

Gill Elementary School

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2010-2011 Annual Report

Principal

Mark Morawski

About Our School

Gill Elementary School serves 573 students (263 females, 310 males) in grades K-4. There are 31 professional teaching staff members and appropriate staff to meet special needs.

School Mission Statement

The Gill Elementary mission is to inspire lifelong learning by providing opportunities for all learners to become responsible, healthy, creative, knowledgeable and resourceful individuals who contribute and communicate within our diverse world.

MEAP Scores

For detailed MEAP information, [click here!](#)

Gill School Improvement Goals

1. All students will improve their fluency and comprehension of reading across all content areas.
2. All students will improve written expression across all content areas.
3. All students will improve their math reasoning and calculation skills through an inquiry-based mathematics approach.

Progress on School Improvement Goals

Reading: The Gill staff continues to place a major emphasis on literacy focusing on reading comprehension. K-4 teachers continue to use research-based strategies which are implemented daily in Readers' Workshop. This year, third grade had additional training in implementation of Readers' Workshop. Our leveled classroom libraries and books categorized by genre follow the workshop model. Third grade received additional books to enhance their classroom libraries. On average, 15 students from grades 1 - 4 received daily intense reading intervention in order to bring them up to grade level. Additionally, our students benefit from literacy paraprofessional support, ESL paraprofessional support, student teachers, parent volunteers, and senior adult and high school volunteers. This additional support helps to meet the needs of individual students at their instructional reading level. Our teachers had collaborative support with reading and writing strategies through the research-based internal professional development opportunity provided through our Instructional Consultation Team (ICT). We continue to effectively implement the reading comprehension program, "Making Meaning," in Grades K and 2-4 along with structured leveled reading instruction, along with Moodle in first grade. Staff members use common language to promote comprehension across our curriculum. K-4 teachers were supported in the Fountas and Pinnell Assessment for reading comprehension. Gill Staff uses common collaboration time and Early Release Days to focus on the area of literacy and our goal of promoting reading comprehension strategies for each student. Our Book Parade and Reading Month activities were successful in motivating students to read outside of the school day and support the home-school connection. To support summer reading skill maintenance, Gill, along with PTA support, continued the Super Summer Success reading program.

Writing: Staff continues their efforts with the implementation of Writers' Workshop as a structure for teaching writing. Within this workshop structure, teachers deliver mini lessons and students experience active engagement through a collaborative learning environment while conferring with teachers and each other, as well as sharing their learning with the group. Staff also integrates the 6+1 Traits of writing into Writers' Workshop. Teachers created a school-wide writing S.M.A.R.T. goal (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Results-oriented, and Time bound) in order to improve writing skills in all curricular areas. From this school-wide goal, grade level S.M.A.R.T. goals were developed. In grades K-3, we continue to utilize Handwriting without Tears, a research-based instructional program to teach handwriting to all students: printing through cursive. Staff meets regularly, as both a whole group and grade level teams, through our weekly collaboration times to discuss successful implementation of Writers' Workshop. In addition, some grades have increased the level of integrated language arts, particularly in writing, with social studies. The focus at Gill has been on the writing traits: ideas/content, organization, and sentence fluency with secondary focus on word choice, voice, conventions, and presentation.

Staff will continue to consistently use rubrics (targets of good writing) for the traits with their students in order to formatively assess their students' writing progress. Continued collaboration about the rubrics will ensure consistency in the scoring of students' writing resulting in higher levels of achievement. Furthermore, several teachers, including the entire fourth grade team implemented the word study program "Words Their Way." This research-based curriculum supports students' spelling and word study skills through the identification of phonological patterns. Teachers gained further support with writing instruction through the research-based internal professional development opportunities available through our Instructional Consultation Team (ICT).



Parent Participation

Following is the number of students whose parents/guardians participated in at least one conference during the school year.

2010-2011 Total 571

Females 262; Males 309

Specialized Schools Serve Students

In addition to the regular K-12 program, Farmington Public Schools provides educational alternatives and opportunities for students, as well as meeting special education needs. These schools are:

- Cloverdale School*
- Farmington Central High School
- Oakland Technical Center
- Visions Unlimited

*For detailed MI Access information, [click here!](#)

Learner Profile Students will exhibit these characteristics:

- Knowledgeable
- Resourceful Problem Solver
- Communicator
- Interdependent Team Member
- Lifelong Learner
- Global Citizens
- Healthy Individual
- Culturally Competent

