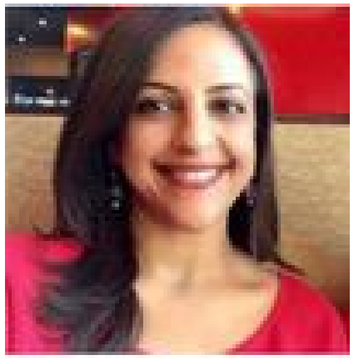
Beyond Expectations:

Inside Systems Driving Exceptional Opportunity in Michigan Charter Schools

THE GOVERNOR JOHN ENGLER
CENTER FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS
CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Presenters



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Executive Principal
Pembroke Academy
Detroit, MI

Steve Paddock
Superintendent
Trillium Academy
Taylor, MI

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Director of Assessment and Evaluation
The Center for Charter Schools at CMU

Learning Objectives

- Learn the key systems and practices that helped high-performing Michigan charter schools exceed expectations.
- Discover practical engagement and instructional strategies you can apply in your own schools.
- Walk away with tools to strengthen continuous improvement.

Why these schools?

Selection Criteria

- Free-Reduced > 70%
- Median growth percentile on NWEA MAP above CMU portfolio in reading and math.
- Regression (performance related to FRPL) – Outperform regression in ELA and math.
- Representative of different ESP.

Data Collection

- Partnership with Basis Policy Research.
- 12 focus groups: 40 teachers, 17 leadership staff, random selection by grade/content
- School document review: Handbooks, calendars, policy guides.

Emergence of Themes

Learning Environment	Engagement	Research Based Strategies and Cognitive Challenge	Assessment and Adjustment
Collective Values	Family Engagement	Professional Learning	Data Infrastructure
Administrator Dispositions	Engagement Strategies	Educator Support Systems	Tiered Intervention
Communication Systems	Student Accountability	Instructional Practices	Data Use
Behavior Systems	Instructional Practices	Individualized Support	Differentiation
Non-Academic Support Systems			

Learning Environment

Collective Values	• Mission alignment and team buy-in. • Shared decision-making process.
Administrator Dispositions	• Visibility and accessibility. • Supportive, collaborative, and proactive leadership.
Communication Systems	• Regular staff meetings and updates. • Transparent and open communication channels.
Behavior Systems	• Consistent implementation of behavior frameworks. • Positive behavior incentives.
Non-Academic Support Systems	• Safe rooms and open-door policy. • SEL and language resources.

Overview: What drives sustained school success?

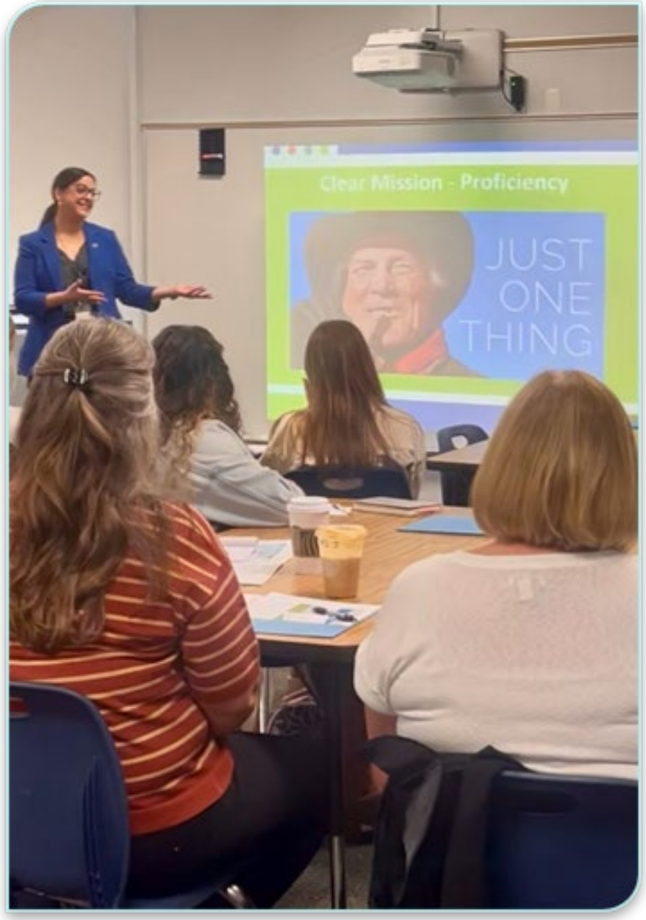
Success is built through consistent and coherent systems, not isolated initiatives.

Pembroke Academy's success reflects aligned values, engagement, instruction, and data use.

Leadership behaviors are reinforced by intentional organizational structures.

Learning Environment: The Foundation

Key Focus: Collective Values.
Mission alignment and authentic team buy-in.
Shared ownership of decisions and outcomes.
Values experienced daily, not just stated.



Learning Environment:
Starts With Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals

Mission

Cultivating college and career focused learners by embracing academic excellence, strong character values, disciplined artistry, and individual student passions.

