LEA Application

Michigan SIG Cohort IV

APPLICATION COVER SHEET

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS (SIG)

Legal Name of LEA Applicant: Mount Clemens Community Schools District Code: 50140	Applicant's Mailing Address: 167 Cass Avenue Mount Clemens, Michigan 48043
LEA Contact for the School Improvement Grant Name: Dr. Deborah Wahlstrom Position and Office: Superintendent Contact's Mailing Address: 167 Cass Avenue, Mount Clemens, MI 48043 Telephone: 586.461.3770 Fax: Email address: wahlstromd@mtcps.org	
LEA School Superintendent/Director (Printed Name): **Deborah Wahlstrom**	Telephone: 586.461.3776
Signature of the LEA School Superintendent/Director: x Deborah Wahlstrom	Date: July 6, 2015
LEA School Board President (Printed Name): **Earl C. Rickman III**	Telephone: 586.615.1274
Signature of the LEA Board President: x Earl C. Rickman	Date: July 6, 2015
Union Representative (Printed Name): **Mary Campbell**	Telephone: 586.201.7354
Signature of Union Representative: x Mary Campbell	Date: July 6, 2015

The LEA, through its authorized representative, agrees to comply with all requirements applicable to the School Improvement Grants program, including the conditions that apply to any waivers the State of Michigan receives through this application.

ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATION: By signing this cover sheet, the applicant certifies that it will agree to perform all actions and support all intentions stated in the Assurances and Certifications in **Attachment H**, and will comply with all state and federal regulations and requirements pertaining to this program. The applicant certifies further that the information submitted on this application is true and correct.

LEA APPLICATION

SCHOOLS TO BE SERVED

SCHOOLS TO BE SERVED: An LEA must include the following information with respect to the Eligible schools it will serve with a School Improvement Grant.

The LEA must identify each Eligible school the LEA commits to serve and identify the model that the LEA will use in each Eligible school. Detailed descriptions of the requirements for each intervention are in attachments E.1 – E.6

An LEA in which one or more priority schools are located must serve all of these schools before it may serve one or more focus schools.

Note: Weight will be given to applicant schools that:

- have not previously received a SIG award
- are identified as priority
- choose the transformation, turnaround, whole-reform, or early learning models

SCHOOL NAME	NCES ID #	PRIORITY (check)	FOCUS (check - if applicable)	INTERVENTION MODEL
Seminole Academy	262469001673	X		Transformation

Note: The **"Rule of Nine" has been eliminated**. In previous years, an LEA that has nine or more Priority schools could not implement the transformation model in more than 50 percent of those schools. That requirement is **no longer in effect.**

OVERVIEW OF APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- DO NOT RESPOND HERE -

1. **Analysis of Need:** (Section B, Question 1) For each priority and focus school that the LEA commits to serve, the LEA must demonstrate that the LEA has analyzed the needs of each school, such as instructional programs, school leadership and school infrastructure, based on a needs analysis that, among other things, analyzes the needs identified by families and the community, and selected interventions for each school aligned to the needs each school has identified.
2. **Family and Community Input:** (Section B, Question 1.b) For each priority and focus school that the LEA commits to serve, the LEA must demonstrate that it has taken into consideration family and community input in selecting the intervention.
3. **Intervention Plan:** (Section B, Question 3) The LEA must describe actions it has taken, or will take, to design and implement a plan consistent with the final requirements of the turnaround model, restart model, school closure, transformation model, evidence-based whole school reform model, early learning model, or state-determined model.
4. **Capacity to Provide Adequate Resources**: (Section A, Question 1) The LEA must describe actions it has taken, or will take, to determine its capacity to provide adequate resources and related support each priority and focus school, identified in the LEA's application in order to implement, fully and effectively, the required activities of the school intervention model it has selected on the first day of the first school year of full implementation.
5. **External Service Provider Selection:** (Section B, Question 5) The LEA must describe actions it has taken, or will take, to recruit, screen, and select external providers, if applicable, to ensure their quality, and regularly review and hold accountable such providers for their performance.
6. **Resource Profile:** (Section B, Question 4) The LEA must describe actions it has taken, or will take, to align other resources (for example, Title I funding) with the selected intervention.
7. **LEA Actions to Support the Intervention Model:** (Section A, Question 1) The LEA (district/central office) must describe actions it has taken, or will take, to modify its practices or policies, if necessary, to enable it to implement the selected intervention fully and effectively.
8. **LEA Oversight of SIG Implementation:** (Section A, Question 2) The LEA must describe how it will provide effective oversight and support for implementation of the selected intervention for each school it proposes to serve.
9. **Family and Community Engagement:** (Section B, Question 3.b) The LEA must describe how it will meaningfully engage families and the community in the implementation of the selected intervention on an ongoing basis.
10. **Sustaining Reforms:** (Section B, Question 9) The LEA must describe how it will sustain the reforms after the funding period ends.
11. **Reform Model Implementation:** (Section B, Question 3, Attachments E.1 – E.6) The LEA must describe how it will implement, to the extent practicable, in accordance with its selected SIG intervention model(s), one or more evidence-based strategies.
12. **Annual Goals:** The LEA must describe how it will monitor each priority and focus school, that receives school improvement funds including by

a. Establishing annual goals for student achievement on the State's assessments in both reading/language arts and mathematics (Section B, Question 8)

b. Measuring progress on the leading indicators from attachment A, Baseline Data. (Section A, Question 3)

13. **Charter School and External Service Provider Accountability:** (Section A, Questions 4 and 5) An LEA must hold the charter school operator, CMO, EMO, or other external provider accountable for meeting these requirements, if applicable.

14. **Pre-Implementation Activities** (Section B, Question 3, Attachments E and F) An LEA that intends to use the first year of its School Improvement Grants award for planning and other pre-implementation activities for an eligible school, the LEA must include a description of the activities, the timeline for implementing those activities, and a description of how those activities will lead to successful implementation of the selected intervention.

15. **Rural LEA Model Modification:** (Section B, Question 3.c) For an LEA eligible for services under subpart 1 or 2 of part B of Title VI of the ESEA (Rural Education Assistance Program) that chooses to modify one element of the turnaround or transformation model, the LEA must describe how it will meet the intent and purpose of that element.

16. **Evidence-Based, Whole-School Reform Model:** (Section B, Question 3, Attachment E.4) For an LEA that applies to implement an evidence-based, whole-school reform model in one or more eligible schools, the LEA must describe how it will

    a. Implement a model with evidence of effectiveness that includes a sample population or setting similar to the population or setting of the school to be served; and

    b. Partner with a whole school reform model developer, as defined in the SIG requirements.

17. **Restart Model:** (Section B, Question 3, Attachment E.5) For an LEA that applies to implement the restart model in one or more eligible schools, the LEA must describe the rigorous review process (as described in the final requirements) it has conducted or will conduct of the charter school operator, CMO, or EMO that it has selected or will select to operate or manage the school or schools.

18. **Implementation Timeline:** (Section B, Question 7, Attachment F) the LEA must include a timeline delineating the steps it will take to implement the selected intervention in each school identified in the LEA's application.

