



WayPoint Academy

Where Students Discover Success

Home of the NAVIGATORS!



A public school academy serving grades 5-12 where
“students are worth WHATEVER it takes!”

WayPoint Academy (formerly MTA) Mission

We believe certain skills are essential for success in school and life: 1) strong core academic skills, 2) appropriate & effective social skills, and 3) effective employability skills. Using as a critical foundation the Basic Competencies and Personal Qualities as enumerated in the Secretary's Commission on Acquiring Necessary Skills Report (SCANS Report, 2003) and the Academic Skills, Personal Qualities and Teamwork Skills as outlined in the Michigan Employability Skills Report, we focus on *futures, not features*, making our primary goal to guarantee that our students are CAREER READY, no matter what the specific career or line of work each may choose to pursue. WAYPOINT is very proud to be a "different" Career Pathways school, as we understand that the world our students are entering, a world that is "flatter" than ever before, requires their secondary education to be as revolutionary in its preparation and approach. To that end, the mission of WAYPOINT is: *"Our students...career READY!"*:

- Create a school culture that embraces learning, producing world-class graduates who are ready to embark upon tomorrow's challenges
- Use the freedom of our unique charter to adopt innovative teaching methods while being fully accountable for student performance that reflects workplace standards and expectations
- Partner with local businesses, industry, service providers and colleges to familiarize students with state-of-the art technology and career related skills
- Develop skills and talented students prepared to enter the job market to meet the growing demands of employers

To create an environment and culture where ALL students can learn and teachers can teach, we follow our WAYPOINT Code of Conduct, known commonly as our "WayPoint Way", embraced by staff and students. Each day, we share together that, as a WAYPOINT Navigator, I will:

- Challenge myself
- Observe school rules
- Be ready and prepared
- Respect myself and others
- Act responsibly and safely

Description of the Academy

Established in 2001 as the Muskegon Technical Academy (MTA) and chartered by Grand Valley State University as a public school academy, WAYPOINT began by

offering grades 6-9 during the 2001-2002 school years. The Academy serviced an average of 128 students that first year and was initially managed by Beacon Management Company. A grade level was added each year for the next three years until, in school year 2004-2005, all grades 6-12 were offered and MTA graduated its first class of Seniors on June 3, 2005. School year 2006-2007 saw 242 students enrolled at MTA with a graduating class of 17 Seniors.

The Academy opened in 2001 in a new facility with pre-designed expansion plans for a second classroom wing as enrollments grow and grades are added. In the Spring of 2003, ground was broken for the first building expansion, during which time a new, state-of-the-art Career Education Technology Lab, a new science lab and more classrooms were added to the existing building. At the end of the 2005-2006 school years, the Board of Directors approved MTA's second expansion in 3 years with construction to begin in the summer of 2006, adding two new classrooms and two new offices.

WAYPOINT works diligently to prepare students for "life after high school", which may mean direct placement into the workforce and/or post secondary training and education at a community college, career college, trade school, the military, or a four-year college or university. "Career Readiness" is for ALL students; those entering the job market directly upon graduation from high school and those who are bound for more education or training. To that end, we are proud to be a member of our local Chamber of Commerce and local Rotary Club, and proud to be a partner with Baker College of Muskegon, Muskegon Community College, Grand Valley State University and our local Career Technical Education Center, sponsored by the Muskegon Area Intermediate School District (MAISD). Also to support "career readiness", the Academy established a full-time Director of Career Services position during 2005-2006, to begin earnestly in 2006-2007. In January, 2007, our Board of Directors established a "Career Ready" certification process which is to begin with the Class of 2011, our 9th graders in 2007-2008. Graduating students will have the opportunity to earn not only their high school diploma beginning in 2011, but will also be able to earn a "Career Ready" certificate, backed by a guarantee for both the student and future employer/post secondary educational institution.

We take great pride in our strong academic program, focused on career awareness, exploration and experience. Strong core academics serve as a basis for analyzing issues, solving problems, comparing and contrasting perspectives, forming opinions, projecting outcomes, and "visioning" the future of an industry or profession or a group of industries or professions. The emphasis in the curriculum is on gaining understanding through an active, project-based teaching and learning environment rather than primarily on teacher directed lectures and passive learning. There is

less focus on job specific skills and more focus on linking fundamentals and academic standards to career relevant knowledge and skills. Students learn skills and knowledge that are largely transferable as they make choices around career pathways.