Vision

Our students will leave Trillium Academy as:

- Lifelong learners in pursuit of college and career
- Critical, innovative thinkers and problem solvers
- Responsible and productive citizens who display good character values
- Professionals with the means to communicate in a global society
- Appreciation for culture and the arts

Values

- PASSION: We believe in embracing and cultivating an individual's passion for education and life.
- LOVE FOR STUDENTS: We believe in providing a safe place founded in love for students. By actively teaching the whole child we foster relationships that bring about optimum student success.
- INTENTIONAL: We believe in being intentional and deliberate about using the arts and outside educational experiences to reinforce classroom academics and to provide a broad education for the whole child.
- COMMUNICATION: We believe in creating a school environment that is built upon collaborative communication with all stakeholders, whose diverse and valuable opinions and experiences contribute to school success.
- HIGH EXPECTATIONS: We believe having high expectations that are clearly defined for both students and staff is essential in promoting responsibility, accountability, and academic success.
- DISCIPLINED ARTISTRY: We believe that fostering disciplined artistry in our students prepares them for lifelong learning as good citizens and community leaders.
- SUCCESS: We believe that in order to create success, we must place the needs of our students, staff, and parents at the center of our academic programs. We understand that all needs are different based on backgrounds and experiences. We will cultivate success by instilling integrity, perseverance, and resourcefulness into our student's daily lives, while being true to our mission.
- FOCUSED: We believe strongly in cultivating college and career focused learners, thus everything we do is in strategic alignment to our mission.
- FAMILY: We believe in the value of the family. Our student's families are a vital component to their success. The greater Trillium family, comprised of school employees and stakeholders, is committed to providing the support and guidance necessary to create successful students.
- RESPECT: We believe that our school community models and practices respecting students, teachers, and staff, including their time, in order to create a more positive community with a common goal of accomplishing our mission.

GOAL 2: Support students in developing personal character	2022		2023		2024		2025	
	Goal	*Actual*	*Goal*	*Actual*	*Goal*	*Actual*	*Goal*	*Actual*
Trillium students are recognized and celebrated at one of the monthly PBIS assemblies	20%	0	20%	37%	20%	41%	20%	43%
Teachers state they are satisfied with the PBIS program, as measured by staff survey	75%	90%	80%	81%	80%	87%	80%	91%
Reduction in suspensions	10%		10%		10%		10%	
Character value lessons are delivered once per month	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Learning Environment

Monday Message

Week of January 19, 2026

Trillium News

Character Trait of the Month:
Perseverance

I hope that everyone enjoyed the surprise "it's too cold for school" day yesterday! Due to this surprise, the admin team has made some changes to the NWEA testing schedule. It has been communicated already but it also located in the NWEA Testing Schedule attached to my email. Please take a look and make sure you are aware. In addition, we will be under a time crunch for make-ups. Please be flexible and patient as admin works through these!

Please do not forget to update the PD sheet that Mrs. Keilman sent out. This is a mandatory assignment that must be completed by the time you leave on Friday!

Dates

1/22- HS Final Exams

1/23- ½ Day 11:50 a.m. dismissal / Staff PD / Grades due by midnight

1/26- HS Final Exams

1/28- Q2/S1 Report Cards Delivered

1/28- Board Meeting 8:00 a.m.

Important Reminders

**Remember to keep your window covering up during the day!

***Please sign in daily using the Raptor Kiosk!**

TLAC

Positive Framing- Using positive framing means making interventions to correct student behavior in a positive and constructive way. Make corrections consistently and positively.

Non-Negotiables

The following practices and procedures must be implemented by all instructional staff at Trillium Academy. They cannot be altered or substituted.

- Objective(s) posted and explained to students (student friendly/ "I Can" statements)
- Do now/bell work (as aligned with TRG pacing/review)
- Staff Present for all Standardized Testing
- Communication via classroom DOJO
- Walls that talk/teach (Reading & Math)
- Mission & vision statement visible
- Trillium pledge/Morning Announcements
- Follow TRG pacing guides
- Use TRG lesson plan template
- Lesson plans must be turned in Monday by 8 a.m./Special Education staff Tuesday by 8 a.m.
- Rules/expectations/social contract posted
- Instructional schedule posted and followed
- Class syllabus
- Data wall: school-wide assessment goals posted
- Teachers are required to keep updated samples of student work
- Current TLAC strategies being utilized and posted (as aligned with TRG standards)
- Hall duty (arrival/dismissal)
- Hall passes

Engagement

Family Engagement	• Opportunities for families to get involved. • Frequent communication with multiple platforms.
Engagement Strategies	• Recognition events or awards for students. • Field trips, extracurriculars, and clubs.
Student Accountability	• Individual tracking and goal setting. • Student-led parent conferences.
Instructional Practices	• Hands-on activities and project-based learning. • Real-world connections.

