



## **School Annual Education Report (AER) Cover Letter**

January 6, 2025

Dear Parents and Community Members:

We are pleased to present you with the Annual Education Report (AER), which provides key information on the 2023-24 educational progress for Michigan Connections 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 Michigan Connections Academy for assistance.

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

For the 2024-25 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 2023-24. 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, had a graduation rate at or below 67%, or failed to exit ATS status in 2021-22. Some schools are not identified with any of these labels. In these cases, no label is given.

Our school was identified as a Comprehensive Support and Improvement school as our 2015-16, 4-year cohort graduation rate was 63.43%. Although the metric used fell below the 67% threshold, we have made marked improvements not only in our 4-year rate but also our 5 and 6-year rates over the past reportable years as can be seen in the below table.

| School Year | CSI             | 4-year rate | 5-year rate | 6-year rate |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 2015-2016   | Identified Year | 63.43       | 71.43       | 68.42       |
| 2016-2017   |                 | 68.71       | 75.00       | 79.75       |
| 2017-2018   |                 | 69.12       | 78.32       | 76.42       |
| 2018-2019   |                 | 75.00       | 76.12       | 81.56       |
| 2019-2020   |                 | 73.53       | 81.29       | 77.61       |
| 2020 - 2021 |                 | 76.76       | 78.52       | 83.33       |
| 2021 - 2022 |                 | 79.02       | 80.85       | 81.34       |
| 2022 - 2023 |                 | 85.38       | 80.00       | 81.56       |

To exit the CSI designation, the school must no longer meet CSI entrance data, which we have done each year since the original identification year, AND improve proficiency in both Math and ELA (minimally .01 percentage point improvement) for each of the last two available years of the CSI cycle. For 2024 - 2025 CSI exits this means both 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 proficiency need to each be at least .01 percentage point greater than baseline proficiency in 2021 -2022.

We continue to meet the graduation rate criteria to be removed from CSI status and work towards meeting the added criteria to be removed from CSI designation. We will continue to work with our local ISD and state partners along with our committed staff, families and students in an effort to further our school programming for greater proficiency and student support.

Specifically, in our continued drive for academic success, our Michigan Continuous Improvement Plan (MICIP) is reviewed quarterly and updated annually with input from key stakeholders. Finally, MICIP includes a focus on critical literacy skills such as mathematics, reading and writing as well as important affective factors that impact student success.

State law requires that we also report additional information:

1. PROCESS FOR ASSIGNING PUPILS TO THE SCHOOL

### **Enrollment Cap and Lottery**

Open enrollment begins in February. If, after accounting for returning students and siblings of returning students, the number of new student applications exceeds the number of open enrollment slots, a lottery will be held each year in April. The lottery will be held at the school office and will be open to the public. If a lottery is necessary, selected students must provide MICA with their academic documentation for course placement by June 30 or forfeit their space to another student on the waitlist. Students not selected in the lottery or who miss the open enrollment period will be placed on a waitlist on a first-come, first-serve basis based on the date on which they complete the enrollment paperwork and return it to MICA. Siblings of enrolled students will have waitlist priority and will be released first if space becomes available in their grade. These criteria have been approved by MICA's authorizer, Ferris State University, and are reflected in the current MICA policies.

2. THE STATUS OF THE 3-5 YEAR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

A copy of our MICIP is available at Michigan Connections Academy. Our plan is on track, meeting all requirements for establishing goals and monitoring progress.

3. A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF EACH SPECIALIZED SCHOOL

Michigan Connections Academy (MICA) is a free online public school, also known as a cyber charter school, serving students in grades K–12 throughout Michigan. The school, which opened for the 2010-11 school year, is

authorized by Ferris State University Charter Schools Office. MICA gives students the flexibility to learn at home with a curriculum that meets rigorous state education standards. At MICA, students, teachers, and Learning Coaches are all partners in the Personalized Performance Learning® (PPL) approach. Together, they develop an instructional plan tailored to each student's academic abilities. The program and goals are adjusted as needed to ensure the student is learning and growing at MICA. Teachers, students, and Learning Coaches monitor the plan and the student's progress throughout the year, aided by MICA's powerful Education Management System (EMS) known as Pearson Online Classroom.

The school's mission is to help each student maximize his or her potential and meet the highest performance standards through a uniquely individualized learning program featuring:

- A challenging, K–12 curriculum developed by leading education experts.
- Instruction from highly qualified and state-certified teachers.
- Support from trained counselors, principals, and administrative staff.
- Dozens of clubs and activities that foster social development and academic growth.
- An involved community of students and their families.

MICA also offers Dual Enrollment, a program that allows eligible students to take a class at a local college or university as part of their regular school day. Students will receive credit from the college as well as Michigan Connections Academy. Admission to the program requires meeting additional criteria.

4. IDENTIFY HOW TO ACCESS A COPY OF THE CORE CURRICULUM, A DESCRIPTION OF ITS IMPLEMENTATION, AND AN EXPLANATION OF THE VARIANCES FROM THE STATE'S MODEL

Course descriptions, sample lessons, and FAQs about the curriculum and program information can be found on the [school website](#).

MICA is a virtual school, so rather than working in a traditional brick and mortar classroom setting, students, parents/Learning Coaches, and teachers all access curriculum and communicate with one another via Connections

Academy's secure education management system known as Pearson Online Classroom.

Pearson Online Classroom is one of the most comprehensive, reliable, and user- friendly online learning systems available. This proprietary system, designed from the ground up to meet the exact requirements of the Connections Academy instructional model and the needs of our students and families, brings the school right to students 24 hours a day from any Internet connection. Pearson Online Classroom is powerful, yet very intuitive and user-friendly. It is also comprehensive, allowing students, parents, and educators to access everything they need from one place.

