



March 2025 Houghton Elementary School

Houghton-Portage Township Schools

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March is Reading Month

This month Houghton Elementary School has been celebrating Reading Month with the theme, "Reading Rocks!" We had an exciting school-wide kick-off assembly with a fun and energetic rock band to help us get excited about reading!

Again this year, students are encouraged to keep track of their reading at home. Each week throughout March students receive a reading log to keep track of their reading minutes and turn in on Wednesdays. We have a school-wide reading goal with a celebration on Friday, March 21st if the goal is met. Only minutes spent reading at home will be counted. If every student reads for about 20 minutes each day, we will reach our goal!



As before, students **earn double minutes** for going "Unplugged" on Tuesdays. If students do not use electronics, including TV, iPads, and video games, they can double the reading minutes that they record on their reading logs.

Next week Tuesday, March 18th is our Family Reading Night from 6:00—7:30pm. We will have face painting, flash-light reading, read alouds, escape rooms, a cake walk with cupcakes,

dance party, plus more! Please join us for this fun Family Reading Night event!!

We also have several fun dress-up days scheduled on Wednesdays, including "Dress like a Country Rock Star!", or "Dress like a Pop Rock Star!", and finally "Dress like a Rock Star from a decade of your choice!"

Every Friday is "Wear Our School Colors" day.

Counselor's Corner—Micah Stipech

What Kind of Screen Time Parent Are You? Take This Quiz and Find Out




Anya Kamanetz surveyed over 500 families. She interviewed dozens of experts who study kids and media to find out best practices, based on the latest research for her new book, *The Art of Screen Time: How Your Family Can Balance Digital Media And Real Life*. She set out to answer the question: What's the best approach to take to tech? In answering this question she boiled all of her research down to this slogan, "Enjoy screens. Not too much. Mostly together."

The quiz on the link below can help assess your parenting style with regards to technology. Take a few minutes — hopefully while your kids are otherwise occupied — to check it out! [Screen Time Quiz](#)

Upcoming Events:


- **March 18th** — Reading Night 6:00—7:30pm
- **March 21st** — 3rd Marking Period Ends
- **March 24th — 28th** — Spring Break. **NO SCHOOL**
- **March 31st** — School Resumes
- **April 7th—May 16th**—M-STEP Testing Window
- **April 18th— 21st**—Easter Break
- **April 23 & 24th**— Kindergarten Screening Nights

Why Can't I Skip My 20 Minutes of Reading Tonight?

Student "A" reads 20 minutes each day	Student "B" reads 5 minutes each day	Student "C" reads 1 minute each day
3600 minutes in a school year	900 minutes in a school year	180 minutes in a school year
1,800,000 words	282,000 words	8,000 words
		
90 th percentile	50 th percentile	10 th percentile

By the end of 6th grade Student "A" will have read the equivalent of 60 whole school days. Student "B" will have read only 12 school days. Which student would you expect to have a better vocabulary? Which student would you expect to be more successful in school...and in life?
(Nagy & Herman, 1987)

WHY READ 20 MINUTES AT HOME?

Student A Reads	Student B Reads	Student C Reads
❖ 20 minutes per day.	❖ 5 minutes per day.	❖ 1 minute per day
❖ 3,600 minutes per school year.	❖ 900 minutes per school year.	❖ 180 minutes per school year.
❖ 1,800,000 words per year.	❖ 282,000 words per year.	❖ 8,000 words per year.
		
❖ Scores in the 90 th percentile on standardized tests.	❖ Scores in the 50 th percentile on standardized tests.	❖ Scores in the 10 th percentile on standardized tests.
<p>If they start reading for 20 minutes per night in Kindergarten, by the end of 6th grade, Student A will have read for the equivalent of 60 school days, Student B will have read for 12 schooldays, and Student C will have read for 3.</p> <small>(Nagy and Herman, 1987)</small>		
WANT TO BE A BETTER READER? SIMPLY READ.		

Three Ways to Read to Your Child

March is Michigan Reading Month! If you're not committed to reading daily with your child, there's no better time than now!

Reading aloud

Choose books your child is interested in that he/she may not be able to read yet. Read with expression and excitement to keep your child engaged in the story. Show your child the pictures and let your child predict what might happen next. Continue reading aloud to your child even after he/she can read on his/her own. Studies show that regularly reading out loud to children will produce significant gains in reading

comprehension, vocabulary, and decoding of words.

Reading together

Sit next to your child as you read together. Try reading every other page. Guide your child in sounding out appropriate words so interruptions don't take away from enjoyment. Take time to look at pictures and discuss the story. Take a bag of books with you on a trip or anywhere you may have to sit and wait. Your attitude will have a great influence on how hard your child will try to become a good reader.