Engagement: Ownership of Learning

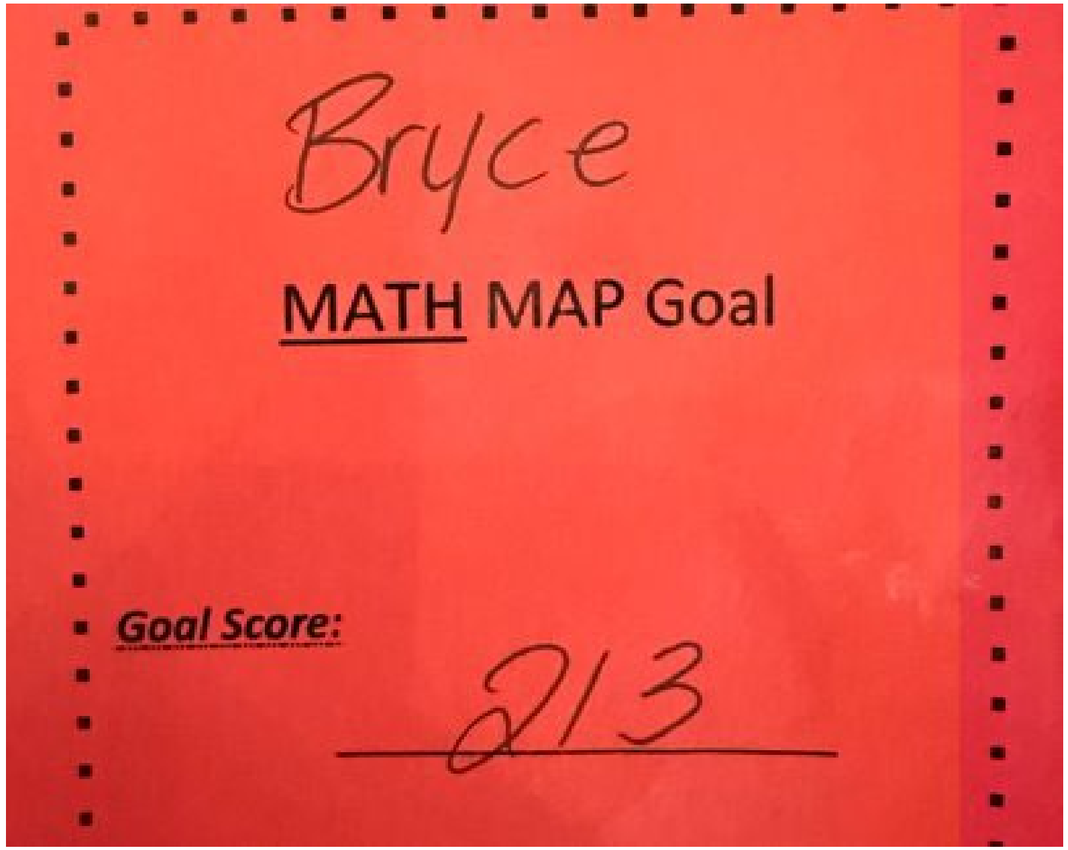
Key Focus: Student Accountability.

Individual tracking and goal setting.

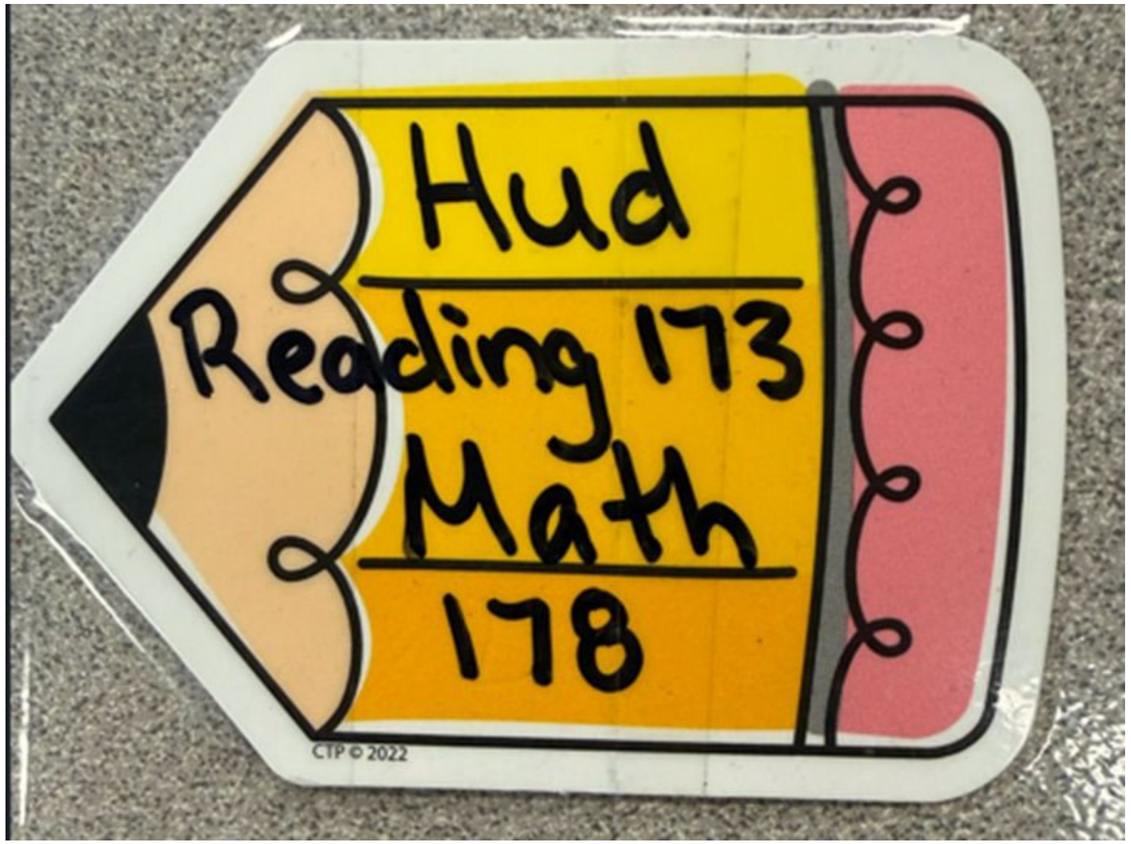
Students understand where they are and where they are going.