Section A

District/Central Office Level Responses

Actions to Support the Intervention Model:

The LEA (district/central office) must describe actions it has taken, or will take, to modify its practices or policies, if necessary, to enable it to implement the selected intervention fully and effectively

The District has taken a number of actions to modify its practices and policies to implement the selected intervention fully and effectively:

- All students, not just those who are easy to teach, learn a rigorous core curriculum. Special education teachers have the same high-quality materials as do our general education teachers and attend the same professional development programs.
- A team of district-level personnel attend professional development sessions with the Seminole team to ensure alignment between priority/SIG school expectations and district policies and protocols. The central office team has worked throughout the 2014-2015 school year to increase its capacity to support a priority school.
- The District has begun the implementation of a comprehensive benchmark assessment program to provide quarterly data to schools. The District is also working to develop report structures that are consistent across data sources to make the analysis of data easier for teachers.
- The District has developed tools for the thoughtful analysis of data to ensure that all teachers, and not just those who are comfortable with data, have a coherent method for looking at student-level data and making decisions.
- District staff work with team members at Seminole to provide feedback and suggestions for their custom monitoring tools.
- The District piloted Thoughtful Education, one of the four recommended by the Michigan Council for Educator Effectiveness, during the 2014-15 school year. The tool uses multiple valid measures in determining performance levels, including as a significant factor, data on student growth for all students. The evaluation tool and protocols for using it were selected with teacher, union, and principal involvement.
- A new District requirement beginning with the 2015-2016 school year is that core District-level staff must have the skill set to assist Seminole with its Instructional Learning Cycles (ILC). This core team will be working closely with Seminole to use classroom data on a more consistent basis, and provide support to anyone who needs it. Requiring core central-office staff to be able to do this, helps ensure sustainability.

There are a number of ways the District will be more involved in intentional in hiring hiring of the best staff possible to implement the grant and build capacity.

In reaching out for staff members, we have specific qualities for which we are looking – including the ability to work well with high-needs students and build relationships. When we are able to hire, postings are developed and applicants are screened by the Curriculum Specialist or Special Ed. Director. District leadership joins the building team at the interviews to ensure the highest caliber individual is selected and then coordinates with HR to contact references. The District is re-opening a school in the 2015-2016 school year and shifting staff to cover both of our elementary buildings. We were careful to maintain a Seminole team that had been involved in the priority school redesign plan, and the piloting of the CKLA curriculum. Even as we place teachers in different grade levels, we will be providing support to ensure teachers new to the District or grade levels have comprehensive training with curriculum materials.

Describe how community resources will be aligned to facilitate implementation of the selected intervention

A number of community resources are being aligned to facilitate the implementation of the selected intervention model. These include: (1) DHS Pathways to Potential now housed in Seminole Academy, (2) a Henry Ford Macomb school-Based Health Center; (3) a well-articulated partnership with the Tank Arsenal to provide an afterschool program as well as PE for our POHI students; (4) CKLA Parent surveys to determine areas of program implementation that may need additional support; (5) Extended curriculum night offerings for parents to build capacity to become involved in an effective partnership with the school; (6) Homework kits developed for each student to ensure families and tutors have the tools for helping students with their homework.

If the applicant is a priority school, how does this align with and support the existing state reform/redesign plan?

Seminole Academy is a newly-identified priority school and has an MDE-approved redesign plan. This SIG application directly aligns to Seminole's approved redesign plan and includes all of its components.

A key to developing and implementing the redesign plan was the unpacking tool. Seminole's unpacking tool was developed in continuous collaboration with leadership, general and special ed. grade-level representatives, School- and District-based administrators, and School- and District-Improvement Facilitators from Macomb ISD. The unpacking tool serves the school team as the guide for rapid improvement. Per MDE requirements, the tool identifies five specific areas related to Seminole's intervention model: (1) Instructional Programs and Practices, (2) Professional Learning, (3) Student Achievement and Student Data Collection, (4) Family and Community Involvement, and (5) Social/Emotional Needs of Students. Big Idea #1 is to increase content knowledge of struggling students through Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA), the program selected to dramatically improve student achievement in reading. The unpacking tool also provides the basis for program evaluation and monitoring the actions of adults and students.

Oversight of SIG Implementation: *The LEA (district/central office) must describe how it will provide effective oversight for implementation of the selected intervention for each school it proposes to serve. Who will perform this work? Will it be existing staff, or does the LEA propose to add additional staff or contract with another entity to perform this work?* ***(maximum length 1 page)***

District staff were intimately involved in the development of the redesign plan, as well as the development of the SIG application. Because this work is some of the most important being done in the district, the following central office team provides direct support to the school: Superintendent (Deborah Wahlstrom), Assistant Superintendent (Renee Clemens), Director of Special Education (Stacy Tomlingson), and Coordinator of Research and Data (Sarah Mohler). These staff members have worked tirelessly to support all facets of the priority school plan including being an active part of all meetings and workshops related to priority school status. All four of these individuals were intimately involved in the Cohort I priority high school and bring that background and experience to assist Seminole.

The superintendent has personally supported the work of Seminole Academy in the following ways: participated with the Seminole team at all FSI workshops at the MISD; participated with the third-grade teachers in their ILC training at the MISD; provided on-site support for the third-grade teachers for the ILC process to include additional training in unpacking standards, determining how to assess standards, organizing and collecting data for standards, and tying interventions to data from the ILC process. Additionally, the superintendent has participated in almost all priority school planning sessions including Data Dialogues, Surveys of Enacted Curriculum, and more.

Monitoring Progress on Annual Goals: *The LEA must describe how it will monitor the progress on meeting annual goals for each school receiving a SIG. Refer to attachment G (from Section B), Annual Goals, as appropriate.* ***(maximum length 1 page)***

The District team accepts the responsibility for ensuring the monitoring of annual goals for Seminole Academy. There are a number of ways this will be completed. First, the goals will be laid out so it is very clear to everyone what we are working to achieve. The goals are designed to ensure we meet the requirements for accountability purposes, but also lead us toward improvement. The goals are measured with multiple data sources, once M-STEP is in place. Until the time M-STEP data is readily available, the District will use NWEA and a District Writing Test to monitor student learning toward standards.

The school's redesign team has determined how it will monitor and measure improvement during the implementation of its redesign plan, funded by a School Improvement Grant (SIG).

To determine the goals, team members reviewed key assessment tools in the core content areas including reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies. For the area of reading, results from the NWEA reading test and M-STEP reading test (when available) will be used. In the area of writing, the school will use results from the district's writing tests. These tests are written in a format similar to that of SBAC assessments, and those that are found on the M-STEP. Mathematics achievement will be monitored with the NWEA math test and M-STEP. Both science and social studies achievement will be monitored by progress in priority standards, using a local assessment specific to the standard, and M-STEP. For the NWEA and district assessments, results from students in grades K-5 will be used. For the M-STEP test, results for students in grades 3, 4, and 5 will be used.

For each assessment, the data will be monitored and reviewed to mirror its use by the Michigan Department of Education for accountability purposes. Students reflected in the data will be full-academic year students (FAY). Additionally, data for the subgroups used for Seminole's accountability will be used. The subgroups for which the school is held accountable include All Students, Black/African American, White, Low SES, Students with Disabilities, and Lowest 30%.

