



Symons Elementary School

2009 Annual Report

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Introduction

Our 3rd – 5th grade upper elementary school is named after Clayton Symons who was a superintendent in Milan for many years. Symons Elementary was created to meet the needs of upper elementary students and strives to be a bridge between Paddock Elementary School and Milan Middle School. Over 520 students are enrolled in our building at this time.

Symons staff consists of 21 classroom teachers, 6 special subject teachers, seven special education and support staff members including three teacher consultants, two reading support staff person, one speech pathologist, and two part time counselors. In addition we have eight teaching assistants, two secretaries, and one principal.

Students have opportunities to participate in six special subject classes including music, physical education, Spanish, art, computer instruction, and Core (additional social studies focus class). Our Fine Arts series offers opportunities for students to assemblies, programs, and attend trips that enhance their learning. Funding for this program comes from our annual candy sale each fall.

Each spring, transition activities are planned for 2nd grade students and families who will be moving to Symons as well as for 5th grade students who will be moving to the Middle School. Staff provides opportunities for students and families to visit the school, as well as hold parent meetings to inform families of school policies and procedures.

The Symons staff was trained in using the 6 + 1 Traits of Writing and the Lucy Calkins writing program. In addition, our district continued the implementation of MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) testing which, unlike the yearly MEAP test, will provide more regular feedback about instructional effectiveness so that changes and adaptations can immediately be made.

Each classroom in the Milan Area School District is equipped with a flexible interactive instructional system that includes a computer, a ceiling mounted LCD projector, interactive Webster Board, DVD/ VCR player, and sound amplification system. Teachers can access the district's network as well as the Internet and World Wide Web.

Software allows teachers to design interactive presentation that get students involved in the learning process and peak their interest level to learn.

Points of Pride

The Symons staff is involved in the NCA district accreditation process. A district team has been established and is beginning the work of collecting data and looking at potential goals.

Symons staff continues to work collaboratively with experts at Washtenaw Intermediate School District on several initiatives designed to help improve student achievement. We have implemented the Instructional Consultation Team process in an effort to better support students who struggle by providing teachers strategies and ideas to help students succeed. We also are using Reading Apprenticeship strategies as we work with students in reading.

While our MEAP scores continue to improve, we still look for ways to help our students be even more successful. Our efforts continue as a building to improve writing across the curriculum. Symons staff was trained in Writer's Workshop and will be implementing this school year.

Parent Participation and Communication

There is a high level of parental involvement at Symons Elementary especially during parent-teacher conferences. Each year, close to 100% of our families attend conferences. Teachers communicate with parents via e-mail, newsletters, or regular grade updates. A school-wide newsletter is published on a regular basis and a Symons Parent e-mail group was created and used to communicate even more effectively and regularly.

The Symons Parent group planned several events for students and teachers during the last school year. The Symons Parent Group will continue to meet throughout this school year to help make our school a great place for all of our students. We encourage parent and community involvement at Symons Elementary School.

Information about our building can be found on our web page at: <http://milanareaschools.org/symons/>