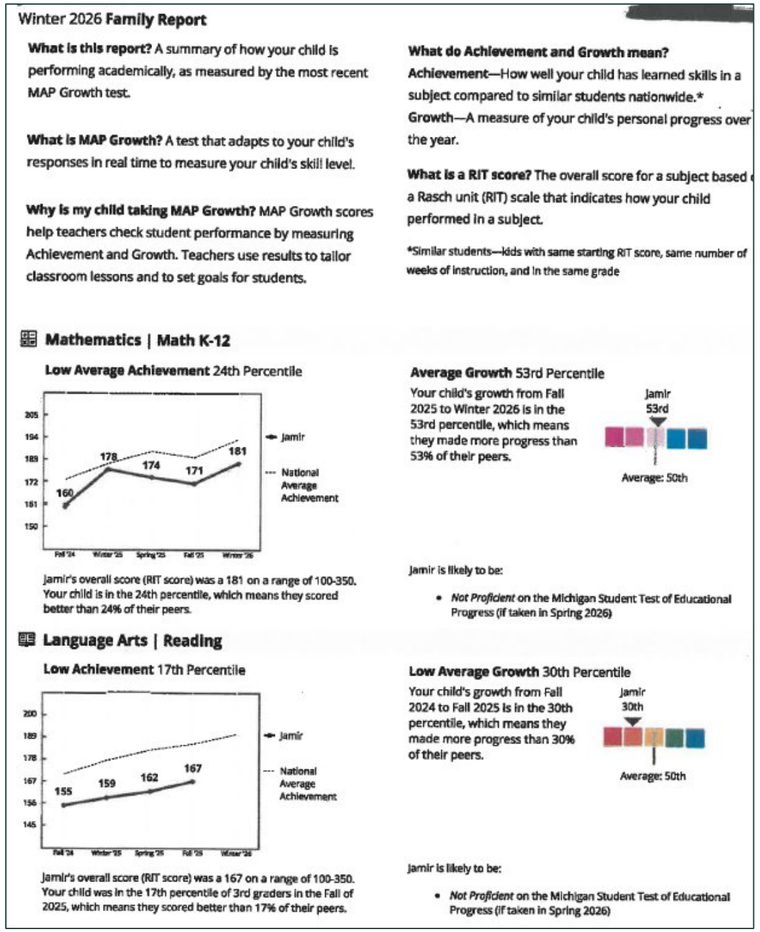
Engagement rooted in purpose, not compliance.

Engagement Through Goal Setting



Engagement Through Sharing Progress





Winter 2026 **Family Report**

What is this report? A summary of how your child is performing academically, as measured by the most recent MAP Growth test.

What is MAP Growth? A test that adapts to your child's responses in real time to measure your child's skill level.

Why is my child taking MAP Growth? MAP Growth scores help teachers check student performance by measuring Achievement and Growth. Teachers use results to tailor classroom lessons and to set goals for students.

What do Achievement and Growth mean?
Achievement—How well your child has learned skills in a subject compared to similar students nationwide.*
Growth—A measure of your child's personal progress over the year.

What is a RIT score? The overall score for a subject based on a Rasch unit (RIT) scale that indicates how your child performed in a subject.

*Similar students—kids with same starting RIT score, same number of weeks of instruction, and in the same grade

Mathematics | Math K-12

Low Average Achievement 24th Percentile

Jamir's overall score (RIT score) was a 181 on a range of 100-350. Your child is in the 24th percentile, which means they scored better than 24% of their peers.

Average Growth 53rd Percentile

Your child's growth from Fall 2025 to Winter 2026 is in the 53rd percentile, which means they made more progress than 53% of their peers.

Jamir is likely to be:

- *Not Proficient* on the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (if taken in Spring 2026)

Language Arts | Reading

Low Achievement 17th Percentile

Jamir's overall score (RIT score) was a 167 on a range of 100-350. Your child was in the 17th percentile of 3rd graders in the Fall of 2025, which means they scored better than 17% of their peers.

Low Average Growth 30th Percentile

Your child's growth from Fall 2024 to Fall 2025 is in the 30th percentile, which means they made more progress than 30% of their peers.

Jamir is likely to be:

- *Not Proficient* on the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (if taken in Spring 2026)

Research-Based Strategies and Cognitive Engagement

Professional Learning	• Access to relevant professional learning. • Instructional coaching and modeling instruction.
Educator Support Systems	• Mentorship of new teachers. • Peer collaboration opportunities.
Instructional Practices	• Critical and depth of knowledge questions. • Modeling and guided practice.
Individualized Support	• Individualized learning plans. • Small group instruction.

Research-Based Strategies and Cognitive Engagement (Instruction)

	Key Focus: Instructional Practices
	Use of critical and depth-of-knowledge questions.
	Consistent cognitive demand for all learners.
	Focus on thinking, reasoning, and application.

Teacher Support

	Tuesday 8/19/25	
8:00-11:00 a.m.	CMU Student Engagement Location: Cafeteria	K-5 Teachers and Support Staff (including SPED, MTSS, EL and Specials Teachers)
9:00-11:00 a.m.	GSRP Parent Orientation Location: Theater	
12:00-3:00 p.m.	CMU Student Engagement Location: Cafeteria	6-12 Teachers and Support Staff (including SPED, MTSS, EL and Specials Teachers)
	Classroom Work Time	When you are not participating in the CMU student engagement training, please make sure you are in the building for the duration of the day completing necessary tasks in your classroom to prepare for student orientation and the start of the school year.