- ***Charter School Accountability:*** *If the applicant is a Michigan charter school, describe how district/central office will regularly review the charter school operator, CMO, or EMO and hold them accountable for meeting the SIG requirements.* ***(maximum length 1 page; please respond "N/A" if the applicant entity is not a charter school)***

N/A

External Service Provider Accountability: *Describe how the district/central office will regularly review the performance of external service providers (ESP) and hold them accountable for meeting the SIG requirements.* ***(maximum length 1 page)***

The SIG team expects to continue to use resources available from Macomb County ISD, including the services of Deane Spencer, Lisa Assaro, Teresa Hoesenheur, and Paul Robinson and will use a method, now used in our Quarterly Reports, to monitor and hold staff accountable. We will monitor items such as the following:

- Facilitation of meetings (Numbers and types of facilitation sessions, agendas, sign-in sheets, work products)
- Technical support (log of technical support provided)
- Support for unpacking tool and program evaluation (Log of support provided, sign-in sheets, work products)
- On-site fidelity checks for program implementation (Fidelity report and presentation)
- Support for Instructional Learning Cycle (Log of sessions, results of student work, sign-in sheets, etc.)

District Level Budget – Part 6a:

A five-year budget overview has been completed for Seminole Academy. This budget includes a 5% allowable expense to provide monitoring ans support services from the Central Office Level. As the district has been in a deficit, the current administrative staff is small – with only a handful of people to administer all programs in the district. Our expectation is that the monitoring and support for Seminole Academy have a high priority, thus a full-time person will be in place to work directly with the school.

The District uses a team approach, which includes cross-training of individuals. This is critical to sustaining oversight of Seminole Academy once the grant period ends.

The following chart, *Budget Overview*, privides a five-year overview of annual costs for Seminole Academy, as well as the annual costs for the District.

Attachment C2
Five-Year Budget Overview

Mount Clemens Community Schools - Local Educational Agency (LEA)

Budget Overview

	Budget Year					
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	5 Year Total
	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	
Seminole Academy	$1,425,000.00	$ 1,425,000.00	$ 1,425,000.00	$ 715,000.00	$ 715,000.00	$ 5,705,000.00
LEA Costs	$ 75,000.00	$ 75,000.00	$ 75,000.00	$ 35,000.00	$ 35,000.00	$ 295,000.00
Total Budget	$1,500,000.00	$ 1,500,000.00	$ 1,500,000.00	$ 750,000.00	$ 750,000.00	$ 6,000,000.00

District Level Budget – Part 6b:

Following are the pages for Attachment C3, which provide the preliminary District Budgets for each year of the SIG. The budget with district-level cost of $75,000 per year for the first three years and $35,000 per year for the last two years, and does not exceed 5% of the overall District allocation.

A position is being created to specifically support SIG specific duties and implementation, monitor the progress of each school, and assist with holding others accountable to SIG requirements. This is in direct alignment with the existing state redesign plan and does not duplicate any positions at the building level. Because of the increased requirements in areas such as the Instructional Learning Cycle at the classroom level, this person (1 FTE) will be full-time in supporting the SIG and district-related activities in doing so.

Following are the preliminary budget pages for each year of the SIG, followed by the budget narrative (Part 6c).

District/Central Office Budget Year 1: (may not exceed 5% of total allocation)								
FUNCTION CODE	FUNCTION TITLE	SALARIES	BENEFITS	PURCHASED SERVICES	SUPPLIES & MATERIALS	CAPITAL OUTLAY	OTHER EXPENDITURES	TOTAL EXPENDITURES
221	Improvement of Instruction							
226	Supervision and Direction of Instructional Staff							
232	Executive Administration							
233	Grant Writer/Grant Procurement/Coordinator	$37,500	$36,175	$595	$750			$75,000
249	Other School Administration							
252	Fiscal Services							
266	Operation and Maintenance							
281	Planning, Research, Development, and Evaluation							
283	Staff/Personnel Services							
331	Community Activities							
	SUBTOTAL	$37,500	$36,175	$595	$750			$75,000
	Indirect Costs _____ % Restricted Rate							
	TOTAL	$37,500	$36,175	$595	$750			$75,000

District/Central Office Budget Year 2: (may not exceed 5% of total allocation)								
FUNCTION CODE	FUNCTION TITLE	SALARIES	BENEFITS	PURCHASED SERVICES	SUPPLIES & MATERIALS	CAPITAL OUTLAY	OTHER EXPENDITURES	TOTAL EXPENDITURES
221	Improvement of Instruction							
226	Supervision and Direction of Instructional Staff							
232	Executive Administration							
233	Grant Writer/Grant Procurement/Coordinator	$37,500	$36,175	$595	$750			$75,000
249	Other School Administration							
252	Fiscal Services							
266	Operation and Maintenance							
281	Planning, Research, Development, and Evaluation							
283	Staff/Personnel Services							
331	Community Activities							
	SUBTOTAL	$37,500	$36,175	$595	$750			$75,000
	Indirect Costs _____ % Restricted Rate							
	TOTAL	$37,500	$36,175	$595	$750			$75,000

District/Central Office Budget Year 3: (may not exceed 5% of total allocation)								
FUNCTION CODE	FUNCTION TITLE	SALARIES	BENEFITS	PURCHASED SERVICES	SUPPLIES & MATERIALS	CAPITAL OUTLAY	OTHER EXPENDITURES	TOTAL EXPENDITURES
221	Improvement of Instruction							
226	Supervision and Direction of Instructional Staff							
232	Executive Administration							
233	Grant Writer/Grant Procurement/Coordinator	$37,500	$36,175	$595	$750			$75,000
249	Other School Administration							
252	Fiscal Services							
266	Operation and Maintenance							
281	Planning, Research, Development, and Evaluation							
283	Staff/Personnel Services							
331	Community Activities							
	SUBTOTAL	$37,500	$36,175	$595	$750			$75,000
	Indirect Costs _____ % Restricted Rate							
	TOTAL	$37,500	$36,175	$595	$750			$75,000

District/Central Office Budget Year 4: (may not exceed 5% of total allocation)								
FUNCTION CODE	FUNCTION TITLE	SALARIES	BENEFITS	PURCHASED SERVICES	SUPPLIES & MATERIALS	CAPITAL OUTLAY	OTHER EXPENDITURES	TOTAL EXPENDITURES
221	Improvement of Instruction							
226	Supervision and Direction of Instructional Staff							
232	Executive Administration							
233	Grant Writer/Grant Procurement/Coordinator	$23,050	$10,950	$500	$500			$35,000
249	Other School Administration							
252	Fiscal Services							
266	Operation and Maintenance							
281	Planning, Research, Development, and Evaluation							
283	Staff/Personnel Services							
331	Community Activities							
	SUBTOTAL	$23,050	$10,950	$500	$500			$35,000
	Indirect Costs _____ % Restricted Rate							
	TOTAL	$23,050	$10,950	$500	$500			$35,000

