

JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL

ANNUAL EDUCATION REPORT (AER) COVER LETTER

August 23, 2011

Dear Parents and Community Members:

I am pleased to present the Annual Education Report (AER) which provides key information on the 2010-2011 educational progress for John F. Kennedy School. This Annual Education Report addresses the reporting requirements identified by the United States Office of Education and the Michigan Department of Education.

Included in the report are Kennedy's points of pride, school improvement plan, parent involvement data, student assessment results, Adequate Yearly Progress data and status information, and teacher qualification data. The format of the report was provided by the Michigan Department of Education. For your convenience, the report may be viewed in its entirety or by selecting individual chapters. To review the report by chapter, click on the chapter heading you wish to review.

For 2010-2011, John F. Kennedy School made Adequate Yearly progress (AYP) in English language arts and mathematics. While we are pleased to have reached this important goal, we are continuously working to improve. We appreciate the continued support of parents, staff and our community in this effort.

The report is available for review electronically at www.ferndaleschools.org/publicationsreports.html or you may contact, Jessica Stilger at (248) 586-8677 to obtain a printed copy.

If you have questions regarding this report contact me at (248) 547-0880.

Sincerely,

Pauline K. Nagle, Principal



JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL 2010-2011 ANNUAL REPORT

AUGUST 2011

PAULINE K. NAGLE, PRINCIPAL

FERNDALE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Introduction to John F. Kennedy School

Kennedy School is a K-6 school that houses two unique magnet programs, the Open Classroom Program and the Multi-Age Program as well as two Special Education resource rooms.

The **Open Classroom** has built a reputation for excellence for more than 30 years and is based on a philosophy that fosters independence, promotes individual student responsibility, stresses self-motivation and self-confidence, and provides instruction in a project-based environment. Exciting, project-based learning is the hallmark of the Open Classroom Program. Included is a parent planned and initiated outdoor education experience that is an integral part of the Open Classroom Program. While mastering the required Ferndale Schools and State of Michigan curriculum and benchmarks, the students complete interdisciplinary units of study, including guided activities and research projects that become increasingly challenging, culminating in sixth grade with independent student projects. An important and essential component of the program is the partnership between school and family. Parents are trained by teachers to be partners in classroom instruction, and to carry over classroom work by reinforcing and supporting study skills and work habits at home. A parent participation agreement is required upon entry and each family is asked to volunteer a minimum of 40 hours each year.

The **Multi-Age Program** provides flexible instruction to meet the individual needs of each child. The program promotes responsibility for self and learning, stresses group skills and cooperation, and delivers instruction in a multiage environment. The Multi-Age classrooms are organized around the concept of developmentally appropriate practices. The Multi-Age practice creates a continuous progress climate, revolving around flexible grouping, that stops school failure and promotes success for all students and is especially beneficial for the at-risk learner. Students in this program are grouped and regrouped in reading and math, in varying ways, including by interest, developmental level, ability, or learning style, rather than by their chronological age or grade level. The Multi-Age program allows students to accelerate as they are ready, and helps them reach their maximum potential. More advanced students build on what they know by gaining new insights and connections to skills, and modeling for others. Students new to the material benefit from observing how their classmates learn. The program allows for fewer student/teacher transitions, and increased interaction between students and teachers. A huge benefit from the multiple year teaching concept that Multi-Age enjoys is that it creates a cohesive "family" atmosphere. Students have opportunities to work with several adult role models, therefore making connections to all staff who help them learn. The Kennedy Multi-Age staff creates a theme each year and creates learning celebrations at least four times a year, revolving around the theme. Each celebration allows students to inter-

act with each other in grades K-6 and allows students to "show what they know" as it relates to the theme and their curriculum. Parents are encouraged to volunteer and interact within each classroom, helping to foster the family atmosphere that's already been established by the staff.

All programs share a common philosophy that each child will strive to the best of his/her ability in a community of learners. All students share the same enrichment activities such as physical education, art, vocal music, band and orchestra for grades 4-6 and Spanish for grades 5-6. Additionally, all programs share lunchtime, recess, school projects, the PTA and assemblies.

Mission Statement

The mission of John F. Kennedy Schools is to educate all children.

In a safe environment of mutual respect, a committed staff will

- **Accept the uniqueness of each child and his or her individual needs.**
- **Promote academic, social, emotional and physical growth.**
- **Encourage a cooperative effort among the staff, students and parents.**

School Vision Statement

The vision of John F. Kennedy School includes staff, parents and students working together to create a professional learning community and to ensure that all students:

- Are given the opportunity to learn at their instructional level.

- Are challenged to work to their maximum potential.
- Receive differentiated instruction to meet individual needs.

