

February 15, 2024

## District & School Annual Education Report (AER)

Dear Parents and Community Members:

We are pleased to present you with the Annual Education Report (AER), which provides key information on the 2022-23 educational progress for Virtual Learning Academy of St. Clair County. The AER addresses the complex reporting information required by federal and some requirements of state laws. Our staff is available to help you understand this information. Please contact Josh Everitt, Virtual Learning Academy Principal, for help if you need assistance.

The District/School AER is available for you to review electronically by visiting [Virtual Learning Academy – MI School Data](#) or you may review a copy in the main office at VLA.

These reports contain the following information:

### Student Assessment Data

- Includes the following three assessments: M-STEP (Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress), MI-Access (Alternate Assessment), and College Board SAT.
- Presents assessment information for English language arts and mathematics for grades 3 to 8 and 11, and MI-Access science for grades 4, 7, and 11, compared to state averages for all students as well as subgroups of students.

### School Accountability Data

- Includes information on schools' performance on various measures such as student proficiency and growth on state assessments, graduation, and attendance rates. Performance is measured on 0-100 index scales.
- Reports schools identified under three federally required categories for further support: Comprehensive Support and Improvement, Targeted Support and Improvement, and Additional Targeted Support.

### Educator Qualification Data

- Identifies the number and percentage of inexperienced teachers, principals, and other school leaders.
- Reports teachers who are teaching with emergency or provisional credentials.
- Includes teachers who are not teaching in the subject or field for which they are certified.

### NAEP Data (National Assessment of Educational Progress)

- Provides state results of the national assessment in mathematics and reading every other year in grades 4 and 8.

### Civil Rights Data

- Provides information on school quality, climate and safety.

Review the table below listing our school. For the 2022-23 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 has at least one underperforming student subgroup in 2021-22. An Additional Targeted Support (ATS) school is one that has 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%. Some schools are not identified with any of these labels. In these cases, no status label is given.

School Name	Status Label	Key Initiative to Accelerate Achievement
Virtual Learning Academy of St. Clair County	No Label	Improve student engagement, minimize student academic barriers, develop post-high school graduation plan.

### General Information

The Virtual Learning Academy of St. Clair County is a public-school academy (PSA) chartered through St. Clair County RESA. We serve students in grades 6-12 and up to the age of 22. Our goal is to provide students individualized educational and career opportunities, services and support through the use of innovative and blended online tools, resources and credentialed staff. We strive to...

- Provide a structured and safe learning environment for students working both online and in the school building.
- Provide free breakfast and lunch options to all students.
- Provide targeted mathematics and reading support and tutoring to minimize achievement gaps.
- Provide extended day and year support to all students.
- Provide flexibility, guidance and support through individualized learning and attendance plans to help students overcome barriers and find academic and life success while earning their high school diploma.
- Provide career exposure, exploration and experiential that promotes 21st century learning skills and helps students find a career path suitable for them (one they are good at and care about).
-

- Provide students an online high school credit recovery opportunity that may allow for re-entry to their traditional high school.

Virtual Learning Academy students are required to meet a rigorous academic curriculum as set by both the State of Michigan and our school board. Virtual Learning Academy provides a strong core curriculum along with research-based intervention strategies for both remediation and enrichment intentions to support all students in finding success.

Eligible students are those who are not regularly attending school for a variety of reasons including students who have dropped-out, been expelled, students exiting court-placed programs, students referred to the program from traditional schools or students seeking an alternative learning option.

### **Key Challenges**

Key challenges for the school continue to include a lack of student engagement, only exacerbated with the COVID-19 pandemic. We see students significantly behind in credits and unmotivated to both attend and make regular academic progress. We see students struggle to maintain a course per month pace. The majority of our students are facing at least one academic barrier. Many are facing three or more. Some of those barriers include chronic absenteeism, lack of parental support, lack of consistent transportation, lack of consistent living arrangements, low math and reading abilities, mental health issues, substance abuse, probation, and more.

### **Initiatives**

Students are given increased flexibility to work in their courses at their own pace and in their own space through individualized learning and attendance plans with the goal of completing minimally one class per month. Students have access to their course 24/7, and access to state-certified teachers who are available in the school building Monday through Friday from 8:00a.m. to 4:00p.m. as well as after hours at night and on the weekends through our school chat site from 6:00p.m. to 9:00p.m. Through our school chat and other communications efforts including Zoom and Google Meet, teacher mentors are able to work one-on-one with students both in the building and those working from home, to help students overcome barriers to success and guide them toward high school graduation.

