

Lara J. Dixon

Director of Educator Preparation and Accreditation | College of Education

Assistant Professor | College of Education K-12 Administration

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Curriculum Vitae

Innovative, Collaborative, Transformational Leader & Teacher

Education

Ed.D. Educational Leadership	Eastern Michigan University	Dec. 2012
Ed.S. Educational Leadership	University of Toledo	May 2003
M.A. Administration & Supervision	University of Toledo	August 1998
B.A. English	Bowling Green State University	May 1994
B.S. Music Education	Bowling Green State University	May 1994

Certification

Administration Michigan	Elementary, Secondary, and Central Office	Until June 30, 2030
Teaching Michigan	BA English 6-12 & JX Music K-12	Until June 30, 2026
Michigan Leadership Institute	Superintendent Academy I & Academy II	Nov. 2015 & 2017
Gerstacker Graduate	Fellow, Saginaw Valley State University	Nov. 2015

Current Professional Experience

Michigan State University

2023 - present

Director of Educator Preparation and Accreditation

- Serve and lead MSU programs and leaders that prepare Birth to P-12 educators, psychologists, administrators, in 8 colleges with 44-degree programs that lead to over 50+ licensures, furthering our preparation and accreditation work and strategic efforts for increased achievement, innovation, and sustained individual and collective impact
- Lead and work with the College of Education and University stakeholders to adjudicate issues, negotiate and implement policy, guide curriculum reviews and adoptions, innovate practices, and use data-analytics for continuous reflection and targeted improvement

- Lead and support external annual federal and state reporting: Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), Michigan Department of Education (MDE), Title II, National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA), Higher Learning Commission (HLC), Professional Licensure and Certification (PLC), Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA)
- Serve as a liaison for CAEP, MDE, MSU Accreditation, MiLEAP, MiSCHOOL Data, and University EPPs
- Forge partnerships and share research and innovative practices to further our efforts to diversify and amplify our university, colleges, and field, leading and supporting MSU CAEP Advisory Council, P-12 Partners, Recruitment and Retention, Grow-Your-Own (GYO), MiCAREER HUB, DARTEP, PD & Ed Rising, Golden Apple, Alternative Credentials, and GenAI initiatives
- Collaborate with MSU and CED leaders: Co-chair of Teacher Curriculum Council, Leader of Academic and Student Affairs Unit Strategic Improvement, Oversight of CED Student & Licensure System, Undergraduate Academic Program Review Committee (UGAPR), Accreditation, Assessment, Curriculum, and Compliance Committee (AACC), College Curriculum Committee (CCC) emeritus member, Alternative Credentials Advisory Board, and President's Inaugural and Alumni Spartan Bus Tour Committees.

Assistant Professor for K-12 Administration

- Teach master and doctoral level courses: EAD 853 Education Finance and Policy and 801 Leadership and Organization Development
- Use GenAI and AI Simulations in teaching to ensure students have innovative, needed skills and experiences and provide GenAI company partnership opportunities
- Collaboratively support, affirm, analyze, refine, and advance through continuous improvement efforts what we do for and with students, PK-12 schools and communities, educational leaders, and political leaders
- Participate in and support research and professional growth and leadership
- Secretary & Treasurer and Executive Board Member for the Michigan Association of Professors of Educational Leadership (MAPEL) and partner with ICPEL on fiduciary functions
- K-12 Administration M.A. and Ed.D. Program Recruitment and GenAI Policy and Use
- Member of DARTEP, NASSP, MASSP, and MEMSPA
- Serve on MDE's Mental Health and Wellness Feasibility Study Tri-State Committee, Well-Trained Educators and Best Practices Committee, and MiSCHOOL Data State-wide Leadership Team

Accomplishments to-date at MSU:

- Held program leader events to deepen understanding and capacity, unify, and build a framework to support a collaborative Educator Preparation and Accreditation (EPP) leadership structure and team
- Created an MSU CED EPP website and established and co-lead the MSU CAEP Advisory Council
- Reviewed tech systems and processes and am leading a Student Technology Licensure & Learning RFP

- Established a HiTA GenAI Partnership
- Working on collaborative projects with MSU Henry Ford and Apple partnership
- Created a team and structure to establish and support out MDE MiCAREER HUB grant partnership
- Co-established a Macomb Intermediate School District (MISD) Grow-Your-Own (GYO) partnership
- Hosted a Future Teachers student visit and am co-creating a framework for future visits
- Presented Teaching with GenAI at MSU Capital Campaign Launch event
- Recruited at state conferences for EAD K-12 Administration
- Presented at 16 university, state, and national conferences and events
- Published an article, was featured on two pod casts and interviewed by 4 news stations
- Inaugural member of the Spartan Bus Tour and selected to the Spartan Bus Tour Alumni Advisory Team
- Appointed Secretary and Treasurer of Michigan Association of Professors of Educational Leadership
- Appointed to the MI Statewide MI SCHOOL Data Leadership Team and communication sub-committee
- Appointed to MDE Comprehensive Feasibility Study and Effective Instructional Strategies Team
- Educational consultant and expert in educational administration, leadership, curriculum, instruction, and school placement, testifying in court proceedings in five Michigan counties

