



Comprehensive Needs Assessment Summary Symons Elementary School 2024-2025

District Demographic Data

The city of Milan was founded in 1831 and is located in the Southeastern Michigan Counties of Washtenaw and Monroe. The city has a total of 3.4 square miles with 75% of its residents living in Washtenaw County and 25% of its residents living in Monroe County. Located between the cultural and commercial hubs of Ann Arbor, MI and Toledo, OH, Milan has both rural and industrial areas. The population of the City of Milan is around 6,000, which inhabit just over 2,500 households. Milan Area Schools includes the entire City of Milan as well as parts of the following townships: Augusta, Pittsfield, Saline, York, Exeter, London, and Milan. These townships are also split between Washtenaw County and Monroe County. The district encompasses approximately 84 square miles of land. The racial makeup of the school district is 88% White, 4.5% Hispanic/Latino, 7% Two or More Races, 3% African American, and <1% Asian. The residents of the City of Milan have varied educational experiences with approximately 48% of the population above 25 years of age earning an associates degree or beyond. The median household income in Milan is just over \$93,000, with a poverty rate of 9.4% (8.2% rate for residents aged 18 or under). *Data listed above gathered online through the U.S. Census Bureau and MiSchoolData

The racial makeup of the student population is 83% White, 7% Hispanic/Latino, 6% Two or More Races, 3% African American, and 1% Asian. Our student population is also: 81% At-Risk, 40% Economically Disadvantaged, 17% Students with Disabilities, and 2% English Language Learners.

Milan Area Schools has four school buildings: Paddock Elementary School, Symons Elementary School, Milan Middle School, and Milan High School. The district proudly operates a schools-of-choice program and consistently receives enrollments from more than 20 districts from Washtenaw County and four contiguous counties. Milan Area Schools recognizes a net increase of 226 students when considering non-resident students attending Milan vs. resident students attending elsewhere. The District offers an exceptional educational program to over 1,900 students in Preschool through Twelfth grade. Milan Area Schools employs 388 staff with 126 serving in the capacity of direct instructional staff. The instructional staff is considered 100% Highly Qualified, with a beneficial mixture of veteran teachers and teachers new to the profession, averaging over 11 years of service. Amongst the staff, 31 are certified with bachelor's degrees, 92 with master's degrees, and two teachers with a doctorate degree.

School Demographic Data

At Symons Elementary School, we have a total of 356 students and 33 staff members providing direct student instruction and support. Of our 356 students, 54.2% are female students and 45.8% are male students. The percentage of students with disabilities in our building is 16%. Our student population

is 82% White, 8% Two or More Races, 7% Hispanic, 2% African American, and less than 1% each of American Indian, Alaska Native, or Asian. Our free and reduced lunch rate for the 2024-2025 school year is 46%, and 93% of our students qualify for At-Risk services.

Staff Perceptions

Our staff reported a high level of satisfaction with the school. The staff feels a strong process is in place for monitoring and evaluating the impact of instruction on learner engagement, outcomes, and overall student success. At the end of last year, staff reported that students were not showing respect to adults and students; however, for the 2024-2025, this has changed with the consistent systems in the building. The staff reports that the building is safe and that social-emotional well-being is prioritized. The staff appreciates the new systems and protocols put in place with the transition of new staff and students for the change of including second graders this school year.

Parental Perceptions

Our parents reported that they believe the school is safe and welcoming and has high learning standards and clear student expectations. Parents describe their interactions with staff as helpful and respectful. Parents expressed at the end of the 2023-2024 school year that they wanted more events and after school programs. For the 2024-2025 school year, we added more after school free PTO events, an after school math club for enrichment, a “Be Nice” group, and a Helping Hands club for students.

Student Perceptions

Our students reported that they enjoy school and feel safe and supported. They stated they have someone to talk to when they have a problem and can receive help when needed. They also described feeling that their teachers had high expectations for learning and that they understood what was expected of them at school. Students reported that students were not treating adults and staff with respect at the end of last year; however, this has changed for the 2024-2025 school year, with the consistent building of climate and culture, with consistent systems.

