Welcome to Wixom Elementary!

Wixom Elementary is characterized by high standards for learning in a caring environment. In 2011-2012, Wixom Elementary served 566 students in grades K-5. Our principal, Alec Bender, worked closely with a staff of 67 to create quality learning opportunities for all students. Our PTA President was Kim Galecki. We are happy that you are a part of the Wixom Elementary family. We invite you to read our Annual Report and call us with questions or comments at (248) 956-3400.

AdvancED / North Central Association (NCA) Accreditation

Since their beginnings, all Walled Lake high schools have been accredited by NCA, now known as AdvancED. The middle and elementary schools earned accreditation in the mid-1990s. In May 2007, Walled Lake hosted a three-day visit from the NCA Quality Assurance Review (QAR) Team. The QAR team noted strengths in the areas of strategic planning, administrative leadership, District-wide assessments and attention paid to the analysis of student achievement data, such as the following:

◆ The leadership and vision of the Superintendent who has led the creation of a research-based, systematic process of improvement.
◆ Professional Learning Communities as a process of collaborative teams that support both District and site-level improvement efforts.
◆ A climate of trust expressed by teachers, students, parents and administrators.
◆ A strong desire to connect instructional and operational programs in order to ensure the District accomplishes its mission of becoming the best educational system in America.

At Wixom Elementary, the staff chose non-fiction writing as our school improvement focus in the spring of 2007. Our Writing Committees worked during the last four years to analyze our writing data, research best practices in writing instruction, and to write our Writing School Improvement Plan. Our Writing Committee and Leadership Team wrote two long-term, building-wide writing SMART Goals which we are using to measure the improvement of writing by all students. In addition, grade level teams have created short-term writing SMART Goals to focus their school improvement efforts.

In November 2012, the District will host a follow-up visit from the AdvancED QAR Team. Over the last five years, school-level and District-level teams have been at work addressing recommendations made in 2007. Much of the work has been focused on using data to make value-added decisions both in classrooms and in supporting departments. In preparation for the November visit, surveys have been administered throughout the school community. Results are now being shared with administrators. In addition, reports are being prepared that will document the ways in which Walled Lake meets the AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools.

AdvancED offers schools and districts a framework within which to improve and to know that they have. The AdvancED systems accreditation model helps all of the schools and departmental offices utilize common planning and communication processes that focus on teaching and learning, to build a positive climate for students and staff, and to hold themselves accountable for continuous improvement.

Parent involvement continues at high level

One of the most important factors in a child’s success in school is the involvement of parents and guardians in the educational process. Parent involvement is high throughout our School District as evidenced by the fact that at the elementary level in 2011-12, 6,688 elementary students, or 97%, were represented by parents and guardians who attended parent-teacher conferences. Ninety-nine percent of the parents who attended conferences were parents of male students and 95% of the parents who attended conferences were parents of female students. In 2010-11, our District-wide elementary parent participation was 96%. At the secondary level in 2011-12, 8,749 students, or 51%, were represented by parents and guardians who attended conferences. Forty-nine percent of the parents who attended conferences were parents of male students and 52% of the parents who attended conferences were parents of female students. In 2010-11, our secondary parent participation was 63%.

At Wixom Elementary, our 2011-12 parent participation was 92%, compared to the previous year’s 94%. In analyzing a gender breakdown, there was 93% parent participation for male students and 90% parent participation for female students.

MEAP scores reported through AER

We are pleased to present you with the Annual Education Report (AER) which provides key information on the 2011-12 educational progress of your child’s school. The AER addresses the complex reporting information required by Federal and State laws. The school’s report contains information about student assessment, Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and teacher quality. If you have any questions about the AER, please contact your school principal. The AER is available for you to review electronically by visiting the school website or you may review a copy from the school office.

MEAP cut scores change in preparation for national testing

A big change took place during the 2011-2012 school year as the State of Michigan changed the cut scores for proficient performance on the MEAP (Michigan Educational Assessment Program) tests. This change made it much more difficult for a student to score at the proficient level on a MEAP test. The State of Michigan made this change to better align our State tests with the new National tests that will be administered starting in the 2014-2015 school year.

The students at Wixom Elementary did a good job on the MEAP tests that were administered to all third, fourth and fifth graders in the State of Michigan in October 2011—and in most cases they exceeded the average proficiency level for the State. In reading, 76% of our third graders, 82% of our fourth graders and 82% of our fifth graders met or exceeded the proficient level for the State of Michigan compared to 62% of third graders, 68% of fourth graders and 69% of fifth graders Statewide. In mathematics, 64% of our third graders, 61% of our fourth graders and 64% of our fifth graders met or exceeded the proficient level for the State of Michigan compared to 36% of third graders, 40% of fourth graders and 40% of fifth graders statewide. The science test is only given to fifth graders, and 14% of our fifth graders met or exceeded the proficient level for the State of Michigan compared to 15% of fifth graders Statewide. This was the second year for the new MEAP writing test for our fourth graders. Fifty-one percent of our fourth graders met or exceeded the proficient level for the State of Michigan compared to 45% of fourth graders Statewide. Writing will continue to be an important school improvement focus at Wixom Elementary.

