



Glen Lake COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

HOME OF THE
LAKERS:
*Growing Learners,
Graduating Leaders*

VOL. 38, NO. 4

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY FOR THE COMMUNITY

SUMMER 2026

Congratulations to the Glen Lake Class of 2026!



Where our 46 graduates are headed:

Work Force	8
Northwestern Michigan College	7
Ferris State University	6
Northern Michigan University	4
Grand Valley State University	3
Michigan State University	3
University of Michigan	3
Hope College	2
Michigan Technological University	1
Saginaw Valley State University	1
Marquette University	1
Great Lakes Maritime Academy	1
University of Miami, FL	1
Cedarville University	1
Transition Central at Northwest Ed	1
Pinnacle Truck Driving School	1
Legacy Aviation	1
Michigan Career & Technical Institute	1



Senior Trip to New York City!



Glen Lake Community,

We hope that you are having an enjoyable summer filled with abundant opportunities to make positive memories. The summer time in our area serves as a poignant reminder of how blessed we are to call this place home.

Our mission at Glen Lake Community Schools is to “Grow Learners and Graduate Leaders.” As we take in our beautiful summer months to reflect and further develop this mission, we are proud of the work our school and community does to serve our children and families. This is always highlighted in our graduation ceremonies as we watch our new leaders taking the next steps in their lives. We are very proud of the young adults they have become and the positive impact they will make in our community and beyond.

To help us achieve our mission, it is vital that we have facilities that meet the basic needs of our students. If you have visited the school over the summer months you have undoubtedly noticed the high volume of construction equipment and workers on site. This construction work in year two of three scheduled summers to replace our outdated HVAC systems in the building along with renovations to classrooms and corridors. Many of the areas being renovated this summer have not been improved since the 1950s. This work was made possible by our

community’s support of the bond issue. We anticipate the HVAC system to be completely replaced at the conclusion of next summer (2027). Thank you for your support!

We wish you all a continued enjoyable summer and look forward to welcoming our students back to the building before we know it.

Respectfully,

Jason P. Misner
Superintendent
Glen Lake Community Schools



First Day of School

FOR THE
2026-27 School Year

Monday, August 31
Half Day for Students
11:30 a.m. Dismissal





The Great Outdoors: **A Blueprint for Experiential Learning in our Elementary Explorers Program**

The Explorers program offers a unique,

hands-on approach to education that moves beyond the four walls of a traditional classroom. By rooting learning in real-world experiences, the program aims to support the whole child—academically, socially, and emotionally—in ways that traditional settings often cannot.

Bridging Academic Standards and Nature

A common question regarding outdoor education is how it aligns with traditional academic requirements. The Explorers program ensures students meet grade-level standards by overlapping outdoor activities with cross-curricular content. While nature naturally lends itself to science, the curriculum also integrates:

■ **Math:** Through measurements and mapping projects.

■ **Literacy:** Via reading sessions in the woods, written observations, and creative writing.

■ **Growth Tracking:** Progress is measured similarly to indoor settings, with expectations growing more in-depth as students move through the grades.

Balancing Structure, Play, and the Elements

The program's structure evolves with the student. For the youngest learners (Y5-K), the focus is primarily on exploration and play, such as "hide and seek" games that teach kids how to be still in the woods. Formal academic

instruction begins in 1st grade and increases as students age.

Managing an outdoor classroom requires clear routines. Every class begins and ends in a "circle of listening," and students are taught to respect natural boundaries in designated areas like "The Flats" or "Mt. Glen Lake." Safety is the program's top priority, followed by education and fun. Even unpredictable weather is used as a teaching tool, helping students develop flexibility and resilience by controlling their attitudes and layers when they cannot control the environment.

Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Growth

Moving learning outdoors often results in stronger focus, increased engagement, and improved self-regulation. Because students must work together to solve problems in an open setting, they develop essential social skills like teamwork, communication, and independence.

