

September 21, 2009

Ottawa Area Intermediate School District  
13565 Port Sheldon Road  
Holland, MI 49424

To the staff of the OAISD:

Greetings!

Black River Public School submits its Annual Education Report.

Black River Public School began its fourteenth year of operation on August 26, 2009. The school provides courses for students in grades K through 12; the school offers programs for students in lower elementary education, with approximately 169 students participating in grades K-3, in upper elementary education, with approximately 105 students, and in secondary education, with approximately 559 students. Black River Public School graduated its ninth senior class, 48 students, on June 5, 2009.

Over a thirteen-year period, Black River Public School has established a solid foundation. Each year the school has seen increased student enrollment. Various assessments suggest that students achieve well at Black River Public School.

Black River Public School opens the 2009-2010 academic year with Mr. Shannon Brunink serving as Head of School in his second year.

This year will certainly be exciting for the students, faculty and parents of Black River Public School. We anticipate serving more students and families than during any previous academic year. We work together to meet the mission of our school: "Preparing students for college and life." We proudly offer wonderful services to the greater Holland community.

Sincerely,

Rhonda L. Pardue  
Curriculum Director

## I. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Black River Public School submitted its 2009-2010 School Improvement Plan with the OAISD on August 31, 2009. For specific information in support of comprehensive school improvement goals, please consult this report.

The school's three improvement goals, in support of NCA emphases, are:

- All students will show improvement in reading comprehension skills across the curriculum.
- All students will increase skills in mathematical problem solving, concepts, and computation at all grade levels.
- All students will increase their understanding of post-secondary opportunities school wide.

## II. RETENTION/DROPOUT/GRADUATION RATES

Black River Public School has measured the following retention rates:

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| From 1996-1997 to 1997-1998 | Approximately 85%   |
| From 1997-1998 to 1998-1999 | Approximately 85%   |
| From 1998-1999 to 1999-2000 | Approximately 80%   |
| From 1999-2000 to 2000-2001 | Approximately 80%   |
| From 2000-2001 to 2001-2002 | Approximately 90%   |
| From 2001-2002 to 2002-2003 | Approximately 95% (Drop-Out Rate, 3.3%)   |
| From 2002-2003 to 2003-2004 | Approximately 95% (Drop-Out Rate, 2.08%)  |
| From 2003-2004 to 2004-2005 | Approximately 89% (rate not calculated at time of report)                                 |
| From 2004-2005 to 2005-2006 | Approximately 91% (Drop-Out Rate, 1.38%)  |
| From 2005-2006 to 2006-2007 | Approximately 92% (Drop-Out Rate, 0.45%)  |
| From 2006-2007 to 2007-2008 | Approximately 88% (Drop-Out Rate, 3.23%)  |
| From 2007-2008 to 2008-2009 | Class of 2008, 56/61= 95%(Drop-Out number is <10 and is not included on the state report) |
| From 2008-2009 to 2009-2010 | Class of 2009, 48/50 (Official numbers from the State will be available soon)             |

The school disaggregates information by individual student. At this time, the overall school population does not generate sufficient data for conventional student subgroups (i.e., ethnicity).

## III. TEACHER QUALITY

Black River Public School opened the 2009-2010 academic year with 78 individuals serving in school administration, faculty and staff positions. The school has 9 board members. 100% of faculty are compliant with "highly qualified teacher" regulations.

## IV. SPECIALIZED SCHOOLS

Black River Public School students also attend courses and programs off campus. Students participate in Hope College's PATH and Upward Bound programs. A few students have taken college courses as part of their high school program of study. Several students have taken career-training courses at the Career-Line Tech Center at the OAISD. This program reserves annually a space in each course for a Black River Public School student. The school has also offered "virtual learning" programs through Michigan Virtual University. During the 2009-2010 academic year, students will continue to explore various forms of coursework online.

These programs supplement learning objectives that are emphasized at Black River Public School, but in some cases these programs provide learning opportunities not yet established on campus.

## V. ACADEMIC CORE CURRICULUM

Black River Public School requires each teacher to hold high standards when assessing student work, standards that exceed those in other public schools.