Specialized schools serve District students

In addition to the regular K-12 program, our School District provides educational alternatives and opportunities for students as well as meeting special education needs. See the “Report on Specialized Schools” for complete information available in our school office or on the website at: www.wlcsd.org.

We also offered 21 college-level Advanced Placement (AP) courses within the high school curriculum. In addition, Walled Lake’s high schools had 27 students enrolled in post-secondary courses during the 2011-12 school year.

Academic rigor emphasized

The Walled Lake Schools’ curriculum provides students with learning experiences based on a rigorous foundation of skills, knowledge and understanding in all areas of language arts (reading, writing, speaking, listening and literature), mathematics, social studies, science, health, physical education, art, vocal and instrumental music, technology, family life education, business and world language instruction.

The District’s mission statement promises all students the opportunity to learn to their maximum potential and to graduate as “...a caring, knowledgeable, responsible citizen” as a result of a sound K-12 educational program based on well-defined, highly articulated benchmarks. In addition, the District’s strategic plan specifies a K-12 articulated and interdisciplinary curriculum and a five-year cycle for reviewing and revising curriculum. The benchmarks in all core and encore academic areas are now being implemented in classrooms throughout the District. The benchmarks are supported by carefully research-based instructional materials including textbooks, technology and other resources.

Unit plans, further aligning benchmarks, text materials and assessments, have been developed in all curriculum areas.

Copies of benchmarks, course descriptions and instructional materials are available on the District’s curriculum website; curriculum.wlcsd.org.

Graduation rate reported

Walled Lake Schools’ 2010-11 graduation rate, the most current available, is 89.68%. The 2009-10 graduation rate was 89.2%.

The Michigan Department of Education has developed a new method for calculating the graduation rate using a four-year cohort formula. This system tracks students from the year they enter ninth grade until they graduate.
After School Tutoring Program at the Village Apartments: One of our programs this year was the After School Tutoring Program at the Village Apartments. This program was offered every Monday and Wednesday after school during the second semester in the clubhouse at the Village Apartments complex. Students in grades 1-5 who needed extra help received small group instruction in reading, writing, and mathematics from Wixom teachers. In addition, National Honor Society students from Western High School and Central High School offered homework help. Parent presentations on how to help your child at home were offered as part of this Tutoring Program.

Student Council: The Student Council organized a school-wide coin collection for the Salvation Army’s Bed and Bread Club. The Student Council officers and representatives presented a check for $1,501.44 during the WJR Bed and Bread Club Radiothon at Oakland Mall in February. The Student Council learned about the issue of adult illiteracy and they raised $473.54 for the Oakland Literacy Council. The Student Council also raised money to adopt an endangered tiger from the World Wildlife Fund and hosted an Earth Day assembly to help our school earn the Green School designation. Other charitable events sponsored by the Student Council included collecting toys for the Hospitality House Annual Holiday Gift Drive, selling Smencils and Weepuls to raise money for Cystic Fibrosis and a very successful Cereal Drive for the Gleaners Food Bank.

Student Instructional Planning Process (SIPP): This year we continued the District-wide Student Instructional Planning Process (SIPP) at Wixom Elementary. Each grade level analyzed student achievement data to identify at-risk learners. Then the grade level teams developed small group classroom interventions that were targeted to meet the needs of our at-risk learners. The progress of the students was monitored throughout the year. If individual students were still struggling, individual intervention plans were developed.

Teacher to Teacher and Upper El. Small Group Literacy Project: The Wixom Elementary teachers in grades K-5 took part in two, half-day literacy workshops. The teachers learned about the best practices for setting up Reader’s and Writer’s workshops in the classroom. Then they spent time observing a teacher who had fully implemented these practices in her classroom. These workshops allowed teachers to exchange ideas with their colleagues, and this led to the implementation of these innovative practices in the classroom. Our teachers in grades 3-5 participated in the Small Group Literacy Project which focused on strategies for teaching small Guided Reading and Guided Writing groups for at-risk students.

Positive Behavior Support Program: The 2011-2012 school year was the fourth year for the Positive Behavior Support Program at Wixom Elementary. We continued to emphasize our three guiding principles of respect, responsibility and safety. The children learned and reviewed building-wide procedures for all aspects of their school day including the classroom, the cafeteria, the playground and the hallway. We continued the Positive Acknowledgement Tickets this year to recognize students who are successfully following our school guidelines. Once a week several students were chosen to appear on our video, “Wixom TV News,” to share examples of classmates who demonstrate respect, responsibility and safety.

Multicultural Education: We celebrated Diversity Week in November with a multicultural music assembly presented by the singing duo Gemini. Our fifth graders created some excellent writing pieces about the issue of adult illiteracy that were displayed at the District-wide Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration in January.

Wixom 4th and 5th Grade Chorus: Music teacher, Leigh Emmett, directed the 4th and 5th Grade Chorus which performed at a number of concerts this year. A highlight of the year was when they brought home a trophy for receiving a “Superior” rating at their competition in Ohio in May. The Chorus soloist at the competition, Ryan Qualle, received a medal for being an outstanding soloist. After the competition, our Chorus had a great day visiting and performing at Cedar Point.