Prior Professional Experience

Anchor Bay School District

2023

Director of Elementary Education

- Provide leadership and strategic vision to preschool and elementary education programs
- Supervise and support preschool and elementary principals
- Forward district mission, vision, values, goals, and achievement
- Collaboratively lead professional development around and implementation of best and emerging practices
- Build structures, protocols, and avenues to increase safety, belonging, equity, and engagement

Accomplishments while at Anchor Bay:

- Created new staff orientation aligned with strategic plan and MVVGs with online guiding resources
- Co-restructured an elementary schedule redesign to support STEM Innovation teams and deep learning goals
- Co-planned district administration retreat

Director of Academic, Business, and Employee Partnerships and Initiatives

- Build strong partnership with universities and businesses to create an early middle college program, coordinate a partner roundtable, expand student internships, and start a Portrait of a Graduate initiative
- Collaboratively lead staff recruitment and retention efforts, develop and support alternative pathways for certification, systematize staff mentoring and evaluation efforts, expand SEL supports, and in partnership with consultants assess and implement safety and security measures
- Collectively plan and implement bond initiatives, leveraging innovative partnerships

Principal, Troy Athens High School

- Transformational leadership for a comprehensive high school of 1,600 – 2,200 students with 165 staff members and \$14 million annual operational expenses
- Supervision, evaluation, professional development, hiring and training of staff
- Advancement of student achievement
 - Leadership in our vision, strategic, plan, and school improvement process, including the implementation of collective inquiry teams that forward equity and authentic, deep, focused, and innovative learning
 - Development of STEM, career exploration, DEI, character education, innovation, belonging, inclusion, normed and standards-based grading integration, student seminars and forums, extension tutoring, a student assistance center, transitional teams, ePortfolios, Visible Thinking, MTSS, Link Crew, and teacher learning teams
 - Responsible for leading and supporting pre-school, ELD, ASD, MoCi, and MiCi programs
- Governance of building climate, safety, public relations, and communication
- Management of all building-internal, board-approved budgets and grants
- Oversight of local, county, state, and national reports and standards
- District Administrator co-leading MTSS, SEL, NPDL, ELA, Fine Arts, Health, Counseling, and the Technology Committee

Accomplishments while at Troy:

- Recognized by the TSD Board of Education for character education, deep learning, innovation, AP Capstone
- Increased graduation rate from 90% to 99.8%
- Improved student attendance by decreasing tardies by 86% while decreasing suspensions by 92%
- Increased AP enrollment from 19 to 38%, AP courses from 17 to 32, & AP Equity & Excellence Score from 26 to 57

- Increased all-students' composite ACT average from 21.7 to 23.9 and SES sub-group averages from 16.0 to 19.79
- Received:
 - Newsweek's 2023 **Top High School** recognition and for thirteen years in the top 1000 national rankings
 - Newsweek & STEM.org's 2023, 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019 **Top STEM High School**
 - Niche's 2023, 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019, 2018 and 2017 **Best Schools Award** and **A+** rating
 - Great School's 2023, 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019 & 2018 **College Success Award**
 - MDHHS **MI HEARTSafe School Award** 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019, 2018
 - Character.org's **2023 National and 2020 State School of Character Award**
 - Bridge Magazine's 2019 **Michigan Academic State Champ Award**
 - Governor's 2017 **Service Award** for **Educational Service Leadership**
 - Center for Michigan 2017 **Academic State Champion** award
 - Mackinac Center's 2016 **Outstanding Achievement** award
 - Washington Post's 6th **Most Challenging High School** in Michigan
 - 2014 Michigan Department of Education **High Performing Reward School**
 - 2015, 2014, 2013, 2012, 2011 **AP District Honor Roll**
 - 2009 **Math, Science, & Technology AP School of the Year**
- Secured: 2022 **Michigan State University Knight Center Environmental & Film Grant**, 2019 **Outdoor Classroom Kiwanis & Troy Foundation Grant**, 2017 **Maker Space Troy Foundation Grant**, 2016 **Innovative Learning Grant**, 2015 & 2016 **YSA Innovative Schools Grant**, 2015 **State Farm Grant**, and 2013 **TRIG Grant**
- Supported **Charity Week**, raising over **\$1,396,000** and increased annual donations from \$22,000 - \$180,024.24
- Developed support and co-taught Math, English & Science classes with a 95% or higher passage rate, and established an at-risk, targeted assistance network and a student/teacher mentoring support program
- Institutionalized a "needs-based" budget system and a paperless student registration and notification process
- Refined hiring protocols to include teaching mini-lessons and reflective post observation discussions
- Helped pass the 2022 TSD **\$555,000,000 bond** and oversaw previous bond funds/projects: creation of Outdoor, Active Learning & Innovation Classrooms, a Conference Center, and ASD classrooms; renovations of Media Center, Guidance Office, Terrace Café, HVAC, corridors, and fire/security systems

