



March 1, 2017

Dear Parents and Community Members:

We are pleased to present you with the Annual Education Report (AER) which provides key information on the 2015-16 educational progress for the Michigan Connections Academy (MICA). The AER addresses the complex reporting information required by federal and state laws. The school's report contains information about student assessment, accountability, and teacher quality. If you have any questions about the AER, please contact Bryan Klochack at MICA for assistance.

The AER is available for you to review electronically by visiting the following [website](https://goo.gl/wfPGOu) (<https://goo.gl/wfPGOu>) or you may review a copy in the main office at your child's school.

For the 2016-17 year, no new Priority or Focus schools were named; some Priority or Focus schools did exit their status because they met the exit criteria. New Reward schools were identified using school rankings and Beating the Odds information. A Focus school is one that has a large achievement gap between the highest and lowest achieving 30% of schools. A Priority school is one whose achievement and growth is in the lowest 5% of all schools in the state. A Reward school is one that has achieved one or more of the following distinctions: top 5% of schools on the Top-to-Bottom School Rankings, top 5% of schools making the greatest gains in achievement (improvement metric), or "Beating the Odds" by outperforming the school's predicted ranking and/or similar schools. Some schools are not identified with any of these labels. In these cases no label is given.

Our school was identified as a Focus school. Michigan Connections Academy believes that all students can learn and must learn at relatively high levels of achievement. It is our job to create an environment in our classrooms that result in this high level of performance. We are confident that, with our support and help, students can master challenging academic material, and we expect them to do so. We are prepared to work collaboratively with colleagues, students, and parents to achieve this shared educational purpose. We continue to target our lower performing students and provide appropriate interventions and explicit instruction to narrow our achievement gap as well as pushing our advanced students to a higher cognitive level thru enhanced instruction. We are actively working to address this area by continuing to implement the district's School Improvement Plan, focusing on increased achievement levels in the four core areas and writing.

Michigan Connections Academy has experienced an incredible population growth and with it an increasingly diverse student population with varied learning needs since our inception and as such continues to identify and work to address the specific needs of our growing and diverse population. The School Improvement Plan is reviewed regularly and updated annually with input from staff. This includes a review of our student achievement data and input from our committed teacher staff that drives school improvement and plans coordinating professional development sessions for our faculty.

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Additionally, our school improvement plan includes a focus on critical literacy skills such as mathematics, reading and writing as well as important affective factors that impact student success.

Michigan Connections Academy continues to provide an educational opportunity and alternative to the students in the State of Michigan. Our mission is to help each student maximize his or her potential and meet the highest performance standards. We are a high-quality, high-tech, high-touch “school without walls” that brings out the best in every student. We appreciate the continued support of our parents, staff, and greater school community in this effort.

Sincerely,

Bryan Klochack

Bryan Klochack
Principal
Michigan Connections Academy

State law requires that we also report additional information.

1. PROCESS FOR ASSIGNING PUPILS TO THE SCHOOL

Enrollment Cap and Lottery

Open enrollment begins in March. If, after accounting for returning students and siblings of returning students, the number of new student applications exceeds the number of open enrollment slots, a lottery will be held each year in the April. The lottery will be held at the school office and will be open to the public. If a lottery is necessary, selected students must provide MICA with their academic documentation for course placement by June 30 or forfeit their space to another student on the waitlist. Students not selected in the lottery or who miss the open enrollment period will be placed on a wait list on a first-come, first-serve basis based on the date on which they complete the enrollment paperwork and return it to MICA. Siblings of enrolled students will have waitlist priority and will be released first if space becomes available in their grade. These criteria have been approved by MICA’s authorizer, Ferris State University, and are reflected in the current MICA policies.

2. THE STATUS OF THE 3-5 YEAR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

A copy of the school improvement plan is available at Michigan Connections Academy. The Michigan Connections Academy School Improvement Plan is on track, meeting all requirements for establishing goals and monitoring progress.