WAYPOINT offers small class sizes in all classes and, at all grade levels, class sizes range from as low as 15 (in fifth & sixth grade) to an average of 18 in grades 7 & 8 and an average of 20 in grades 9-12, as we work to promote more student-centered and individualized instruction and attention, assisting to ensure for student achievement success.

Exposing students to and experience with a wide variety of "real world" activities/events through numerous field trips in and around the local community, the state, and even neighboring states, is an Academy emphasis. Each year, students are taken on trips, exposed to a variety of state-of-the-art industry professional events and experiences, and cultural events and experiences, many of which they might not otherwise have the opportunity to experience.

Academy Curriculum

WAYPOINT embraces the Michigan Curriculum Framework in grades 5-8 and the Michigan Merit Curriculum in grades 9-12, a curriculum whose strong mathematics, language arts, social studies and science, aligned with the Standards and Benchmarks, Grade Level Content Expectations and High School Content Expectations of our State of Michigan curricula.

The Academy instructional program also infuses the 3 Part Foundation and Personal Qualities of the S.C.A.N.S. (Secretary's Commission on Acquiring Necessary Skills) Report, as well as those of the Michigan Employability Skills Profile. No matter the career area chosen by a student, he/she will have the opportunity to realize greater success by understanding and emulating the Basic Skills, 5 Competencies and Personal Qualities as outlined in both the SCANS and MI Employability Skills reports.

WAYPOINT also contracts with the Michigan Virtual University based on the campus in East Lansing, Michigan, as we offer on-line class opportunities for our students through their Michigan Virtual High School program.

Desiring to "bring the world to our students and our students to the world", WAYPOINT is proud to be the only local public charter school academy participating in an area-wide fiber optic connectivity project, connecting

international, national, state and local municipalities, industries, education and non-profits to one another.

Beginning in the Fall of 2005, three new Advanced Placement® classes were offered: AP English Lit & Comp., AP Biology, and AP Studio Art with a total of 13 students participating in the AP classes. Those same 3 classes were offered in 2006-2007 with 11 students participating, and again in 2007-2008 with 12 students participating. Of the 12, 10 completed an AP class and took the final exam; 2 students scored well enough to earn college credit based on the final exam score.

Academy Board of Directors

WAYPOINT is proud and honored to be served by a Board of Directors, appointed by Grand Valley State University, who are committed to performance excellence for ALL Academy students. Members of the Board represent a comprehensive composite of our local community:

President	William Seyferth Eagle CNC
Vice President	B. C. Thompson Goodwill GoodTemps
Treasurer	Stephen Olsen Northern Machine Tool
Secretary	Dr. Frank P. Marczak Muskegon Community College
Trustees	Bruce Essex Port City Group
	James A. Fisher Shoreline Recycling
	Amy Heisser Howmet/Alcoa
	Brianna Scott, JD Drake & Scott, LLC
	H. John Workman Eagle Group

Academy Officials

Superintendent & CEO
Administrative Ass't. to Supt.
Business Manager
Director of Student Services
Director of Career Services

Barbara C. Stellard
Carol A. Chaney
Lynn M. Korabik
Amie S. Berryhill
Josi Canales

Academy Improvement/Accreditation Standards

Continuous quality improvement is a key focus at WAYPOINT. The Academy's improvement process reflects the same continuous improvement processes and approaches as those utilized in other workplace settings, working to: 1) identify areas for emphasis and enhancement and/or 2) solve existing challenges that have been identified through quantitative research and analysis of data and qualitative assessment of information from a variety of sources within the Academy.

The Academy's entire staff, led by the Superintendent, has the oversight responsibility for development, review and evaluation of our plan and its results. Team composition is reflective of all key stakeholder groups that are vital to the growth, development and enhancement of the Academy: parents, students, administration, faculty and community.