District/Central Office Budget Year 5: (may not exceed 5% of total allocation)								
FUNCTION CODE	FUNCTION TITLE	SALARIES	BENEFITS	PURCHASED SERVICES	SUPPLIES & MATERIALS	CAPITAL OUTLAY	OTHER EXPENDITURES	TOTAL EXPENDITURES
221	Improvement of Instruction							
226	Supervision and Direction of Instructional Staff							
232	Executive Administration							
233	Grant Writer/Grant Procurement/Coordinator	$23,050	$10,950	$500	$500			$35,000
249	Other School Administration							
252	Fiscal Services							
266	Operation and Maintenance							
281	Planning, Research, Development, and Evaluation							
283	Staff/Personnel Services							
331	Community Activities							
	SUBTOTAL	$23,050	$10,950	$500	$500			$35,000
	Indirect Costs _____ % Restricted Rate							
	TOTAL	$23,050	$10,950	$500	$500			$35,000

District Level Budget, Budget Narrative – Part 6c:

The preliminary district-level budget includes a position to fully monitor the implementation of the School Improvement Grant. This position is not duplicated at the building level, where the SIG Coordinator oversees and manages the day-to-day activities of the SIG.

Mount Clemens Community Schools
Seminole Academy

Overview of Duties of SIG-Supported Position

Financial Oversight	Support for School Seminole Academy	Monitoring Seminole for Compliance with Grant Requirements	Monitor Progress on Annual Goals and Implementation of the Grant and Selected Intervention Model
• Monitor the monthly reports for the SIG to ensure all line items are within budget. • Review monthly report to the School Board that provides an overview of what percentage of funds have been spent. • Provide support for ordering materials for the SIG. • Provide support for creating and maintaining the SIG inventory.	• Serve as a liaison between Seminole Academy and District staff. • Provide support to grade-level teams in the ILC process.	• Provide a monthly update related to compliance with the SIG.	• Monitor the Instructional Learning Cycle (ILC) at Seminole Academy.

District staff will monitor the SIG in the following ways: (1) Develop a monitoring plan that is shared with Seminole Academy, (2), Prepare district-level longitudinal data for use in aligning curriculum and instruction, (3) Prepare growth-level data during the school year to monitor student achievement, (4) Monitor the District's monthly reports to ensure all line items are within budget, (5) Review monthly budget reports to track percentage of SIG funds spent throughout the year, (6) Review and refine the Instructional Learning Cycle to ensure all teachers at Seminole use the cycle with fidelity, and (7) Provide a monthly update to Board members.

Seminole Academy will use resources from Macomb ISD including the continued use of school- and district-level improvement facilitators. Seminole Academy and Macomb ISD will complete a service plan upon awarding of the SIG. To monitor the work of staff from the ISD, we will use the structure in place now for reporting on the good work they are doing. This includes such items as a log of time spent with Seminole Academy, a description of the work completed, artifacts from training programs, teacher satisfaction survey of the MISD work, and sign-in sheets from workshops.

Note: The District has no charter school operators, CMOs or EMOs – we don't think this should count against us on the rubric. (The way the rubric is designed, if we choose to not do one of the elements, we're placed in a lower category.)

The efforts of the the additional District-level staff align fully with Seminole's redesign plan, and meet the allowable functions of the SIG as shown in the previous chart, *Overview of Duties of SiG-Supported Positions.*

The District will continue to fund District-level support for Seminole after the grant period ends. The District will be out of deficit and will financially be able to continue the position. (The District will be out of deficit at the beginning of year 4 of the grant period.) Additionally, during the five-year period, other staff members will be crossed-trained to ensure the duties funded in the position can be completed byi someone else if necessary.

District in Deficit Status

While a district in deficit status, we began turning this around 2½ years ago. Attached is the letter we recently sent to the MDE, which resulted in an extension of time to eliminate the deficit so we can work on program areas in the district. We are one of the districts improving the deficit and improving achievement. Does this really have to count against us? ☺

