



GROSSE POINTE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

Empowering Students · Valuing Diversity · Inspiring Curiosity · Pushing Possibilities

Pierce 2024-25 Annual Report

Pierce Middle School: A Place to Grow, Belong, and Thrive

Pierce Middle School is more than a building — it is a community where young adolescents are known, challenged, and celebrated. Many of our faculty members have devoted 20 years or more to Pierce because they believe, as one veteran teacher loves to say, *“Pierce is a great place to be.”* Their commitment, combined with the energy of new staff who quickly become part of the Pierce family, creates the stable, caring environment our students need to take academic and personal risks.



Welcoming Students & Families

Middle school can feel like uncharted territory, so we begin supporting students long before the first day of 5th grade. Each January administrators and counselors host an information night for incoming families, followed by spring visits to our feeder elementary schools-- Defer and Maire. In May, future Trojans spend a morning at Pierce touring classrooms, eating in the cafeteria, and participating in team-building activities. An 8th-grade-led WEB (Where Everyone Belongs) orientation then kicks off the school year and continues with mentoring events that help new students feel seen and supported.

Living the P.I.E.R.C.E. Values

Daily attention to Social-Emotional Learning is at the heart of our school culture. Teachers weave conversations and reflections into lessons, hallway interactions, and class meetings, always returning to the attributes our students chose to define a Pierce Trojan:

Perseverance · Integrity · Empathy · Respect · Courage · Effort



Through morning messages, PBIS lessons, and school-wide assemblies, we show students what these traits *look and sound like and celebrate when we see them in action.*

Positive Behavior & Personalized Guidance

Our PBIS framework recognizes good decisions with Reward Signatures that can be redeemed at the Trojan Treasure Trove or for mid-year and end-of-the-year raffles; it is not uncommon for our student

Mission Statement

The mission of Pierce Middle School is to create a caring and respectful environment where all students can grow intellectually, ethically and socially.

Attendance Rate: 95%

Percentage of Parents Participating in Parent-Teacher Conferences:

- 2024-25 95% (533 students)
- 2023-24 98% (516 students)

Assignment of Studies

The Board has determined attendance areas and students shall be expected to attend school within that area. A parent may request a transfer or appeal a placement decision on behalf of their student.

The principal shall be responsible for assigning students to classes. In elementary schools, the principal, in determining the grade level for any new student, may take into consideration the previous schooling of the student but may assign the student to a lower grade level or higher grade level, if in the principal’s judgment such an assignment would be in the best interest of the student. In middle school and high school, students will be assigned to counselors, classes, and instructors by the building principal. GPPSS also has policies and guidelines which guide promotion and retention.

ESSA Support Label

The school has not been given a label for additional support under ESSA.

Nondiscrimination Statement

The District shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation or transgender identity), disability, age, religion, height, weight, marital or family status, military status, ancestry, genetic information, or any other legally protected category in its programs and activities, including employment opportunities.

The Superintendent shall designate not less than two compliance officers who are responsible for coordinating the District's compliance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations, and for investigating reports of discrimination. The Superintendent shall ensure that all required notices under the civil rights or other laws are provided to staff members. The Superintendent shall develop and implement administrative guidelines to enforce this policy.

For further information on nondiscrimination, visit: www.gpschools.org under School Board - Policy or <http://wdcrobcop01.ed.gov/CFAPPS/OCR/contactus.cfm> for the address and phone number of the office that serves your area, or call 1-800-421-3481.

FERPA Notice

The Grosse Pointe Public School System may, upon request, release the following directory information: student name, grade level, graduation date, height and weight if an athlete, participation in school activities, honors and awards, photographs and videos of students in school activities, and student name, addresses and telephone numbers when requested by military recruiters. GPPSS also publishes student information via school sponsored or school-related media, including activities of the Grosse Pointe Foundation for Public Education. Parents or students, 18 years or older, who do not wish this information made public should click the FERPA directory information button during K-12 online registration.

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body to earn over **11,000** positive signatures in a year. Two full-time counselors loop with students for all four years, coaching them through friendship challenges, goal-setting, and the transition to high school.

Engaging Academics & Expanding Choice

Pierce offers a thoughtful progression of opportunities:

- **5th Grade:** Students learn within a supportive team of two to three core teachers, rotate through exploratory electives, and may begin band or orchestra or choir.
- **6th Grade:** A second rotation exposes students to Life Skills, Physical Education, and additional creative arts choices.
- **7th–8th Grade:** Learners design a schedule that reflects their passions—world languages, broadcast journalism, digital art, industrial arts, foods, advanced music, and more—while continuing rigorous core studies.



Opportunity Beyond the Bell

Pierce offers more than two dozen clubs—from Robotics and Future Cities to Drama, Fishing, and Cross-Country—and 7th/8th grade interscholastic sports such as Volleyball, Basketball, and Track. If a club does not yet exist, we help students create it.