All students have ample opportunities to career awareness, exploration, preparation and training opportunities. In addition, VLA works in tandem with St. Clair County TEC. Students use Xello to explore potential careers that fit with their interests, skills and personalities. All students will have an educational development plan (EDP), spend time with our career advisor and have a post-high school career plan in place before graduating.

Virtual Learning Academy uses the NWEA: MAP Growth assessment to determine student's math and reading abilities upon enrollment in the program. For students with low grade level knowledge and skills at entry, targeted supplemental instruction and tutoring is provided to bridge gaps and to get students at

high school grade level. One tool we use to do this is IXL. Students take the MAP Growth assessment twice annually to assess growth, learning and progress toward closing achievement gaps.

We strive to provide all students a safe and healthy learning environment where they feel welcome and belong. We have created a student lounge where students can enjoy free breakfast and lunch daily and spend some social time. Students are able to receive counseling support and services from our full-time school social worker and school counselor. We also recently hired a full-time student success coach to help reduce and/or minimize barriers and help students find their path to success.

In an effort to remove the transportation barriers for many students, free bus tickets are provided for the Blue Water Area transit local bussing.

State law requires that we also report additional information.

## 1. Process for Assigning Pupils to the School

Virtual Learning Academy has year-round open enrollment for eligible students in St. Clair County and contiguous counties. Students may apply to enroll via VLA's website ([sccvla.org](http://sccvla.org)), by calling the main office at (810) 364-1362 or by stopping into the building at 1520 Michigan Road, Port Huron, MI. 48060. Please see the paragraph above for further information on eligible students.

## 2. The Status of the 3-5 Year School Improvement Plan

Virtual Learning Academy is fully accredited by Michigan Department of Education and engages in a continuous cycle of school improvement; conducting a comprehensive needs assessment and analyzing achievement trends, identifying areas of need along with designing and implementing strategies to address those needs. Virtual Learning Academy School Improvement Plan now through MICIP (Michigan Integrated Continuous Improvement Process) may be viewed in its entirety at: [School Improvement Plan](#). It may also be obtained by contacting the Virtual Learning Academy front office.

### **Mission Statement:**

Our mission is to empower and support students to become successful and career-ready.

We do this using individualized learning and attendance plans and blended learning for each student, which allows students to work at their own pace and in their own space, while also receiving one-on-one mentoring and tutoring from a compassionate team of state-certified educators while working remotely or in the VLA building.

### **Prior to 2021 School Improvement Goals:**

- College & Career Readiness
- Math Proficiency
- Reading Proficiency
- MMC Instruction & Credits Earned

## 2021-2026 School Improvement Goals:

- Student Engagement
  - Social/Emotional Learning
  - Individualized Learning Plans
  - Safe & Healthy Learning Environment
  - Career & College Readiness

## Progress towards goals:

VLA staff have been provided some targeted professional development opportunities where they have been able to gain some great insights and direction in the area of social/emotional learning - specifically addressing how we can incorporate more of these SEL skills into the daily student learning and education already taking place at VLA. These skills include developing healthy identities, managing emotions, setting and achieving goals, demonstrating empathy, establishing and maintaining supportive relationships and making responsible decisions.

Our school social worker has been an incredible asset to the VLA program. She is bringing years of knowledge, experience and skills to VLA where she is providing individual and group counseling to students and parents addressing mental health, behavior, academic, social concerns and more. Students are receiving the support, counseling and therapy they so desperately need to remove barriers in the way of their academic success. We have recently connected with St. Clair County Community Mental Health staff to build a closer partnership with them as we share many of the same students and many of our students could benefit from the services they are providing. We hope this opens many opportunities to continue providing the mental health and SEL supports and services our students need.

All students have an individualized learning and attendance plan in place that is being monitored by multiple VLA staff. Academic goals are set with students and monitored regularly. VLA is reporting out monthly progress toward goals to St. Clair County RESA, VLA's authorizer. This includes data specific to students completing on average one course per month. Academic gaps are determined using NWEA: MAP Growth testing which students take upon enrollment and twice annually during their time with VLA. Targeted intervention and supplemental instruction are provided to students when determined necessary to bridge academic gaps and ensure students are making adequate progress toward graduation. We are continuing to hold reading and writing workshops to improve students' academic skills in these areas. We are also now using IXL to supplement and address student's academic gaps in both math and reading. In an effort to provide alternative learning options, we are offering both in-building applied science and exploratory art courses that students can choose to enroll in.

