

**HONEY CREEK  
COMMUNITY SCHOOL**  
*Integrating Life, Learning, and Community*

**ANNUAL REPORT  
2008**



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## **About Our School**

### **Mission Statement**

The Mission of Honey Creek Community School is to provide an education of the whole child emphasizing the integration of thought and experience by centering learning on themes and projects in a multi-age setting. Adults with various kinds of expertise, including teachers, parents, and other community members, share in the teaching of the children, connecting the children's lives inside the school with their local and global communities and ecosystems. Honey Creek Community School is committed to fostering an understanding of difference and diversity, and to teaching and modeling an active dialogue about communicating and working together effectively in a democracy with a diverse population.

### **Belief Statements**

- ❖ We believe that people learn and grow best when various aspects of their education and experience are integrated and interactive.
- ❖ We believe that students are most effectively guided by "Expert Models" who participate in cooperative apprenticeships.
- ❖ We believe that complex, situated learning environments and experiences enable all individuals to progress as successful, life-long learners.
- ❖ We believe that the development of cooperative learning strategies and the ability to work successfully as a team member are essential life skills.
- ❖ We believe that understanding and appreciating differences and diversity are integral to becoming successful adults in our changing democracy.
- ❖ We believe that it is essential for children to understand themselves as active participants in their school and in their larger community.

### **Background**

Honey Creek was started by parents who were interested in finding quality alternative education for their children. In 1995, a charter was granted through Washtenaw Intermediate School District, and Honey Creek opened its doors for its first school year.

Honey Creek Community School is a public charter school designed to guide the students in a multi-age setting emphasizing social skills, technology, literacy, and environmental studies. Honey Creek is housed at the High Point Center, located on 40 acres with nature trails, where we share a playground, indoor heated pool, interact with High Point students and learn appreciation for those who are different from ourselves. Our students are residents of Washtenaw County's ten school districts and thus supported with state and county funds and federal grants. Our charter was renewed in May 2005 for another five years.

Honey Creek Community School houses grades K-8. The middle school, grades 6-8, was implemented in 2001, beginning with only 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades that first year. 181 students were enrolled at Honey Creek in 2007-2008. Early Elementary had a 17:1 student per teacher ratio, and both Middle Elementary and Later Elementary had an 18:1 student per teacher ratio. The Middle School had a ratio of 19 students per teacher.

Honey Creek Community School's overarching philosophy rests on the assumption that people learn and grow best when the various aspects of their education and experience are integrated and interactive. To that end, Honey Creek Community School bases learning on an integrated curriculum and on combining thinking with doing. In addition, Honey Creek Community School fosters connections among the home, the school, the community, and among children and adults of different ages and backgrounds. The curriculum emphasizes the integration of thought and experience, and the integration of subject areas, by centering learning on themes and projects with meaning and purpose in the students' lives. A model of apprenticeship best characterizes the nature of the learning experience, in which adults with various kinds of expertise, including teachers, parents, and other community members, share in the teaching of the children, and the children's lives inside the school and outside the school are connected by those relationships and by visits to community sites which are important to the projects and themes the students are doing and studying. Within the school, those projects and themes are explored through learning centers, workstations, and through the Academic Service- Learning program, which allow teachers to guide students as they learn through hands-on activities, both individually and in groups.

### **Overview of Academic Achievement** **Board Goals for 2007-2008**

The Honey Creek Board of Trustees supports the Executive Director and the school improvement goals by:

- ❖ Serving as an educational model
- ❖ Strengthening infrastructure
- ❖ Maximizing community resources
- ❖ Maintaining diversity and stability

### **School Improvement Goals**

School Improvement Planning  
Statement of Affirmation

Through the strategic planning process, Honey Creek Community School will strive to be a model of innovative education. We will work to foster an environment of sharing, trust and open dialogue where all potential and personal growth is achieved. Everyone in the community is a life-long learner.

Together we construct a standards-based, balanced curriculum utilizing individual strengths, meeting students where they are, while accelerating their learning through sound instruction and assessment.

This will be accomplished by focusing on these three broad goal areas:

1. Improve student achievement in the area of mathematics

2. Improve student achievement in the area of literacy
3. Improve the culture and climate of the school community

These broad areas were developed based on a review of previous year's NCA data/reports, school-wide data, recommendations of NCLB and staff/parent input. The work of the School Improvement Teams (SIT) will be to use the broad goal areas to develop specific, *measurable* "action" goals and strategies, inclusive of timelines, resources and the professional development needed. A previous goal of improving parent involvement and home communication was integrated into the remaining broad goal areas.

