

# Career Connections Academy

870 E. Superior Street  
Wayland, MI 49348  
Phone: 269.792.2254  
Santino Di Cesare, Principal

## ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022-2023

February 15, 2024

Dear Parents and Community Members:

We are pleased to present you with the Annual Education Report (AER) which provides key information on the 2022 - 2023 educational progress for Career Connections Academy. 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 Santino Di Cesare, Principal, for assistance.

The AER is available for you to review electronically by visiting the following web site [2022-2023 CCA Annual Education Report](#), or you may review a copy in the main office at your child's school.

For the 2023-24 school year, schools were identified based on previous years' performance using definitions and labels as required in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). A Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) school is one that had at least one underperforming student subgroup in 2022-23. An Additional Targeted Support (ATS) school is one that had a student subgroup performing at the same level as the lowest 5% of all schools in the state in 2021-22. A Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) school is one whose performance was in the lowest 5% of all schools in the state or had a graduation rate at or below 67% in 2021-22. Some schools are not identified with any of these labels. In these cases, no label is given. CCA was not given one of these labels.

Career Connection Academy's key challenges include continuing to improve our math, science, and writing proficiency scores and prepare our students for careers. During the next school-year, our staff and administration will strive to implement strategies designed to bring about improved results. One of our key initiatives will be to prepare CCA students for careers through an increase in technical center participation, career oriented elective courses, and project based learning.

State law requires that we also report additional information:

### **Process for Assigning Students to Career Connections Academy**

Career Connections Academy is a public school open to all high school aged students living in the Wayland Union School District. Students from other districts can apply to attend Career Connections Academy through the district Schools of Choice application process. Students needing a career centered curriculum are recommended to Career Connections Academy by their counselors, teachers and administrators. Also, students needing credit recovery are often recommended to Career Connections Academy in order to provide the students with the individual focus and learning track needed to ensure the child receives a Wayland High School diploma.

### **School Improvement Plan**

Over the past four years, our school has diligently worked to implement and refine the district's Michigan Integrated Continuous Improvement Plan (MICIP), with a specific focus on enhancing students' proficiency in claim, evidence, and reasoning (CER) skills. Through strategic planning, collaborative efforts among

educators, Professional Learning Community (PLC) teams, and targeted classroom instruction in all content areas, we have witnessed excellent progress in the development of these critical academic competencies among our students. The implementation of evidence-based teaching strategies, ongoing professional development for teachers, and a commitment to data-driven decision-making contribute to the positive outcomes observed, as students demonstrate an increased ability to construct well-supported arguments, critically analyze information, and effectively communicate their ideas.

### **Special Programs**

Wayland Union Schools provides all students with an exceptional academic education, geared towards individual student needs. Individualized supports, interventions and opportunities are provided to empower students to reach their full potential. For students who are eligible for special education we provide a continuum of services to meet their needs. The Individualized Educational Plan Team (IEPT) makes decisions regarding the appropriate programs and services providing a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment. Along with instructional support, the district employs ancillary support services that include speech and language pathologists, school social workers, teacher consultants, occupational therapists, and school psychologists. In cooperation with Allegan Area Educational Service Agency (AAESA) teacher consultant services for visual impairments, hearing impairments, autism spectrum disorder, and orientation and mobility, behavioral consultants and physical therapists.

Special education programs are provided in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education (MARSE) and the Allegan Area Educational Service Agency's ISD Plan. Special education programs are located in each building in the district and are based on each individual student's level of need as an alternative to the disability specific programs outlined in MARSE. Programs and services for our youngest students, age birth to three, and for our students whose level of need requires extensive ongoing support throughout the day are provided through AAESA.

### **Core Curriculum**

The core curriculum provides a framework for our educational programs. It is a set of expectations all students should achieve to progress in their schooling. We are working to deliver a curriculum that provides all students with the knowledge and skills necessary for living effectively today and in the future. Career Connections Academy teachers use district approved curriculum resources to implement our core instruction. These include Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Technology, Fine and Performing Arts, and Physical Education. All areas of the curriculum are reviewed annually within a five-year cycle.

The five year process includes reviewing the current curriculum along with the revisions received from the Michigan Department of Education, revising the curriculum, implementing the revision, monitoring the implementation, and finally, evaluating the data and the curriculum revisions to determine when certain concepts should be introduced at a particular grade level. Curriculum revisions and/or textbook and software purchases are reviewed and recommended to the Board of Education by the District School Improvement Committee.

Teachers receive professional development and training in areas of the curriculum that have been revised or when students have not been able to demonstrate adequate performance. It is important for teachers to be aware of each individual student that is not performing to district and state standards, and plan their instruction accordingly.

Our curriculum provides expanded opportunities designed to meet individual needs. Course offerings exceed core curriculum requirements established by the Michigan Department of Education. Strong academic programming is supported by quality technology and facilities. Please contact the Assistant Superintendent of Instruction for access to district curriculum guides.

Integrated with our core academic curriculum and enhancing a student's quality educational experiences are:

- Community partnerships
- Field trips, assemblies, and special activities/events
- Integration of technology into instruction and assessment
- Library-media resources

- Active and involved parent participation

Student achievement remains our top priority. Higher standards and greater expectations have resulted in the implementation of a variety of instructional methods, progressive teaching strategies, and specialized programs designed to respond to the individual needs and learning styles of a diverse student population. We offer a demanding academic schedule for all students with an emphasis on post-secondary preparation skills.

We embrace the concept of a brain-compatible learning environment, recognizing that individuals learn at different rates of growth through different methods of instruction and a variety of teaching/learning styles. Our curriculum makes provisions for the variability of academic skills, interests, and social, emotional, and physical development within our student population.

**Aggregate Student Achievement Results on District Assessments and Nationally Normed Achievement Tests**

The Michigan Department of Education has transitioned to using the SAT as part of the Michigan Merit Exam. Career Connection Academy juniors took the SAT in the spring of 2022.

SAT	Composite Score
2022-2023	815.4
2021-2022	773.8

**Parent Teacher Conferences**

PT Conferences	% Attending		
	Fall	Winter	Spring
2022-2023	41.7%	16.7%	22.9%
2021 - 2022	30%	14.8%	8.3%

**Advanced Placement/College Equivalent Courses**

In the 2022-2023 school year, no students took an AP course.

We are very proud of the direction Career Connections Academy is headed as we establish ourselves as our own educational entity. Career Connections Academy staff work collaboratively to support our vision to create an environment where all students have the opportunity to attain skills that make them better prepared for all post-secondary choices. With support from our families, community and staff our students will learn the content and skills necessary to meet the challenges of whatever post-secondary option they choose.

Sincerely,

Santino Di Cesare, Principal  
Wayland High School/Career Connections Academy