The school uses several standardized tests to assist in assessing student academic achievement, including the Michigan Educational Assessment Program, the Michigan Merit Examination, the PSAT, Advanced Placement examinations, the SAT, the ACT, and Scantron. The aim of such assessments is to provide students with the opportunity for success after graduation, whether in college or career.

| Middle School Graduation Requirements  | High School Graduation Requirements   |
|--|---|
| 3 years of English<br>3 years of History<br>3 years of Science<br>3 years of Mathematics<br>2 years of Middle School Spanish<br>3 years of "The Arts"<br>8 semesters of additional coursework<br>20 hours of Community Service | 4 years of English<br>3 years of Mathematics (4 credits beginning in Class of 2011)<br>3 years of Science<br>3 years of History (1 year must be "Political Systems and Thought")<br>2 years of Foreign Language (students must also meet a three-year language proficiency in Spanish)<br>2 years of "The Arts" (Visual Art, Theatre Studies, Music, Choir, Dance)<br>60 hours of Community Service<br>1 year of Physical Education (evaluated through PE class or sport team participation)<br>Health<br>1 semester of Keyboarding<br>Additional coursework to total 24 credits (course work in any discipline)<br>Senior Project<br>3 years of Project Term |

The academic year 2008-2009 was the tenth year that Black River Public School offered courses for graduating seniors. It was also the eighth year that the school offered courses for upper elementary students (grades 4 and 5) and the fifth year for students in lower elementary school (grades 1-3). Advanced Placement examination results for the 2008-2009 academic year included the following information: scores of 3, 4, or 5 were 56% (62% for students in the Class of 2009). 137 examinations were given in 14 subjects (Art History, Biology, Calculus AB, Chemistry, English Language and Composition, European History, US Government and Politics, Comparative Government and Politics, Physics B, Psychology, Spanish Literature, Statistics, Studio Art (Drawing), and US History). 74 students participated in testing. 60% of students in the Class of 2009 earned a "mastery score" (3 or higher) on at least one examination. This compares to the performance from the previous year, in which examination scores of 3, 4, or 5 were 63% (74% for students in the Class of 2008). 121 examinations were given in 14 subjects (Art History, Biology, Calculus AB, Calculus BC, Chemistry, English Literature and Composition, European History, US Government and Politics, Comparative Government and Politics, Physics B, Physics C-Mechanical, Spanish Language, Studio Art (Drawing), and US History). 67 students participated in testing. 38% of students in the Class of 2008 earned a "mastery score (3 or higher) on at least one examination.

The following list displays courses available at Black River Public School:

### 2009-2010 Academic Courses (General Education)

|                     |
|---------------------|
| <b>Kindergarten</b> |
|---------------------|