## **Methods of Assessment**

### **MEAP Testing**

In accordance with the Michigan Department of Education, Honey Creek participates in the MEAP test. This test is given to all students in grades three through eighth grade equivalent learning levels. With only a handful of students taking the test each year, one student's score can account for 10-20 percentage point variations in our overall percentages, and it is therefore meaningless to compare our scores to districts with hundreds or thousands of students. While our group data is difficult to analyze, we do use MEAP scores as one of many tools for assessing and planning for individual students. We are very happy that individual student scores are reflecting the progress we have watched those students make during their time at Honey Creek Community School.

## **Honey Creek Community School Current 2007-2008 MEAP Standings**

### **Honey Creek Community School Demonstrates Continued Improvement on 2007-08 MEAP Results**

#### **Narrative:**

Honey Creek Community School continues to outperform the state average. In 17 out of 21 subgroups/content areas, HCCS meets or exceeds (levels 1 and 2) state standards. We will continue to forge ahead until we meet this challenge across all grades and content areas!

#### **Highlights and Findings:**

- 🍏 92% of HC students in grades 3-8 meet or exceed state standards in Reading. This continues to be strength for Honey Creek.
- 🍏 93% of HC students in grades 3-8 meet or exceed state standards in Math. This demonstrates a developing strength for Honey Creek.
- 🍏 The key below represents: the areas with highest percentage achieved, areas of growth comparing 2006 to 2007 and areas that overall are above the state average.
- 🍏 Even though grade 8 demonstrates growth over 2006 in Writing, and grade 4 made significant improvement from 25% to 62%, exceeding the state average, writing continues to be an area for targeted growth.
- 🍏 MEAP scores improved in all but 4 categories (7<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Writing and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Reading) from 2006-2007.
- 🍏 Comparison is made to Ann Arbor only because this represents the largest demographic area of our student enrollment population.
- 🍏 HCCS staff is cognizant of the reality that MEAP results provide only one lens. We will continue to develop and use traditional, alternative and authentic assessments (at the classroom and building level) to assess student learning.
- 🍏 Our ongoing goal is for 100% of HCCS students to either meet or exceed the state standards (top two performance categories).

Percentage of Grade 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 Students (including SE students) Meeting or Exceeding MEAP (Levels 1 and 2):

	Honey Creek			State			Ann Arbor		
	Jan 06	Oct 06	Oct 07	Jan 06	Oct 06	Oct 07	Jan 06	Oct 06	Oct 07
8 Science	93*	67	93*	77	75	79	87	88	90
8 Math	80*	60	85*	63	68	70	82	86	88
8 Reading	93*	80*	86*	73	76	71	88	90	90
8 Writing	87*	60	64	64	67	72	80	84	83
7 Math	38	47	80*	60	64	73	81	85	88
7 Reading	88*	73	86*	76	80	73	91	91	88
7 Writing	50	73*	71	67	65	77	82	79	88
6 Social Studies	93*	83*	95*	78	74	73	89	87	84
6 Math	71*	78*	95*	65	69	73	84	87	87
6 Reading	86*	78	95*	80	83	82	91	94	92
6 Writing	71	65	86*	75	74	73	86	86	85
5 Science	95*	88*	100*	77	83	82	88	92	90
5 Math	86*	82*	100*	73	76	74	90	92	91
5 Reading	95*	100*	100*	80	84	82	89	93	90
5 Writing	48	65*	63*	63	57	59	75	75	74
4 Math	93*	88*	95*	82	85	86	93	93	94
4 Reading	100*	94*	100*	83	85	85	93	93	92
4 Writing	57*	25	62*	55	45	45	67	58	62
3 Math	92*	95*	100*	87	88	90	96	96	96
3 Reading	92*	90*	84	87	87	85	93	93	94
3 Writing	69*	55*	37	52	52	45	59	67	76