Reading alone

Keep books all around the house, especially in the bathroom and next to your child's bed. This is a great way to encourage reading alone. Winding down with a book before bed works well for preparing your child to go to sleep. Notice what kind of books your child chooses to read and look for more books by the same author at the library.



M-STEP TESTING

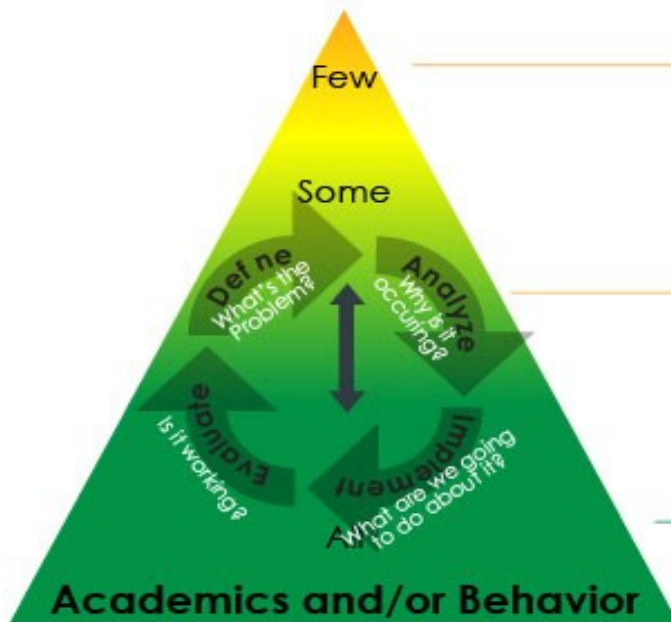
The M-STEP state testing window is opening soon! The week of April 7 marks the first week of a six week window that we have for testing. We will be testing all students in grades 3, 4, 5. Our 3rd and 4th graders are tested on ELA and math skills. 5th grade tests ELA, math, science, and Social Studies. Details on the testing schedule for each grade level and class will be sent out soon!



MTSS Corner

What is MTSS (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support)?

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support is a prevention based framework of team-driven, data-based decision making to improve outcomes for every student, both behaviorally and academically. The framework involves building tiers of support for all students based on evidence based practices in education.



Tier 3: Intensive, Individualized Interventions & Supports

The most intense (increased time, narrowed focus, reduced group size) instruction and intervention, based on individual student need, provided in addition to and aligned with Tier 1 & 2 academic and behavior instruction and supports.

Tier 2: Targeted, Supplemental Interventions & Supports

More targeted instruction/intervention and supplemental support, in addition to and aligned with, the core academic and behavior curriculum.

Tier 1: Core, Universal Instruction & Supports

General academic and behavior instruction and support provided to all students in all settings, designed and differentiated for all student strategies.

Houghton Elementary School Data Celebrations:

79% of our students school-wide were at benchmark for their composite Acadience reading score.

Major behavior referrals are at similar levels to years past. We have 97% of our students with 0-1 major behaviors, just under 3% of our students having 2-5 referrals, and just under 1% having 6 or more referrals. This is truly remarkable! We continue to emphasize PBIS classroom expectations being taught and reinforced.

Goal:

Acadience goal for Spring 2025 is to have 80% of students scoring at or above benchmark on reading assessments.



Attendance in the early grades

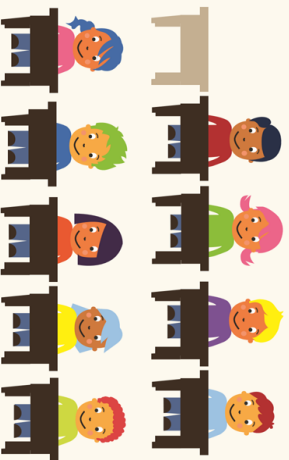
Many of our youngest students miss 10 percent of the school year—about 18 days a year or just two days every month. Chronic absenteeism in kindergarten, and even pre-K, can predict lower test scores, poor attendance and retention in later grades, especially if the problem persists for more than a year. Do you know how many young children are chronically absent in your school or community?



Who is affected

Kindergarten and 1st grade classes often have absenteeism rates as high as those in high school. Many of these absences are excused, but they still add up to lost time in the classroom.

1 in 10 kids
in kindergarten and 1st grade are chronically absent.
In some schools, it's as high as 1 in 4.¹



2 in 10
low-income kids
miss too much school. They're also more likely to suffer academically.¹



2.5 in 10
homeless kids
are chronically absent.²



4 in 10
transient kids
miss too much school when families move.²



Why it matters

If children don't show up for school regularly, they miss out on fundamental reading and math skills and the chance to build a habit of good attendance that will carry them into college and careers.