|  |   |
|--|---|
| English, Mathematics, Science, History, Spanish, Sensory (evident in Mathematics), Practical Life<br>Music, Visual Arts  |   |
| <b>Grades 1-3</b>  |   |
| English, Mathematics, Science, History, Spanish<br>Music, Visual Arts  |   |
| <b>Grades 4-5</b>  |   |
| English, Mathematics, Science, History, Spanish<br>Music, Visual Arts  |   |
| <b>Grades 6-8</b>  |   |
| <u>Mathematics</u><br>Integrated Mathematics 1<br>Integrated Mathematics 2<br>Integrated Mathematics 3<br>Middle School Mathematics Tutorial<br>Mathematics Counts<br><u>English</u><br>English 6, "Africa, the Middle East, and Western Hemisphere"<br>English 7, "Asia"<br>English 8, "Early Europe"<br>Creative Writing<br>* Creative Writing ~ Fiction<br>Written and Illustrated By...<br>* Book & Film Studies<br>* English 6-8<br><u>History</u><br>History 6, "Africa, the Middle East, and Western Hemisphere"<br>History 7, "Asia"<br>History 8, "Early Europe"<br>Investigate Holland<br>People in History<br>* Public People | <u>Science</u><br>Earth Science 6<br>Life Science 7<br>Physical Science 8<br>Robotics<br>Everyday Science<br>* Everyday Science Too<br><u>Spanish</u><br>Spanish Language A<br>Spanish Language B<br><u>Music</u><br>Beginning Woodwinds<br>Beginning Brass/Percussion<br>Jazz Band<br>Middle School Band<br>Vocal Elements<br>Beginning String Orchestra<br>Preparatory String Orchestra<br>* Where Music Came From<br><u>Visual Art</u><br>Visual Art 6, "Africa, the Middle East, and Western Hemisphere"<br>Visual Art 7, "Asia"<br>Visual Art 8, "Early Europe"<br>* Introduction to Visual Arts<br><u>Electives</u><br>Middle School Physical Education<br>Keyboarding<br>Success in School |
| <b>Grades 9-12</b>   |   |
| <u>Science</u><br>Biology<br>Chemistry<br>Physics<br>Earth Science<br>Astronomy<br>Backyard Physics<br>* Front-yard Physics<br>* Intro to Psychology<br>Advanced Placement: Biology<br>Advanced Placement: Chemistry<br>Advanced Placement: Environmental Science<br>Advanced Placement: Physics<br>Advanced Placement: Biology/Chemistry Lab.<br>Advanced Placement: Psychology   | <u>Spanish</u><br>Spanish Language I<br>Spanish Language II<br>Spanish Language III<br>Spanish Language IV<br>*Spanish Language V<br>Advanced Placement: Spanish Language<br><u>Music</u><br>Symphonic Band<br>Concert Band<br>Jazz Band<br>Concert Choir<br>Concert Orchestra<br>Advanced String Orchestra<br>* Music Appreciation   |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><u>Mathematics</u><br/> Algebra/Statistics 9<br/> Algebra/Geometry 10<br/> Advanced Algebra/Geometry 11<br/> Precalculus 12<br/> Advanced Placement: Calculus<br/> Advanced Placement: Statistics<br/> * Discrete Mathematics</p> <p><u>English</u><br/> English 9, "Literature and Composition"<br/> English 10, "Twentieth Century Global Topics"<br/> English 11, "American Literature"<br/> English 12, "Global Topics"<br/> Holocaust Literature I, II<br/> Media Literacy<br/> Advanced Placement: English Literature<br/> * Utopic/Dystopic Studies<br/> * Everything Shakespeare<br/> Creative Writing<br/> Advanced Placement Writing Lab</p> <p><u>History</u><br/> History 9, "World History"<br/> History 10, "Government"<br/> History 11, "The United States"<br/> History 12, "World Issues"<br/> Middle East Conflict<br/> * American Wars<br/> * History in Dispute<br/> Advanced Placement: European History<br/> Advanced Placement: U.S. History<br/> Advanced Placement: US Govt/Pol<br/> Advanced Placement: Comp. Govt/Pol<br/> * Economics</p> | <p><u>Visual Art</u><br/> * Introduction to Art<br/> * Introduction to Graphic Arts<br/> Intro to Art History<br/> 2D Design<br/> 3D Design<br/> Advanced 2D Design<br/> Advanced Placement: Studio Art<br/> Advanced Art<br/> Advanced Placement: Art History<br/> * Digital Photography<br/> * Life Drawing and Painting</p> <p><u>Electives</u><br/> Conditioning<br/> Computer Applications<br/> * Creative Wellness<br/> Ejercicios en Espanol<br/> Film Studies<br/> German Language I, II, III, IV<br/> Advanced Placement: German Language<br/> High School Physical Education<br/> Keyboarding<br/> Sociology<br/> Teaching Practicum<br/> Weight Training</p> |
|---|---|

**2009-2010 Academic Courses (Special Education)**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Elementary School:</b> Inclusion support for all subjects  |  |
| <b>Middle School</b>  | <b>High School</b>   |
| Resource: Departmental English<br>Resource: English Support<br>Resource: Mathematics Support<br>Resource: Mathematics Inclusion (co-teaching)<br>Resource: Departmental Mathematics<br>Resource: Combined Support<br>Reading/Mathematics Workshop<br>Mathematics Workshop | Resource: English Support<br>Resource: Mathematics Inclusion (co-teaching)<br>Resource: Combined Support |

\* = new courses

**VI. ACCREDITATION**

Black River Public School is accredited by the State of Michigan, as determined by the "Education, YES!" program. The North Central Association for Colleges and Schools has granted Black River Public School regional accreditation. NCA also recognized Black River Public School with its "Outcomes Endorsement," which represents the successful completion of a five-year school improvement cycle. The American Academy for Liberal Education has granted Black River Public School national accreditation, as it did during the previous year.