	Wednesday 8/20/25	
9:00-11:00 a.m.	**BTAM (Threat Assessment Training- ALL STAFF)** Location: Classrooms (virtual)	Please make sure you are logged in with cameras on for the duration of the training.
11:00-3:00 p.m.	**Classroom Work Time**	If you are not participating in the Goalbook or SS training, please make sure you are in the building for the duration of the day completing necessary tasks in your classroom to prepare for student orientation and the start of the school year.
1:30-2:30 p.m.	**SPED Team Meeting (All SPED teachers)** Location: Room 409	
1:00-2:00 p.m.	**Goalbook Training (Invited SPED team members)** Location: Classrooms (virtual)	Please make sure you are logged in with cameras on for the duration of the training.

Teach Like A Champion Cheat Sheet

Setting High Academic Expectations

1. Technique One: No Opt Out. Teachers with high expectations don't accept "I don't know," but expect students to be engaged and "give it a shot."
2. Technique Two: Right is Right. This technique accepts no half-answers but asks for complete and correct answers to questions.
3. Technique Three: Stretch It. This technique pushes a teacher to take correct answers and ask students to add depth or nuance to their answers.
4. Technique Four: Format Matters. High expectations also means only accepting students answers in complete sentence with good grammar.
5. Technique Five: No Apologies. Teachers with high expectations don't apologize for what they teach. No more "Sorry I have to teach you Shakespeare."
6. Technique 39: Do It Again. Repetition is one way to be sure that students understand what you expect and that it is done to your standards.
1. Technique Six: Begin with the End. This planning technique focuses on the outcome instead of what you want to do during the period.
2. Technique Seven: The Four M's. The four m's of planning are:
    a. Manageable
    b. Measureable
    c. Made First
    d. Most Important.
3. Technique Eight: Post It. Be sure your students know your objective for the day by posting it on the board.
4. Technique Nine: The Shortest Path. Although teachers are often enamored with clever approaches, Lemov asserts that the shortest path to the objective is the most effective. 5. Technique 10: Double Plan. Double planning involves planning not only what you will do, but also what the students will do during a lesson.
6. Technique 11: Draw the Map. Drawing the map is controlling the environment by wisely grouping students through the seating chart.

Teacher Support

Learning Centers:

Module 5.2 Lessons 1-5 Center 1

Listening Center
Day one: Listen to New HMH story of the week. Interactive lesson too
Day two: Listen to your leveled Rigby book or Chapter book. Interactive lesson too
Day three: Listen to your leveled Rigby book or Chapter book. Interactive lesson too
Day Four: Listen to your leveled Rigby book or Chapter book. Interactive lesson too
Day five: Listen to the Read and Response Homework story of the week.

Module 5.2 Lessons 1-5 Center 2

Writing: Students will write a Persuasive Letter,

Day one: Learn about form.

Day two: make a word bank

Day three: Draft letter.

Day four: Clean up draft

Day five submit letter.

Module 5.2 Lessons 1-5 Center 3

Word-Work
Shades of Meaning
Subject-verb agreement
Ar and r control
Adjectives and adverbs
Dictionary

Module 5.2 Lessons 1-5 Center 4

Read with Teacher
Rigby Readers based on levels
Chapter books based on levels

Verb:

Apply-Comprehend-Inquire
Assessment:

Formal
Homework:

Mentor Meeting Agenda
September 18, 2025

Attendees

J. McGregor - Principal
M. McSweeney - 4-8 AP
Stephanie Brazell - Mentor
Michael Chrusciel - Mentor
Dawn Childress - Mentor
Deanna Doede - Mentor

General Announcements

Good News

Discussion Items

- Roster
- Schedule: (3) Mentor Program Meetings
  - September 18th
  - January 15th
  - April 9th
- Program Design
  - Monthly Tasks
  - Meet with Mentee bi-weekly through April
    - 2 meets per month
  - Document Meetings
    - Mentor Log
- To Do:
  - Craft Email for Mentees - it is a job requirement to participate in the program
    - After school, before school etc
  - Michigan Teachers for tomorrow: Observations will be a separate situation but log the observation in mentor log