Key: \* Above state average

**Honey Creek Community School Current Composite Education YES! Standings  
2007-2008**

Grades Tested	Ed Yes! Grade	AYP Status	School Improvement Phase
3-8	A	Met AYP	0

**AYP**

Adequately Yearly Progress (AYP) is calculated for all public schools, for each district, and for the state. The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) established “annual state objectives” (the required percent of students proficient on MEAP and English Language Arts and Math tests). These annual objectives must be reached for the school and each subgroup that has at least 30 students in the group. These subgroups include: special education, free and reduced lunch, African-Americans, Caucasians, etc. To make AYP, schools must:

- Test at least 95% of its students (can be averaged over three years)
- Attain the annual objectives **or** reduce the percentage of students in the non-proficient category of achievement by 10% (safe harbor)
- Meet or exceed other academic indicators
  - graduation rate for high schools (80%)
  - attendance rate (80%) for elementary and middle schools

### **IMPROVEMENT PHASE**

**N/A**= Schools may be listed as N/A for the Improvement Phase at a grade range that is not used for calculating the official AYP for the school. Generally, the official AYP for a school comes from the highest tested grade level in the school.

**0**= The school is not identified for improvement.

To obtain Honey Creek records, please visit <http://www.mcgi.state.mi.us/mischoolinfo/>

### **Curriculum Celebration**

Selecting appropriate assessment tools for any educational program requires aligning the assessment methods with the developmental age of the students, the content of the curriculum, and the understanding of learning that is embodied in the school. This final element, all too often overlooked in the rush to “pick a test and get on with it,” is essential if we are to provide a full picture of *how* as well as *what* our children learn.

Honey Creek has elected to measure our students’ learning and to demonstrate that learning to the community through a unique semi-annual Curriculum Celebration at each level. The Celebration embodies all forms of alternative assessment, including performance assessment, product assessment, portfolios of student work, student exhibition and personal communication. Every student in every classroom participates after the completion of a unit; therefore they tell the story of what and how they have been learning in our school. Visitors to the Celebration see student-made products, watch demonstrations, hear students describe their work, ask questions, and – as they walk through a series of rooms filled with bright displays and chattering children – gain an understanding of both Honey Creek’s curriculum and our philosophy.

#### **Annually Each Fall:**

Nature of Event: Exploratory/Interactive

Format: Theme Based

Content Focus: Social Studies and Science

Layout: Large common spaces

#### **Annually Each Spring:**

Nature of Event: Exhibition

Format: Theme Based

Content Focus: Integrated Projects

## **Other Curricular Programs**

### **Academic Service-Learning**

SERVICE-LEARNING IS A METHOD BY WHICH YOUNG PEOPLE LEARN AND DEVELOP THROUGH ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN A THOUGHTFULLY ORGANIZED SERVICE EXPERIENCE THAT...

1. Meets actual community needs;
2. Is coordinated in collaboration with the school and community;
3. Is integrated into each young person's academic curriculum;
4. Provides structured time for a young person to think, talk, and write about what he/she did and saw during the actual service activity;
5. Provides young people with opportunities to use newly acquired academic skills and knowledge in real-life situations in their own community
6. Enhances what is taught in the school by extending student learning beyond the classroom; and
7. Helps foster the development of sense of caring for others.

**AS-L partnerships included Huron River Watershed Council, High Point School, Washtenaw Intermediate School District, Manchester Seeds, The Ford Sunflower Project, American the Beautiful Foundation, Dexter Mill.**



## **HONEY CREEK COMMUNITY SCHOOL**

### **ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS 2007-2008**

- ❖ After six years of receiving Learn & Serve grant funding in the amount of \$95,000 to support the development, implementation, and institutionalization of Academic Service-Learning into its daily curriculum, programming, and philosophy, the AS-L program at Honey Creek Community School successfully completed its first year without funding from Learn & Serve America. The Honey Creek community takes tremendous pride in the fact that its work over the last six years has resulted in a strong, self-sustainable program that is completely imbedded in the school's culture, curriculum, and programming.
- ❖ Honey Creek was awarded a \$500 grant from the State Farm Foundation to support AS-L activities.
- ❖ HCCS finished its third season as a participant in The LEAGUE Powered by *Learning To Give*.
- ❖ In 2007-2008, the average HCCS student spent over 43 hours engaged in service to others. The entire HCCS student body (~182 students) spent over 7,861 hours engaged in service to others.

❖ Sixty-seven Honey Creek students earned the President’s Volunteer Service Award (50+ hours of service). Twenty-five of those students earned the Silver Award (75+ hours) and three earned the Gold Award (100+ hours of service).