Graduation Rate

The graduation rate is the percentage of

Math: The 2010-2011 school year has been our first year fully implementing the Bridges in Mathematics program. This program is an inquiry-based and research-based program which develops stronger conceptual thinkers. It is a hands-on program which allows children to meet their individual potential through visualizing and explaining their mathematical reasoning. Within the Bridges program, the workplaces are an opportunity for students to apply their learning through games, activities and make relevant to real life experiences. Also, the Number Corner component of this comprehensive mathematics program gives students another daily experience with using a calendar approach to reinforce their number sense with a spiraling of skills throughout the grade levels. Bridges and Number Corner work in concert with each other to reinforce mathematical reasoning and computation. During the 2010-2011 school year, teachers have had the opportunity to be trained by Bridges professionals to help with the effective implementation of this new program. As the year progressed, teachers had several opportunities to meet in grade level teams, with District math personnel to support implementation with fidelity. This time was used to look at each unit's strengths, and further develop assessment tools. Teachers are utilizing the Bridges web site, as well as meeting in professional learning communities to enable them to further develop their best practice in math instruction.

District Student Achievement Data

Students are assessed through the Farmington Public Schools' Assessment Model. Assessments provide multiple opportunities and a variety of approaches to measure student achievement against the State standards and content expectations. Standardized tests are used to compare student performance against State (Michigan Educational Assessment Program also known as the MEAP and Michigan Merit Exam) and national (ACT Series and Iowa Tests of Basic Skills) results. In addition to standardized tests, end of grade, term and unit assessments provide teachers with information about student achievement that is tied directly to the curriculum (e.g., mathematics, language arts). Classroom assessments are not limited to paper/pencil tests and may include portfolios, demonstrations, research projects and other direct measures of performance. The goal of the assessment program is to provide all students with varied and fair opportunities to demonstrate what they know and are able to do. This complete assessment program is used to monitor the learning of all students and provide feedback for instructional and curricular purposes. We assess all of our elementary students annually with Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, Fountas & Pinnell reading assessment, and 6+1 Writing Traits assessment to determine skill levels in mathematics and English Language Arts.

Elementary School Curriculum Development

Curriculum maps (K-12) and common assessments continue to be developed and updated for grade level content areas and courses. These maps identify and prioritize essential learnings for our students at each grade level. Completed curriculum maps are available on the District web site and the staff curriculum shared folders. Research-based strategies are incorporated into the maps as learning and teaching tools. The elementary math committee, following the District Frameworks process, examined math programs representing research-based math strategy instruction and a match for our students. The Bridges elementary math program is in its second year of implementation. Reader and writer's workshop continues to be a District direction, along with inquiry hands-on learning. Relationship building strategies among and between staff and students is also a focus. A standards-based report card is utilized to reflect student expectations. All curriculum development is done by committee with strong teacher leadership, using State standards as the guide.

National Education Legislation

(NCLB). This law contains the most sweeping changes to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) since it was enacted in 1965. It changed the federal government's role in kindergarten through grade-12 education by asking America's schools to describe their success in terms of what each student accomplishes. The Act contains four basic education reform principles: stronger accountability for results, increased flexibility and local control, expanded options for parents, and an emphasis on teaching methods that have been proven to work. Farmington Public Schools is addressing the implications of this federal legislation along with the Michigan Accreditation System to meet the needs of all our learners

ninth-graders who graduate from high school within four years adjusting for students who move in or out of the District and to alternative programs. The rate is calculated by the State from data provided by the District for the 2009-2010* school year.

FHS 95.30%

HHS 90.16%

NFHS 96.34%

FCHS 38.89%

District

2009-2010 89.20%

2008-2009 85.05%

For detailed information go to: www.farmington.k12.mi.us/schools/annualreports

**2010-2011 graduation data was not available at press time.*

School Accreditation at Gill Elementary School

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires that Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) be calculated for all public schools, for each school district, and for the state. The school or district must attain the target achievement goal in reading and mathematics or reduce the percentage of students in the non-proficient category (partially proficient and not proficient) of achievement by 10% ("safe harbor"). A school or district must also test at least 95% of its students enrolled in the grade level tested for the school as a whole and for each required subgroup. In addition, the school must meet or exceed the other academic indicators set by the state: graduation rate for high schools of 80% and attendance rate for elementary and middle schools of 85%. These achievement goals must be reached for each subgroup that has at least the minimum number of students in the group.

Title I is a federally funded program to aid and assist economically disadvantaged children to gain equal access to standard curriculum. Under the targeted assistance status, the selected schools must generate lists of targeted students based on academic and social need. Based on the poverty rate, four elementary schools, one upper elementary school and one middle school were eligible and selected to receive Title One targeted assistance.

Title I Schools include Beechview Elementary, Gill Elementary, Lanigan Elementary, Wood Creek Elementary, Power Upper Elementary and East Middle School. None (0%) of these schools have been identified for school improvement.