The program is also designed to be inclusive of all learning styles. Lessons are adapted through verbal instructions, larger fonts, or one-on-one support. For students struggling with attention or high energy, the program uses creative interventions like taking a solo walk. This walk gives students a chance to reflect on their behavior and perform a physical activity before returning to the group, allowing them the space they need to reset.

Showcasing the Explorer Experience

Feedback from families has been overwhelmingly positive, with

parents noting that students frequently share what

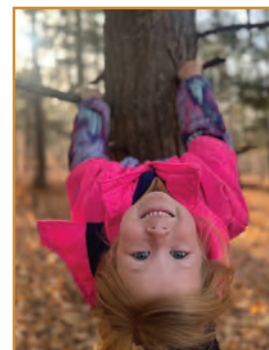
they have learned during family hikes. Some of the hallmark activities that define the Explorers experience include:

■ **Sit-spots:** A dedicated place in the woods where students sit and observe changes in flora and fauna throughout the seasons.

■ **Holistic Tracking:** Analyzing animal tracks to determine not just what animal was there, but how it was feeling and what it was doing.

■ **Unique Challenges:** Activities like the blindfold rope hike, forest meditation, and learning bird language.

Ultimately, the Explorers program provides a flexible, memorable environment where curiosity is encouraged and every student has the chance to succeed in their own way.





Intervention & Enrichment: Student Support for Success!

Intervention and enrichment. In our school, both translate to mean student support for student success. Admittedly, even to myself, academic intervention was a bit of a mystery to me my first few years here. In my time here, I have witnessed the program(s) evolve into something all encompassing and supportive that as a parent and a staff member, I can say with confidence gives Glen Lake students a unique opportunity that many districts just can't provide.

Tier I, Tier II and Tier III Learning Defined

- **Tier I** learning is universal high-quality core instruction provided to ALL students.
- **Tier II** learning is targeted and supplemental for students identified as at-risk of falling behind grade level
- **Tier III** learning is intensive and highly individualized frequent interventions when students aren't responding to Tier II

Intervention departments work in all Tiers, but its main focus is Tier II and III.

Who provides academic intervention in the elementary?

In the elementary we currently have two full time- academic interventionists: Katie Bonne and Jen Gretzmacher.

While Jen is retiring this year, she has been putting her 20+ years of teaching experience at providing guidance and resources to both our students and teachers.

We also have Katie Bonne who's passionate determination and decisive academic actions keep us on the cutting edge of what is best practice for our struggling students.

And stepping into Jen's place next year will be Alisha Needham, long time second grade teacher here at Glen Lake. Her patience and excitement around literacy will be a true asset to our students and that department.



Jen
Gretzmacher



Katie
Bonne



Alisha
Needham

What does elementary intervention look like?

Intervention support comes in many forms: from small groups, to quick assessment screenings, to push in services in classrooms, and focused learning in a quiet, dedicated classroom space.

What tools are used?

Tools can include academic programs and materials that expand on core information to provide varied learning opportunities that might otherwise be limited by time in the gen ed classroom. Paraprofessionals are program-trained and guided to help serve more students than just two interventionists can schedule in a seven-hour school day.

Who provides academic intervention in the middle school?

In the middle school we currently have two academic interventionists: Dana Schlosser and Kristin Zassick.

Dana is and has been a long-standing Glen Lake special education teacher. Students receiving support from Dana have access to her wealth of patience and practice serving some of our most diverse learners.

Kristin is an expert math teacher focused on students learning foundational skills in algebra, geometry and statistics.



Dana
Schlosser



Kristin
Zassick

What does middle school intervention look like?