❖ Honey Creek students partnered with the following members of the community-at-large in Academic Service-Learning activities:

WISD	Gretchen’s House
High Point School	Shelter Association of Washtenaw County
High Point Girl Scouts & PSO	Washtenaw Housing Alliance
HCCS PTO	Pennies for Peace
Dexter Public Schools Food Service	Food Gatherers of Ann Arbor
Siddhartha School in Ladakha, India	Heifer International
State Farm	Matthaei Botanical Gardens
Just Us Club	SOS Shelter
National Wildlife Federation	Mott Children’s Hospital
	Ann Arbor VA Hospital
	Kiwanis
	Tantre Organic Farm

### **Specialized Education**

Honey Creek students who have special needs receive special education services through Honey Creek Community School contractors and staff. Washtenaw Intermediate School District provides consultation and mentors. Honey Creek Community School provides its own speech and language services and Teacher Consultant. The special education staff, Honey Creek teachers, and parents work together to best meet the needs of the student.

### **Overview of other pertinent information**

#### Instructional Consultation Teams (ICT)

Honey Creek Community School is part of the Michigan Consortium of IC teams. ICT is a model of support for schools. Instructional consultation can be accessed when a teacher has a concern regarding a student. Instructional Consultation has three critical components. The first component is a delivery system consisting of a representative team, request for assistance procedures, case management and documentation. The second component includes the process variables of collaborative communication, systematic problem solving and curriculum based assessment. The final component is evaluation design. Evaluation design includes training of team members and continually assessing the outcomes of the ICT program as a whole.

The goal of instructional consultation at Honey Creek Community School is to enhance, improve and increase student and staff performance.

The objectives are to:

1. Develop a systematic support network within the building, including a trained Instructional Consultation team.

2. Enhance teachers' skills in and application of best practices of instructional assessment and delivery.
3. Develop school-wide norms of collaboration and problem-solving.
4. Utilize data for classroom and school decisions.

\*Adapted from ICT Training Manual, Lab for IC teams, University of Maryland

Currently, Honey Creek is in its second phase of implementation. In phase one, a facilitator was trained and data was collected. In phase two, Honey Creek's IC team was formed and trained in instructional consultation. As we move into phase three, we will aim for continued implementation and institutionalization of the IC team model.

The Honey Creek IC team's goals for 2007 were: 1) All team member will have successfully reached the intervention evaluation stage of an ICT reading case by the end of the 2007-08 school year. 2) Team members will gain an awareness and understanding of instructional consultation in behavior, math, and writing. 3) The IC team will retain its members and keep membership at seven or more. Goal one has been attained as seven of eight team members have reached the intervention-evaluation stage of a case. Goal two was achieved through the ½ day team training provided to all team members. Goal three was attained by maintaining team membership at eight members.

### Highlights and Accomplishments

- ❖ GRANT AWARD! Honey Creek Community School received a Small Rural School Achievement grant (\$25,267) for the fourth year in a row. We can use this money in a number of ways, including teacher and administrative development, learning improvements, and teacher bonuses

### Parent Participation

**Cooperative Efforts:** All Honey Creek parents are encouraged to join us as partners in the educational process. Over 98% of our parents provided support to Honey Creek in some way during the 2007-08 school year. This is fantastic participation. We have awesome parents at Honey Creek. Thank you so much! Below are examples of the ways parents have helped:

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| ❖ Student/Parent/Teacher Conferences | -Cooking                                 |
| ❖ P.T.O. fund raisers                | -Gardening                               |
| -Bagel sales                         | ❖ Field study chaperones                 |
| -Scrip sales/purchases               | ❖ Reading with children                  |
| ❖ Boundless Playground               | ❖ Room parents                           |
| ❖ Fall Festival                      | ❖ Donation of time and money             |
| ❖ Winter Carnival                    | ❖ Grant writing                          |
| ❖ Holiday Shop                       | ❖ 8 <sup>th</sup> grade trip fundraising |
| ❖ Cultural Fair                      | ❖ Classroom fundraising                  |
| ❖ School Media Center                | ❖ Graduation ceremony & dance            |
| ❖ Honey Creek Community School Board | ❖ Staff meeting snacks                   |
| ❖ CPC data analysis                  | ❖ Academic Service-Learning              |
| ❖ Life skills                        | ❖ AS-L Committee and presentation work   |
| -Electronics                         | ❖ School Age Advisory Committee          |
| -Sewing                              | ❖ Art Classes                            |