The 2010-11 year's school improvement process focused School Data Profile/Analysis, State-required building school improvement plans, and supporting NCA District Accreditation. In the Spring of 2011, Farmington Public Schools completed Standards Assessment Report and hosted Quality Assurance Review (QAR) April 11-13, 2011. Based on the evidence reviewed by the QAR team, Farmington Public Schools was awarded the status of Accredited.

The Michigan School Accreditation System (MI-SAS) will replace Education YES! in the 2011-12 school year and will be based on student achievement and compliance with Michigan statutes. These components are combined to assign an Annual State Accreditation Status to each school. To provide educators, parents, and employers with a complete picture of the school, additional information about the school and its district, community, and the state is included as part of the "dashboard" display.

For detailed information go to: www.farmington.k12.mi.us/schools/annualreports

Farmington Public Schools' District Accreditation

During the 2008-09 school year, Farmington Public Schools began the process of District Accreditation from North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI). District Accreditation is a systems approach to improving student performance results over time. District Accreditation recognizes that increasing student achievement is more than improving instruction. It is a result of how effectively all the parts of the education system - the district, school, and classroom - work together to meet the needs of students.

District Accreditation applies the three pillars of accreditation - high standards, continuous improvement, and quality assurance - to the entire District to ensure alignment and support between and among all the departments and operating units of the District and its schools. The District Accreditation process provides the District with a comprehensive framework for continually improving student learning and District effectiveness.

In the Spring of 2011, Farmington Public Schools completed Standards Assessment Report and hosted Quality Assurance Review (QAR) April 11-13, 2011. The Quality Assurance Review (QAR) Team included eight members, four educators from Wyoming, Oklahoma and Indiana and four from Michigan. The team interviewed 195 Farmington stakeholders, reviewed artifacts for the 63 indicators and evaluated Farmington using each of the seven AdvancED standards. Findings were based on the team's ratings on evidence that was aligned with the seven AdvancED standards and related indicators. The following seven standards were judged and Farmington's ratings from Highly Functioning, Operational, Emerging or Not Evident are noted:

1. Vision and Purpose - FPS is Highly Functioning
2. Governance and Leadership - FPS is Highly Functioning
3. Teaching and Learning - FPS is Highly Functioning
4. Documenting and Using Results - FPS is Operational
5. Resource and Support Systems - FPS is Highly Functional
6. Stakeholder Communications and Relationships - FPS is Highly Functional
7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement - FPS is Operational

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District employs only highly qualified staff

All teachers employed by Farmington Public Schools have earned “highly qualified” status, as defined by the No Child Left Behind Act. This means that a series of stringent requirements have been met by the teacher, in addition to qualifying for a teaching certificate in the State of Michigan. Some of these requirements include: passing the Michigan Test for Teacher Certification (MTTC) subject content examination for various subjects taught, earning an academic major in the content area, earning a Master’s Degree in a related area, earning National Board Certification, teaching for at least three years AND earning 18 semester hours in an approved program directly related to content area or 90 contact hours of professional development, or demonstrating competence as outlined in a local performance assessment portfolio.

For detailed information go to: www.farmington.k12.mi.us/schools/annualreports

Points of Pride

1. With the opportunity to receive federal funding, we have been able to provide the following services:
 - a. Extended Day Learning for students
 - b. Love and Logic Parenting sessions
 - c. Behavior Interventionist
 - d. Paraprofessional support
 - e. Professional Development for teachers

2. Gill has community partnerships with the following organizations:
 - a. Hitachi
 - b. Kids Hope
 - c. LOC Federal Credit Union
 - d. Jr. Optimist Club
 - e. Bosch
 - f. High School mentoring
 - g. Junior Achievement

The Challenges We Face

1. Reduced state funding has affected Gill in increased class sizes, consolidation of school and reconfiguration of elementary school structure (K-4 buildings and upper elementary). Such changes has created year of transition for both students and staff. Decreased funding coupled with increased student and family need results in an important challenge to which our school must attend. Matching students’ academic and behavioral needs become the focus of this challenge.

2. Budget reduction has also resulted in an elimination of Media Technician positions, less access to new hardware and less teacher training for integration of technology into the curriculum. At the same time, the District continues to expand the use of software in documenting common assessments (Pearson) and communication with families (Wiki).

3. While Title 1 funding has resulted in greater support personnel, the coordination of these services to optimize benefits to the students and teachers continues to be a focus.

4. Our Instructional Consultation Team faced challenges with a changing team membership, finding common planning time to meet and coordinate support with teachers, and streamlining the process in order to provide timely results.

5. As a result of restructuring, the number of classrooms per grade level has increased. This has made it difficult for grade level teachers to meet as a team on a regular basis. Unable to coordinate the schedule to allow grades with more than four classrooms to meet consistently at a common time.