Beliefs Statement

The staff, students and parents at John F. Kennedy believe:

- All students can learn.
- All students must be encouraged, and given the opportunity and support to achieve their greatest potential through the establishment of high expectations and the expectation of academic excellence.
- Student growth occurs when students are actively engaged in rigorous and relevant learning.
- All students are responsible for personal decisions, actions and behaviors with appropriate consequences.
- All students are unique with varying learning styles, abilities, strengths and interests and should be offered opportunities to maximize their capabilities.
- We will foster a positive school climate of a caring community which respects and values diversity and nurtures everyone's self-esteem.
- All students' learning is enhanced through social interaction.
- Positive self-esteem promotes student achievement.
- Teachers are key facilitators of learning and problem solving rather than just providers of information.
- Students and staff should be aware of and show consideration for individual and cultural differences.
- We shall provide a safe and healthy environment for learning.
- All students need to have access to, training in, and experience with the technological tools of the information age.

School Assignment

Students enter John F. Kennedy School via a school lottery. Parents are required to tour the both Roosevelt and Kennedy with the principal or the principal designate. They then apply through the district's admission process prior February 28th. At the time of application, parents are assigned to a geographic grid number. The lottery is held the second week of March, drawing one student at a time from the grids. Each classroom within each program is filled via the lottery method. Current students are not included in the lottery, and incoming siblings of current students are given priority status for entry into the program of choice.

Points of Pride

- **PTA and related PTA activities.** The JFK PTA has a very large and involved membership and provides families the opportunity to come to school for a family oriented function. These functions include a back to school ice cream social, fall festival, book fair, sock hop, roller skating nights and first day of school coffee. PTA provides students with excellent learning opportunities through many assemblies. This year, we enjoyed Brainstormers, Peace Love and Planet, Juice-drummers, Ann Arbor Hands On Museum Science and Physics show. Additionally, PTA funded over \$2,000 in teacher grants. They also provided financial support for music boosters, teacher/staff appreciation, show choir, 6th grade graduation, service squad and the volunteer reading program.
- **The PTA walk-a-thon** earned money to supplement the physical education and the music programs. Students were sponsored to walk/run for 30 minutes during the school day, which also encouraged health and fitness within their lives. This year's walk-a-thon earned more

than \$2,000 towards purchasing new playground equipment.

- **The JFK Fine Arts committee**, in conjunction with representatives of other Ferndale schools, hosted two district/city wide events, the "Art Walk" and "Art on the Town". Both events incorporated student's artwork, showcased in numerous local businesses, to raise money for the districts' art programs.
- **"Ignite the Light" Talent Show** which is organized by parents presented 35 acts and showcased over 100 of our talented children.
- **Our Green School Committee** completed a second Michigan Green certification with an "Emerald Green status" (top 10 in Oakland County) and hosted a "Clean for Green Sale" emphasizing recycling and reusing items.
- **Our Garden Club** boasts the development of a Michigan native garden that is a certified monarch butterfly and Michigan bird habitat. They also support an interactive vegetable garden that is incorporated in classroom instruction that also provides fresh produce to our community. Some of the mint grown is used at a local business.
- Our school runs many **service projects**. JFK Fall Food Drive: 1,000 pounds of food to Gleaner's. Mr. Williamson's 5th/6th grade class, along with Mrs. Bresson's Life Skills class volunteered one day to package food at Gleaner's, also.
- **Mr. Williamson's Class Donations:** Monthly donation to chosen charities totaling \$1500. Examples: Smile Train, Pet Pantry, Special Olympics, Gleaner's
- In Mrs. Madson's class, **students made 100 bag lunches** along with posters, cards, letters and/or pictures for the Michigan Veterans Foundation-Homeless Veterans. This Veteran's group helps men and

women who have served in any branch of the military “get back on their feet” by offering vocational counseling/training to any veteran needing help with mental or physical health issues. They rely on others to provide them with gently used clothing as well as food.

- Parent volunteers run an **after school math club** for students needing help with math skills.
- One of our Open Classroom kindergarten grade teachers, **D’Anne McNeil**, was recognized as John F. Kennedy’s Elementary Teacher of the Year. Our Employee of the Year was long time paraprofessional, **Sheila Rembert**.
- The entire **fourth grade traveled together to Lansing** in a day-long trip to the state’s capitol building.
- Open Kindergarten classroom worked on thematic study **Ocean Projects** that included reading, writing, research and performance. This differentiated instruction approach utilized individual, small and whole group instruction.
- **Promoting healthy choices**, students participated in the “Count Your Steps” program.
- Promoting school community, many joint program activities took place across both Open and Multi-Age magnet programs including “**Hall-a-palooza**” where students engaged in team building activities.
- **6th graders traveled to Grand Ledge**, Michigan to study rock formations.
- Open Classroom first and second graders went on a **virtual trip to England**.
- Fourth Grade students spent a day in May in interactive center based activities to study Michigan, including role playing as a pioneer, listening to Lumber Jack stories, building toy cars through an assembly line and enjoying a Michigan breakfast.

• **PEEPS program:** This program created mentorship and friendships between general education students and special education students with severe disabilities, such as autism and cognitive impairment. Student pairs, or peeps, ate lunch together, played together at recess and built social-emotional skills in the process.

Parent Teacher Conference Attendance

Kennedy School achieved a 98.2% attendance rate for the Fall Parent/Teacher Conferences. We offered afternoon and evening conferences on two different days in November. All parents/guardians were scheduled for mandatory fall conferences. Spring conferences were held on an as needed basis during one evening in March.

