

William Grace Elementary School

29040 Shiawassee Street • Farmington Hills, Michigan 48336 • 248.489.3747

2007-2008 Annual Report

Principal:
Pamela Green

About Our School

William Grace Elementary School serves 269 students (139 females, 130 males) in grades K-5. There are 15 professional teaching staff members and appropriate staff to meet special needs.

Parent Participation

William Grace Elementary School has a high degree of parental involvement. Following is the number of students whose parents/guardians participated in at least one conference during the school year.

2007-2008 100 %
2006-2007 100 %

Females 100 %; Males 100 %

Graduate Profile

Graduates will be:

- Collaborative Team Members
- Effective Communicators
- Healthy Individuals
- Knowledgeable Thinkers
- Lifelong Learners
- Quality Producers
- Responsible Citizens
- Thoughtful Problem Solvers

Education YES!

Adequate Yearly Progress Status (AYP)

2007-2008 Met AYP

2006-2007 Met AYP

Composite Grade

2007-2008 A

2006-2007 B

School Mission Statement

William Grace has a united purpose to provide a safe, inclusive learning community. Together with families and community, we promote responsibility, respect, independence and a desire to learn as students discover and develop their individual potentials in all areas. We empower students to become lifelong, self-directed learners who have a positive vision of their future.

William Grace School Improvement Goals

Goal one:

- a) All students will improve their reading skills across all areas of the curriculum.
- b) All students in kindergarten through second grade will improve their phonemic awareness/phonics skills across all areas of the curriculum.

Goal two: All students will improve their writing skills across all areas of the curriculum.

Goal three: All students will improve their math skills across all areas of the curriculum.

Progress on School Improvement Goals

1. Literacy continues to be emphasized with a focus on reading comprehension K-5 and phonemic awareness K-2. School-wide, teachers worked to establish a common language and focus on similar literacy strategies. Reader's Workshop continues to be utilized as a means to deliver a balanced literacy program. This model incorporates read alouds, shared, guided, and independent reading. We began to place more emphasis on understanding the structure of informational text. A variety of non-fiction texts were purchased to support this focus. K-1 teachers used the Zoo-phonics program to reinforce phonemic awareness and phonic skills. All second through fifth grade teachers administered the QRI during the fall in order to determine reading comprehension levels. Kindergarten teachers used the Kindergarten Assessment each trimester to assess literacy components. A few staff members piloted the new Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment Kit in the spring. These formative evaluation tools were used to assess, monitor, and plan for instruction based on the individual needs of the student. Staff used PLC (Professional Learning Community) times to review data and plan for instruction. The Making Meaning program continues to be an integral part of our curriculum in order to develop a common school wide literacy language and increase reading comprehension skills.

2. Several staff members attended the Writers Workshop training through Oakland County ISD. Teachers incorporated Writers Workshop within their classrooms and began using key components such as developing volume and stamina, conferring, and celebrating successes. Classroom teachers used mini lessons to reinforce concepts and deliver instruction. The 6 + 1 Traits were infused into the curriculum. Coaching was available to all teachers to support their use of Writer's Workshop in the classroom. Throughout the year, students were continually assessed in the area of writing with the use of consistent grade level rubrics. The staff used Professional Learning opportunities to share student papers and plan for instruction. Intervention groups were established to address the needs of the students based on performance data. Grades three through five received six weeks of instruction related to paragraph development.

3. Through the use of inquiry-based instruction, students constructed knowledge and developed a deeper understanding of math concepts. All teachers focused on teaching the appropriate grade level curriculum which followed a District-developed curriculum map. Lower elementary used Touch Math to assist students with learning basic facts. All grade levels utilized the Mastering Math Facts program to increase computation skills. The daily use of ADD math assisted with the reinforcement and introduction of key math concepts. K-5 teachers used the Compass Learning program to individualize instruction by assessing students and assigning academic pathways. Fifth grade teachers used a combination of CMP math, Investigations, and other resources to introduce and reinforce grade level skills.



Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP)

MEAP scores shown below represent the percent of students that met or exceeded the state standard.

	WG 07-08	State 07-08	WG 06-07
Grade 3			
Math (F 95; M 100)	97	90	98
ELA Composite (F 100; M 92)	97	81	98
Grade 4			
Math (F 85; M 84)	85	86	90
ELA Composite (F 90; M 84)	87	76	82
Grade 5			
ELA Composite (F 84; M 83)	84	78	84
Science (F 95; M 83)	89	82	89
Math (F 74; M 83)	78	74	78

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
- Farmington Community School – Adult Education Program
- Oakland Technical Center
- Visions Unlimited

Graduation Rate

The graduation rate is the percentage of 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.

2006-2007	87.13%
2005-2006	87.74%

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 and Michigan Merit Exam) and national (ACT Series) 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.

Elementary School Curriculum Development

Curriculum maps (K-12) 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 elementary grade level, K-5. Completed curriculum maps are available on the District web site and the staff curriculum shared folders. Elementary science and social studies Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations were revised this spring (08) at the State level. The process of curriculum adjustment and mapping has begun in these areas. Research-based strategies are incorporated into the maps as learning and teaching tools. 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 was developed and 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

On Jan. 8, 2002, President Bush signed into law the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). This law represents the President's education reform plan and 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 the President's 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 Education YES! Accreditation System to meet the needs of all our learners.

