

February 20, 2026

Dear Parents and Community Members:

We are pleased to present you with the Annual Education Report (AER), which provides key information on the 2024-25 educational progress for Berrien Springs Virtual Academy. The AER addresses the complex reporting information required by federal and state laws. The school's report contains information about accountability, student assessment, and teacher quality. If you have any questions about the AER, please contact Chiquita Adams, Director of On-Campus Non-Traditional Programs, for assistance.

The AER is available for you to review electronically by visiting the following website, <https://bit.ly/4a28yAG>, or you may review a copy in the main office at your child's school.

For the 2025-26 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 group in 2024-25. An Additional Targeted Support (ATS) school is one that had at least one student group 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, had a graduation rate at or below 67%, failed to exit CSI status in 2024-25, or failed to exit ATS status in 2021-22. Some schools are not identified with any of these labels. In these cases, no status label is given. Our school has not been given one of these labels.

The Berrien Springs Virtual Academy serves families who are interested in a homeschool feel coupled with the rigor, support, and accountability provided by a traditional school. The school provides highly qualified teachers on campus and online. The challenges in this setting are communication, goal setting and support services. The virtual academy is in the process of addressing these challenges in the following ways:

In the area of communication, the school sends out mass communication via School Messenger and S'More newsletters, and automated progress reports on a bi-weekly basis via email. In addition, teachers communicate with students and families

through phone, email, online meetings and face-to-face workshops. To assist students in setting goals, the Virtual Academy staff and counselor meets with

individual students and/or families to view and review goals. The guidance includes progressions toward graduation, as well as college and career goals setting.

The Virtual Academy, in concert with Berrien Springs Public Schools provides various support services. Services provided at the Virtual Academy include mentorships, one-on-one reading and math intervention when applicable in each content class. Through other buildings, the school provides special education, counseling services, counseling services, and extensions such as electives, dual enrollment and career courses.

State law requires that we also report additional information.

1. The Virtual Academy accepts both in-district and school of choice students. Course placement is determined through previous school transcripts and parent input.
2. The School Improvement Plan is in process
3. The Virtual Academy is a 6-12 grade seat time waiver program. Students have the option to work from home with mentoring sessions as needed.

Students are required to come into the building for tests and exams.

Students in grades 6 -12 primarily use [Imagine Learning's Edgenuity program](#).

Students are permitted to work from home or on campus. Parents serve as motivational coaches but may rely on teachers to provide academic support. For additional elective opportunities, students also have access to Michigan Virtual curriculum for virtual programming along with electives offered through the Berrien Springs Home School Partnership and on-campus elective courses.

4. The Virtual Academy focuses on both growth and proficiency. Growth data may be skewed due to the transient nature of this program with students switching into the building, back to brick and mortar schools, along with school of choice students at semester or those entering and exiting as a result of the Alternative Education qualifier.
5. Berrien Springs has meticulously aligned its curriculum with the state's model curriculum, ensuring no discernible variances. The adoption of Common Core State Standards, founded on National Standards and endorsed by the Michigan Department of Education, serves as the foundation for our educational framework. These standards are accessible on the MDE website at <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/services/academic-standards>. At all levels, our curriculum is structured in accordance with these standards. For



those seeking detailed insights into our courses, Curriculum Guides for all disciplines can be obtained upon request from the school director or district curriculum director.

6. Over 70% of families have attended parent teacher conferences.

7. Virtual Academy High school students in grades 9-12:
 - a. 90% of students in grades 11 and 12 participate in dual enrollment classes through Lake Michigan College, Southwestern Michigan College, and Andrews University OR Career and Technical Education offered through the county.
 - b. In the last two years, 95% of students who attempt college courses earn college credit.



Special Education AER **2025-2026 School Year**

Resident students (along with students accepted through the schools of choice process) may qualify and have a need for special education programs and/or services. The district is continuing to develop their Multi-Tier Systems of Supports (MTSS) model, providing general education options for students needing additional support through interventions and monitoring their progress over time. For those students who are unable to demonstrate progress with significant interventions, students being referred for special education programming/services may begin this process through a request for an evaluation or Child Study Team (CST) meeting. Should a student qualify for special education programs and/or services under one of the thirteen eligibility areas in Michigan, a team of individuals will develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) to help assist the child progress within the general education setting. Programming and services offered within the district for students are as follows-

A. Resource Room Services for Local Special Education Students

Part of the IEP process includes the determination of appropriate aids, supplementary services, accommodations, and modifications for success in general education. Current special education programs within the district include, but are not limited to, Elementary and Secondary Resource Rooms. Students follow a general education curriculum with the Common Core State Standards. There are two models utilized within Berrien Springs Public Schools, one in which classroom instruction is provided by a general education teacher along with interactive co-teaching from a special education teacher; the second model is for students determined to need more direct instruction for needs outlined within their IEP. Under this model, students may receive programming/services that pull them out of the general education classroom for a set amount of time dictated by their IEP. At the elementary level, approximately fifty-five students receive Elementary Resource Room programming; seventy-nine secondary students receive Secondary Resource Room programming.

