The Education Trust-Midwest is proud to announce the 2021 Building the Hope Award Recipients. At the Building the Hope Schools, the majority of students are students of color and students from low-income backgrounds. These public schools are in the top 25% for academic proficiency or above average student growth for all Michigan students.

Moreover, their subgroups of students — Black, Latino/a, low-income and English Learner students in particular — also are performing in the top 30% among Michigan’s high-growth public schools where data is available. They also engage in culturally and linguistically-responsive school-wide practices — including instructional practices — that facilitate students’ outstanding academic progress and growth, making them true outliers in the state of Michigan.

Students first. As a school, we know what our students need. We’re constantly trying to meet their needs so that students can advance in the world. We identify where each student is at and create an individual learning plan, where teachers will actually indicate what strategies can be used in order for that child to learn. Each child will have their own individual plan showing where they currently are in English and how they can perform in their work level.”

— Kathryn Valadez-Herrera
Principal
Bennett Elementary School was selected as a BTH school because their English Learners showed exceptional academic growth as demonstrated by exceeding the statewide above average growth rates in both ELA and Math for 3 straight years.

467 Total Enrollment

Bennett Elementary teachers employ targeted and differentiated instructional strategies to ensure their English Learners have the tools to grow in proficiency year after year. Additionally, the school engages families through a variety of linguistically-responsive communications, including an app that provides translation for monolingual parents and caregivers. An EL Interventionist is also on staff to further assist students towards growth in English fluency and content mastery. Finally, Bennett sees great success with its Scholar Dollars incentive program, which has positively impacted behavior and attendance and provides opportunities to celebrate student achievement.

English Learners’

2019 Above Average Growth Rates

- ELA: 56.0%
- Math: 57.4%
- EL Students at Bennett: 29.4%
- Statewide Rate for all MI Students: 29.4%

buildingthehopeschools.org