School Accreditation at William Grace Elementary School

Farmington Public Schools is engaged in a variety of activities relative to school accreditation. All elementary, middle and high schools are accredited by the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement. Alameda and Farmington Community School Early Childhood Programs are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Based on the successful completion of a five-year improvement process, which demonstrated gains in student achievement, William Grace Elementary School has finished the NCA Performance Accreditation five year cycle. The final year of NCA focused on documenting the school improvement process at the end of the five year cycle. This year's school improvement process will focus on NCA district accreditation and state required building school improvement plans.

In 2002, the Michigan Board of Education approved a new state accreditation system after receiving input from diverse audiences across the state, including educators, parents, business and labor. Under Education YES! (Yardstick for Excellent Schools), schools will receive grades of A, B, C, D-Alert, or Unaccredited. The system takes multiple measures into account when grading schools. These factors include MEAP (elementary and middle school) and MME (high school) achievement data and school performance indicators. MEAP and MME data are used for achievement status and achievement change scores and make up two-thirds of the Ed YES! Report Card grade. The other one-third of the grade comes from the Indicators of School Performance which are reported out by strand and include; Teaching for Learning, Leadership, Personnel and Professional Learning, School and Community Relations, and Data and Information Management.

Points of Pride

1. William Grace continued to offer enrichments for grades three through five during the 2007-08 school year. Enrichments offered students the opportunity to select an area of interest and complete an in-depth study related to that subject. All enrichments were designed to support our core curriculum and enhance student learning. In addition, we began implementing intervention groups for grades three through five. Based on our MEAP data, we focused on paragraph writing to provide intensive instruction in order to increase our students' ability to write paragraphs. Plans are already underway to continue utilizing intervention groups in order to address the academic needs of our students.

2. William Grace began implementing the Positive Behavior Support system. Matrixes were developed for six key focus areas and shared with students, staff, and parents. In addition, a different life skill was highlighted each month. Through the use of literature, modeling, practice, and positive reinforcement, we began recognizing and rewarding students for using the featured life skill. Students created books and made a video to reflect their learning. We opened "Gracie's Café" during the lunch hour to recognize students who demonstrated appropriate behaviors. We continue to reinforce our "Three Rule School" philosophy. Our students know that they are expected to: Take Care of Yourself, Take Care of Each Other, Take Care of this Place.

3. This year William Grace received the "Energy Star". As a school, we have established a group of student leaders called "Kilowatt Keepers" to help monitor our use of energy and assist with making sure all electrical items are powered off at the end of the day. We have worked closely with the District's energy manager to educate senior citizens about energy conservation and train other schools about our Kilowatt Keeper program.

4. William Grace received the "Green School Award" for Oakland County. Our school met 13 of the necessary criteria to receive this award. As a school we have focused on being "green." We participated in recycling batteries, paper, ink cartridges, foam trays, and cardboard. Our Kilowatt Keepers conducted energy audits and monitored our use of electricity. In addition, we adopted two manatees from the endangered species list and celebrated Earth Day with a school-wide cleanup. We continue to add to our courtyard habitat as we learn how to make adaptations to improve the area for local wildlife.

5. William Grace received third place in the Healthy School Award Program for Oakland County. As a school, we provide a healthy environment for our students and staff. We begin the day by offering a breakfast program and limit snacks/treats to those from the recommended healthy snack list. Our school continues its partnership with Botsford Hospital to continually review our policies and provide nutritional information to our school community. Students participated in the ACES program, field day, Walk to School, and the Mustang Mile in addition to receiving physical education twice a week. The staff engaged in lunchtime walking clubs and after school yoga. Our Healthy School Committee met regularly throughout the year to plan additional activities that promote living a healthy lifestyle while increasing awareness related to being physically fit.

Challenges We Face

1. Due to economic conditions within the state of Michigan, many of our students come from highly mobile families. The lack of continuity in educational experiences directly impacts the academic success of these students. Many of our students require additional support services in order to address the instructional gaps that have resulted from the inconsistencies in their education. Our limited support services are often inadequate to meet the increasing needs of these students.

2. Parental involvement continues to be a challenge. Attendance at PTA meetings has been minimal which impacts the ability to engage parents in leadership opportunities. In spite of low attendance, our PTA Board continues to support school-wide activities and seek ways to increase parental involvement. With the addition of a Parental Coordinator, we are hopeful that we will be able to survey the needs of our parents and find meaningful ways to engage them as partners in the education process.

3. The economy has had a direct impact on our ability to fundraise in order to support the costs of field trips, assemblies, and other initiatives. Our free/reduced population has increased to 40%. Responses to catalog sales have been minimal which has decreased our PTA's operating budget. As a result, we have sought alternative ways to fund these activities by hosting a Fun Run and writing for numerous grants. We continue to seek funding options that will assist in providing experiential opportunities for our students.

4. Writing is an area that we continue to focus on as a building. This year our MEAP data indicated a decline in student performance in the area of writing. Although this pattern has been seen throughout the entire state, we are dedicated to finding ways to improve our students' ability to be thoughtful and competent writers. Through the use of assessment and informal observations we have discovered that many of our students have limited background experiences which would assist them in developing a variety of rich, detailed stories. As a staff we seek opportunities to enrich the lives of our students by engaging them in hands-on activities, quality field trips and assemblies.