



TEACHING AND LEARNING

Parent Newsletter

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Happy New Year! I cannot believe we are halfway through the 2019-2020 school year. Please take a moment to read through this quarterly issue of the Lake Orion Community Schools Teaching and Learning newsletter.

LOCS is busy implementing many different initiatives throughout the district.

In the coming weeks, scheduling for 2020-2021 begins for students in Grades 5-11. Be on the lookout for information regarding secondary scheduling for students. One innovative scheduling option we are particularly excited to offer to our 11th and 12th grade students is the choice of starting school later in the morning and staying through a fifth hour.

See the LOCS website by clicking on the bulleted line below for more information on flexible scheduling:



[Flexible scheduling information](#)

Wishing you a wonderful New Year.

Sincerely,

Heidi Mercer
Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning
Lake Orion Community Schools



Michigan's Assessment System

- What It Is
- What It Means
- What It Offers

State and federal law require all students be tested in specific grades and subjects once a year to measure student progress in learning state content standards or other career- or college-ready goals. Our elementary and middle school assessment is called the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress or M-STEP. Students in grade 8 take the PSAT™ 8/9. The Michigan Merit Exam, PSAT (9/10) and SAT (11) are the state high school exams. Some students with disabilities take an alternative state assessment called MI Access; English language learners are given an assessment called WIDA.

Assessment Print Materials

Statewide assessment results are reported at MI School Data through the state's new Parent Dashboard for School Transparency. In addition to test scores, the Dashboard (www.mischooldata.org/parentdashboard) is filled with important school-level information that parents and others say they want to know about Michigan public schools, including charter schools.


MI School Data

Parent Dashboard for School Transparency

[Parent Dashboard](#)
[Early Childhood](#)
[Special Education](#)
[K-12th Grade](#)
[Postsecondary](#)

Parent Dashboard for School Transparency

Your window to important school information and facts

[Dashboard Home](#)
[State Overview](#)
[Find a School](#)
[Contact Us](#)
[Dashboard Help](#)

What Parents Can Do to Help Students Prepare

As a parent and your child's first teacher, you can help your child understand and prepare for the assessments they will take in school. Here are some points that will help your child perform their best:

Find out the tests. To start, review the Michigan Department of Education website for the tests your child will take. These pages include valuable information on state assessments and the spring testing schedule.

Michigan Merit Exam (MME) (www.michigan.gov/merit)
mde.michigan.gov/merit
Early Learning and Mathematics Benchmark
www.michigan.gov/earlylearning

Talk to your child about testing! Let them know that assessment is a regular part of learning. Make sure they understand why they are being tested and how it is important to their future.

Keep state tests in perspective: Reduce your child's anxiety about the test by reminding them that it is just one measure of learning, and another way to find out where their academic strengths and weaknesses are. Remind them that if they do well, and how they have improved with effort.

Take a look at the state practice opportunities and encourage your child to practice at home. Not only will this help you better understand the types of questions your child will be answering, it will help familiarize your child with the test format and features. If your child is struggling, let the teacher know so they can help. Take the test, the focus can be more on test content and less on test navigation.

M-STEP MARS and **Early Learning and Mathematics Benchmark** Assessment Online Test Training and M-STEP sample test items can be found on this web page
• **"Pilot" and "Pilot" sample test items** can be found on the **College Board website**, <https://collegeboard.org/mars>
• **MARS offers** early grade engagement resources on the **WIDA website**, (wida.wisc.edu)
• **WIDA offers** your child's early writing and oral skills a **high profile, low sugar/carb breakfast**: Children who are alert, hungry or have had too much sugar and carbs are less able to pay attention in class or to handle the demands of a test.

Remember—Attending school matters! Tests reflect children's overall knowledge and achievement. Missing school means missing instruction.

Meet with your child's teacher as often as possible to discuss progress! Ask the teacher for suggestions for you and your child to do at home to help them prepare for the tests.
Learn what your child should know!
English language arts
Michigan students in grades 3-5 can be found on the state.ils.illinois.gov
Illinois Communication and Symbolic Behavior Development (developed for the PTA Parents Guide to Schools, an descriptions of the skills and knowledge your child expected to gain every year.

Information on how parents can help their students prepare including links to on-line practice.

Testing Facts to Share with Your Child

- Tests are just one way teachers, schools, districts, and states use to measure what students know and how well they are learning what is taught.
- The purpose of a state assessment is to ensure our state's schools do the best job possible in preparing students to become successful, based on a set of agreed-upon standards.
- Because the state test is exactly aligned with Michigan's standards, test questions should be a natural extension of what students are learning every day in their classrooms.

