

Multi Grade Classrooms

We have visited many multi-age classrooms in Michigan this year. These schools typically have a waiting list to get in and also have a lot of school of choice students (75-90% of their enrollment). Below is a list of some of the schools we visited, a brief summary of their grade configuration, and parent testimonials. There are also many other multi grade schools that we haven't had the opportunity to visit.

Norton Shores –Lincoln Park School (231) 755-1257

This is a Multi-age school within a school. It also has technology and the Daily 5 Literacy program. Hi, I am a teacher at Lincoln Park, and also a parent whose children are in the multi-age program. I was asked to give you a few reasons I like the program from a parent's perspective:

1. I like the feeling of safety my children feel being with teachers they know well. There is less beginning of the year jitters, as they are familiar with the teachers already.
2. I like the feeling of family that is created. The children spend 5 years with the same core group of children. They get to know each other quite well and create lasting friendships. Additionally, they are exposed to children of various ages and come to rely on each other. The older grades become the mentors for the younger ones. The younger children look up to the older students.

Shari Ralston
Kindergarten Teacher
Lincoln Park Elementary

Crawford School – Kalkaska K-2, 3-5, 6-8

Contact Person- Mrs. Sue Lawrence (231) 258-2934

They are a two room school house. K-2 and 3-5 are in the same room with a divider. The 6-8 teacher is in the old wood shed. They have a total of 56 students. The school has been around since 1872. They have one instructional aide that is a retired teacher that they share. They have no prep time. The majority of their students are school of choice. They rotate Social Studies and Science curriculum.

Oriole Park Elementary – Wyoming Public Schools

1420 40th St. SW, Wyoming, 49509

Phone 616-530-7558

Fax 616-249-7624

They are a multi-age program, a "Blue Ribbon" award-winning school which has received an "A" ranking for three consecutive years. They use the Leader In Me program with great results, and it compliments their multiage flexible learning component.

Ionias Schools

Coon School, Ionias K-3, 4-8

Contact Person – Morgan Herron 527-2569

There are two teachers. They each have an instructional aide and share a part time Title one teacher. They are both 1st year teachers. They teach every subject to every grade.

Haynor School – Ionia K-2, 3-5

N. LeValley School –Ionia K-5

Huron County Schools

Verona Mills School-Bad Axe

Contact Person – Kathy (989) 269-7054

K-8 24 students – 1 Full time teacher, 1 part time retired teacher training the full time teacher and 1 instructional aide. Kindergarten goes to school 4 full days. They teach every subject.

Big Burning School-Bad Axe (989) 269-8853

K-8, (21 students) They have 1 full time teacher and 2 instructional aides.

Eccles School-Bad Axe (989) 479-9266

K-8, (18 students) They have 2 full time teachers and 0 instructional aides.

Adams School –Bad Axe

Church School – Bad Axe (989)269-7772

Quote from a parochial teacher taken from a Michigan Multi-age Initiative Survey

“I believe as a "teacher" in a parochial school I have become a facilitator of student's individual learning. In order for all students to be successful I have learned to guide, nurture, and support their learning process. Rather than acting simply as their “giver of knowledge”, I facilitate each child’s growth in all areas according to their individual, developmental needs and interest. I have learned to focus on teaching children, not curriculum.”

Zeeland Public Schools- Innocademy 616-748-3065

Innocademy is a year round, multi-age, magnet school in Zeeland. They have a partner school in Mexico.

Parent Quotes:

“Innocademy provides a good learning experience. They teach children at all levels”.

“Multi-age classrooms represent the workforce. We work in multi-age, global settings. They are being taught to how to be critical thinkers, how to adapt to change, how to be well rounded.”

“They are passionate about life long learning”

Cross Lutheran School – Pigeon K-2, 3-5, 6-8

Contact Person – Gwynne

There are 3 full time teachers. K-2 has a part-time instructional aide. 3-5 has a part-time grandparent volunteer. They rotate curriculum.

Plainwell Schools-Angela Colyer- acolyer@plainwellschools.org

2, 3-5 classrooms. They rotate curriculum

Oneida District Number 3 –Grand Ledge (269)227-3411

Glen School- K-1, 2-3, 4-6, 3 teachers and 3 instructional aides

Vineyard Academy Catholic School –Richland (269) 629-7253, PreK & JrK~or~JrK & K, depending upon enrollment; 1st/2nd grade; 3rd/4th grade; 5th - 8th grade, each classroom having one teacher.

St. Mary's in Big Rapids- K, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4-5, 6-8

South Olive Christian School –Holland (616) 875-8224 K-1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-8

All Saints Catholic School – Alpena K-1, 2-3, 4-6

St. John Lutheran School – Port Hope (989) 428-4811 K-2, 3-5, 6-8

Grandville Public Schools-Century Park Learning Center -254-6821 K, 1-3, after 4th grade they stand alone. 1-3 have 4 double classrooms with 2 teachers for each.

Montessori Schools –

http://www.privateschoolreview.com/state_montessori_schools/type/10/stateid/MI

There are over 100 Montessori schools in Michigan. The Grand Rapids school is set up in classes of: 3-6 year olds (PreK-K), 6-9 year olds (1st-3rd), and 9-12 year olds (4th-6th). This seems to be a typical classroom set up for most Montessori Schools. This is a testament that the blended learning/multi grade classrooms do work.