3. A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF EACH SPECIALIZED SCHOOL

Michigan Connections Academy (MICA) is a free online public school, also known as a cyber charter school, serving students in grades K–12 throughout Michigan. The school, which opened for the 2010-11 school year, is authorized by Ferris State University Charter Schools

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Office. MICA gives students the flexibility to learn at home with a curriculum that meets rigorous state education standards. At MICA, students, teachers, and Learning Coaches are all partners in the Personalized Performance Learning® (PPL) approach. Together, they develop an instructional plan tailored to each student's academic abilities. The program and goals are adjusted as needed to ensure the student is learning and growing at MICA. Teachers, students, and Learning Coaches monitor the plan and the student's progress throughout the year, aided by MICA's powerful Education Management System (EMS) known as Connexus®.

The school's mission is to help each student maximize his or her potential and meet the highest performance standards through a uniquely individualized learning program featuring:

- A challenging, K–12 curriculum developed by leading education experts.
- Instruction from highly qualified and state-certified teachers.
- Support from trained counselors, principals, and administrative staff.
- Dozens of clubs and activities that foster social development and academic growth.
- An involved community of students and their families.

MICA also offers Dual Enrollment, a program that allows eligible students to take a class at a local college or university as part of their regular school day. Students will receive credit from the college as well as Michigan Connections Academy. Admission to the program requires meeting additional criteria.

4. IDENTIFY HOW TO ACCESS A COPY OF THE CORE CURRICULUM, A DESCRIPTION OF ITS IMPLEMENTATION, AND AN EXPLANATION OF THE VARIANCES FROM THE STATE'S MODEL

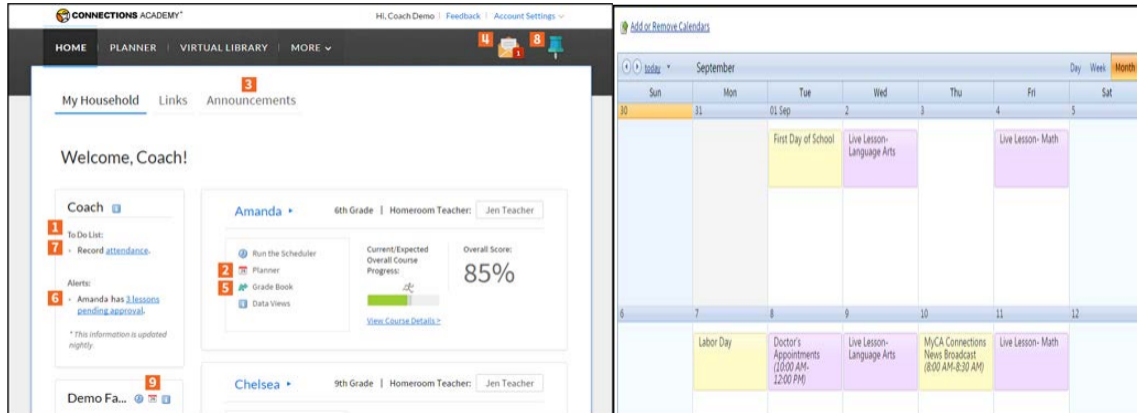
MICA's curriculum and program information can be found in the Connections Academy [Program Guide](#). The most current version of the Program Guide is also accessible from the school's website.

MICA is a virtual school, so rather than working in a traditional brick and mortar classroom setting, students, parents/Learning Coaches, and teachers all access curriculum and communicate with one another via Connections Academy's secure education management system known as Connexus®. Connexus is one of the most comprehensive, reliable, and user- friendly online learning systems available. This proprietary system, designed from the ground up to meet the exact requirements of the Connections instructional model and the needs of our students and families, brings the school right to students 24 hours a day from any Internet connection. Connexus is powerful, yet very intuitive and user- friendly. It is also comprehensive, allowing students, parents, and educators to access everything they need from one place.

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Tools for Parents and Learning Coaches



From their personalized home page, parents can:

- View all students' schedules, assignments, and lessons.
- Adjust the learning schedule for students in grades K–8.
- Monitor students' progress using the online grade book.
- Record attendance.
- Communicate with teachers and other families via our secure WebMail and message boards.
- Rate the Connections Academy learning experience, at any time.

Tools for Students

The student's individualized home page helps students communicate, organize, and complete and submit assignments. From the homepage, they can:

View daily and monthly schedules and access lessons.