To provide parents with information on student testing, state assessments, and how you can help your child prepare, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has developed several print and video communication tools .

You can find parent resources on the following pages:

- [M-STEP web page](#)
- [PSAT web page](#)
- [MME web page](#)
- [MI-Access web page](#)
- [WIDA web page](#)

These and other tools are available on each State assessment web page, which can be accessed through the [OEAA Student Assessment](#).

Education Assessment Michigan System

What It Is, What It Means, And What It Offers

Revised 01/17/2020

Expecting More
Getting children ready to take their place in the world is challenging. The knowledge and skills students need for a successful career continually evolve to meet current and future workplace demands. To ensure students can meet these demands, Michigan's State Board of Education has approved new learning standards that broadly outline what students will know and be able to do in each subject area by the time they will be ready for the next stage of learning.

Teachers will also guide teachers as they develop their curriculum and lesson plans. Today's standards are designed to help students:

- Understand subject matter more deeply
- Know how to think critically
- Understand what they learn to the real world
- Determine what learning more relevant in their lives

What for Progress
The standards in Michigan take a high-quality approach to assessment. Summative assessments measure what students know and are able to do at specific subject areas.

Formative assessments measure student progress against current standards or other career-relevant goals. **The Michigan Student Test of Science Progress (M-STP)** is designed to assess students' progress in science. The M-STP is designed to measure their knowledge of state standards in science and mathematics in grade 8. The **PSAT** is designed to measure ELA and mathematics in grade 8. The **Michigan** system of science and social studies standards are measured by M-STP in grades 5 and 8.

High school students take the **PSAT** 8/9 in grade 8 and **PSAT**™ 10 in grade 10. To inform schools, students, and parents on what students know in ELA and mathematics, and help prepare students for the SAT college entrance exam given to every high school junior as part of the **Michigan** **Exam** (MME). The MME consists of a free SAT™ with Essay that also measures student knowledge on state ELA and mathematics standards, M-STP science and social studies components, and a work skills assessment called ACT WorkKeys™.

State Assessments Provide

- A important snapshot of student achievement at a state, district and building level
- Valuable information to parents and teachers on their children's academic achievement
- Important data for schools and districts to evaluate curriculum and programming effectiveness

Most students will spend no more than 3-8 hours – less than one percent of instructional time – on state assessments. All other assessments are determined at the school district or building level.

The table on the following page lists the state tests students take at each grade level. Schools have the flexibility to give the M-STP and PSAT online anytime within a four-week time frame for each grade level. The PSAT, SAT, and ACT WorkKeys assessments are administered according to College Board and ACT guidelines on specific dates. Check your school's school for exact M-STP and MME administration dates.

M-STP Features

- Modern test content, with fewer multiple choice questions and more problem solving and critical thinking.
- Computer adaptive testing (CAT) for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics assessments, which provides a more individualized test experience for students and more precise measurements of student learning.
- Efficiency: Testing time takes less than 1% of instructional time annually.
- Actionable results – preliminary results available to schools within a few days of testing. Final results are available before the start of the next school year for all buildings operating under a standard calendar; parent reports are distributed by schools at the start of the school year.

State assessment overview, features, student test time, testing dates, and more.



DIVERSITY

Michelle Cureton, Diversity and Equity Coordinator

January: On January 20, Lake Orion Community Schools held its second annual evening to celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy. Lake Orion High School's Diversity Committee worked together to ensure that the evening was a time to reflect on the message of, "We Are All Connected." Students across the district were invited to compete in various essay, poetry, and multimedia competitions focused on the theme, "We Are All Connected," with the winners presenting their winning entry during the evening celebration. The evening also featured various musical, dance, multimedia performances, and speakers all devoted to promoting the theme. In the future, we look forward to Dr. King's birthday remaining a meaningful observation and celebration in which the Lake Orion community continues to highlight and honor the legacy of this great man.

Click on the bulleted line below to view a montage of the evening.

- [MLK celebration montage](#)

February: We will have the honor of highlighting African-American history month throughout Lake Orion High School. All students will have the opportunity to participate in meaningful activities that will highlight the month in an intentional and thoughtful way. There will be an opportunity for students to participate in a Saturday field trip to the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History (details to come.)