Preliminary data from a California study found that children who were chronically absent in kindergarten and 1st grade were far less likely to read proficiently at the end of 3rd grade.

Who Can Read on Grade Level After 3rd Grade?



of kids with good attendance in K and 1st
(missed 9 or fewer days both years)



of kids with at-risk attendance
(missed more than 9 days both years)



of kids chronically absent in K or 1st
(missed 18 or more days one year)



of kids chronically absent in K and 1st
(missed 18 or more days both years)

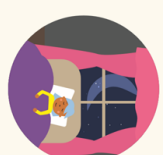
What families can do



Find out what day school starts and make sure your child has the required shots.

Build regular routines for bed time and the morning.

Talk about the importance of regular attendance and about how your child feels about school.



Don't permit missing school unless your child is truly sick. Use a thermometer to check for a fever. Remember that stomach aches and headaches may be signs of anxiety.



Avoid medical appointments and extended trips when school is in session.

Keep a chart recording your child's attendance at home. At the end of the week, talk with your child about what you see.

Develop back up plans for getting to school if something comes up. Ask a family member, neighbor or another parent for help



Seek support from school staff or community groups to help with transportation, health problems, or no safe path to school.

¹ Chang, Heily, Romero, Manages, Present, *Engaged and Accounted For: The Critical Importance of Addressing Chronic Absence in the Early Grades*, National Center for Children in Poverty, NY, NY, September 2008.
² Chronic Absence in Utah, Utah Education Policy Center at the University of Utah, 2012.
³ Attendance in Early Elementary Grades, Association for Student Characteristics, School Readiness and Third Grade Outcomes, Applied Survey Research, May 2011.

Kindergarten Round-Up 2024-25

Houghton Portage Township Schools has begun registering kindergarten-aged children for the 2024-2025 school year. Children who will be five years of age by December 1st, 2025, are eligible to enter kindergarten or Young 5's.

We will have a Kindergarten Screening Event on Wednesday, April 23rd from 5:00—7:00pm and Thursday, April 24th from 3:30—5:30pm at Houghton Elementary

Please call Houghton Elementary School at 482-0456 ext. 3040 to pre-register your child. Children currently attending Young 5's are automatically registered for kindergarten. Please pass this information on to parents of kindergarten age children.



February TEAM Students

Every month we are recognizing a student in each class that exemplifies our schools TEAM goals:

Take Responsibility

Earn Respect

Act Positively

Make it Safe

These students will enjoy cookies with the principal and receive a certificate. Our February honorees are:

Young 5's: Jordan Lantz

K: Everett Manninen, Olav Mork,

Geneva Melin, Rowan Beauchamp

1st : Braelynn Isaacson, Autumn Baker, Lyra Robins-Zuraw, Kennedy Vandiver, Elliana Laplander

2nd: Ingrid Kurtti, Micah Ervin, Luke Browning, Bruno Reich, Ewaoluwa Ayo-Akinola

3rd: Olivia Capello, Isaiah Green, Ramesse Jones, Henry Pettibone, Jamie Middlebrook,

4th: Anisha Ghosh, Violet Bradley, Lola Bustos, Benjamin Breffle, Eli Mayo,

5th: Elli Lishinski, Jack Lieburn, Mason Howell, Eva Bradfish, Miika Haataja

Congratulations!

TEAM Students



Lost And Found

Please help! Our lost and found is once again overflowing. Please come in and see if anything belongs to your child.

Our lost and found is located right outside the cafeteria. We will be donating the contents to local charities over Spring Break.

LOST & FOUND

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Houghton MI 49931



Phone: 906-482-0456 Ext. 3000
Fax: 906-487-5941
Principal—Cole Klein
email: cklein@hpts.us

www.hpts.us



Student Drop-off and Pick-up

Drop-off and pick-up time is a certainly a very stressful time of day for parents, staff, and students. We continue to work on this procedure and have seen some improvements in the past few weeks. Please continue to help us keep our students safe!

- **Slow down and please be patient.**
- **Watch for students, parents, and staff in the crosswalks.**
- **Pull up as far forward as possible along the sidewalk so that cars behind you can easily pull in.**
- **Please remember that students should be dropped off at the upper parking lot or roundabout in the morning.**
- **Park in the parking lot if you are coming into the school. Vehicles should not be left unattended along the sidewalk.**

The Roundabout continues to be under-utilized, especially at drop-off time. **PLEASE CONSIDER USING THE ROUNDABOUT.** This will help reduced to long line-up of waiting cars both on Bridge St. and in our driveway. We have a staff member positioned there both in the mornings and afternoon to help.



SPRING BREAK

Houghton-Portage Township Schools will be closed for Spring Break from March 24th through March 28th. Classes will resume for all students on Monday, March 31st.