Mount Clemens Community Schools
Office of the Superintendent

MEMORANDUM

To: Michigan Department of Education

FROM: Deb Wahlstrom

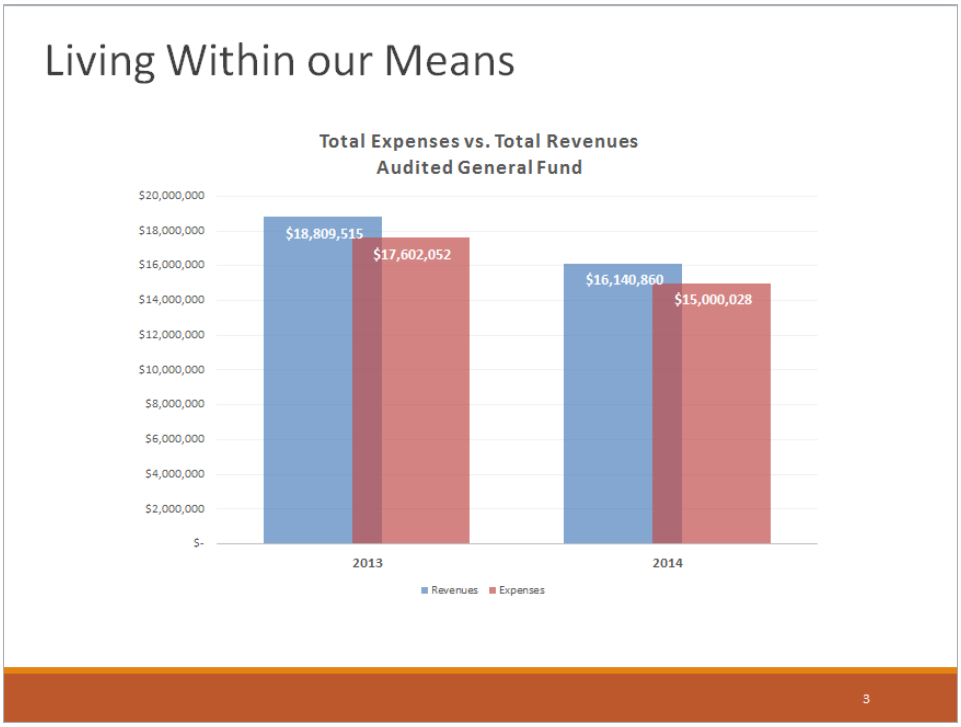
Date: May 18, 2015

RE: ***Deficit Elimination Plan***

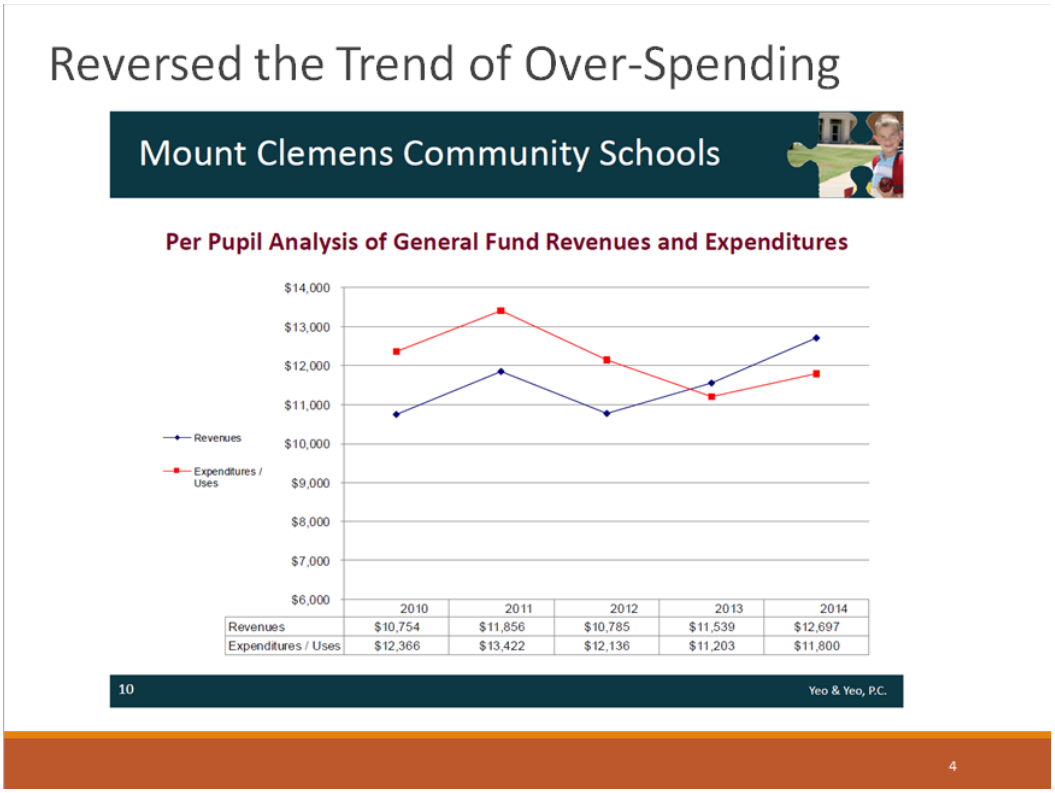
Thank you for taking time to talk with Board President, Earl C. Rickman III, Board Treasurer, Glenn Voorhess, staff members, Paul Bodiya (MISD), and me via Go-to-Meeting on March 31, 2015. The purpose of this memorandum is to lay out detailed information for your consideration as you continue to work with us as we continue to eliminate the deficit. While our business managers, past (Jan Gullen) and present (Teresa Davis), have previously talked with you about the finances in our district, I want to provide information and additional insight for your review and consideration.

I had the honor of taking the helm of the district in late August 2012. At that time, the district had been in a pattern of adding to the deficit on a yearly basis. Upon my arrival, my Board President, Earl Rickman, and the rest of our Board members made a commitment to eliminate the deficit and work toward this began immediately.

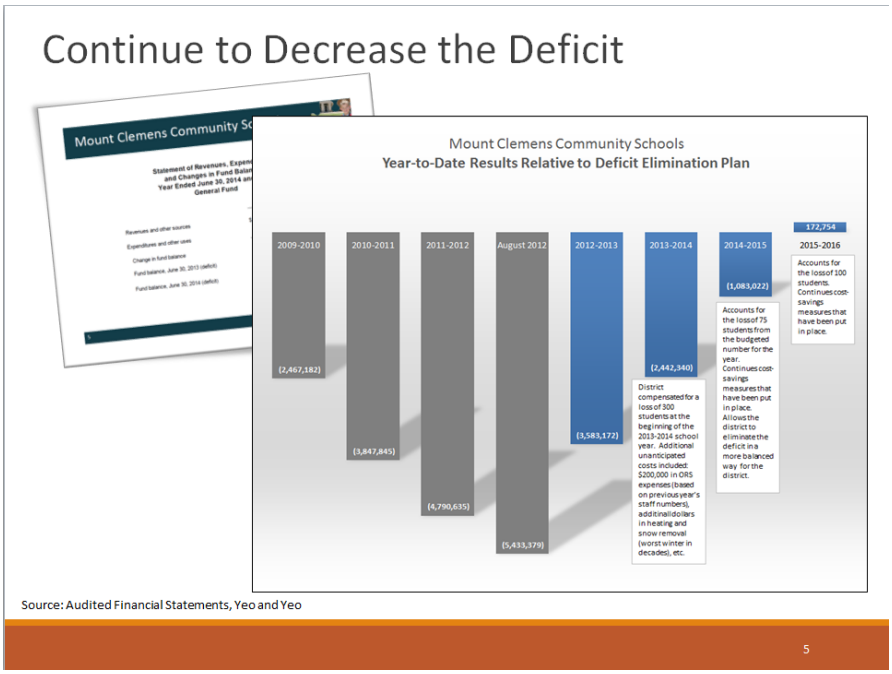
As noted in our audited general fund, we've taken care to live within our means for the past two years.



We've continued this in 2014-2015 and will again do so in 2015-2016 and beyond. By ensuring that we live within our means, we reversed the trend of over-spending as shown in the following visual.

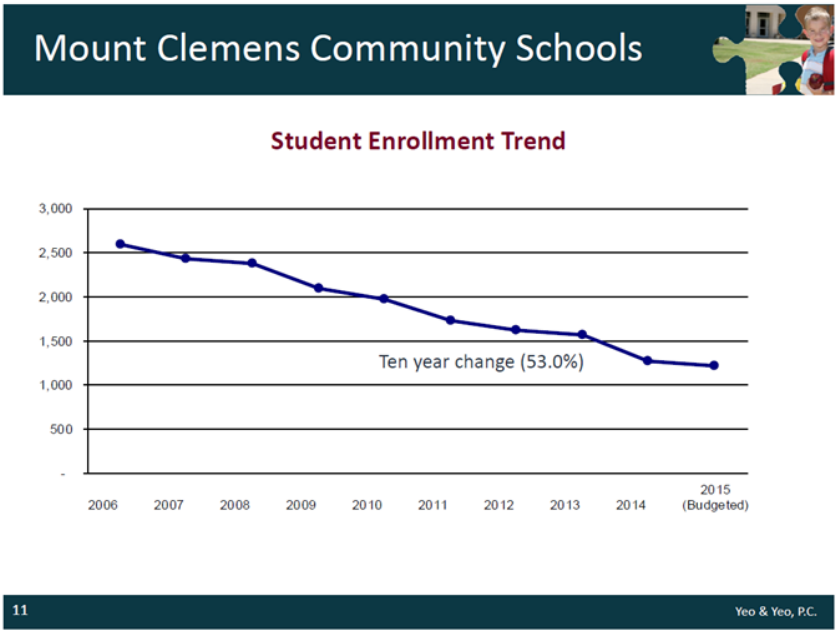


We take eliminating our deficit quite seriously and to that end have decreased the deficit in each of the past two years. We are on the trajectory for doing so again this school year (2014-2015). I recognize that the district has been in deficit for many years, but our new team has been in place for only a bit over two, and we believe we have the data to show we are moving in the right direction; data that will hopefully show that we are on the right trajectory – and one you approve.