- [Wright Museum information](#)



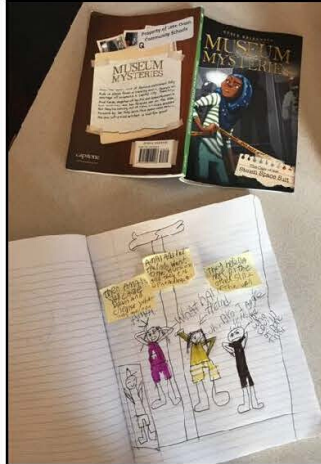


ELA

Beth Bruce, Kelly Day & Kate DiMeo, Instructional Coaches

Writing About Reading

Third graders in Ms. Watt's classroom worked on their writing about reading in their readers' notebooks.



If you liked these books, you might like...

Henry Mudge	<i>Mr. Putter and Tabby</i> <i>Young Cam Jansen</i> <i>Hi Rise Private Eyes</i>
Mercy Watson	<i>Princess Black</i> <i>Mrs. McGee</i> <i>Bad Guys</i>
Magic Tree House	<i>The Left Behinds</i> <i>Flashback four</i> <i>Secret Smithsonian Adventures</i>
I Survived	<i>Ranger in Time</i> <i>Storm Runners</i> <i>Hatchet</i>
Diary of a Wimpy Kid	<i>Big Nate</i> <i>Case of Origami Yoda</i> <i>Dear Dumb Diary</i>
Wonder	<i>Rules</i> <i>Out of My Mind</i> <i>El Deafo</i>
Harry Potter	<i>Percy Jackson</i> <i>Artemis Fowl</i> <i>Eragon</i>
The Hate U Give	<i>The Radius of Us</i> <i>The Other Side of Freedom</i> <i>People Kill People</i>

High Leverage Study Habits

After researching the habits of highly successful students, Mary Ehrenworth, Senior Deputy Director of the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project at Columbia University, noticed three essential components of students' success:



Notetaking

Not only are students maintaining strong notebooks during the school day, but they are also being recursive with their notes without the prompting of a teacher. For instance, a successful student may choose to take time outside of school to recopy, reorganize, review, and/or revise their notes.



Forming study groups

Additionally, successful students are maintaining study groups outside of the school day.



Doing just a bit more

Lastly, successful students make it a habit to do just a bit more, even if it is only 10 minutes more. They take the initiative to do additional reading, researching, and/or writing.





ENGLISH LEARNER DEPARTMENT

Jen Howe, EL District Coordinator

It's WIDA ACCESS Season!

All English Learners in Grades K-12 will take the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs between February 3 and March 20, 2020. WIDA ACCESS monitors a student's progress in learning academic English, is administered online, and assesses the four language domains of listening, reading, writing, and speaking. Test results are available in the summer and are provided to families and classroom teachers at the start of each school year. For more information, click [here](#). Thank you for encouraging your students to do their best on the WIDA ACCESS and for your support of the testing schedule.

LOCS Students Can Now Apply to Earn the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy

Michigan has joined approximately 30 states in recognizing bilingual students. The Michigan Seal of Biliteracy recognizes students who are proficient in English and an additional language. Universities may consider the Seal of Biliteracy for placement in language courses, and the Seal of Biliteracy also indicates to employers that students are entering the workforce with proficiency in more than one language.

Students who meet the Lake Orion High School ELA graduation requirements and demonstrate proficiency in an additional language can now apply to earn the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy. Students can demonstrate proficiency by a rating of Intermediate High on an approved language assessment or a transcript verifying study in another country. Applications are available from the Lake Orion High School counseling office. Students who earn the Seal of Biliteracy will be recognized at a departmental awards ceremony and will receive a certificate from the State of Michigan and a gold seal for their diplomas.

Resource Spotlight: The Multilingual Children's Association

The Multilingual Children's Association, headquartered in San Francisco, is focused on the day-to-day joys and challenges of raising bilingual and multilingual children. The purpose of their website is to encourage and support families raising multilingual children and includes articles, resources, tips, tools, and forums. Check out the following articles.

- [Ten Myths You Will Be Told About Multilingual Children](#)
- [Ten Steps to Raising a Multilingual Child](#)
- [5 Ways to Improve The Language Interaction](#)





FROM THE TEACHING & LEARNING OFFICE

Read by Grade Three Law Update

Reading is critical for a student's success. In 2016, the state of Michigan Legislature passed the "Read by Grade Three Law" to ensure that students exit third grade reading at or above grade level. Following the three-year implementation/transition process, this law will affect the current third grade students. In accordance with this law, and as a means of better informing classroom instruction, districts will be providing Grades K-3 assessments to students three times a year. These assessments will identify students who need intensive reading instruction and intervention and will also provide useful information to help teachers tailor instruction to meet individual student needs. Lake Orion Community Schools remains proactive, having administered assessments/screeners to kindergarten through third grade students for the past 10 years.