B. Center-Based Special Education Programs

Berrien Springs hosts several center-based programs for Berrien County RESA. These programs are housed in Berrien Springs and operated by Berrien Springs Public Schools. The funding comes through federal, state and Berrien RESA sources. Many of the students in these programs are not residents of Berrien Springs, but are able to take advantage of these center programs through the IEP (Individual Educational Program) process in conjunction with their resident district. Students are placed in the program through an IEP team composed of their local district and Berrien RESA



diagnostic and educational staff. Transportation to and from Berrien Springs is provided through the student's resident district. These programs include:

1. Deaf/Hard of Hearing (DHH) Classrooms, Teacher Consultant Services, Audiological Services:

Students with hearing impairments have been part of Berrien Springs Public Schools for approximately 60 years. Cass County contracts services through Berrien RESA allowing students to be IEP placed from either Cass or Berrien counties. Babies are frequently identified at birth and start receiving intervention services at a very early age with teacher consultants seeing families in their natural home environment. Classroom services are available starting at preschool. These students may also participate in general education classes throughout their school-day depending on the student's individualized education program. Approximately thirteen Berrien and Cass County students receive direct services in the classroom program; one student is a resident of Berrien Springs.

Many students who are Deaf or hard of hearing function very well in their home districts while receiving direct or indirect assistance from a teacher consultant and/or audiologist for equipment purposes. Approximately 140 children from Berrien County and 25 children from Cass County are patients of the Hearing Center. Approximately 145 children receive equipment services (IFSP, IEP, and 504) in both counties. Currently, 11 students are provided with DHH programming in the center-based program (preschool-5th grade).

Two educational audiologists provide audiological services and equipment management for students with identified hearing loss through our Hearing Center for students in Berrien, Cass, and Saint Joseph counties. They also provide diagnostic information for children with diagnosed, fluctuating, suspected or possible hearing losses. They work with physicians, the Health Department, families, Build up Michigan, Early On, and Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) to diagnose children as soon as possible and get amplification and intervention started. The team of audiologists work with over 500 students each year.

2. Severe Language Impaired Preschool Program:

Students in the SLI preschool room receive instruction from a highly qualified teacher having endorsements in Elementary Education, speech and language impairments, and who is also a licensed speech and language pathologist. A maximum of 15 students ages three to six years of age must meet specific requirements to be placed into this county-based program. During the



2025-2026 school year, three (3) Berrien Springs resident students are enrolled in this classroom with a total of 15 students overall from Berrien county.

3. Middle School Mildly Cognitively Impaired Classroom:

The district operates one county-wide classroom at Berrien Springs Middle School for students functioning with mild cognitive impairments. The program incorporates reading, writing, and vocabulary with social studies and science topics, following the Extended Grade Level Content Expectations from Michigan Department of Education. Currently, nineteen students are being serviced within these county classrooms. This school year, five (5) students considered to be Berrien Springs resident students are IEP placed in these rooms.

4. High School Mildly Cognitively Impaired Classroom:

A county-wide classroom for students functioning with a mild cognitive impairment is also housed within the high school and taught by a teacher of the cognitively impaired. The students work through a series of objectives that are linked to the Extended Grade Level Content Expectations and daily living skills for transition to post-secondary goals. Students also receive instruction through the use of the Life Centered Curriculum and earn a Seal of Employability and certificate of completion upon completion of the program. This program also includes pre-vocational and vocational experiences. There are a total of seventeen students enrolled in the classroom presently, with eight students being Berrien Springs residents.

C. Ancillary Services:

Ancillary services are available for students who qualify. These services may include speech-language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, or consultation from service providers such as vision, orientation & mobility, or assistive technology consultants.

Approximately 189 students receive speech and language services from Berrien Springs speech and language pathologists. Thirty-eight students receive OT and/or PT services within Berrien Springs buildings from Berrien RESA OT/PTs.

D. Build Up Michigan:

Build Up Michigan: Berrien Springs provides both evaluations and services for resident students ages three-five through the Build Up Michigan program. Evaluation plans determined for children through Build Up Michigan referrals are considered full and individual evaluations. Any programs/services offered are developed with the IEP planning team and evaluation team to meet the unique needs of each student.



E. Specialized Programs for Students Available Outside of Berrien Springs District:

Some students need programs that are not offered within the district. The IEP process is used to make this determination and to place these students in appropriate programs that offer the specialized instruction necessary to meet their goals and objectives while considering every

student's least restrictive environment. Transportation is provided for these students. These programs, and the current number of resident students served in these programs include:

Program Name	Program Type	Operated by/Location	Number of BSPS Residents Placed
Blossomland Learning Center	MOCI & SXI (PS-26)	Berrien RESA	17
Lighthouse Education Center	ASD (K-26)	Berrien RESA (LEC and Satellite RoomsI)	9
Lighthouse Education Center	EI (K-26)	LEC	4
Northside	ECSE (ages 3-5)	Niles Community Schools	2
Southside/Ballard Elementary	EI (K-26)	Niles Community Schools	4
Howard Ellis Elementary	MICI (K-2nd)	Niles Community Schools	0
Stewart Elementary/Hollywood Elementary	MICI (K-5th)	Lakeshore Public Schools	3
Watervliet North	MICI (3rd-5th)	Watervliet Public Schools	0

Juvenile Center, Berrien Springs, Michigan

The juvenile center has programming for students with disabilities that are court placed, for an amount of time determined by a judge, with the goal being eventual re-integration into the resident district's educational system. Any students currently placed at the juvenile



center are considered Berrien Springs residents during their placement there and the district is involved in their special education planning and team.

The staff at Virtual Academy is very proud of the students and families engaging in our program and the opportunities it provides for continued personal and academic growth.

Sincerely,

Chiquita Adams

Chiquita Adams

Director, On-Campus Non-Traditional Programs

Berrien Springs Virtual Academy

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