August, 2014

Dear Parents and Community Members:

We are pleased to present you with the Annual Education Report (AER), which provides key information on the 2013-2014 educational progress for Branch Line School. 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 the leadership team at info@branchlineschool.org or 734-335-0663.

The AER is available for you to review electronically by visiting our transparency web site at http://branchlineschool.org/the-school/transparency-reporting/ or you may review a copy in our main office at your child’s school.

The state has identified some schools with the status of Reward, Focus or Priority. A Reward school is one that is outperforming other schools in achievement, growth, or is performing better than other schools with a similar student population. A Focus school is one that has a large achievement gap in 30% of its student achievement scores. A Priority school is one whose achievement and growth is in the lowest 5% of all schools in the state. Due to the fact that this is our second year of operation, we have not yet been assigned a label.

The key challenges we faced this year were: 1. Not being able to run three full testing cycles, which would have allowed us to make mid-year adjustments in the curriculum. 2. As our first year in operation, all students were new to us and came to us with varying degrees of ability. Any time a student changes schools; there is a period of social, emotional and academic acclimation to a new environment, which all of our students experienced last year.

The key initiates being undertaken in the school to accelerate student achievement and close persistent gaps in achievement are: 1. Over the 2014 summer, curriculum specialists were brought in to work with the staff to develop a student-driven, core-standards based curriculum, designed to ensure that each student is steadily progressing, while maintaining a hands-on learning environment. 2. This is done through using Individualized Learning Plans, student driven activities and hands-on activity-based experience to facilitate learning.

Per State law requirement, the following information describes our one building district in our second year of operation.

1. PROCESS FOR ASSIGNING PUPILS TO THE SCHOOL: Open Enrollment until classes are full. We will hold a lottery to place waitlisted students. From that point forward, we admit on a first come first served basis.
2. THE STATUS OF THE 3-5 YEAR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN: We are currently in year two of operation. We are making progress to be on track for year three.
3. A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF EACH SPECIALIZED SCHOOL: We are a one-building district.
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: As part of our plan, we are finalizing the re-design of our curriculum, which will be completed February 2015 and available in the school office. The curriculum is based on the Michigan State adopted common core, with a focus on student-driven, Michigan State core-standards based curriculum, designed to ensure that each student is steadily progressing, while maintaining a hands-on learning environment.
5. THE AGGREGATE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT RESULTS FOR ANY LOCAL COMPETENCY TESTS OR NATIONALLY NORMED ACHIEVEMENT TESTS: The attached includes data from NWEA MAP testing 2013-2014 School year, which is a nationally normed achievement assessment.
6. IDENTIFY THE NUMBER AND PERCENT OF STUDENTS REPRESENTED BY PARENTS AT PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES: 87% of parents were in attendance for parent-teacher conferences.

The first year of operation was challenging and rewarding. We’ve learned a lot. We’ve spent a lot of time over the summer improving processes to ensure that we have a successful year. We are highly encouraged by the amount of family involvement; we know that student success is magnified when there is an involved, invested family behind each of our students. We appreciate the support of all of our families.

Sincerely,

Branch Line School Leadership Team

Margaret Ameel Denise Ryba Molly Kramer

Instructional Leader Operational Leader Cultural Leader

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