To that end, WAYPOINT has initiated the formal Academy improvement process and continues to be involved in the following:

- Evaluating its educational program, including our MEAP assessments over the past 5 years, student attendance, student behavioral referrals, parent involvement, etc.
- Aligning the Academy curriculum, our instructional and assessment practices to the State Board of Education's Michigan Curriculum Framework, Content Standards, and Grade Level Content Expectations, Michigan Merit Curriculum & High School Content Expectations, and the Federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) AYP standards
- Allocating the necessary fiscal, human and educational resources and efforts to ensure articulation and alignment of our written and taught curricular instructional and assessment practices
- Providing on-going professional development for all staff focused on our vision, mission, curricular, and student academic and career goals
- Providing and maintaining state-of-the-art facilities and equipment in a manner which supports a thriving learning environment for students
- Continuous collection, analysis and utilization of data focused on increased student learning and academic success; and program enhancement
- Application of technology in the delivery of curriculum and instruction focused on improving student performance (specifically implementing assistive technology training & equipment throughout the entire program to ensure 100% accessibility of the general education curriculum to ALL students served by the Academy)

Data analysis demonstrated improvement needs in literacy, prompting the staff to set its primary Academy improvement goals in reading and writing. Assessment results in both the MEAP and M.A.P. (NWEA "Measures of Academic Progress") demonstrate steady, continuous improvement throughout the Academy in its quest for increased student achievement. *In the 2007-2008 school year, the Academy was recognized by both the Michigan and U.S. Department of Education as a "Nationally Distinguished Title I School" for Outstanding Achievement and for Closing the Achievement Gap.*

Student Enrollment

Academy enrollment in the Fall of 2007 numbered 239 students, up from an average of 128 in 2001-02, 200 in 2002-03, and 234 in 2003-04; 244 in 2004-2005 was our largest enrollment to date. Since then, increasingly high gas prices have negatively impacted our student enrollment as parents find it more and more difficult to transport their children to school.

In its seventh year, enrollment data at WAYPOINT clearly demonstrates that the student body represents students from throughout the Greater West Michigan area, with students coming from all 12 contiguous local school districts, from as far away as north of Montague and as far south and east as Coopersville. Though all area school districts are represented in our student body, the majority of our students' home district is Muskegon Public Schools.

Parent surveys have demonstrated, over a period of time, some consistency in the factors which account for their enrolling their students at WAYPOINT: 1) warm & welcoming & "positive" environment, 2) student-centered & individualized instructional focus, 3) small class sizes, 4) career emphasis/integration into instruction, 5) safe environment, 6) friendly, encouraging staff.

The Academy's student population represents a high concentration of economically disadvantaged students and families, with 69% of the 2007-2008 student body qualifying for free or reduced lunch throughout the year.

Student retention in the program is a major goal; charter schools have generally reflected an average yearly turn over in student body of 22%-25%. WAYPOINT's retention rate for the 2007-2008 school year was 89%, demonstrating our increased success in retaining students once they begin with us. Student attrition factors have highlighted family economics as a major reason for students leaving the Academy, along with lack of athletic offerings and stringent dress code, especially at the high school level. As gasoline prices continued to soar and as

parents lost jobs, they found it increasingly more difficult to provide transportation to school each day. Of the 11% of students we lost, 80% left due to transportation issues, lost family income or families moving away from the area. The other 20% were for a variety of reasons, primarily students looking for more organized athletic opportunities and a less restrictive dress code.

The following is a "snapshot" of the student body by gender and ethnicity:

<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Native Am.</u>	<u>African Am.</u>	<u>Hispanic</u>	<u>Caucasian</u>	<u>Biracial</u>	<u>Other</u>
51%	49%	≤ 1%	22%	11%	63%	≤ 1 %	≤ 2%

The following is a "snapshot" of the student body by "home" school district:

<u>MPS</u>	<u>OV</u>	<u>Oakridge</u>	<u>R-P</u>	<u>M Hts</u>	<u>Rav</u>	<u>W-Hall</u>	<u>Fruitport</u>
123	31	18	11	24	1	10	6
<u>Holton</u>	<u>Mona Shores</u>	<u>N Muskegon</u>	<u>Zeeland</u>				
1	10	2	1				

Student Achievement

NWEA "Measures of Academic Progress" Assessment: beginning in the Spring of 2006, the decision was made to formally "abandon" use of the Stanford Achievement Test and replace it with the MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) assessment instrument, believing it to be much more effective as we "diagnose" our students' achievements and create effective instructional strategies and interventions geared to improve our students' achievements. MAP was piloted in the late Spring of 2006 and was formally implemented in grades 5-10 beginning in the Fall and Spring of the 2006-2007 school year. At the end of the Spring 2008 testing period, WAYPOINT students achieved beyond the national average in student academic growth achievement, as noted by authorizer GVSU. Please note the achievement chart that follows:

NWEA M.A.P. Growth Goal Attainment (% reaching growth goals)

	<u>MTA %</u>	<u>GVSU %</u>	<u>NWEA %</u> (national)
Fall to Spring Growth Goal	52.4	59.2	53.4
Fall to Fall Growth Goal	54.7	53.8	54.2

MEAP Assessments: (see attached data charts) the Academy achieved AYP again in the 2007-2008 school year and has consistently achieved AYP (Annual Yearly Progress as defined by the Federal No Child Left Behind legislation) the past few years. We are proud of the accomplishments of our students and the very fine instructional work being done by our teachers.

On the State of Michigan "Ed YES!" accreditation program, WAYPOINT has earned a grade of "B" for the 2007-2008 school year, up from a grade of "C" the past 2 years, indicating solid and steady progress toward increased student achievement is being made.

Each demographic sub group was successful, with some of the greatest gains being made by our economically disadvantaged population. Given that, the staff is not satisfied with the level of progress and continues to set aggressive goals for increased student achievement and performance. Data demonstrates a consistent and steady improvement at both the middle school and high school levels.

WAYPOINT has completed three years of a middle school mathematics improvement project sponsored by the MAISD and Western Michigan University. Our Academy led the middle school mathematics achievement gains at the end of the project, surpassing the other two school districts involved in the project: Muskegon Public Schools and Muskegon Heights Public Schools:

MEAP Performance Level Improvement

	<u>MTA</u>	<u>MPS</u>	<u>MHPS</u>
Grade 6	59%	36%	0%
Grade 7	48%	35.5%	40%
Grade 8	26%	25.5%	10%

Beginning in the Spring of 2007, and again in Spring, 2008, all State of Michigan 11th graders were assessed using the "new" Michigan Merit Exam. The MME replaced the former HS MEAP test which had been used by the State for many years. The new Merit Exam consists of the ACT college entrance exam, portions of the ACT Workkeys assessment, and a variety of other tests developed by the MDE to satisfy the requirements of the NCLB legislation. A comparison of the results of the Academy's 2007 and 2008 MME assessments are included in the attachments at the end of this report. Student achievement growth was recognized in English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science; Social Studies witnessed a slight decline

with the introduction of a "Constructed Response" piece of writing...which will be eliminated by the State for Spring 2009 testing.

The college entrance exam, ACT, is a significant component of the MME. Following is a table showing the achievement of our Academy students as compared to student achievement across the State:

Average ACT Scores - Academy vs. State

	<u>English</u>	<u>Math</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Science</u>	<u>Composite</u>
MTA/State 2007	15.5/17.8	17.3/18.9	18.3/19.1	17.1/19.5	17.3/18.9
MTA/State 2008	16.7/17.6	17.0/19.0	17.3/18.8	18.4/19.4	17.4/18.8

The Academy staff recognizes that ACT benchmark scores in each content area can serve as "predictors" of college success, thus utilize those benchmark scores as goals for student achievement: English = 18; Math = 22; Reading = 21; and Science = 24.

Dual Enrolled Students

The 2007-2008 school year was the sixth year during which WAYPOINT high school students qualified to dually enroll, taking classes both at WAYPOINT and at the college of their choice, having earned that privilege by successfully completing the high school MEAP tests with proficient scores. Beginning in the Fall of 2007, 6 students successfully completed classes at Baker College and Muskegon Community College.

Michigan Virtual HS

The number of students electing to challenge themselves by taking additional classes beyond their regular six period day continues: 15 class offerings were taken by WAYPOINT students throughout the year, with all but 2 successfully passing their classes.