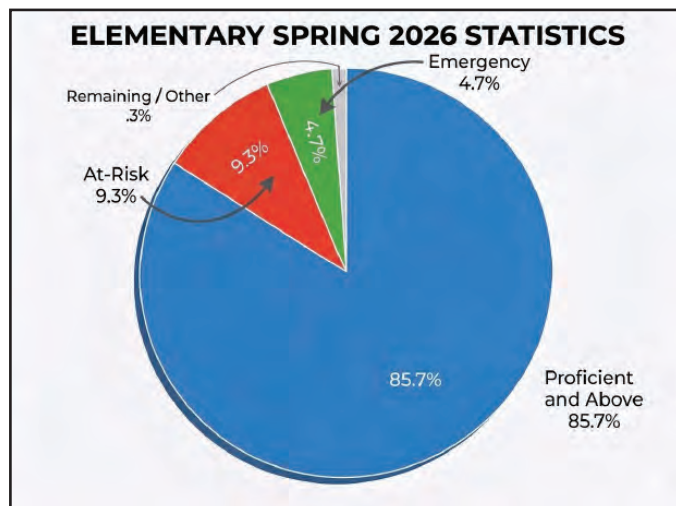
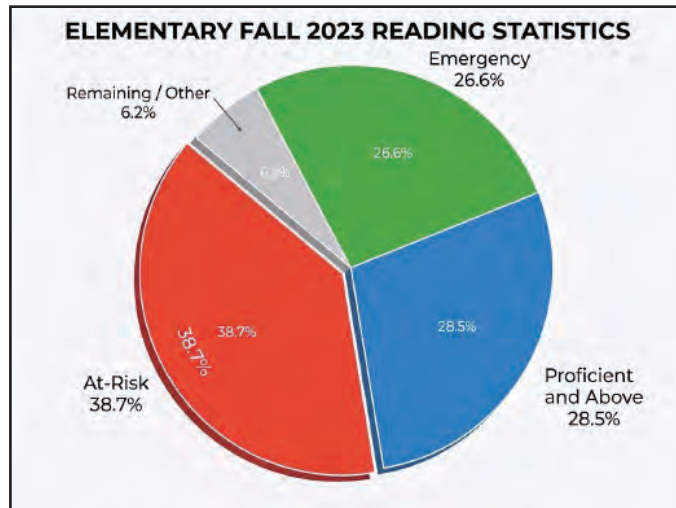
Middle School intervention primarily happens in a smaller group setting during non-core class periods. Using collected assessment data and teacher input, students are identified as needing extra support in order to gain confidence in one or multiple core academic subjects. Intervention time could focus on correcting classroom work or the use of activities and discussions to better understand content.

continued on next page

Other fun facts:

- Students can move in and out of intervention as needed throughout their elementary and middle school career.
- Both elementary and middle school use programs such as Delta Math, NWEA and IRLA to collect data that is considered prior and during support times.
- Glen Lake has over 10 paraprofessionals supporting our academic intervention department.
- The elementary school first started using American Reading Company (ARC) and IRLA (Independent Reading Level Assessment) in the Fall of 2023. The first baseline assessments resulted in 26.6% of our students in the Emergency category, 38.7% At-Risk, and 28.5% Proficient and Above.
- Wrapping up Year Three of Elementary ARC and IRLA use, we are now seeing 4.7% at Emergency level, 9.3% in At-Risk, and 85.7% as Proficient and Above.

In just 3 years of intervention and focus, reading proficiency jumped among Glen Lake students from 28.5% to 85.7%!



Glen Lake's Internship Program Offers Real-World Experience

There is not one specific goal that we, as educators, aim for with our students, but if there is one we can all agree is important, it's to prepare them for life after graduation. As I looked into the programs offered at Glen Lake, I knew I wanted to highlight the internship program. And after completing interviews, highlighted throughout this article, you'll understand why.

Internships are offered as an option to Juniors and Seniors and are introduced as part of the standard scheduling catalog. They can participate for one semester or a full year and from one class period up to three, depending on the student's other course responsibilities. Internships are career interest-based and must meet certain curriculum and safety standards.

After speaking with two of our student interns and their mentors, the prevailing message was the same: real-world experience can only happen if you get out in the real world and it's vital that students do just that. Internships are an excellent way to do this. Prior to the internship beginning, both intern and mentor focus on mutually agreed upon goals to promote growth and engagement.