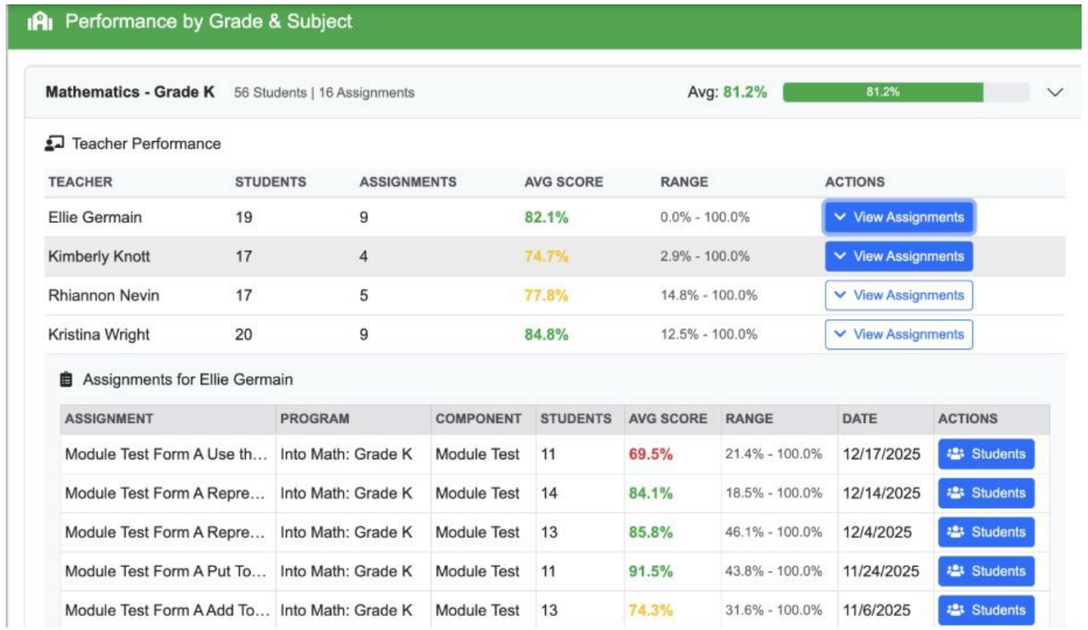
Assessment and Adjustment

Data Infrastructure	• Grade-level, MTSS, and data team meetings. • Accountability to making improvements.
Tiered Intervention	• Student identification and strategic grouping. • Enrichment classes and tutoring opportunities.
Data Use	• Use of formative and summative assessments. • Adjustment to instruction.
Differentiation	• Utilization of diagnostic tools. • Leveled assignments and instruction.

Assessment and Adjustment: Turning Data Into Action

	Key Focus: Data Use
	Formative and summative assessments inform instruction.
	Instruction adjusted in real time.
	Data drives support, not labels.

Assessment Literacy and Data Analysis



Performance by Grade & Subject

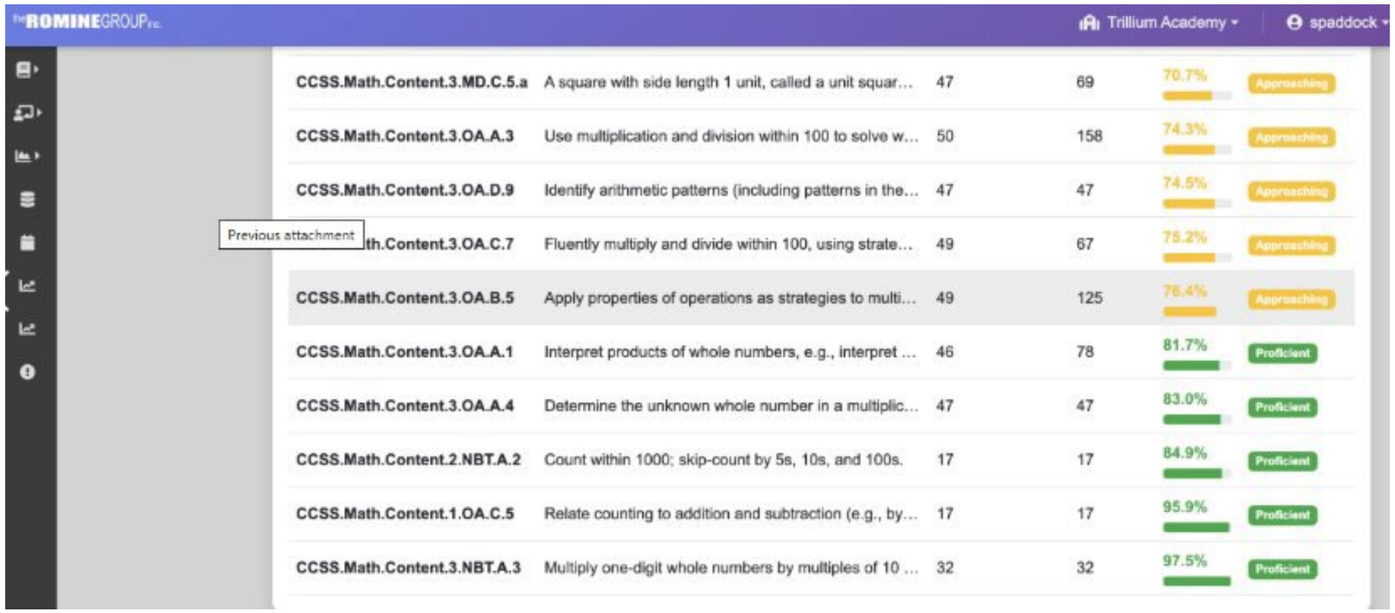
Mathematics - Grade K 56 Students | 16 Assignments Avg: 81.2% 81.2%

Teacher Performance

TEACHER	STUDENTS	ASSIGNMENTS	AVG SCORE	RANGE	ACTIONS
Ellie Germain	19	9	82.1%	0.0% - 100.0%	View Assignments
Kimberly Knott	17	4	74.7%	2.9% - 100.0%	View Assignments
Rhiannon Nevin	17	5	77.8%	14.8% - 100.0%	View Assignments
Kristina Wright	20	9	84.8%	12.5% - 100.0%	View Assignments

