

ROCKWELL

School Improvement Annual Report 2008-09

The mission of Rockwell Junior High School is to enhance students' social, academic and prevocational skills by creating an enriching and supportive learning environment.

Rockwell serves severely emotionally impaired (SEI) students, ages 12 to 15, who reside in Macomb County. The academic curriculum follows the benchmarks defined by the state of Michigan, but with lessons amended so competition is limited and success more attainable. Extra services provided by ancillary staff help ensure that students' other needs are met. Our average enrollment is 95 students and the average daily attendance rate was 93% last year.

Status of School Improvement

Our school improvement goal is to reduce the number of office referrals for verbal aggression, instigation, non-compliance, bullying and harassment of any kind. Our positive behavior support (PBS) program is in its seventh year. It focuses on responsibility, respect, courtesy and cooperation. Daily personal adjustment classes help students learn to interact with one another in positive ways, while speakers from the community provide lessons on diversity. Both individuals and whole classrooms are recognized for their behavior in school, on the bus and at community service sites. A great deal of attention is devoted to collecting, counting and posting rewards in the classroom. Surprise incentives provide additional rewards throughout the year.

Office referrals declined 15% over the year among a cohort group of 30 students who have attended Rockwell for two consecutive years, demonstrating the value of the PBS program.

Curriculum

Our curriculum follows state standards and benchmarks of the Michigan Merit Curriculum for math, English language arts, science, geography, history and physical education. We use amended textbooks to limit competition and increase success with basic goals and objectives. All academic goals written into a student's annual Individualized Education Program (IEP) are reflective of the state's standards and benchmarks.

Other learning experiences include a performing arts workshop (All the World's a Stage), physical education events, and a variety of assemblies. Academics in Motion (AIM) provides hands-on activities combining academics and social skills experiences. Participation in student council helps develop responsibility. Members handle flag duty, snack cart, recycling, fundraising and more, and they meet weekly with staff to work on team-building skills.

Use of Technology

A 10-week computer class introduces students to Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Adobe Photoshop, and an online typing program helps them learn or enhance keyboarding skills. All eighth grade students take a technology skills test. Safe use of the Internet enables students to gain information beyond the teacher's knowledge and the limits of the traditional classroom.

Student Achievement

All students are tested in September using the Woodcock Johnson III Tests of Achievement. Results are used in conjunction with state assessment results to help write the student's IEP and to plan classroom lessons. Every five weeks parents receive either a progress or quarterly report to keep them informed of ongoing academic and behavior achievement. Honor assemblies held four times a year recognize students for honor roll, peacemaker, citizenship and "On-A-Roll." Students who show consistent positive behavior over time are recognized for their achievement with the opportunity to return to their local school district as an "integrated" student. Last year 17 returned on a part-time basis; of those, six returned full time.

All students participate in state assessments. The majority took the MEAP this year. For some of our students, however, MEAP is not appropriate, even with accommodations. They took the MI-Access Functional Independence assessment. Individual results were shared with parents; results for various groups of students are shown on the following tables:

MEAP Students meeting or exceeding performance expectations

		Fall 2008		Fall 2007	
Subject		# tested	%	# tested	%
GRADE 7	Math	14	43%	18	17%
	ELA*	14	36%	15	20%
	Reading	14	43%	17	35%
	Writing	14	29%	15	7%
GRADE 8	Math	23	26%	27	11%
	ELA*	22	32%	25	36%
	Reading	22	32%	27	56%
	Writing	23	26%	25	20%
	Science	25	40%	26	54%
GRADE 9	Social Studies	23	52%	14	36%

*ELA = English language arts on MEAP is a combination of reading and writing scores.

MI-Access Functional Independence Students meeting or exceeding performance expectations

		Fall 2008		Fall 2007	
Subject		# tested	%	# tested	%
GRADE 7	Math	9	*	4	*
	ELA	8	*	5	*
GRADE 8	Math	6	*	10	90%
	ELA	6	*	9	*
	Science	5	*	pilot	

*The state does not provide data on groups smaller than 10 students.

Use of Community Resources

Rockwell receives financial support from civic organizations and local businesses. In turn, classrooms provide service to the community, with staff supervision. Field trips to museums, outdoor adventures and performing arts events help students learn about their community. Grant money provides a subscription to *The Macomb Daily* for use in lessons on current events.

Staff Development

Staff have access to a variety of venues for learning new teaching strategies and behavior management techniques that help us meet our improvement goal. Conferences sponsored by the MISD featured nationally known professionals in the field of education. Staff attended a workshop on *United Streaming* and are now enhancing lessons with audio-visual components. In addition, our team attended the annual training needed to be recertified in CPR and use of the automated external defibrillator.

All of our teachers meet the “highly qualified” criteria set by the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

Parent Participation

Throughout the year, we provide opportunities that encourage parent participation. In the fall, we hold an open house, inviting parents to visit the school and meet the staff. Eighty-seven percent of parents attended annual IEP team meetings and 67% came to spring conferences. In a more social setting, parents are invited to a holiday luncheon, spring talent show, and a parent appreciation luncheon. We also give parents the opportunity to attend a weekly support group led by our school social worker and school psychologist. A daily agenda book, monthly newsletters and our website (www.misd.net/Rockwell) provide continual informal information. Upon request, conferences with parents and the student are held throughout the year to reassess behavioral and/or academic concerns.

Points of Pride

- Our concern for the environment is evident through a variety of eco-friendly activities, including the recycling of paper, plastic and ink cartridges, and creation of a T-shirt designed as part of a student contest and sold to celebrate Earth Day.
- One of our “integrated” students was voted into the student council at her home school.
- A bake sale generated \$100 for Leader Dogs for the Blind while student council fundraisers raised \$900 for the Muscular Dystrophy Association.
- We collected pop tabs and gave them to the Elks Club for use in a camp scholarship.
- We adopted a chimpanzee, meerkat and giraffe from the Detroit Zoo.
- Community service projects included providing students from one of the MISD’s Autistic Impaired sites and one Cognitively Impaired elementary program with tutoring help or preparation for Special Olympics; helping out at the Warren Community Center and Nativity Church; and participating in the “Keep Masonic Boulevard Clean” project.
- Our community integration class donated money and personal products to Turning Point, a shelter in Mount Clemens.



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Rockwell Junior High

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