Annual Report 2020-21

Serving the districts of Allegan, Fennville, Glenn, Hopkins, Martin, Otsego, Plainwell, Wayland, Innocademy, and Outlook Academy

Vision
Ensure every learner, school, and community thrives.

Mission
Support and engage in partnership with our districts and communities to serve all families and create and drive educational innovations.

Belief Statements
We believe that quality education requires strong, trusted community partnerships and community collaboration.

We believe that ALL students should have access to quality education.

We believe that education should provide the foundation for a rewarding life.

We believe in being good stewards of the responsibilities we are entrusted with through leadership, education, and service.
Superintendent’s Message

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Allegan Area Educational Service Agency I would like to present our Annual Report for the 2020-2021 school year. In this report, you will find important information about the numerous high-quality programs and services that the Allegan Area ESA provides to our community. I am honored to give this report about agency goals and our progress toward goal achievement. Through continuous improvement, the Allegan Area ESA continually prepares students to be career and/or college ready, not only today, but also for future careers. None of this work would be possible without you and your continued support.

Your feedback and involvement are important to us. Please feel free to contact me at william.brown@alleganaesa.org if I may be of assistance. Together, we can prepare our Allegan County students to face the future.

Yours in Education,
William D. Brown
Superintendent
School Description: The Allegan County Area Technical and Education Center, also known as the Allegan Tech Center, is a career and technical training center, providing hands on training for local high school juniors and seniors. The school also provides evening short-term training courses for adults throughout the year.

School Goals: The Allegan Tech Center goals are to increase the technical, academic, and employability skills of the students so they can be successful in both the work place and post-secondary training.

Pupil Assignment Process: Local districts are assigned slots in each Allegan Tech Center program based on the school size. A number of slots are also available to be opened in the late spring for any district to use.

Core Curriculum Implementation: Individual course syllabi are posted on the AAESA website and copies of the curriculum for each course are available by request.

Additional Information: Many of the courses at the Allegan Tech Center offer direct college credit, free to the student. All courses offer articulated college credit at many community colleges and technical schools. Seventy seven Allegan Tech Center students acquired 356 direct college credits through Lake Michigan College totaling $57,672 in free tuition costs.
Program Description: Early College Allegan County is an early middle college program that accepts qualified students from the local districts served by the Allegan Area ESA and through a partnership between the agency and Lake Michigan College.

Program Goals: Early College Allegan County is an opportunity for motivated students to extend high school by one year in order to earn up to 62 college credits. Students complete both high school and college coursework, on the way to attaining an Associate’s degree.

Application Process: Applicants must have: A 2.2 grade point average (GPA) or above, be on track with the Michigan Merit Curriculum to finish required coursework by the end of Junior year, passing scores for the Accuplacer showing College Readiness, complete Lake Michigan College Application, complete the ECAC Application, and must attend a College Readiness Course in the summer.

Additional Information: 42 students completed the program in 2021 in both the Arts and Business programs. Four with a perfect 4.0 GPA. Twenty seven students went on to pursue a Bachelor’s degree.
School Description: Hillside is composed of three programs, Hillside Learning Center, Hillside Behavior Center, and the Young Adult Campus.

Hillside Learning Center provides programs to educate students with significant physical and/or cognitive impairments. Classroom teachers, along with other education professionals, join together to plan and provide a free and appropriate public education for each student.

Hillside Behavior Center provides programs to assist students who exhibit pervasive and persistent behaviors. These programs help the students better understand their behaviors, make more positive choices and return to their local district successfully.

The Young Adult Campus emphasizes community based instruction with a focus on vocational skills and functional academics. This program is designed to strengthen the student’s ability to safely navigate their communities and to fully participate in family activities. The goal is to connect students and families with adult service agencies to facilitate meaningful transition to the adult community.

Pupil Assignment Process: When a school district determines that the needs of a student with a significant impairment have not been met in their local school district, a Needs Review process is initiated to develop the student’s Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The IEP team considers the needs of the student as well as the programs and services necessary to meet the student’s needs.

Core Curriculum Implementation: The instruction at Hillside Learning Center is based on Michigan Department of Education’s essential elements and is consistent with the student’s IEP. At Hillside Behavior Center instruction is based on academic standards or a personal curriculum that is consistent with the student’s IEP.

Transition services are a coordinated set of activities that promote movement from school into adult life. Participation in Transition planning increases post-school outcomes for students. This process involves bringing together schools, students, families, and community agencies in a joint effort to plan the student’s most appropriate path to adult life.
Early Childhood Education

Great Start Readiness Program

The Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) is a free preschool program for families that meet eligibility criteria.

During the 2020-2021 school year, we saw, firsthand, the impact of COVID-19. Allegan Area ESA operated 11 classrooms including one virtual classroom for families unable to participate with in-person learning. The staff shifted between in-person and remote learning to prevent the spread of COVID-19 within the classroom. Allegan Area ESA GSRP also added an additional community-based partner to provide GSRP in a childcare setting; providing the opportunity for before and after school care for enrolled families.

Great Start Collaborative
Help Me Grow Allegan

During this school year the Allegan County Great Start Collaborative (GSC) continued to implement Help Me Grow-Allegan. The program is an early childhood initiative designed to help children stay developmentally on track and healthy prior to school entry.

Our local Family Coaches provided virtual Play n Learn groups for families across the county. Families joined on for story times, crafts and other adventures.

The GSC also launched Talking is Teaching to support early literacy and has created strong partnerships with local community programs and organizations to help build literacy skills in our young children.

Early On

Early On (EO) offers early intervention services for children 0-3 years with disabilities or delays.

During the course of the pandemic, the EO Team learned to weave in and out of in-person and virtual visits with families, utilizing technology to support each child’s development toward his/her goals. EO received funding to provide books and materials to support virtual evaluation and intervention. Books were used to increase early literacy skills as well as to promote positive interactions between adult caregivers and children enrolled in the program.
Highlights for the Allegan Area ESA Teaching and Learning Priorities for 2017-2020:

All students will be on track to read at grade level or beyond by 3rd grade.

Strategies to address this priority included use of the County-Wide Literacy Coaches Network, High Impact Leadership Project - United States Department of Education grant and the Reading Now Network Annual Symposium.

All students will have the math and science skills and knowledge to be career and college ready.

Strategies to address this priority included professional learning and coaching in essential math practices, curriculum alignment, science and literacy grants, robotics and coding events, and the Allegan Area STEM Partnership.

All students will have social and emotional skills and positive behavior that contributes to personal and academic success.

To address this priority Allegan Area ESA applied for and received funding for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and mental health services. Allegan Area ESA also offered whole child mini-grants to support efforts in local districts.

Administrative Services provided by the Finance and Operations department include: budgeting, negotiations, pupil membership accounting and auditing, school safety, financial and statistical information, financial audit, tax collection information/tax levy, federal grant administration, state forms/electronic reporting, and purchasing.

The AAESA transportation services fleet logged 277,576 miles for the 2020-21 school year.