Andi Forton (Junior) had the opportunity to intern with Meg Paxton, owner of The Teenie Weenie Store in Maple City. Goals of this internship included learning more about owning a business, graphic design, and learning new software programs. Andi reported that so many more skills and lessons were learned than she imagined. She gained independence, she gained an understanding of what her post high school plans could include, and maybe most importantly, she learned more about what she wants for herself.



Glen Lake Diesel Mechanic Robert Tice took Junior Olliver McGough under his wing, sharing his decades of experience.

Meg offered an environment that allowed creativity, autonomy, and she enjoyed the experience herself. She would like to offer further opportunities in the future and hopes to have others join, including the sewing, alterations, and embroidery side of her business.

Olliver McGough (Junior) had the opportunity to intern with Glen Lake Schools' on-staff diesel mechanic, Robert Tice. Robert joined Glen Lake just this year and brought with him national certification and decades of experience training future mechanics. His passion and skill for mentorship is obvious. Olliver's future seems well-grounded in the plan to enter the field of diesel mechanics. Along with an internship with Robert, he attends the Career Tech Center's heavy equipment/diesel mechanics program and has a paid internship lined up with AIS this summer.

Guidance Counselor, Johanna Rasmussen, who oversees the mentorship program, states that the opportunities offer a much-



Meg Paxton, owner of the Teenie Weenie Store in Maple City, shared her expertise with Junior Andi Forton.

needed step outside Glen Lake's walls, exposing students to experiences not available in a traditional classroom, and develops community partnerships and connections that make Glen Lake the community school we love. Johanna would like to increase the number of connections and asks that if you have an internship opportunity and have a passion for teaching, please contact her at the school at 231-334-3061 ext. 508 or email her at rasmussenj@mylakers.org.

—Bethany Pousho



GLEN LAKE SCHOOLS FOUNDATION

Annual Event

Sail Away SOIRÉE

AN EVENING BENEFITING GLEN LAKE STUDENTS

PLEASE JOIN US FOR AN ELEGANT EVENING ON BIG GLEN LAKE
IN SUPPORT OF STUDENTS IN GLEN LAKE SCHOOLS.



THURSDAY,
AUGUST 20, 2026



5:30 – 8:30 PM



GLEN LAKE
YACHT CLUB

6617 S. SUNSET DRIVE • GLEN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

TICKETS | \$85 *per person*

www.glenlakeschoolsfoundation.org

Through the kindness of our donors and scholarship contributors, the Glen Lake Schools Foundation removes obstacles to learning by opening doors to opportunity for every student.



Come together. Make a difference. Create a bright future.



Glen Lake Community Schools

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GLEN LAKE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

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minutes are available
on the school website.

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GLEN LAKE SCHOOL STORE

WWW.STORE.MYLAKERS.ORG



2026-27 School Calendar

8/26	Teacher Work Day
8/26	Community Open House 6-8:00 PM
8/31	First Day of School, 11:30 AM Student Dismissal
9/4	No School
9/7	Labor Day - No School
10/14	Parent Teacher Conferences 5-8:00 PM
10/15	Half Day for Students
10/15	Parent Teacher Conferences 12:30-3:30 & 5-8:00 PM
10/16	No School
11/2	No School for students; Staff Professional Development
11/25	Half Day for Students & Staff
11/26	No School - Thanksgiving Break
11/27	No School - Thanksgiving Break
12/21	Winter Recess Begins
1/4	School Resumes after Winter Recess
1/18	No School - MLK Day
1/21-22	Half Day Students/Full Day Staff
2/11	Parent Teacher Conferences 5-8:00 PM
2/12	Half Day Students & Staff
2/15	President's Day - No School
3/26	No School - Spring Break Begins
4/5	School Resumes after Spring Break
4/16	Half Day Students/Full Day Staff
5/31	Memorial Day - No School
6/11	Half Day Students - Last Day
6/14	Half Day Staff - Last Day

Half Days = 11:30 AM Dismissal