### **Tools for Parents and Learning Coaches**

From their personalized home page, parents can:

- View all students' schedules, assignments, and lessons.
- Adjust the learning schedule for students in grades K–8.
- Monitor students' progress using the online grade book.
- Record attendance.
- Communicate with teachers and other families via our secure WebMail and message boards.
- Rate the Connections Academy learning experience, at any time.

### **Tools for Students**

The student's individualized home page helps students communicate, organize, and complete and submit assignments. From the homepage, they can:

View daily and monthly schedules and access lessons.

- Monitor progress through the online grade book (for students in grade 6 and above).
- Communicate with teachers and students through WebMail and message boards.
- Access many online learning resources.
- Participate in clubs and activities.

- View a directory of students.

### **Tools for Teachers and Administrators**

Pearson Online Classroom is used extensively by teachers and administrators. Some of the many tools for teachers allow them to:

- Conduct lessons live over the Internet with LiveLesson® sessions.
- Track student progress.
- Review and grade online assignments and assessments.
- Communicate quickly and effectively with students, parents, and Learning Coaches.
- Keep track of student and family interactions.
- Modify learning to meet students' needs

Because much of the learning and record-keeping is done online through Pearson Online Classroom, school administrators can monitor the effectiveness of instruction and assure students are making progress, every day.

### **5. THE AGGREGATE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT RESULTS FOR ANY LOCAL COMPETENCY TESTS OR NATIONALLY NORMED ACHIEVEMENT TESTS**

#### **2022-23 MAP Results – Math**

| <b>Grade</b> | <b>Mean Math Pretest RIT Score</b> | <b>Mean Math Posttest RIT Score</b> | <b>% with Satisfactory Progress</b> |
|--------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 2            | 184.2                              | 193.2                               | 51.7%                               |
| 3            | 181.8                              | 190.7                               | 36.7%                               |
| 4            | 196.8                              | 204.4                               | 40.8%                               |

|   |       |       |       |
|---|-------|-------|-------|
| 5 | 203.7 | 208.8 | 36.3% |
| 6 | 210.4 | 215.6 | 38.5% |
| 7 | 221.3 | 225.7 | 40.1% |
| 8 | 226.3 | 228.5 | 37.5% |

### 2023-24 MAP Results – Math

| Grade | Mean Math Pretest RIT Score | Mean Math Posttest RIT Score | % with Satisfactory Progress |
|-------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2     | 182.5                       | 190.7                        | 51.7%                        |
| 3     | 182.3                       | 194.9                        | 51.4%                        |
| 4     | 197.3                       | 209.5                        | 51.9%                        |
| 5     | 205.5                       | 214.0                        | 42.1%                        |
| 6     | 211.1                       | 222.1                        | 61.0%                        |
| 7     | 222.2                       | 230.2                        | 50.0%                        |
| 8     | 228.1                       | 233.3                        | 48.6%                        |

## 2022-23 MAP Results – Reading

| Grade | Mean Reading Pretest RIT Score | Mean Reading Posttest RIT Score | % with Satisfactory Progress |
|-------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2     | 181.3                          | 189.9                           | 46.7%                        |
| 3     | 188.3                          | 195.6                           | 48.1%                        |
| 4     | 199.7                          | 202.0                           | 34.2%                        |
| 5     | 205.9                          | 207.7                           | 36.9%                        |
| 6     | 212.4                          | 212.9                           | 37.2%                        |
| 7     | 217.7                          | 217.3                           | 37.3%                        |
| 8     | 220.5                          | 220.7                           | 46.4%                        |

## 2023-24 MAP Results – Reading

| Grade | Mean Reading Pretest RIT Score | Mean Reading Posttest RIT Score | % with Satisfactory Progress |
|-------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2     | 177.5                          | 186.0                           | 39.7%                        |
| 3     | 187.3                          | 189.4                           | 30.6%                        |

|   |       |       |       |
|---|-------|-------|-------|
| 4 | 199.3 | 204.4 | 40.3% |
| 5 | 203.3 | 205.1 | 30.2% |
| 6 | 209.8 | 214.0 | 47.1% |
| 7 | 216.6 | 217.9 | 44.1% |
| 8 | 220.3 | 220.6 | 48.6% |

6. IDENTIFY THE NUMBER AND PERCENT OF STUDENTS REPRESENTED BY PARENTS AT PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

2022 - 2023 School Year: 1434 (94.2%)

2023 - 2024 School Year: 1428 (97.6%)

7. FOR HIGH SCHOOLS, ONLY ALSO REPORT ON THE FOLLOWING:

1. THE NUMBER AND PERCENT OF POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENTS (DUAL ENROLLMENT)

2022 - 2023 School Year: 22

2023 - 2024 School Year: 21

2. THE NUMBER OF COLLEGE EQUIVALENT COURSES OFFERED (AP/IB)

2022 - 2023 School Year: 25

2023 - 2024 School Year: 24

3. THE NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN COLLEGE EQUIVALENT COURSES (AP/IB)

2022 - 2023 School Year: 10

2023 - 2024 School Year: 11

4. THE NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS RECEIVING A SCORE  
LEADING TO COLLEGE CREDIT

2022 - 2023 School Year: 3

2023 - 2024 School Year: 1

Michigan Connections Academy continues to provide an educational opportunity and alternative to the students in the State of Michigan. Our mission is to help each student maximize his or her potential and meet the highest performance standards. We are a high-quality, high-tech, high-touch "school without walls" that brings out the best in every student. We appreciate the continued support of our parents, staff, and greater school community in this effort.

Sincerely,

Bryan Klochack

Superintendent

Michigan Connections Academy