Parent Involvement

Parent volunteerism is a major component of our building. On any given day there could be 30-40 parents helping in any of our 17 classrooms. In addition to field trips, parents come in to help with center-based activities, tutoring, running book conferencing, and helping with general teacher clerical duties. Parents also helped enrich the school atmosphere through PTA based functions including the ice cream social, the Fall Festival and the Sock Hop. This welcome resource of parent volunteerism offers support and all of us, students, families and teachers accumulate the rewards. In 2010-2011, over 8000 parent volunteer hours were recorded at Kennedy School.

In addition to parent volunteers we have the Ferndale Volunteer Reading Team made up of retired senior citizen volunteers from Ferndale and neighboring communities. These volunteers make a one or two-hour a week commitment to do activities such as: one-on-one reading with at

risk students, book conferencing with upper grade students and teaching the Remarkable Reading Program to students who need extra help.

State of Core Curriculum

Ferndale Public Schools has a documented curriculum that is aligned with the state curriculum. The district follows a five year rotational plan to evaluate each of the curricular areas to ensure that each area remains aligned and to re-evaluate the effectiveness of the written curriculum as compared to district data in that same area. More information about the district’s core curriculum can be obtained from Barbara Evoe, Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction at 248-586-8657.

At JFK, the 2010-2011 curricula implementation was enhanced by professional development, program meetings and staff meetings, all of which are held regularly during the school year. The guiding principle of our school’s Professional Learning Community is that the purpose of our school is to ensure high levels of learning for all students. We recognize the increased demands for excellence for all students. The JFK staff is becoming more proficient in using data to guide teaching specific student learning goals for individual students. Our professional development for 2010-2011 centered on the use of data to support instructional decisions.

Throughout our staff meetings, our professional development and our program meetings, we maintain our dedication to student learning by keeping four critical questions forefront in all of our curricular work.

- 1) What is it that we want students to learn?
- 2) How will we know that they have learned it?
- 3) How can we intervene if a student isn’t learning?

4) What will we do if they already know the content?

The answers to these questions are addressed within the alignment of curriculum to the state standards, benchmarks, and grade level content expectations and the internal examination of JFK's student data system and plan of interventions.

School Improvement Plan

Each year the school improvement plan reviews the school's progress and updates its improvement plan. Below is an outline of the 2010-2011 school improvement plan, which includes the goals and strategies. For a complete copy of the plan contact the school office at 248/547-0880.

Goal 1: Inquiry Science Improvement Goal

Goal Statement: John F. Kennedy School will use the inquiry approach to learn science concepts and apply those concepts to new learning situations.

Strategy #1: Increase Instructional Time - Teachers will plan and teach district approved science curriculum at least three times each week for 40-50 minutes per day at each grade level.

Strategy #2: Science Across the Curriculum - Teachers will integrate science into other curricular areas (i.e., reading, writing, and math) to maximize students' exposure to science concepts, scientists and the scientific process.

Goal 2: Increasing Students' Ability to Comprehend Expository Text

Goal Statement: Students at John F. Kennedy School will improve reading comprehension of expository text.

Strategy #1: Teachers will use the re-reading strategy to increase reading fluency in young readers.

Strategy #2: Teachers in grades K-3 will continue to use Making Meaning kits in classrooms at least two times per week to increase comprehension skills with expository text.

Goal 3: Reducing Learning Gaps Between No Child Left Behind Student Groups

Goal Statement: In math, the JFK staff will work to reduce the achievement gap between all students and those in the economically disadvantaged subgroup.

Strategy #1: Increase the number of minutes of math instruction

Strategy #2: Staff will use data to identify at-risk students.

Goal 4: Increasing Writing Proficiency

Goal Statement: All students at John F. Kennedy School will be proficient writers across the curriculum.

Strategy #1: All teachers will use the Lucy Calkins' strategies explained in their workshops/in-services and other staff development. Teachers will use the district curriculum to ensure that all writing genres are taught, follow the common grade level pacing guide and use the prescribed graphic organizers at appropriate grade levels

Average Daily Attendance

John F. Kennedy's average daily attendance rate as reported by the Michigan Department of Education was 96%.

Student Retention Rate

The student retention rate for the 2010-2011 school year was zero.

Teacher Quality Data

The federal No Child Left Behind law requires public school elementary and secondary teachers to meet their state's definition of highly qualified teacher for each core academic sub-

ject they teach. These qualifications include a bachelor's degree, full state certification as defined by the state, and demonstrated competency, as defined by the state. Currently 100% of John F. Kennedy's teachers meet this requirement.

Our staff has attended many workshops and conferences that increase their understanding of how children learn and to improve their teaching. Workshops include but are not limited to: Michigan Reading Association Conference, Lucy Calkins Writing Workshops, Science Workshops, Social Studies Workshops, Kindergarten Conference, Autism Awareness workshops, Reader's Workshop, Writer's Workshop, Response to Intervention, and Physical Education Conference.

Achievement Data

To view the John F. Kennedy School achievement data for 2010-2011, visit www.mischooldata.org and search John F. Kennedy School in the Dashboard, or [click here](#) for the complete report.