We have figured out what to do even though our enrollment has been problematic. As with other districts in our county, we have had a continuous drop in enrollment for many years as you can see below.

Enrollment Continues to be an Issue



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Last year, we had a drop of about 300 students, for which we successfully adjusted. We are maintaining the adjustments this year as we continue to eliminate the deficit. Right now, we are about 75 students away from our 2014-2015 targeted enrollment; and dealt with this loss of enrollment in the following ways:

- Maximized use of staff in on-going grants.
- Reviewed line items in budget to ensure we are spending only on what we need.
- Applied for Best Practices to provide an additional $50.00 per student (1,141 students) for a total of an additional $57,050.
  Additional actions we are working include the following:
- Restructuring the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) to bring it in line with the way other districts implement this program for a savings of $100,000+ per year. (Restructuring of union position.) We can no longer subsidize GSRP with the general fund budget. Currently, GSRP is staffed by union positions and we pay union wages for teachers in the program. GSRP does not fund the program as it is currently staffed, so we need to make adjustments to live within the GSRP budget each year.
- Charging back to other districts when students return to the district after Count Day.
  We have completed negotiations with our teachers' union and have ratified a new two-year Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). The new agreement is in place through June 30, 2016. The value of the concessions is $592,344 in 2014-2015 and $282,735 in 2015-2016 for a total of $875,079 over the two years.

As a part of working with the union, we made structural changes; changes that support a brighter financial picture in the future. Listed below are some of the changes in the CBA that support a more stable financial outlook:

In year one (2014-2015), $592,344

- Formulas for overages were adjusted and made more reasonable for a value of $12,000.
- A total of ten furlough days in 2014-2015 reflecting a value of $294,340.
- Savings in wage-related benefits: $97,132.
- Limit to the district for paying subs: $75,000: In this, union members pay $100 for substitutes for approved absences as bargained in the CBA. After five days of being out of school, teachers will pay $100 a day to cover the cost of the substitutes. This also addresses an infrastructure issue – of improving attendance of teachers – which cost the district over $200,000 during the 2013-2014 school year.
- Reduced the amount of pay a teacher receives for using his or her prep period to cover another class. Rather than being a formula based on a teacher's wages, the amount is now $45.00 for all teachers – a more predictable number.
- Savings in OT/PT Salary Savings: $26,750 plus $8,827. This reflects the reduction of a less senior person filling the role of a more senior person, who retired.
- An additional two furlough days in exchange for a two-year contract, reflecting a value of $58,868.00.
- Savings in wage-related benefits on the additional two furlough days: $19,426.

In year two (2015-2016), $282,735

- A total of five furlough days reflecting a value of $147,170.
- Savings in wage-related benefits for the five furlough days: $48,565
- Employees pay $100 for substitutes for approved absences as bargained by the CBA with a value of $75,000.

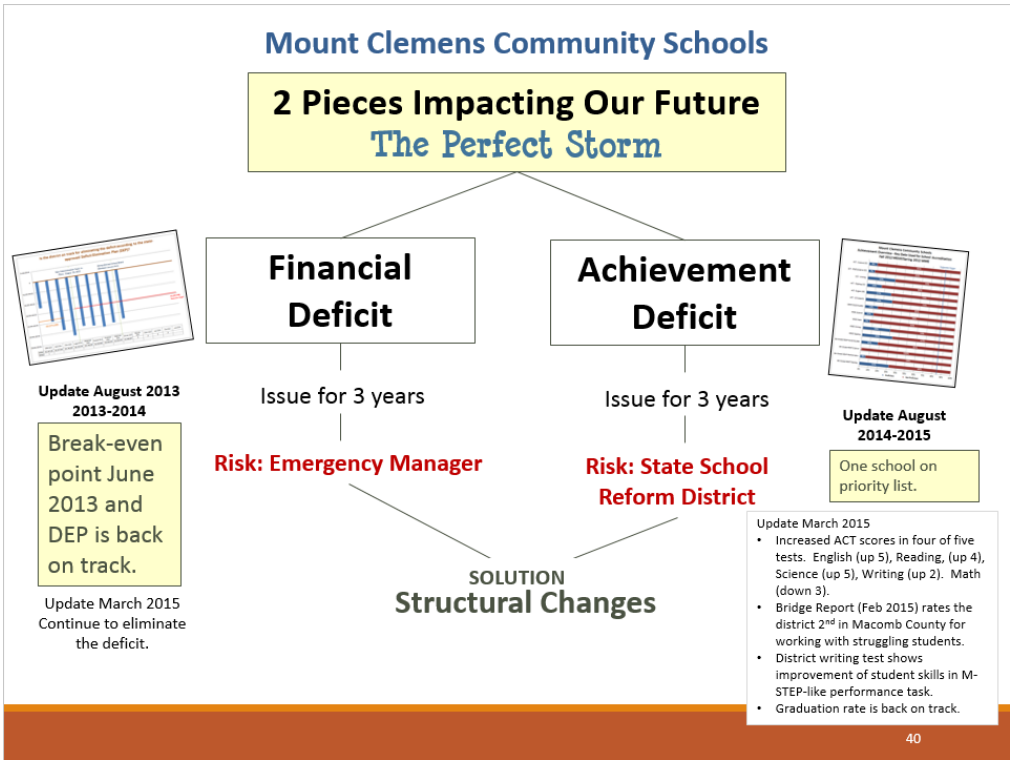
In addition to the financial savings, we also agreed to have a contract that ends on June 30th of each year, rather than at the end of August of each year.

As you are likely aware, our district has faced, and continues to face challenges:

- Declining enrollment continues to be a pattern. As we move into the next school year, we will need to make additional adjustments, both in our strategies and in preparation in the event enrollment declines again. (This is reflected in our Deficit Elimination Plan.)
- The district has been hit hard, as have other districts, with reductions in state aid.
- Local charter schools continue to recruit students from public schools (including ours) making it a challenge to predict enrollment. Because charter schools have no enrollment period, as do public schools, students move back and forth between schools during the school year. Our small city of four square miles houses three charter schools.

District staff have met on a regular and consistent basis with MISD Superintendent Mike DeVault and his Cabinet at Macomb ISD, and will continue to do so. In each of these meetings, we present our status on finances and our corresponding instructional program and strategies. The MISD team asks questions, clarifies information, and pushes our thinking. We will continue to meet during upcoming school years, as this guidance has been an invaluable resource for us.

We've been weathering what we call "The Perfect Storm" for the past two and one-half years. While we have made progress in our work, we embrace that there is much left to do.



While we have been working at an aggressive rate to eliminate the deficit, we have also been working equally as aggressively to rebuild the school district through structural changes. We have been retooling the district in the background to ensure we have schools our parents want their children to attend. To that end, the following actions are bringing renewal to the district:

1. At the beginning of the current school year (2014-2015), we partnered with *Pathways to Potential* (DHS) and now have a Success Coach in each of our schools.
2. In October 2014 (2014-2015 school year), we began implementation of a first-rate English Language Arts curriculum, *Core Knowledge Language Arts*, in grades preK through five.
3. In the 2014-2015 school year, we begun piloting a new evaluation model, using one of the four vetted models by the Michigan Council for Educator Effectiveness. We included principals, teachers, union

leaders, and central office staff in the selection of the tool, training, and the processes for using the tool in its pilot year. Rather than wait to be told to begin implementation, we are getting this done.