Black River Public School has commenced a new three-five year school improvement cycle, through NCA's Performance Accreditation track, beginning in 2005-2006. Goal areas are mathematics, reading, and post-secondary opportunities.

## VII. ADDITIONAL HIGH SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

Five students during 2008-2009 took college courses, and collectively completed 9 semester-long courses with Hope College, Grand Rapids Community College, or Grand Valley State University.

The school provides the public, colleges and universities, with the following profiles of student achievement:

***Newsweek, June 8, 2009, "Black River Public School #3 in Michigan"***  
**COLLEGE PROFILE 2009-2010**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b><u>GENERAL INFORMATION</u></b><br/>         Black River Public School is a non-profit public college preparatory liberal arts school that employs smaller size classes (about 20 students in a class) to create an environment thriving on participation, responsiveness, and experiential learning. The maximum size of the school will be about 80 students in each graduating class.</p> <p><b><u>HISTORY AND LOCATION</u></b><br/>         Founded in 1996, Black River Public School is located in Holland, MI, adjacent to libraries, parks, playgrounds, Lake Michigan and community centers that the school uses on a regular basis.</p> <p><b><u>ENROLLMENT 2009-2010</u></b><br/>         High School: 310 Class of 2009: 48</p> <p><b><u>HIGH SCHOOL FACULTY</u></b><br/>         40 full- and part-time high school faculty provide instruction. Core classes have an average size of 20 students.</p> <p><b><u>GRADING SYSTEM AND CLASS RANK</u></b><br/>         The grading system is traditional. Grades of C and above are college recommending. D is a passing grade. Given the nature of the school and the small class size Black River Public School does not rank, and few academic awards are presented each year. Students who receive a C- or higher in an AP course and a 2 or higher on the AP examination receive a weight of 1.000 for the course grade.</p> <p><b><u>ACCREDITATION AND ASSOCIATIONS</u></b><br/>         Black River Public School receives its accreditation from the American Academy for Liberal Education (<a href="http://www.aale.org">www.aale.org</a>) and the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. The school participates in the National Honor Society and National Junior Honor Society. The school is also a member of the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA).</p> | <p><b><u>SAT AND ACT EXAMINATIONS, 2008-2009</u></b><br/>         SAT examination averages were 636 critical reading, 620 mathematics, and 640 writing. ACT examination average was 22.6.</p> <p><b><u>SCHOOL CURRICULUM</u></b><br/>         The minimum graduation requirements are 24 credits and include 4 years of English and; 3 years of mathematics, science, and history; a 3-year proficiency in Spanish; 2 years of the arts; 60 hours of community service; several years of electives, and a senior project. Beginning with the Class of 2011, students must also be admitted to a four-year college or university. The curriculum at Black River Public School consists of core and elective courses, and is aligned with ACT guidelines. The school structures its humanities courses in an interdisciplinary manner: 9<sup>th</sup> graders focus on the World, 10<sup>th</sup> graders political thought, 11<sup>th</sup> graders the United States, and 12<sup>th</sup> graders global topics. Program of study can be viewed at the following site:<br/> <a href="http://www.blackriverpublicschool.org/documents/course_catalog.pdf">www.blackriverpublicschool.org/documents/course_catalog.pdf</a></p> <p><b><u>PROJECT TERM</u></b><br/>         High school students are required to complete three years of project term courses, which can include theatre, yoga, international cooking, native American studies as well as opportunities to travel to such places as Washington, Oregon, New York, or internationally to such places as Spain, Australia or Mexico. Students are required to give an exhibition of their work at the end of Project Term.</p> <p><b><u>ADVANCED PLACEMENT EXAMINATIONS, 2008-2009</u></b><br/>         Students have completed Advanced Placement examinations in 18 subjects.<br/> <b>2008-2009</b><br/>         In May 2009, 74 Black River Public School students took 137 Advanced Placement examinations. 56% of those scores were 3, 4, or 5 (62% for students in Class of 2009). <i>Newsweek</i> (2009) recognized Black</p> |
|--|--|