The law also requires districts to provide early and regular written communication with parents of Grades K-3 students with reading difficulties, called an Individualized Reading Improvement Plan (IRIP). This plan will include information about current services being provided, additional reading supports planned for the child, and strategies for parents to help the child at home (Read-At-Home plan). If a child has an IRIP, the classroom teacher will present it to the family at fall and/or spring parent/teacher conferences.

All third grade students will be required to take a standardized state assessment (M-STEP) in the spring to determine promotion to fourth grade. This school year, if a third grade child scores below the state set cut score of 1252 or lower on the M-STEP, parents will be informed by the Center for Educational Performance and Information in writing that the child may not be promoted to fourth grade. Retention of third grade students is another requirement of the Read by Grade Three law.

For more information regarding the Read by Grade Three Law, click on the bulleted lines below.



- [MDE Early Literacy - Read by Grade Three Law](#)
- [LOCS - Read by Grade Three Law](#)



If there are any questions about the law, please contact the building principal or Lake Orion Community Schools Director of Curriculum, Kerri Anderson at kerri.anderson@lok12.org



MATH DEPARTMENT

Brent Cubitt and Emilie Schiff, Instructional Coaches

5 Math Terms Every Parent Should Know In Mathematics

Adapted from

<https://www.scholastic.com/parents/school-success/learning-toolkit-blog/math-terms.html>

If you're the parent of an elementary school or middle school student, you've probably already figured out that your child's math class is different from math class when you were young. Kids today are engaged in hands-on activities, technology, and small group teaching.

They're *not* learning to "borrow" numbers and "carry the one." In fact, one of the major changes in how math is being taught now involves the use of language. Your child is probably using new math terms daily and focusing on building number sense, decomposing numbers, and using different models to show

his/her thinking. She's/he's using 100 charts, 10 frames, and building fact fluency every day, and we can help explain what some of this looks/sounds like, and why it can help your child really understand mathematics.

Understanding what your child is being taught in class will help you have deeper conversations about learning, and stay informed of (and be able to help with) daily lessons. Below are five frequently used vocabulary terms your child may be exposed to in math class that will help you stay tuned in — and that's a (math) fact.

1. Mental Math: This is the ability to see, solve, and calculate math problems in your mind without the use of a pencil, paper, or calculator. It's extremely important to build strategies for your child to increase their mental math skills. This is a great skill to work on in the car, running from sport to sport/activity to activity!

2. Number Sense: Think of number sense as your child's overall understanding of numbers and flexible thinking about them. The ability to understand, relate, and connect numbers to each other and see numbers in many different ways. Developing your child's number sense is imperative to mathematical success.

3. Decompose: This is the ability to break apart numbers into smaller parts. For example, your child will learn in kindergarten and first grade to decompose the number 10 — this number can be broken apart into the numbers 9 and 1; 8 and 2; 7 and 3; etc.

4. Ten Frame: A mathematical visual to help your child "see" numbers and understand the concept of tens and ones in place value. A ten frame is made up of two rows of five squares to show the number 10.



5. 100 Chart: This teaching tool (see example below) helps your child see numbers patterns, skip count, and visualize number sequences from one to 100.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80
81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100

Stay tuned for 5 more helpful mathematics terms in our next Parent Newsletter!

[illegible]

It's very interesting how gratitude works. We are well intentioned with a "thank you" for a door being opened for us or a tissue handed over; however, it appears as though we are at a loss for words of gratitude upon genuine, heartfelt gestures. Sometimes we become so overwhelmed that we even attempt to refuse the gesture or express how we will repay the gift immediately. The fact of the matter is that expressing gratitude is linked to a wide range of mental and physical benefits yet showing deep gratitude can be quite challenging for many.

Mindfulness is being with the present moment, intentionally, and without judgement. In and of itself, mindfulness is a powerful tool for strong mental health. A large part of mindfulness is allowing oneself to be more aware of our surroundings and noticing life as it presents itself. An interesting result of this way of being is becoming more grateful, so when difficult emotions present themselves, mindfulness encourages us to be with them and gratitude allows us to see the good or to be grateful for what we do have. It is a symbiotic cycle towards better mental and physical health.

