 222.1 | 211.8 |
| Reading - Grade Level | Change in Mean RIT | Fall 2019 | Spring 2020 |
| 9.0 | -10.0 | 214.2 | 204.2 |
| 10.0 | -4.0 | 212.9 | 208.9 |
| 11.0 | 7.9 | 217.6 | 225.5 |
| 12.0 | -1.2 | 218.6 | 217.4 |

2018-2019

| MATH - Grade Level | Change in Mean RIT |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 9 | 3.9 |
| 10 | 4.1 |
| 11 | -2.1 |
| 12 | *Not Available |
| READING - Grade Level | Change in Mean RIT |
| 9 | -2.1 |
| 10 | -4.5 |
| 11 | -0.7 |
| 12 | 14.5 |

Parent-Teacher Conference Participation

Our school does not hold formal parent/teacher conferences due to the nature of our program. Parents are continuously engaged throughout the enrollment cycle of the student. Parent’s are a key component in the support network of virtual learners, so they are an integral part of helping educate our students.

Post-Secondary Enrollment

Success - Alger Heights offers several dual-enrollment options with local colleges throughout the State. Unfortunately, due to the virtual nature of our school, 0 students have chosen to engage in dual enrollment over the last two years.

College Equivalent Courses Offered

Success - Alger Heights students have access to a full course catalog aligned with their Educational Development Plans at local community colleges.



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College Equivalent Course Enrollment

Success - Alger Heights had 0 students participate in college equivalent coursework during the 2018-19 and 2019-20 school years. This represents 0% of the students enrolled at Success in 2018-19 and 2019-20 .

Score Leading to College Credit

Success - Alger Heights had 0 students participate in college equivalent coursework during the 2018-19 and 2019-20 school years. This represents 0% of the students enrolled at Success - Alger Heights.

Success - Alger Heights is a great option for students who want flexibility with schedules, want to re-engage with their education, or simply want a different option. We offer a complete array of services for all students that are with us. Our goal is to see all of our students succeed, not only to graduation, but into adulthood doing what they want for their future. We offer the best services so no child is left behind.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristi L. Teall". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Kristi Teall
Executive Director