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | River Public School as #474 in the nation (#3 in Michigan) on its “challenge index” for Advanced Placement student participation. |
|--|---|

Shannon E. Brunink, M.S.Ed., Head of School  
 John K. Donnelly, B.A., Dean of Students  
 Rhonda L. Pardue, M.A., Curriculum Director  
 Cessandra Wright, M.Ed, College Advisor  
 Jennifer Wise, B.S., Registrar  
 John Woods, Ed. D, Special Education Supervisor  
 Carol Fomunung, M.S.W., School Social Worker/Counselor  
 CEEB Code: 231963; District School Code: 70904-8331

### **ASSESSMENTS AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

“Preparing students for college and life.”

2008-2009 Senior Graduates (48): over \$2,025,000.00 in scholarships

2007-2008 Senior Graduates (56): over \$1,020,000.00 in scholarships

### **ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAM**

2008-2009: Scores of 3, 4, or 5 were 56% (62% for students in the Class of 2009). 137 examinations were given in 14 subjects (Art History, Biology, Calculus AB, Chemistry, English Language and Composition, European History, US Government and Politics, Comparative Government and Politics, Physics B, Psychology, Spanish Literature, Statistics, Studio Art (Drawing), and US History). 74 students participated in testing. 60% of students in the Class of 2009 earned a “mastery score” (3 or higher) on at least one examination.

2007-2008: Scores of 3, 4, or 5 were 63% (74% for students in the Class of 2008). 121 examinations were given in 14 subjects (Art History, Biology, Calculus AB, Calculus BC, Chemistry, English Literature and Composition, European History, US Government and Politics, Comparative Government and Politics, Physics B, Physics C-Mechanical, Spanish Language, Studio Art (Drawing), and US History). 67 students participated in testing. 38% of students in the Class of 2008 earned a “mastery score” (3 or higher) on at least one examination.

### **NATIONAL MERIT RECOGNITIONS**

Class of 2008: 1 National Merit Semi-Finalist

Class of 2007: 1 National Merit Finalist; 3 National Merit Commended Scholars

### **ACT**

2008-2009: School Composite Score, 22.6; State Composite Score, 19.6; National Composite Score, 21.1

2007-2008: School Composite Score, 21.8; State Composite Score, 18.8; National Composite Score, 21.1

### **SAT**

2008-2009: School 1896 (Critical Reading, 636; Math, 620; Writing, 640); Nation 1511 (502, 515, 494)

2007-2008: School 1848 (Critical Reading, 620; Math, 601; Writing, 626); Nation 1511 (502, 515, 494)

### **PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARSHIP**

2000-2001: Annaka Sikkink was named as a Presidential Scholarship nominee, one of 2,600 in the nation.

### **MUSICAL ARTS**

2008-2009: The Black River Jazz Orchestra won the "Outstanding Band" award at the 2009 WMU Jazz festival held at the main campus. The BRJO was chosen from 22 bands from the Midwest and as a result have been invited to perform at the New York City Jazz Festival held at the Lincoln Center in February 2010.

2006-2007: High School Orchestra received “Division One” rating in district and state competitions; performed at Michigan Music Conference (January 2007)

### MME

11<sup>th</sup> Grade Composite Scores, Levels 1 and 2 percentages (Spring 2009 results for Class of 2010)

|                           | <u>Mathematics</u> | <u>Reading</u> | <u>Writing</u> | <u>ELA</u> | <u>Science</u> | <u>SS</u> |
|---------------------------|--------------------|----------------|----------------|------------|----------------|-----------|
| Black River Public School | 81                 | 88             | 78             | 84         | 81             | 93        |
| <b>State</b>              | 49                 | 60             | 43             | 52         | 56             | 81        |

### MEAP

7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Composite Scores, Levels 1 and 2 (2008-2009)

|                           | <u>Writing (7.8)</u> | <u>Reading (7.8)</u> | <u>Math (7.8)</u> | <u>ELA(7.8)</u> | <u>Science (8)</u> | <u>SS (9)</u> |
|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Black River Public School | 92, 87               | 94, 90               | 95, 89            | 96, 90          | 89                 | 90            |
| <b>State</b>              | 78, 74               | 80, 76               | 83, 75            | 80, 77          | 76                 | 72            |

Black River Public School made Annual Yearly Progress (AYP); district received "A" from state

## VIII. ADDITIONAL TITLE 1 REQUIREMENTS

The 2009-2010 marks the sixth year that Black River Public School receives Title I financial support.