Parent Involvement: We are proud to have an active group of volunteers who support our instructional program. Parents, grandparents and community volunteers worked with small groups of students in all subject areas throughout the year. Parent volunteers coordinated and held a school-wide Variety Show performed both at Wixom Elementary and on stage at Walled Lake Western High School. Several of our parents ran our Literacy Library spending countless hours reshelving books and working on the electronic cataloging of our collection.

Staff Members and Parents Receive Special Recognition: This year kindergarten teacher Mrs. Carrie O’Connell was selected as the Teacher of the Year for Wixom Elementary. The Wixom Elementary PTA presented a Michigan PTSA Honorary Lifetime Membership Award for outstanding service to our PTA and school to retiring teacher Mrs. Diane Poma, and Mr. Stephen Foster and Mrs. Jane Foster received the...
Points of pride (continued)

Michigan PTSA Distinguished Service Award for their many years of dedicated service to our PTA and school. Our PTA also presented PTSA Merit Awards to Mrs. Irene Kaplanetz and Mrs. Tami Estes.

◆ **New Mentor/Mentee Program**: This year the Wixom Elementary Leadership Team created our new Mentor/Mentee program. All staff members were invited to select one at-risk student to mentor throughout the school year. Thirty-seven students and staff members participated in this successful new program.

◆ **March is Reading Month**: We had an ice cream sundae theme for this year’s March is Reading Month. The students did lots of at-home reading during the month of March as a result of Mr. Bender’s challenge which was to read a grand total of 300,000 minutes at home. It turned out that the students beat his challenge by over 10,000 minutes by reading a grand total of 310,282 minutes at home. Mr. Bender lived up to his part of the bargain, and six lucky students turned him into a giant ice cream sundae by pouring chocolate sauce, strawberry sauce, sprinkles and more over his head at an all-school assembly!

**Leadership team oversees the school improvement process**

During the 2011-2012 school year the Wixom Elementary Leadership Team continued to oversee the school improvement process. Second grade teacher, Mrs. Jennifer Mifsud and kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Carrie O’Connell, served as the co-chairpersons of the Leadership Team. Other members of the team included representatives from every grade level, representatives from different content areas and our principal Mr. Bender.

Our Writing Committee met on a monthly basis during the 2011-2012 school year to do the research for a new strategy within our Writing School Improvement Plan. The new strategy focuses on oral language development, vocabulary development and guided writing. Drafts of two new action plans for vocabulary development and guided writing were completed during the 2011-2012 school year. The three other strategies within our Writing School Improvement Plan include: effectively writing to a prompt; effectively revising writing pieces and students taking ownership and accountability for their own writing through conferencing and the utilization of rubrics.

The Leadership Team coordinated the SMART Goal process at our school. We have two building-wide writing SMART Goals which we are using to measure the success of our Writing School Improvement Plan. In addition, each of our grade level teams wrote short-term SMART Goals for the improvement of student achievement in writing for two cycles from November-January and February-May. Data was collected and analyzed for both of these cycles. Grade level teams and content area teachers presented their SMART Goal strategies and results at the fourth annual Wixom Elementary Data Fair in June 2012.

Our Leadership Team spent several months this year preparing for our third Peer Review Visit which was held in May 2012. Our Visiting Team included Michelle Fiebke-Lang, principal of Maple Elementary, Jill Segal, Supervisor of the Transportation Department and Kathy Said, Supervisor of the Special Services Department. During the Peer Review Visit presentation, our Leadership Team co-chairpersons and our principal presented our MEAP data in all subject areas, our writing school improvement plans, Benchmark Assessment data for mathematics, our building-wide SMART Goals, information on the progress of building a Professional Learning Community at Wixom Elementary, information about our Data Team and the first four years of our writing school improvement data. We were pleased that our kindergartners, first graders, third graders and fourth graders demonstrated solid growth over time on the annual writing prompts that we administer at Wixom. However, we were concerned that there was only a 1% increase at the second grade level and a 2% increase at the fifth grade level over time on the annual writing prompts that we administer at Wixom. We noted a significant achievement gap with lower writing scores from student groups such as Economically Disadvantaged students, African American students, and Limited English Proficient students. We also noted that there is an achievement gap by gender with boys scoring lower than girls on writing assessments especially in grade 4. The new strategy that the members of the Writing Committee are currently developing on oral language development, vocabulary development and guided writing is specifically designed to increase the writing achievement of the above-noted student groups.

**Wixom Elementary data team**

The Data Team at Wixom Elementary consists of one representative from each grade level. The primary responsibilities of the Data Team are to access and analyze electronic data on student achievement. Data Team members utilized data from our School District’s Mastery Manager system to prepare reports for each grade level team to analyze.
In compliance with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and the Americans with Disability Act of 1990, it is the policy of the Walled Lake Consolidated School District that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex, age, disability, height, weight, political belief, military service, marital status or genetic information be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination during any program or activity or in employment. For information contact the District Compliance Officer, at 248-956-2023.