**HONEY CREEK COMMUNITY SCHOOL**  
**SCHOOL AGE PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**  
**2007-2008**

- ❖ Honey Creek Community School’s After School and Summer Camp Programs continue to be licensed by the Family Independence Agency.
- ❖ During the school year, approximately 179 students were enrolled in the After School Programs.
- ❖ Approximately 130 children participated in the Summer Camp Program last year.
- ❖ In addition to providing high quality childcare and a variety of developmentally appropriate activities for students in grades K-8, the after school programs offered the following enrichment activities:

- |                                    |                      |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Piano Lessons                      | Choi Kwang Do        |
| Soccer                             | Abakadoodle Art      |
| Jazz Band                          | One-To-One Tutoring  |
| Field Hockey                       | Brownies             |
| Basketball                         | Girl Scouts          |
| Private Musical Instrument Lessons | Tech Club            |
| Chamber Ensemble                   | Phoenix Fitness Club |
| Italian Class                      | Flag Football        |
|                                    | Homework Club        |

**Overview of School Information**

**Demographics**

Students	95-96		96-97		97-98		98-99		99-00		00-01		01-02		02-03		03-04		04-05		05-06		06-07		07-08					
African American	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
American Indian	2	6	5	8	5	5	5	7	2	9	3	8	4	4	3	6	7	5	6	7	5	5	7	6	9	4	0	0		
Asian	1	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	9	2	8

Caucasian	9 12	21 17	26 29	29 37	31 34	30 30	46 42	55 47	49 52	45 51	47 52	53 46	64 55
Hispanic	1 0	2 1	0 4	1 3	1 3	5 3	4 3	4 2	3 1	4 2	5 2	2 1	3 0
Multi-ethnic	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 4	0 4	3 13	0 5	4 6	13 13	20 16
<b>Totals</b>	16 19	30 27	35 41	38 51	39 50	40 49	56 61	63 66	65 80	62 80	67 75	67 75	98 83

### **Financial Data: 2005-2006**

<b>General Fund</b>		<b>School Age Endowment Fund</b>	
<b>Revenues</b>		<b>Assets</b>	
Program revenues		Cash	15,242
Charges for services	\$ 135,270	Endowment	54,815
Operating grants and contributions	215,166		
<b>General revenues</b>		<b>Deductions</b>	
State foundation	1,302,498	Endowment activities	0
<b>Total revenues</b>	\$ 1,662,499	<b>Net assets - ending</b>	\$ 70,057
<b>Expenses</b>			
Instruction	\$ 929,769		
Support services	551,691		
Community services	181,817		
Capital Outlay (noncapitalized)			
Depreciation (unallocated)			
<b>Total expenses</b>	\$ 1,663,277		
<b>Decrease in net assets</b>	\$ (778)		

### **Reportable Incidences**

We are happy to relate that there were no reportable incidences for the 2007-2008 school year.

### **Nondiscriminatory Policy**

Honey Creek Community School is non-religious and shall accept students and hire staff without discrimination as to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status,

sexual orientation, educational affiliation, handicap status, or age, and complies with all applicable laws and regulations.

## **Staff**

**Administration:** Executive Director – Al Waters, Assistant Director – Shellee Almquist, School Age Supervisor – Sue Huczek, Administrative Assistant – Karen Giltrow

**Teachers:** *Early El* –Barbara Naess, Stephanie Boling and Catherine Gardner; *Middle El* - Salli Kropp and Mary Bassett; *Later El* –Teresa Gonzalez and Johnny Thompson; *Middle School* – Elizabeth Scott, Jonathon Baek, Joe Griffith, and Cindy Wauer

**Specials:** Amy Broadhurst (PE and Swimming), Angela Biedenbender (Band/General Music Teacher), Katherine Downie (Art) Bill Vanloo (Technology)

**Staff Support:** Bil Vanloo (Technology Specialist), Barbara Edwards (Media Specialist), Karen Berg (Teacher Consultant), and Melissa Talladay (Speech &Language) Meg Szczygiel (ICT), Monica Nelson (Social Worker) Michelle Phibs (Occupational Therapist)