Parents are involved to every extent possible through parent conferences, progress report mailings and Parent Portal access in Edgenuity.

We make every effort possible to ensure students feel safe when attending our VLA building or working remotely. We enforce policies on bullying and cyber-bullying. We have a secure front entrance and

security cameras throughout the building, both inside and out. We are updating our emergency operations plan biennially and running through drill scenarios with both staff and students regularly. We are also holding active shooter training every couple of years for VLA staff.

VLA's student lounge continues to be a safe place where students can socialize and enjoy free breakfast and lunch each day. Students are able to participate in several activities like student advisory, open art room, corn hole, basketball, disc golf, gardening, workshops and more.

VLA is following all guidelines and recommendations from the CDC and St. Clair County Mental Health Department as pertaining to COVID-19 to ensure all students feel safe when working in the building. We will be adding HEPA air purifiers shortly as provided to us by St. Clair County RESA.

VLA has a full-time career advisor who is providing students with college and career exposure, exploration and experience as they work to develop a post-high school career plan. All students have the unique opportunity to work through Xello, a career exploration tool, providing invaluable information and resources to assist in student's career planning. Students work to complete the four required career lessons in Xello every year. They also create a post high school career plan which can include plans like college, apprenticeships, workforce, military, gap year, technical or vocational training, entrepreneurship and more. Students have support building a resume, completing FAFSA and college applications, determining TIP eligibility, and obtaining other financial aid help and support.

We continue to bring in guest speakers, college representatives, military recruiters and business professionals to increase student's awareness of potential career paths that may be a good fit for them. Students have ample opportunities to ask questions following these presentations. VLA staff are also sharing their own personal career ladders with students in our "Why Not" presentation series. This will include talks from VLA staff as well as outside business (MAPAL, Disney and more). We are promoting the St. Clair County TEC Open House this February to all students and families to further explore potential CTE and CTMC options they have right here in St. Clair County.

### **3. A Brief Description of Each Specialized School:**

VLA is a public-school academy chartered by St. Clair County RESA providing a flexible online learning pathway to academic and career success for students who have dropped out, been expelled from high school, been referred to the program or who are seeking an alternative learning option.

### **4. Core Curriculum**

The district's core academic curriculum is provided through Edgenuity for all high school age students in grades 9-12. The district curriculum is standards-based for all students. A standards-based curriculum communicates to students, parents and the community exactly what VLA students are expected to learn. Virtual Learning Academy uses the State of Michigan's Core Curriculum and Common Core State Standards as models when reviewing and developing content areas. This is done by state-certified

teacher mentors minimally on an annual basis. VLA's core curriculum is available for you to review electronically using the following link: [VLA Curriculum](#), or may also be obtained by contacting the Virtual Learning Academy front office. We also offer homeschool families in grades 6-8 access to curriculum through Edmentum.

## 5. The Aggregate Student Achievement Results for any Local Competency Tests or Nationally Normed Achievement Test

The academic progress of students in high school is evaluated by district state assessments. Students take either the PSAT or SAT test 9th, 10th, and 11th grade years. To view the report showing specific scores and achievement trends, please visit [Virtual Learning Academy – MI School Data](#) or you may review a copy in the main office at VLA.

## 6. Parent-Teacher Conference Rate:

- 2021-2022 – 25%
- 2022-2023 – 31%
- 2023-2024 – 40%

## 7. For High Schools Only, also Report on the Following:

- Post-Secondary Enrollment (Dual Enrollment): 0
- College Equivalent Courses Offered (AP/IB): 0
- Students Enrolled in College Equivalent Courses (AP/IB): 0
- Students Receiving a Score Leading to College Credit: 0

Despite the many challenges we face, Virtual Learning Academy has experienced another successful year. We are very proud of the students, parents, and staff of Virtual Learning Academy and look forward to continued success in the years to come. At the time of this writing, we have had 488 graduates come through the program. Virtual Learning Academy will continue to strive for excellence and would welcome feedback from all stakeholders as we seek to make VLA the best it can be.

Sincerely,



Josh Everitt, Principal  
Virtual Learning Academy of St. Clair County  
1520 Michigan Road, Port Huron, MI. 48060  
[everitt.joshua@sccacademy.org](mailto:everitt.joshua@sccacademy.org)  
(810) 364-1362 or (810) 455-4480