Actively Engaging Educators to Improve School Performance

How does MSU work with schools?
Evaluation of 21st Century Community Learning Centers

This comprehensive evaluation of 21st Century Community Learning Centers (after-school programs) is evaluating effectiveness of the program, developing white papers on key after-school issues, and designing a state-of-the-art data collection system. MSU Outreach & Engagement provides technical assistance regarding storage and retrieval of the project’s large database.

**Location:** Statewide
MSU Outreach & Engagement
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How does MSU work with schools?

- **Evaluation**
  - Professional development for teachers/staff
  - Coaching for principals
- **Research**
  - Literature reviews focused on best practices
- **Data analysis**
- **Consultation**
- **Service-learning**
- **Long-term community engagement**

### All Students Achieve Program – Parent Involvement in Education (ASAP-PIE)

MSU is a partner in the statewide evaluation of the ASAP-PIE program. ASAP-PIE is a “zero to three” initiative designed to improve school readiness, reduce the need for special education services, and increase family stability for the 60,000 children involved in the program. This information will inform planning for Michigan’s Great Start initiative.

**Location:** 23 sites funded statewide
Learning to Give is a K-12 curriculum that enhances students’ understanding of and commitment to philanthropy, citizenship, and volunteering. MSU faculty advise the project leaders on structure and dissemination strategies. They are also evaluating the program’s curriculum development process and impact on student knowledge, attitudes, and behavior.

Location: Statewide
Catholic Social Services: Foster Kids and Education

With MSU Outreach & Engagement Partnerships and the School of Social Work, Catholic Social Services of Lansing/St. Vincent Home is exploring and developing best practice models of service delivery to children and their families. The Foster Care component of this collaborative is creating opportunities for young people to share thoughts about their experiences in foster care and in schools with educators, social service administrators, foster parents, and community leaders. The collaborative has published two anthologies of letters from foster children, “Dear Governor” (2002) and “Dear Teacher” (2003).

Location: Lansing
Off to a Great Start

MSU Families and Communities Together (FACT) Coalition is funding two efforts to assist Michigan’s Great Start initiative. A new easy-to-use booklet will give families tools for promoting early literacy. A second effort is to assist the state in training licensed child care providers in effective ways to meet the 30 minutes a day requirement for emerging literacy activities with children.

Location: Statewide
Through a W. K. Kellogg Foundation grant to the Capital Area Youth Alliance, MSU faculty from Family and Child Ecology and the Child Development Lab are identifying and testing strategies to strengthen the transition of children from pre-school settings into kindergarten. A program called “Leap Frog” is helping teachers to strengthen literacy and social competency skills of high-needs pre-kindergarten children.

**Location:** Lansing
Academic Coaches Institute
The Alliance for Building Capacity in Schools (ABCS) Academic Coaches Institute is training a cadre of about 100 school reform coaches to assist Michigan high priority schools in raising student math and reading achievement. Web-based tools will further the learning, collaboration, and communication of Institute core faculty and coaches. MSU Outreach & Engagement is building the Angel-based Web site for this project.

Location: Statewide
Elementary Asset Survey

This survey, based on Search Institute research, attempts to determine the basis for success of elementary age students. The survey is undertaken periodically in Lansing and occasionally in other school districts.

Location: Lansing and St. Johns
Head Start on Science

Head Start on Science is a science-teacher training program to promote children’s exploration and problem-solving ability through hands-on science activities. A family component is included to promote science interest at home. In conjunction with the MSU Children’s Garden, MSU Outreach & Engagement is conducting a pilot study of four Head Start classrooms to assess changes in teachers’ and parents’ attitudes about science, their teaching strategies, and children’s scientific reasoning ability and socioemotional functioning.

Location: Greater Lansing area
Best Practice Briefs

*Best Practice Briefs* are a publication of MSU Outreach & Engagement Partnerships. Each issue presents state-of-the-art concepts, tools, processes, and models of best human services practice in a user-friendly form. Two newly published (March 2004) *Briefs* summarize characteristics of good school leadership and parent involvement in schools. Past topics include full service schools and service learning. Briefs are available online at [http://outreach.msu.edu/bpbriefs](http://outreach.msu.edu/bpbriefs)

**Location:** Web-based

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Building UP to Success

In October 2002 University Outreach, in collaboration with public and private human services leaders, co-sponsored a community asset development conference in Houghton. One hundred participants from the Western Upper Peninsula subsequently agreed to engage MSU in a long-term partnership focused on evidence-based ways to improve school climate, strengthen the character of students, and engage adults in the lives of teenagers.

Location: Upper Peninsula
Early Childhood Initiatives Project

A newly awarded (January 2004) grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation extends our work to improve children’s school readiness in Lansing to the larger community. The grant will focus on systems integration and alignment of early childhood services and programs, and education and leadership training of community members including underrepresented populations, as well as the business and faith communities.

**Location:** Ingham County
America Reads/America Counts

The America Reads/America Counts initiatives are federally funded, community-based work-study opportunities for students. MSU runs these programs in a service-learning model, with on-campus orientation and training, monthly discussion/reflection sessions, and an evaluation component, which looks at MSU student outcomes related to the work. Tutors serve at all Lansing elementary and two of the middle schools.

Location: Lansing
GivEm40
The Youth Partnership of Northwest Michigan—popularly known as the GivEm 40 Coalition—is a five-county effort to create an environment in which infants, children, and youth in the region have everything they need to succeed. Utilizing the Search Institute’s 40 development assets, the coalition provides leadership to foster asset-building activities for children and youth. MSU faculty and staff help ensure that plans undertaken across the region are research-based, documented, and evaluated.

Location: Traverse Bay area
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Grand River Elementary School Improvement Plan

Grand River Elementary, Lansing, has entered into a partnership with MSU to create a professional development plan that will fulfill objectives of their School Improvement Plan grant. Faculty from Education, Family and Child Ecology, and the Child Development Lab are building the school’s ability to evaluate outcomes, understand and apply best practices, provide positive guidance to students, and enhance the effectiveness of instruction.

Location: Lansing
Young Spartan Program

This partnership with the Lansing School District promotes academic achievement and career awareness through service-learning. MSU student volunteers partner with teachers, parents, and community leaders to create learning opportunities for children. Six program models—special events, clubs, academic incentives, tutoring and classroom interaction, MSU course-based service-learning, and professional consultations—deliver year-round services. Other activities of the partnership include professional development for teachers and curriculum development.

Location: Lansing