Assignments for Ellie Germain

ASSIGNMENT	PROGRAM	COMPONENT	STUDENTS	AVG SCORE	RANGE	DATE	ACTIONS
Module Test Form A Use th…	Into Math: Grade K	Module Test	11	69.5%	21.4% - 100.0%	12/17/2025	Students
Module Test Form A Repre…	Into Math: Grade K	Module Test	14	84.1%	18.5% - 100.0%	12/14/2025	Students
Module Test Form A Repre…	Into Math: Grade K	Module Test	13	85.8%	46.1% - 100.0%	12/4/2025	Students
Module Test Form A Put To…	Into Math: Grade K	Module Test	11	91.5%	43.8% - 100.0%	11/24/2025	Students
Module Test Form A Add To…	Into Math: Grade K	Module Test	13	74.3%	31.6% - 100.0%	11/6/2025	Students



ROMINEGROUP Inc. Trillium Academy spaddock

Previous attachment

CCSS.Math.Content.3.MD.C.5.a	A square with side length 1 unit, called a unit squar…	47	69	70.7%	Approaching
CCSS.Math.Content.3.OA.A.3	Use multiplication and division within 100 to solve w…	50	158	74.3%	Approaching
CCSS.Math.Content.3.OA.D.9	Identify arithmetic patterns (including patterns in the…	47	47	74.5%	Approaching
th.Content.3.OA.C.7	Fluently multiply and divide within 100, using strate…	49	67	75.2%	Approaching
CCSS.Math.Content.3.OA.B.5	Apply properties of operations as strategies to multi…	49	125	76.4%	Approaching
CCSS.Math.Content.3.OA.A.1	Interpret products of whole numbers, e.g., interpret …	46	78	81.7%	Proficient
CCSS.Math.Content.3.OA.A.4	Determine the unknown whole number in a multiplic…	47	47	83.0%	Proficient
CCSS.Math.Content.2.NBT.A.2	Count within 1000; skip-count by 5s, 10s, and 100s.	17	17	84.9%	Proficient
CCSS.Math.Content.1.OA.C.5	Relate counting to addition and subtraction (e.g., by…	17	17	95.9%	Proficient
CCSS.Math.Content.3.NBT.A.3	Multiply one-digit whole numbers by multiples of 10 …	32	32	97.5%	Proficient

Use of Data for Goal Setting

Teacher Name:

GROWTH GOAL: 80%

READING

MATH

Teacher will fill out the four Classroom Reflection questions

Teacher will fit out the Focus Areas and Action Plan per students

Classroom Teacher Reflection:

Why do you think students didn't meet their goals?

List Three things your students will do to prepare for Spring Testing?

How do you plan to differentiate in order to prepare your below/average/high students to hit their goals?

Reflect on your use of differentiated instruction and centers so far this year. Is there an opportunity to give students more differentiated instruction to support their growth?

Of the students listed below, which students are you considering for retention?

DATA DIG: READING

NAME OF STUDENT	Fall Score	Winter Score	Winter Goal	Spring Goal	Is this student below/average/ high?	Suggested area of Improvement	Student Action Plan	Does this student receive MTSS Support?	Does this student receive EL Stupport?	Does this student receive SpEd Support?
					Above					
					Average					
					Below					

DATA DIG: MATH

NAME OF STUDENT	Fall Score	Winter Score	Winter Goal	Spring Goal	Is this student below/average/ high?	Suggested area of Improvement	Student Action Plan	Does this student receive MTSS Support?	Does this student receive EL Stupport?	Does this student receive SpEd Support?

What are we handing out:

Recommendations for Improving Outcomes

- Full report, *Uncovering Policies and Practices in Michigan Charter Public Schools that Outperform Expectations*, is available at https://www.thecenterforcharters.org/research-and-analysis.

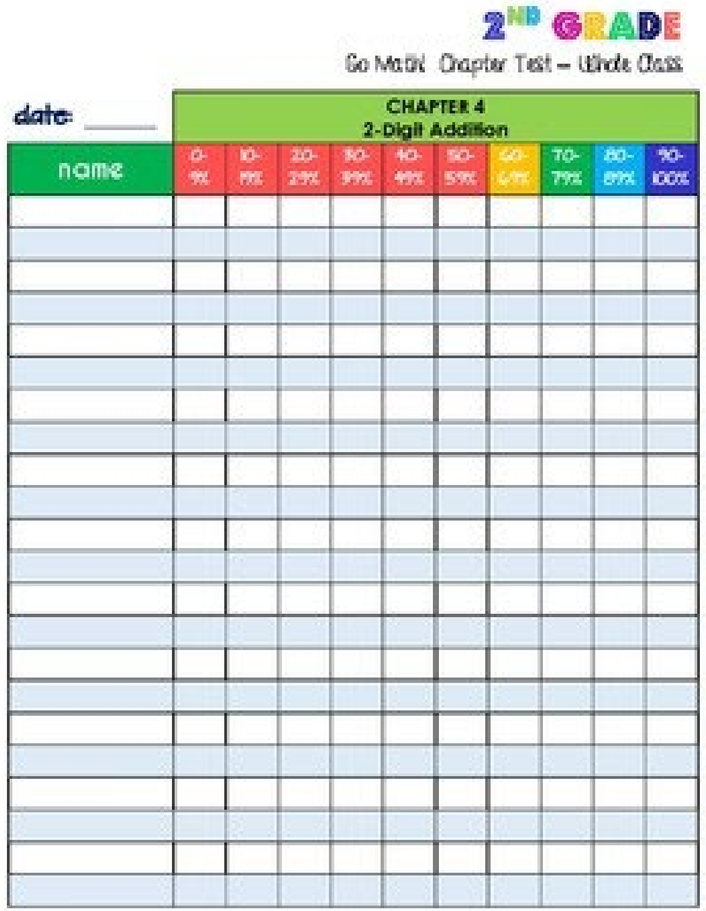
- Schoolwide Considerations (p. 9)