We've always known that showing gratitude is the right thing to do but research and science is now showing us how beneficial that simple act of politeness can be to our mind and body, especially when done with intention and awareness. The two together, gratitude and mindfulness, have the ability, when practiced on a regular basis, to cultivate a cycle of stability and resiliency, sprinkled with compassion for self and others, boosting self-care to the next level.

Notice and appreciate the little things	Practice mindfulness
Keep a daily gratitude journal	Express your gratitude to loved ones regularly
Volunteer	Create a gratitude jar
Go a day without complaining	Write a card, text, email or letter of gratitude and send it



SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

Amy Bohm, Andrea Brook, Jamie Kimber, Pam Moreman, Instructional Coaches

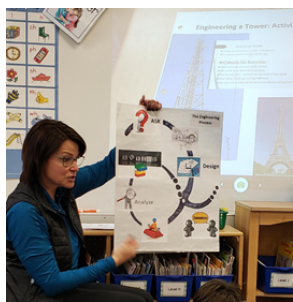
Science vs Engineering with the New NGSS Standards

Often missing from science instruction of the past was the integration of science and engineering practices. The new standards adopted by Michigan address this concern, but what is the difference between science and engineering?

In the K–12 context, “science” is generally taken to mean the traditional natural sciences: physics, chemistry, biology, and (more recently) earth, space, and environmental sciences. We use the term “engineering” in a very broad sense to mean any engagement in a systematic practice of design to achieve solutions to particular human problems. (NRC 2012, p.11-12)

Engineering design is not just applied science. There are many similarities but engineering design has a different purpose and a different product than scientific inquiry.

Purposely adding engineering into the NGSS helps students use and learn the process engineers use to solve problems. In science, we often ask questions to understand the natural world. In engineering, we ask questions to solve a problem. All students, in every grade, follow the same design process.



The Engineering process includes:

- **Inquiring** or asking questions to define the problem. What are the criteria and constraints?
- **Imagining** what a solution might look like?
- **Designing** a possible solution with a team.
- **Constructing** a possible solution.
- **Analyzing** the design.
- **Revising** the design to improve it.
- **Communicating** with our design team throughout the entire process.

A few examples:

- Kindergartners study the science of pushes and pulls and then engineer barriers to keep a bear from sliding off the end of a slide.
- First graders study the structures and functions of animals and then use nature to inspire designs to solve human problems.
- Second graders study the properties of materials and design houseboats to keep their gummy bears dry.
- Third graders study weather and build rain gauges and anemometers to collect weather data.
- Fourth graders study how information is stored and transferred. They design and create a survival kit to send messages with both noise and sound.
- Fifth graders study the earth's spheres and design a barrier to stop erosion.





SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Julie Gutman, Special Education Director

Resources Available to You and Your Child

The **Arc of Oakland County** serves all children and adults with disabilities. They strive to create easy avenues to understand all of the services and responsibilities out there. Check out these two great checklists. **Click on each bulleted line for the website.**

- [Childhood Benefits: Key Considerations, By Tom Kendziorski and Penny Canada, Arc of Oakland County](#)
- [Transition to Adulthood Checklist: Key considerations, by Tom Kendziorski, Arc of Oakland County](#)
- [The Social Security Administration pamphlet describing the benefits available to eligible children with disabilities and how to apply, including SSI and SSDI. Benefits for Children with Disabilities Resource Guide.](#)

Oakland County Intermediate School District

Oakland County Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)

Mom to Mom Sale

Special Needs & Adaptive Equipment Sale

Saturday, February 1, 2020, 10 A.M. - 1 P.M.

Oakland Schools, 2111 Pontiac Lake Road, Waterford Twp, MI 48328

Roadmap for the Future

Begin planning now for your child.

- [Oakland County Community Resources](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions About Special Education](#)

Michigan Alliance for Families

Supporting the Educational Needs of Children & Youth with Mental Health Challenges & Those Who Have Experienced Trauma

Connect with resources for children's mental health and trauma.

Thursday, February 27, 2020, 9:30 A.M. - 12 P.M.

