



Home of the Wolverines

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Enrollment Soars at Au Gres-Sims

Au Gres-Sims experienced a booming growth when new students enrolled this fall. With the addition of the Great Start Readiness Preschool Program and the second year of the Academy underway, student enrollment at the fall count had increased 65 students from the 2012 fall count of 383 students to 448. That's an increase of 17%!

"This is a positive reflection of all the incredible things we

have going on here," said Jeffrey Collier, Superintendent. "Students who previously left the district are coming back and we have many new schools of choice students. Families are obviously understanding our great academic programming and experiencing the unbelievably positive and safe culture we have here. We are essentially a public school with a private school *feel*."

While enrollment was down at many surrounding schools, Au

Gres-Sims welcomed the new arrivals. "We are working hard to remain the area's *Destination District*," said Superintendent Collier. "We are thinking outside of the box to provide the very best learning opportunities that are tailored to meet the individual needs of our learners. Our goal is to ensure students receive a successful and fulfilling educational experience here. We always remain student focused."

Au Gres-Sims Elementary Again Honored by the State as a "Reward School"

Au Gres-Sims Elementary School as been designated as a "Reward School" for high student achievement by the Michigan Department of Education for the second consecutive year.

The State congratulated Au Gres-Sims on being named one of only 347 Reward Schools out of the 4,247 schools in Michigan, or one of only 8% of schools in 2013-14.

On October 3, 2013 Au Gres-Sims was identified as a *Beating the Odds* Reward School. Beating the Odds schools are those whose achievement exceeds expectations or predictions based on the demographic characteristics of the schools and students.

Au Gres-Sims Elementary Watershed Project

The Au Gres-Sims Elementary River Project is a project-based learning program that allows fourth and fifth grade students to conduct real science in a natural setting. Three sites were selected on the east branch of the Au Gres River. The first site was near the headwaters on Vaugh Creek, the second site was where Alabaster Road crosses the east branch of the river, and the final site was near the mouth of the river. Forty-nine students and 12 adults, including fishery biologists, retired teachers, and active parents went out into the field and into the water to gather significant data.

Students studied 320 to 500 feet of river, creek or stream at a time. Each site was broken down into six quadrants. Teams of eight students were responsible for investigating, identifying, and recording the following in their quadrant: surface and bottom river temperature; the width and depth of the watershed; and the substrate of the bottom and the invertebrates living there. Students also calculated the rate of flow of the watershed

and tested for water quality.

Students worked in teams to analyze and compare data to gain an understanding of the current health of the watershed, which drains into Saginaw Bay. The mouth of the river is near the water intake pipes that deliver water to the treatment plant and then is piped to many municipalities across the eastern side of the state. Once the data is compiled, students will draw conclusions pertaining to each site and the study as a whole.

The students worked with the MiCorps recording system and will publish their findings on the Michigan Sea Grant's website, *Great Lakes Field-Scope*. These findings should be made public before January 2014.

The Project was funded in part with a grant from the Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network (WIN). WIN is a volunteer organization that focuses on opportunities to better link the economic, social, and environmental well-being of Saginaw Bay communities in order to sustain and improve the region's

quality of life.

Other essential partners in making the Au Gres-Sims Elementary River Project a success were Thunder Bay Marine Sanctuary, the Northeast Michigan Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative, Michigan Sea Grants, Huron Pines, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Department, Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan, Northwood's Wholesale Outlet, Cabela's, and Au Gres Marine.

Below, a U.S. Fish and Wildlife member helps students gather samples and data.