4. In the 2014-2015 school year, we piloted a mathematics program for grades K-5 (Eureka Mathematics), but chose a different program (*Bridges Mathematics*) for implementation in the 2015-2016 school year.
5. The Board has approved the opening of one of our mothballed schools for the 2015-2016 school year. This school will be a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) school, with curriculum that is proven to support the learning of at-risk students. This strategy is designed so the district does not continue to lose additional students. When looking at the data, we determined that the Board's decision to bring our littles from fourth and fifth graders to the secondary campus, is not working for us. We lost approximately two classrooms of fourth-grade students, and another two of fifth-grade students, because parents prefer their children to be in an elementary-school setting. We know that if we do not make the change back, we will continue to lose students between the fourth- and fifth-grade years. Our DEP plan includes a loss of 100 students, and our strategy is to retain the students we have. We have made sure out parents know that our fourth- and fifth-grade students will be in an elementary setting – and as a result, we are not hearing about, or getting, transfer requests for the next school year.
6. The Board has approved the STEAM school to be a balanced calendar school, beginning in the 2016-2017 school year. This provides parents an additional choice for their children, but more importantly, provides our students with continuous learning that is balanced more evenly throughout the school year. We also recognize that a balanced calendar school provides us with a different and popular choice for parents when looking at schools.
7. At its May 2015 meeting, the Board will be reviewing a Letter of Intent with Macomb County to lease our second mothballed school for a county-wide Headstart center. As you know, empty schools are not good for any community, and we are excited about revitalizing our schools with our youngest citizens. We have been working behind-the-scenes on this for over a year, and it is finally coming to fruition.
8. We reinstated middle school sports, thanks to the good deeds of volunteer coaches and staff members. As you likely know, a middle school sports program feeds into the high school program and helps ensure students have experiences, techniques, and skill for high school sports. A high-quality sports program supports the overall climate of a high-quality district.
9. We established a partnership with Henry Ford Health Systems, and are opening a Henry Ford School-Based Health System in our secondary campus before the end of the school year. This will provide a pediatrician's office right in our schools providing us with yet another strong wrap-around service for our families. This office will be open year-round.
10. We completed the redesign work for our priority school and our plan has been approved by the MDE. This work will continue throughout the summer and into the next school year.
11. Beginning with the 2015-2016 school year, the District will support only students who are from the District's middle-school program as candidates for the International Academy of Macomb (IAM). This will encourage parents of students from schools such as Prevail (a competing charter) to enroll their children in *our* middle school program if they desire to have their child attend the International Academy of Macomb.
12. We have re-created the elementary schedule for the 2015-2016 school year to ensure our students have specials (e.g., art, music, physical education, engineering, foreign language), and daily recess. The new schedule also builds in designated time for daily enrichment and intervention work with our students.
13. We have begun the steps of ensuring that all of our students have the same solid core curriculum, beginning with our pre-K to 5 CKLA program. This means that teachers of special education students have the same materials, tools, and training as general education teachers so that all of our students are exposed to a challenging and viable learning experience.
14. We have increased student achievement. By all measures, we are improving academically. Our MEAP, MME, and ACT scores have all improved. We have instituted a rigorous writing assessment that mirrors national assessments, and our students are showing improvement. We began using NWEA assessments

this year, and again, our students are showing improvement. With that said, we recognize there is still much to do.

We are not asking for a bailout. We are asking for time. With additional time, we will be able to use some of our funding for the following:

1. Continue with curriculum implementation for grades preK-5 with our new CKLA program. This includes additional support and embedded training for our teachers in the summer and into the next school year.
2. Implement Bridges Mathematics in grades K-5, with the first set of materials being ordered in July 2015, in time for professional development and training with teachers over the summer.
3. Begin implementation of a new Language Arts program for the middle school.
4. Begin implementation of a new mathematics program for the middle school.
5. Begin implementation of a new English program for the high school.
6. Begin implementation of a new mathematics program for the high school.
7. Develop and integrate material for the redesigned SAT – which is new for the entire state in the 2015-2016 school year. There are no state dollars provided to fund the materials or corresponding teacher training.
8. Continue to work on materials for preparing students for the M-STEP, which is an assessment that is a 180 degree turn from the types of assessments our students have been taking with the MEAP. Teachers and students still have much to learn about the M-STEP, so professional development is also key here.
9. Begin the implementation of the Next Generation Science Standards, due to be approved the Michigan State Board of Education within the next couple of months. This will include curriculum, materials, and embedded professional development for teachers.

The list above represents essential items for increasing student achievement in the district. These are basic tools and materials for teachers and students at the classroom level. We are not budgeting for anything we don't absolutely need. Again, what we hope you will consider is additional time, which will allow us to continue to rebuild our academic programs, which ultimately support our stability as we move into the future.

Our district is only four square miles and houses the county seat. We are landlocked and have little availability in the city for building new homes. We compete with at least three charter schools – for the same 3,000 students. We also compete with larger and contiguous school districts such as L'anse Creuse and Chippewa Valley. We provide county services to homeless children, and another permanent homeless shelter has just been approved to open by the end of the year. While our challenges are great, data show that we are improving achievement. A recent report by *Bridge* magazine, which takes into account poverty, placed Mount Clemens second in the county. (This report is placed at the end of this document.) We implemented NWEA and district writing assessments this school year and are showing strong improvements from the fall to winter assessments. (Students are taking the third round of assessments nearer to the end of the school year.) We are committed to providing the best tools and resources for our teachers and students – with a curriculum that is rigorous while filling learning gaps. We are on a movement to improve achievement, and we know what to do.

Financially, we must eliminate the deficit. In terms of achievement, we must ensure that a greater percentage of all of our students are achieving at higher rates. We appreciate the opportunity to continue our work on both.

The Bridge Report

February 2015

by Deb Wahlstrom, Superintendent
Mount Clemens Community Schools

On February 1, 2015, *Bridge Magazine* released its 2014 Academic State Champs database and report. The Bridge report uses data from the past three years to determine whether a school and/or district is performing as expected when poverty is factored in. This report is important to our district, as our poverty rate is 89.3%, and the good things going on in the district are often masked when poverty is not taken into account. The purpose of this report is not to take away the good things other school districts are doing, but rather, to recognize that in spite of having the highest poverty rate of public school districts in Macomb County, we exceed the expectations for performance.

Mount Clemens Community School District

Academic State Champ scores:*

Grade setting	Score
Overall	103.9
Elementary	105.58
Middle school	102.44
High school	103.55

Students, 2013–14: 1,197
Enroll change, 2008–13: –41.5%
Low-income students: 89.3%

(Was 79.8% in 2008)

Number of schools: 3
Demography

White	25.6%
Black	59%
Hispanic	4.6%
Asian	0.3%
Other	10.6%

* Districts with scores between 99 and 101 are meeting expectations, taking into account the percentage of low-income students. Those districts scoring above 101 are exceeding expectations, and those below 99 are falling short.