- Monitor progress through the online grade book (for students in grade 6 and above).
- Communicate with teachers and students through WebMail and message boards.
- Access many online learning resources.
- Participate in clubs and activities.
- View a directory of students.

Tools for Teachers and Administrators

Connexus is used extensively by teachers and administrators. Some of the many tools for teachers allow them to:



- Conduct lessons live over the Internet with LiveLesson® sessions.
- Track student progress.
- Review and grade online assignments and assessments.
- Communicate quickly and effectively with students, parents, and Learning Coaches.
- Keep track of student and family interactions.
- Modify learning to meet students' needs

Because much of the learning and record-keeping is done online through Connexus, school administrators can monitor the effectiveness of instruction and assure students are making progress, every day.

5. THE AGGREGATE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT RESULTS FOR ANY LOCAL COMPETENCY TESTS OR NATIONALLY NORMED ACHIEVEMENT TESTS

During the 2014 – 2015 and 2015 - 2016 school years, MICA students in Kindergarten and first grade took the Longitudinal Evaluation of Academic Progress (LEAP®) assessment in Math. In the 2015 – 2016 school year, students in grades 2 – 10 took the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) – Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment in Math and Reading.

LEAP

Note: The LEAP program was revised to align with Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and Next Generation Assessment items. This has resulted in an assessment that is more rigorous and aligned to different standards, so the 2013-14 data is not directly comparable to data from prior years.

LEAP Math Results

MICA students in grades K-2 participate in LEAP (Longitudinal Evaluation of Academic Progress) testing for pre- and post-test measures. LEAP is a (proprietary) psychometrically valid benchmark assessment system developed by Connections Education and used in elementary and middle School in reading and math across the country. Students receive a score of percent correct on the pretest and posttest LEAP reading and math assessments. Students are considered to have made satisfactory progress if they score a minimum of 75% on the posttest assessment and/or if they increase their score from the pretest to the posttest by at least 10 percentage points. LEAP results are presented below. Results below are based on students that completed both the pretest and posttest for a given year.

2014 - 15 Results

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Grade	Average Math Pretest Score	Average Math Score	% with Satisfactory Progress
K	79.1%	97.1%	100.0%
1	73.4%	90.2%	95.4%

2015-16 Results

Grade	Average Math Pretest Score	Average Math Posttest Score	% with Satisfactory Progress
K	84.4%	97.3%	100.0%
1	71.4%	87.8%	93.7%

6. IDENTIFY THE NUMBER AND PERCENT OF STUDENTS REPRESENTED BY PARENTS AT PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

2010 – 2011 School Year: 312 (99.6%)
 2011 – 2012 School Year: 422 (97%)
 2012 – 2013 School Year: 604 (100%)
 2013 – 2014 School Year: 1176 (100%)
 2014 – 2015 School Year: 1432 (98.9%)
 2015 – 2016 School Year: 1467 (98.2%)

7. FOR HIGH SCHOOLS, ONLY ALSO REPORT ON THE FOLLOWING:

a. THE NUMBER AND PERCENT OF POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENTS (DUAL ENROLLMENT)

2010 – 2011 School Year: 0
 2011 – 2012 School Year: 1
 2012 – 2013 School Year: 2
 2013 – 2014 School Year: 0
 2014 – 2015 School Year: 5

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2015 – 2016 School Year: 11

b. THE NUMBER OF COLLEGE EQUIVALENT COURSES OFFERED (AP/IB)

2010 – 2011 School Year: 17

2011 – 2012 School Year: 17

2012 – 2013 School Year: 17

2013 – 2014 School Year: 17

2014 – 2015 School Year: 17

2015 – 2016 School Year: 17

c. THE NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN COLLEGE EQUIVALENT COURSES (AP/IB)

2010 – 2011 School Year: 0

2011 – 2012 School Year: 5

2012 – 2013 School Year: 3

2013 – 2014 School Year: 4

2014 – 2015 School Year: 13

2015 – 2016 School Year: 21

d. THE NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS RECEIVING A SCORE LEADING TO COLLEGE CREDIT

2010 – 2011 School Year: 0

2011 – 2012 School Year: 1

2012 – 2013 School Year: 1

2013 – 2014 School Year: 2

2014 – 2015 School Year: 0

2015 – 2016 School Year: 3

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