- School Leader Considerations (p. 10)

- Teacher & Classroom Considerations (p. 10)

Guiding Questions: Schoolwide Considerations

	How do we ensure coherence between mission, systems, and daily practice?
	What structures support regular, actionable data review?
	Do our values consistently guide decisions and behaviors?



2ND GRADE

Go Math Chapter Test – Whole Class

date: _____

	CHAPTER 4 2-Digit Addition									
name	0-9%	10-19%	20-29%	30-39%	40-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-79%	80-89%	90-100%

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Guiding Questions: Schoolwide Considerations

Opening Register 2025-2026

Teacher's Name: **Grade:** **Room Number:**

Please indicate MSTEP (grades 3-7) and NWEA (K-8) raw scores that indicates proficiency for grade level proficiency for the students' **2024-25** grade.

MSTEP – Reading : 1300 NWEA – Reading: 194

MSTEP – Math: 1300 NWEA – Math: 199

	Student Last Name	Student First Name	**2025** MSTEP Reading Raw Score	**2025** MSTEP Math Raw Score	**Spring 2025** NWEA Reading Raw Score	**Spring 2025** NWEA Math Raw Score	**24-25** Teacher/Grade	Comments
1					204	202	New Student	2 year
2					218	210	New Student	
3					207	204	New Student	
4					209	206	New Student	
5					195	210	New Student	
6					216	212	New Student	
7			1292	1310	206	209	3rd/Parton	
8			1279	1298	186	209	3rd/Rogers	
9					209	204	New	
10					198	204	New	

WHAT am I reteaching? Students are finishing up the assessment today.

Assessment Analyzed: Unit 5 Quiz 2	Standard: NF.B.4

What misconception or gap am I addressing?

When multiplying fractions by another fraction, students struggle to see that as finding part of a part.

What is the end goal of the reteach? I can multiply a fraction by another fraction using an area model.

WHO am I reteaching?

☐ Whole Group	☑ Small Group
	Number of groups and students in those groups: Group 1 (Small Group Lesson w/ Mrs. Benning)

O-3 (One-On-One) Meetings:
A Cornerstone System and How They Drive Impact

	Regular, protected time between leaders and individual educators.
	Strengthens relationships and trust.
	Keeps leaders close to instruction and data.
	Supports individualized professional growth.

Model	Model values through presence and listening.
Increase	Increase leader visibility and accessibility.
Normalize	Normalize accountability through supportive dialogue.
Connect	Connect PD directly to classroom practice and data.

Cohesive Systems in Place From NHA to School Level

Administrative Agenda February 2, 2026

Measurability	
❖ Winter Data Review ➢ NWEA Reading Grades K-2 ➢ Beacon Assessment Grades 3-7 ➢ Practice PSAT Grade 8 ❖ Chronic Absenteeism ➢ Follow-Up Parent Meetings ❖ Behavior ➢ Out of School Suspensions ➢ BSP -Needs and Updates	
Relevancy	
❖ Upcoming Staff Meetings ➢ No In-Person This Week Due to Conferences ➢ 2/11/26 – All Pro Dads Meeting ➢ 2/25/26 – IAT Meeting #3 ❖ Black History Month Events and Projects ➢ Communications Sent Out ➢ Logistics ❖ School Safety Team Meeting ➢ Building Walk-Through ➢ Agenda Items	
Anonymity	
❖ Newer Staff Members ➢ Mid-Year Onboarding Support Plan ➢ Mentors ❖ Staff Recognition ➢ Using Motivosity for Staff Shout-Outs ❖ Staff Support with ABSS Team ➢ Who is in Need of NHA Learn Course Assignments for Additional PD	

- Organizational structures reinforce leadership behaviors.
- Consistency across schools strengthens implementation.
- Systems ensure leadership remains instructional, relational, and data-driven.

Guiding Questions: School Leader Considerations

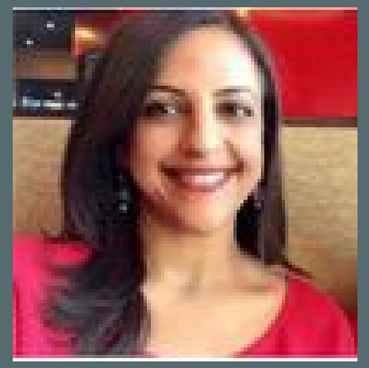
	How do we model the values and expectations we ask others to uphold?
	How do we build visibility and trust with staff, students, and families?
	How do our communication practices foster transparency and shared accountability?

Closing Reflection

- Success is not accidental—it is systemically supported.
- Intentional structures make strong leadership sustainable.
- Pembroke Academy's success reflects aligned people, practices, and purpose.

Thank You!

To our partner schools for participating in this study:



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Thank You!

Questions about this presentation or other research:

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