Note: Some districts are not ranked because they did not have classes in all grades or were not open in all three years.

This internal document provides information related to the recently-released Bridge report for schools in Michigan, and as stated in the report, "The methodology and data analysis, independently developed by Public Sector Consultants, a public policy firm in Lansing, takes into account the impact of poverty by analyzing how districts across Michigan perform compared with districts of similar socioeconomic levels, an acknowledgement of the debilitating effect that poverty typically has on student achievement."

The role of poverty in a school district is undeniable.

Mount Clemens Community Schools (MTCPS) has a poverty rate of 89.3%, the highest in Macomb County for public school districts. Academic State Champ Scores are scores assigned to a school, based on poverty levels.

Bridge Magazine assigned the following Academic Champ scores to our district: Overall Score (103.9), Elementary Score (105.58), Middle School (102.44), and High School (103.55). As noted by Bridge, "Districts with scores between 99 and 101 are meeting expectations, taking into account the percentage of low-income students. Those districts scoring above 101 are exceeding expectations, and those below 99 are falling short." **Mount Clemens received an "exceeding expectations" in each area scored.** This means we are performing better than our peer groups, a fairer comparison than comparing our achievement to schools where the needs of the students are significantly different.

The following chart provides the ranking of school districts in Macomb County, based on Academic State Champ Scores.

Mount Clemens Community Schools
Academic State Champ Score Rankings (Overall)
Macomb County

District	County	Enrollment 2013	Poverty	Overall rank (out of 507)	Elementary school rank (out of 653)	Middle school rank (out of 627)	High school rank (out of 552)
Clintondale Community Schools	Macomb	3,152	75.5%	96	19	426	115
Mount Clemens Community School District	Macomb	1,197	89.3%	126	112	211	176
Fitzgerald Public Schools	Macomb	2,710	84.1%	169	154	316	172
Roseville Community Schools	Macomb	4,998	74.6%	218	241	229	310
Fraser Public Schools	Macomb	5,380	45.8%	219	185	284	330
Lakeview Public Schools (Macomb)	Macomb	3,991	39.3%	225	150	395	276
Merritt Academy	Macomb	543	44.5%	246	96	313	465
Utica Community Schools	Macomb	28,357	29.8%	254	394	288	224
Center Line Public Schools	Macomb	2,721	65.8%	265	365	305	273
L'Anse Creuse Public Schools	Macomb	11,244	34.9%	325	313	187	508
Warren Consolidated Schools	Macomb	15,153	58.2%	337	438	452	265
Warren Woods Public Schools	Macomb	3,277	53.2%	362	457	395	380
South Lake Schools	Macomb	1,981	58.8%	373	441	501	359
Conner Creek Academy East	Macomb	1,003	90.4%	406	551	425	384
Lake Shore Public Schools (Macomb)	Macomb	3,674	40.4%	422	326	543	511
Van Dyke Public Schools	Macomb	2,748	73.6%	440	526	550	433
Romeo Community Schools	Macomb	5,268	26.0%	448	584	508	441
New Haven Community Schools	Macomb	1,255	49.8%	469	499	504	548
Chippewa Valley Schools	Macomb	16,456	25.9%	480	549	566	538
East Detroit Public Schools	Macomb	3,807	84.1%	490	597	609	497
Armada Area Schools	Macomb	1,995	21.5%	494	481	598	550
Richmond Community Schools	Macomb	1,564	30.0%	497	627	589	526
Arts Academy in the Woods	Macomb	352	31.5%	Not Ranked*			542
Great Oaks Academy	Macomb	714	91.7%	Not Ranked*	320	12	
Prevail Academy	Macomb	630	78.9%	Not Ranked*	182	152	
Reach Charter Academy	Macomb	710	69.0%	Not Ranked*	189	479	
Academy of Warren	Macomb	616	99.0%	Not Ranked*	609	542	
Eaton Academy	Macomb	389	89.7%	Not Ranked*	617	600	
Mt. Clemens Montessori Academy	Macomb	342	19.0%	Not Ranked*	361		
Huron Academy	Macomb	514	50.6%	Not Ranked*	482		
Global Preparatory Academy	Macomb	145	82.1%	Not Ranked*			
Macomb Montessori Academy	Macomb	96	91.7%	Not Ranked*			
Michigan Mathematics and Science Academy	Macomb	466	77.7%	Not Ranked*			
Noor International Academy	Macomb	164	39.6%	Not Ranked*			
Success Mile Academy	Macomb	206	78.2%	Not Ranked*			

When looking at the data, please focus on the following points:

- Mount Clemens Community Schools has the highest poverty rate of public school districts in Macomb County, and with a score of 126, ranked second in the county based on Academic State Champ Score Rankings.
- The elementary school rank for Mount Clemens is 112, well ahead of Prevail, which is ranked at 182.
- The middle school rank for MTCPS is 211, while Prevail is 152.
- The high school rank is 176, well ahead of all school districts in the county other than Clintondale and Fitzgerald.

A Look at the Rankings by Districts with Schools in Priority Status

While there are numerous things can be observed with the data, it's important to look at schools districts, like ours, that have a priority school from the August 2014 list.

Each year, the Michigan Department of Education places the lowest five percent of schools into priority status. These schools are assigned to the State School Reform Office, and must adhere to any and all requirements of that office. At least five school districts in Macomb County had one or more schools placed into priority status in August 2014. These school districts are highlighted in the following chart.

Mount Clemens Community Schools
Academic State Champ Score Rankings (Overall)
Districts with Priority Schools in 2014
Macomb County

District	County	Enrollment 2013	Poverty	Overall rank (out of 507)	Elementary school rank (out of 653)	Middle school rank (out of 627)	High school rank (out of 552)
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Success Mile Academy	Macomb	206	78.2%	Not Ranked*			

- Five school districts in Macomb County had one or more schools placed in priority school status in August 2014. These districts are Mount Clemens Community Schools, Warren Consolidated Schools, South Lake Schools, Van Dyke Public Schools, and East Detroit Public Schools. (This does not include districts that had a priority school named in their districts in 2011, 2012, or 2013.)
- Of the districts with priority schools named in August 2014, Mount Clemens received the highest Academic State Champ Score Ranking (Overall) with an overall rank of 126 of 507 districts. MTCPS was followed by Warren Consolidated Schools (337), South Lake (373), Van Dyke Public Schools (440), and East Detroit (490).

- When looking at the differences in rankings of districts with priority schools, Warren Con has 211 districts between it and MTCPS, South Lake has 247, Van Dyke has 314, and East Detroit has 364. In other words, when looking at MTCPS, the next ranked priority school district in Macomb County is Warren Con. MTCPS has a ranking of 112 of 507 districts, while Warren Con has a ranking of 337. This is a difference of 211.

Last year, Context and Performance scores (CAP scores) were also determined for schools in the state by the Mackinac Center for Public Policy. Seminole Academy received a CAP score of A – one of only four elementary schools in Macomb County to receive an A. Additionally, the high school was ranked 4th in Macomb County of 35 schools.

For more information about the Academic State Champs rankings, visit the website for Bridge magazine.