The School receives funding pursuant to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). The School provides paraprofessional support of student literacy and language arts skills using Title I, Part A funds which are designated for "improving the academic achievement of the disadvantaged." The School's program defines a student to be "at risk" if his or her reading skills are below grade level. Title I Aides identify and provide remedial services to this sub-population of students. Based on the School's number of students who qualify for free and reduced priced meals pursuant to the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the school received an allocation of \$24,069 for 2008-2009. The school also received \$8,288 under Title II, Part A, which is earmarked for programs "preparing, training, and recruiting high quality teachers and principals." This program helps to provide teachers that are new to the Montessori method with intensive Montessori summer training and certification through the Michigan Montessori Teacher Education Center (Rochester Hills, Michigan).

## IX. PARENT PARTICIPATION

During the 2008-2009 academic year, Black River Public School has experienced generally a 50% participation rate (300+ families) of parents and legal guardians at fall and spring teacher conferences; attendance is generally stronger in elementary school and middle school than in high school. This figure compares similarly to that of the preceding year. The school makes grade reporting available nine times during the academic year. Monthly newsletters are provided for all of the middle school and high school classes and weekly newsletters are sent home in the elementary school; with this frequency, the availability of "on-the-spot, unscheduled" conferences and the presence of the "Infinite Campus," participation at parent-teacher conferences may not be as necessary as it was during prior years. Parents are widely encouraged to be active in the school. The Parent Group, an organization of parent volunteers who look to support the programs of the school, continues to be an avenue through which parents can be actively involved with school improvement contributions. In addition to our Parent Group, parents also serve as School Board members, on committees and focus groups, as coaches, tutors and club advisors. They are involved in Community Service projects, and Project Term courses, the Book Fair and other school-wide events. Parents participate actively within the classroom, especially in the elementary grades.

## X. OTHER

Victor Jarvis, Hannah Jacobsma, and Alexie Ehmann performed in The Grand Rapids Ballet Company production of *The Nutcracker*, December 2008

1000 Cranes to Hiroshima, Holland Sentinel, Stephen Kloosterman, June 17, 2009

2009 Graduation, Holland Sentinel, Stephen Kloosterman, June 7, 2009

BRPS student travels to UAE, Holland Sentinel, Stephen Kloosterman, Apr4, 2009

The Panning Family, GR Press, Greg Chandler. Feb 15, 2009

B-Ball “Brainiacs”, GR Press, Steve Kaminski. Dec 9, 2008

Black River Students Clean Historic Grave Markers, Holland Sentinel, Sept 23, 2008

BRPS Students Shine – MI Merit Exam Results, Holland Sentinel, August 7, 2008

Black River Recognized as #3 ranked school in Michigan in annual Newsweek survey. June 8, 2009

Art Students Thinking Big - 2008, Holland Sentinel, August 7, 2008

More on Thinking Big, 2008, Holland Sentinel, August 7, 2008

Black River Recognized in “Best Communities for Music Education” survey  
NAMM Foundation, April 20, 2008.

BRPS Art Students Take Top Two Honors in Art Show, Holland Sentinel, March 14, 2008

College Plans Key at Black River Public School – ‘Rat Camp’ to Help to Inspire Students to Apply to 4-Year Institutions, Grand Rapids Press, August 17, 2008

Six Area High school, 10 Middle Schools Advance to State Level at Science Olympiad, Grand Rapids Press, March 21, 2009

Black River Celebration auction raised over \$35,000 for the school science department.

Hannah Selig, a junior at Black River, was recognized as the High School Studies Student of the Year in Grand Rapids on February 10, 2009.