Parent Satisfaction

In the Spring of 2008, parents of WAYPOINT students were surveyed to determine their level of satisfaction with the Academy. The survey demonstrates a high degree of satisfaction parents have with WAYPOINT. Parents were asked to

evaluate various aspects of the Academy, using the following rating scale: 1 = *strongly disagree*; 2 = *disagree*; 3 = *agree*; and 4 = *strongly agree*

Survey Summary for 2007-2008 (in rank order): 21% response rate

1. MTA staff members communicate regularly and in a timely fashion with parents: 3.30
2. I/We are delighted with MTA's academic program for my/our student(s): 3.40
3. MTA has provided a safe and encouraging school for my/our student(s): 3.60
4. I/We are delighted with the quality of instruction my/our student(s) receives at MTA: 3.70
5. I/We feel "welcome" when visiting MTA: 3.75
6. I/We feel encouraged to participate and become involved in MTA activities, events, trips, meetings, etc.: 3.30
7. I/We would recommend MTA, as a good school, to other people and their children: 3.70

Parent Teacher Conferences: two formal sessions held during the year, one in the Fall and one in the Spring. Attendance rates were as follows: 1) Fall = 40% and 2) Spring = 32%. This was a significant increase over the past two years. We have focused diligently to get parents more involved at the Academy...with success.

Open House for Parents/Families: held for its sixth year, the annual Fall Open House saw attendance remain steady from the year before: 1) 2002-2003 = 27%; 2) 2003-2004 = 37%; 3) 2004-2005 = 38%; 4) 2005-2006 = 36%; 5) 2006-2007 = 39%; 6) 2007-2008 = 41%.

WAYPOINT has an "open door" policy for parents and strongly encourages parental involvement as clearly stated in the Academy Student Handbook, on the Academy website and which is reinforced in every newsletter which goes to parents (at least once a month; most often twice a month). Parents know that they are welcome to visit the Academy, its classes and any other facet of its programs at any time. *Parents are encouraged to visit their student's classes, meet with teachers and staff, and become a part of the Academy by volunteering to assist during the day, in extra curricular activities, field trips, and other activities and events.*

Teacher/Staff Qualifications

MTA's staff remains stable and consistent, with very little if any turnover from year to year. In 2007-2008, MTA employed 1 Executive administrator (Superintendent), 1 Business manager, 1 Administrative Assistant, 1 Maintenance/Custodian, 16 full time teachers, 1 Director of Student Services, 1 Director of Career Services, 2 paraprofessionals and 2 aides. All of the

teaching/professional staff and support staff employed by the Academy are certified in the State of Michigan, as required by School Code Law. All teachers and professional staff have Bachelors degrees with 2 holding Masters degrees or above. All teaching staff are Highly Qualified as defined by the NCLB mandate.

Academy Points of Pride!

- ***ACADEMY RECOGNIZED AS "National Distinguished Title I School" by U.S. and Michigan Departments of Education for student achievement gains***
- ***Academy teacher recognized as Greater Jaycees' "Young Educator of the Year" for 2008***
- 100% staff participation in Chamber of Commerce/Muskegon Area Intermediate School District sponsored "Educator in the Workplace"
- Student-run CREDIT UNION, a student run full service credit union in conjunction with Family Financial Credit Union completed its third year of operation
- 100% of 2008 graduates fully employed and/or in college
- Middle School HS & MS Rocket Clubs awarded ribbons for performance during annual state wide competition
- Students won annual Marines/WZZM-TV sponsored "Toys for Tots" West Michigan school competition (collecting over 3200 toys for needy children)
- Three Advanced Placement® classes offered: Biology, Studio Art, English Literature & Composition and MI-VHS AP classes
- Three Business management student teams participated in the Stock Market competition held at Wolverine World Wide headquarters placing 5th overall
- Successful food drive to help fill local food pantries
- Incorporation of Career Ready I classes into MS curriculum
- Middle School student achievement increases dramatically, especially in reading and writing skills
- Student attendance continues to improve: daily average for MS = 95% and HS = 93%
- Honor Roll Celebration Dinner - sponsored and "catered" by staff for HR students and their families; 96% of students awarded present with their families
- Successful Academy/Business partnerships with Park Terrace, Hume Home, Family Financial Credit Union, American Dollar, Junior Achievement, Catholic Social Services; developing a partnership with Goodwill Industries of West Michigan

- A variety of successful projects conducted with Junior Achievement, including a very successful Reverse Job Shadow Day
- Outstanding Honors & Awards Assembly for students and their parents on the last day of school
- 42 students earned All A's or All A's & B's first semester; 31 did so second semester
- Very strong, committed and dedicated staff, faculty and Board
- Very strong and supportive partnership with Grand Valley State University