5505 Corporate Drive, Troy, MI 48098

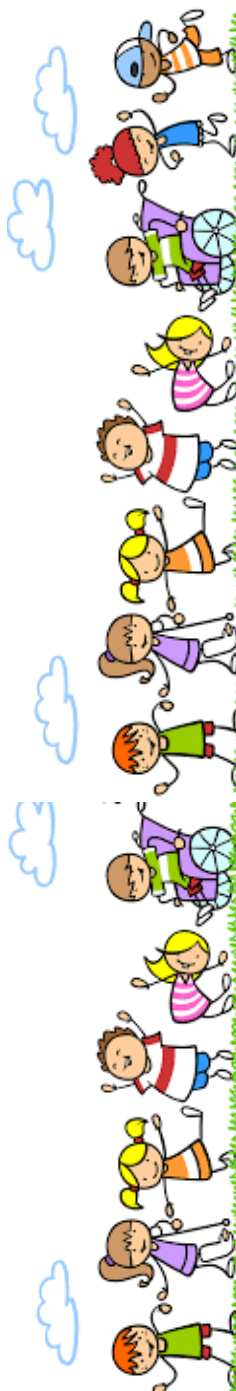
For more information, an informal time to ask a question, or a chance to meet other parents, please join Julie Gutman, LOCS Director of Special Education and other ancillary staff members for coffee or tea. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Parent Tea and Coffee Hour with the Director of Special Education for Lake Orion Community Schools

February 21, 2020, 1 - 2:30 P.M.

Community Educational Resource Center (CERC)

455 East Scripps Road, Lake Orion, MI 48362





TECHNOLOGY & CAREER READINESS

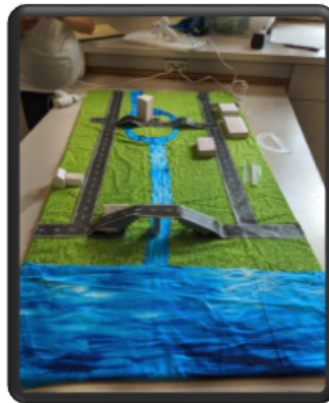
Craig Schoon, Instructional Technology Coach & Rosa Everitt, Career Readiness, HS

At the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year three new courses were implemented at the Lake Orion Community Schools middle school level. One of those new classes is Designing Solutions through Technology and Engineering (DSET 7.) For one of the projects, students design and create a small-scale city. Here are a few pictures from some of the student work done in the DSET 7 course.

Planning



Building and Constructing



For Michigan's students to be competitive in the 21st Century economy, it is critical that they have access to computer science learning opportunities. (Source: Based on Workforce Intelligence Network and DTMB Labor Market Information Data May 2018) Therefore, the state of Michigan implemented a new set of Computer Science standards for K-12.

Please click on the bulleted lines below to access the Computer Science standards and a description of Computer Science.

- [Computer Science Standards](#)
- [Computer Science Description](#)



BOND UPDATE

Heidi Mercer, Asst. Superintendent of Teaching and Learning

The 2018 bond election was an important moment for Lake Orion Community Schools, securing the district for the next generation.



In 2019, LOCS staff embraced the opportunity and began planning for the initial series of projects.

As we enter 2020, there are many exciting steps taking place, with some of them already apparent in the schools.

In one of the first visible projects, LOCS will update much of the district's classroom furniture.



The elementary furniture replacement process has already begun, and should be completed in the fall of 2021, with middle school and high school furniture being installed in the fall of 2022. During the December school break, four elementary classrooms – each in a different school -- received new furniture to pilot. Teachers and students in those classes test and try different pieces of furniture through late spring.



After a year of meetings and discussions with architects, staff members, community members and the construction partner, we are excited to share that the first four building renovations are nearing the groundbreaking phase.

Building renovation designs for Carpenter Elementary, Orion Oaks Elementary, Webber Elementary and the new Early Childhood Center are complete. LOCS will hold bond community meetings for each of these facilities, providing a detailed overview of each project's upcoming updates. All community members are invited to attend any and all of these meetings.



Orion Oaks Elementary – Tuesday, March 3, 6:30 p.m.

Carpenter Elementary – Tuesday, March 3, 7:15 p.m.

Early Childhood Center – Wednesday, March 11, 5:30 p.m. at LOCS Admin Building (315. N. Lapeer St.)

Webber Elementary – Monday, March 16, 7 p.m.

As those projects shift into the construction phase, the next phase of projects will kick off with design committees for Stadium Drive Elementary and Paint Creek Elementary.

To stay updated on all bond information, please visit:

lakeorionschools.org/bond

Check out the photos on the next page to see some of the progress that is being made.



ELEMENTARY FURNITURE PILOT CLASSROOMS