Student Achievement

Student achievement is measured using both state and local assessments. Trend data indicates that our students began the year with a lower achievement in math and reading on the NWEA tests. Part of this decrease is due to the fact that our second grade students took the Reading and Math 2-5 NWEA test, which is more comprehensive and the test is no longer read to them. All of our students are growing in both reading and mathematics for the achievement portion of the NWEA. The reading Benchmark Assessment System shows growth for all of our students. Overall, the students are closing achievement gaps and recouping learning loss from the pandemic years. With literacy, our students are showing growth in vocabulary and narrative texts. The areas for improvement would be information literacy. With mathematics, students are showing growth in geometry and need more improvement in constructing reasoning to justify solutions.

In response to our assessment and perception data from the previous school year, the following items represent new or reinforced improvement initiatives.

- TRAIL Social-Emotional Learning Program
- Professional Development in Reading Fluency
- Professional Development in Mathematical Problem Solving
- Differentiated Instructional Coaching
- Word Study Intervention WIN Time in 4th and 5th grades
- Morpheme Magic in 4th and 5th Grades
- Focus on more formalized progress monitoring in Reading

- Increased time in Science and Social Studies in 4th and 5th grades
- Focus Skills Group for students with mild to moderate cognitive disabilities
- Peer-to-Peer program to work on social skills and interactions with disabled students

School Systems Review

Milan Area Schools conducts Internal Reviews on an annual basis in each school building. The review process is modeled after the AdvancED Accreditation Review process, whereby the host school shares a comprehensive presentation reviewing academic and perception data along with data-based plans for the upcoming school year. The visiting team, including administrators and teachers from the three other district buildings, receive the presentation, conduct classroom visits, interview a student panel, review artifacts in the building, and then summarize their experience.

The visiting team for the most recent review, completed in October 2024, identified the following highlights at Symons Elementary School:

- Exciting time for Symons!
- The staff and students are embracing the changes - a chance to reinvent, collectively.
- Purposeful and intentional use of culture and climate initiatives to improve academic growth
- The building demonstrates a calm, positive, and welcoming “vibe”
- Decision-making by the Leadership Team is rooted in data analysis.
- Intentional efforts are working and clear structures and strategies are being implemented.
- Efficiency in routines and transitions, which are clearly understood by students
- Evidence of differentiated learning opportunities
- The culture of learning is ever-present
- Observed efficiency in instructional routines - maximizing learning potential!
- Students share excitement about the academic challenges and opportunities
- There is ever-present evidence of professionalism, teamwork, cohesiveness amongst the staff
- Joyful representations abound in the building - shared positivity amongst stakeholders
- Symons is focused on driving improvements through culture and climate initiatives

Comprehensive Needs Assessment Determinations

The Comprehensive Needs Assessment, which serves as the conclusive report of the annual cyclical district improvement process, yields the following strategies in alignment with district-wide goals established by Milan Area Schools:

1. **MAS Mathematics Goal:** Reduce the gap in NWEA Mathematics RIT scores and PSAT/SAT Math by at least 25% from Fall to Spring between the all-student average and Students with Disabilities and also Economically Disadvantaged Students.
 - **Symons Mathematics Strategy:** Bridges Intervention Program - The Mathematics Interventionist will conduct individualized and small group intervention using the Bridges program as a foundation.
2. **MAS Reading Goal:** Reduce the gap in NWEA Mathematics RIT scores and PSAT/SAT Math by at least 25% from Fall to Spring between the all-student average and Students with Disabilities and also Economically Disadvantaged Students.
 - **Symons Reading Strategy:** High Quality Intensive Reading Intervention - The Reading Interventionists will utilize a variety of strategies, including ISME Morphology, UFLI, SIPPS, LLI: Leveled Literacy Intervention, Phonics and Spelling through Phoneme-Grapheme Mapping, Wilson Foundations, Wilson Just Words, Wilson Fluency, Intensive Phonological Awareness, Heggerty Phonemic Awareness, Orton-Gillingham, and Tools4Reading to provide ongoing and consistent intervention to students who qualify as at-risk according to the criteria established by the state of Michigan.