Partnership with Families & Community

Our vibrant PTO raises approximately **\$30,000** annually through the Fun Run, funding cultural field trips (e.g., the Holocaust Memorial Center, Arab American National Museum, Henry Ford Museum), year-end celebration activities, classroom grants, and scholarships to ensure every student can attend 5th Grade Camp and the 8th Grade Washington, D.C. trip.



It takes a special educator to teach middle school, and Pierce is full of them. Together with our families, we proudly nurture more than 500 Trojans each year—helping them grow in

- **Perseverance**
- **Integrity**
- **Empathy**
- **Respect**
- **Courage and**
- **Effort.**



Pierce truly is a *great place to be—and an even better place to grow.*

Proud to be Trojans!



Principal Sara Dirkse

Events

September 2,

First Day of School

September 3, 6:30 p.m.

Back to School Night

September 8

Late Start Mondays begin for Staff PLC

September 11

Back to School Night for North and South

October 1

Student Count Day

October 7

PSAT Test for 8th Grade

October 15

Middle School Evening Conferences

October 16

1/2 day for Students
MS Afternoon and Evening Conferences

October 31

1/2 day a.m. for Students (PD for staff)

November 2

GPPSS Open House 12-2

November 4 - Vote

Full Day of PD—no school for students

November 26-28

Thanksgiving Break

December 22-January 2

Winter break. Classes resume Monday 1/5

January 6

Rising 5th Grade Parent Info Night

January 7

Rising Freshman Parent Info Night North & South

January 19

MLK Day No School

January 23

Half day Am (records)

February 16-20

Mid Winter Break

March 30-April 3

Spring Break

April 8

PSAT Test for 8th Grade

April 20

All Day PD

June 11

Last Day of School

Core Curriculum

Grosse Pointe Public School System engages in a continuous cycle of improvement grounded in collaboration, continuity, and commitment to guiding principles. We are anchored by our **Vision: One Inclusive Community Learning Together**, and our **Mission: Cultivate Educational Excellence by Empowering Students, Valuing Diversity, Inspiring Curiosity, and Pushing Possibilities**. GPPSS fosters an equitable educational community where every learner can realize their unique potential. Our goal is to offer students rich opportunities to develop the attitudes, values, knowledge, and skills to become engaged, contributing members of society.

Our district employs aligned practices to ensure curriculum, instructional strategies, and assessments work cohesively to maximize learning. All students access a rigorous, relevant curriculum aligned from preschool through graduation. A broad, innovative, and evolving curriculum meets diverse needs and challenges learners to reach their fullest potential. Instruction is differentiated and culturally responsive, rooted in best practices and research. We maintain high expectations while honoring flexibility, innovation, and individual teaching styles to ensure meaningful learning in every classroom, every day. Curricular adjustments are data-informed through ongoing districtwide assessments.

GPPSS curriculum is developed under the leadership of the **Educational Programs Leadership Council (EPLC)**—a collaborative body of teachers, parents, students, and administrators. Curriculum aligns with state standards across disciplines and integrates exemplary local and national standards. EPLC reviews curriculum committee reports and presents them to the Board of Education with recommendations for assessments, professional development, technology integration, and culturally responsive instructional strategies. GPPSS offers a wide range of **Advanced Placement (AP)** courses, engaging enrichment programs, and a comprehensive special education program to ensure pathways to success for all students. The **Strategic Plan** guides curriculum and instructional practice design and review. All curricular areas undergo a four-phase cyclical review process:

- **Phase 1** – Curriculum review & study (currently Social Studies, Counseling, Library/Media, TV Production)
- **Phase 2** – Goal and program development
- **Phase 3** – Implementation of new curricula
- **Phase 4** – Ongoing maintenance and improvement

GPPSS supports a robust professional development program, combining teacher-selected opportunities with district-prioritized training. This promotes professional growth while aligning practices with district goals. We are committed to fostering a culture of modern learning and innovation, preparing students to thrive in a dynamic world. Our programs cultivate critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and adaptability, equipping students for diverse future pathways. Emerging technologies are thoughtfully integrated to enhance learning, promote problem-solving, and encourage engagement—while keeping learning human-centered and grounded in real-world application. By embracing innovation, GPPSS empowers students to explore ideas, develop practical skills, and become adaptable, forward-thinking contributors to their communities.

School Improvement Plan

Pierce students continue to demonstrate outstanding academic success as evidenced through national (NWEA in Math and ELA and the PSAT), and state (M-STEP) assessments. As a part of our School Improvement Plan, the Pierce staff has worked collaboratively throughout the school year to review and analyze student achievement data to identify areas of strength as well as areas of focus for improvement. Through this work we have targeted the following goal and strategies:

Our goal:

- To provide opportunities for all students to have access to curriculum with a focus on literacy in order to improve ELA and Math M-Step, PSAT EBRW, and NWEA while closing the achievement gap for targeted students populations.

District Strategy:

- #1 – Restorative Practices
- #2 – Essential Coaching Practices for 5th-grade Literacy
- #3 – Lexia Reading

Building Strategy:

- #1 – Restorative Practices
- #2 – Disciplinary Literacy
- #3 – Lexia/Power Up
- #4 – Map Accelerator



PIERCE MICHIGAN STUDENT TEST OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS (M-STEP)

M-STEP ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS TEST Percentage Scoring SATISFACTORY									
Grade 5				Grade 6			Grade 7		
Year	All	Female	Male	All	Female	Male	All	Female	Male
24-25	70% (44%)	70%	70%	68% (39%)	70%	66%	74% (39%)	84%	64%
23-24	79% (44%)	77%	81%	56% (38%)	63%	49%	68% (38%)	77%	59%

M-STEP MATHEMATICS TEST Percentage Scoring SATISFACTORY									
Grade 5				Grade 6			Grade 7		
Year	All	Female	Male	All	Female	Male	All	Female	Male
24-25	61% (33%)	49%	73%	60% (32%)	53%	68%	76% (33%)	73%	79%
23-24	73% (33%)	66%	81%	61% (31%)	60%	62%	75% (32%)	80%	69%

M-STEP SCIENCE Percentage Scoring SATISFACTORY						
Year	Grade 5			Grade 8		
	All	Female	Male	All	Female	Male
24-25	64% (40%)	59%	68%	73% (41%)	76%	69%
23-24	78% (40%)	72%	84%	57% (39%)	56%	59%

M-STEP SOCIAL STUDIES Percentage Scoring SATISFACTORY						
Year	Grade 5			Grade 8		
	All	Female	Male	All	Female	Male
24-25	65% (30%)	59%	70%	77% (47%)	76%	79%
23-24	56% (19%)	51%	61%	61% (30%)	54%	68%



NOTE: Pierce MSTEP Data is not reported by Racial/Ethnic minority group, Special Education, or Economically Disadvantaged because no group is significantly large enough to report MSTEP results without revealing the identity of individual students. State of Michigan MSTEP results have been shown in parentheses for comparison to school results.

PSAT Grade 8 Percentage Achieving SATISFACTORY			
Year	All	Female	Male
24-25 English	91% (65%)	94%	89%
23-24 English	88% (65%)	88%	88%
24-25 Math	72% (30%)	76%	68%
23-24 Math	66% (33%)	66%	67%

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (continued)

M-STEP

2024-25 M-STEP Percentage of Students Tested								
Grade	ENGLISH	MATH	SCIENCE	SOCIAL STUDIES	Total English with Other Tests	Total Math with Other Tests	Total Science with Other Tests	Total Social Studies with Other Tests
5	99%	99%	99%	98%	99%	99%	99%	98%
6	97%	97%	Not Tested	Not Tested	99%	99%	Not Tested	Not Tested
7	98%	98%	Not Tested	Not Tested	99%	99%	Not Tested	Not Tested
8	99%	99%	98%	98%	100%	100%	98%	98%

NOTE: Total with Other Tests refers to percentage tested with M-STEP or MI-ACCESS (alternative state test) in each area.

GROSSE POINTE WRITING

Percentage of Students Achieving a SATISFACTORY Score												
Year	Grade 5			Grade 6			Grade 7			Grade 8		
	All	F	M	All	F	M	All	F	M	All	F	M
24-25	80%	86%	73%	90%	92%	89%	90%	96%	85%	93%	98%	87%
23-24	84%	87%	82%	86%	96%	77%	90%	94%	85%	93%	96%	91%
22-23	76%	87%	65%	81%	93%	71%	88%	91%	86%	96%	97%	95%

NORTHWEST EVALUATION ASSOCIATION (NWEA)

Average Percentile Achieved by Pierce Students (on National Norms)

Percentile READING Spring					Percentile MATH Spring		
Grade	Year	All	Female	Male	All	Female	Male
5	24-25	68	66	69	76	73	79
	23-24	75	76	74	77	73	82
	22-23	70	76	64	67	66	68
6	24-25	67	70	64	68	67	69
	23-24	66	70	62	71	70	72
	22-23	71	74	69	71	73	70
7	24-25	70	75	64	79	80	78
	23-24	68	71	65	79	80	78
	22-23	62	64	60	70	66	73
8	24-25	69	73	66	80	81	80
	23-24	65	68	62	79	76	82
	22-23	64	65	64	64	63	65

NOTE: A percentile is the percentage of students in a national norms group who scored at or below a particular score.