- Repurposed resources and reassigned responsibilities to increase productivity and implement cost savings

Saginaw Valley State University

Gerstacker Fellow

2014 - present

- Study how government, industry, and educational leaders advance a country's achievement and economic prospects
- Selected to traveled to Finland, Copenhagen, Poland, Washington DC, and Houston Texas to learn from educational, industry, finance, and governmental experts and leaders
- Attend leadership retreats, networking sessions, professional development, and trainings

Adjunct Instructor College of Educational Leadership & Supervision

2009-2014

Taught EDL 650/651/652 Elementary, Middle School & High School Principalship

Saint Clair Shores

2006-2007

High School Principal, Lake Shore Public Schools

Leadership for a comprehensive, suburban high school of 1,3000 students and 110 building staff members

Ann Arbor Public Schools

2001-2006

Elementary Interim Principal, Abbot Elementary

Leadership for an elementary K-5 grade school of 308 students and 25 building staff members

Class Principal, Pioneer High School

Leadership for a grade level of 813 students and 77 staff members, and building administrator for a multicultural, comprehensive high school of 3200 students and 397 staff members

Dexter

2000-2001

Assistant Principal Dexter High School, Dexter Community Schools

Leadership for a comprehensive, suburban high school of 1,100 students and 103 building staff members

Toledo

1994-2000

Assistant Principal Rogers High School, Toledo Public Schools

Leadership for a comprehensive, urban high school of 1,100 students and 127 building staff members, including a special education center for 109 students and oversight of K-12 feeder-school curricular and transitional programs and events

Teacher Scott High School, Toledo Public Schools

Courses: American Literature & Honors British Literature

Teacher Whitmer High School, Whitmer Community Schools

Courses: Drama, Honors American Literature, British Literature

Honors – Awards - Distinctions

Sponsored visit to Arizona State University to meet with and learn from CED leaders about innovative practices and structures	June 2025
Selected Coach to GenAI CEOs, ASU+GSV Learn from University Leaders event	April 2025
Selected for MSU Spartan Bus Tour Alumni Advisory Team (SBT AAT)	January 2025
CAEP Accreditation International Reviewer	Nov. 2024 - present
Selected for MSU Inaugural Presidential Spartan Bus Tour	October 2024
Selected for MDE MiSchool Data Statewide Leadership Team	February 2024
Selected for MDE <i>Well-Trained Educators and Best Practices Committee</i>	Jan. 2024 – present
Selected for MDE and Region 8 <i>Comprehensive Center Feasibility Workgroup</i>	Jan. 2022 – present
Selected for Michigan State Police <i>School Safety Grant Selection</i> committee member	October 2022
<i>Above & Beyond Award</i> from ESGR (Employer Support of Guard and Reserve)	April 2021
<i>Patriot Award</i> from ESGR (Employer Support of Guard and Reserve)	June 2020
Selected for MASSP Board Member for Region 12	April 2020 - 2023
Honorary Troy Boys and Girls Club Board Member	April 2020 - present
MASSP <i>Principal of the Year</i> nominee	November 2019
<i>Top of Troy</i> - Honoree at the Fall Troy Chamber of Commerce Women's Business Forum	February 2019
Selected for Governor's <i>Service Leadership Award Selection Committee Member</i>	March 2018 - present
2017 Governor's <i>Educational Service Leadership Award</i> recipient	June 2017
Gerstacker II Fellowship – Studied Educational Policy in Washington, D.C.	August 2017
Gerstacker II Fellowship - Studied Innovative Learning in Houston, Texas	March 2016
Gerstacker I Fellowship – Studied Educational Best Practices in Poland and Finland	April 2015

Michigan Department of Education High Performing Reward School award recipient	November 2014
Eastern Michigan University, Oral Defense & Dissertation University Exemplar	November 2012
"Honored Educator" University of Michigan's College of Education Commencement	May 2005

Presentation and Publications

Invited Speaker, "GenAI Leading and Teaching," Grand Valley State University CED Administrative Advisory Board event	June 2025
Invited Presenter with Dr. Rick Stiggins, "Developing Academic Confidence through Personalized Assessment and Increased Achievement," MSU Spring Talks	May 2025
Invited Panelist, Urban Superintendent Association Of America (USAA) Spring National Conference	March 2025
Invited Presenter, "Using GenAI for Teaching & Learning at MSU," MSU Capital Champaign Kick-Off Event	March 2025
Routledge Publication Reviewer for Thinking with AI: Collaborating To Foster Critical Competencies by Angela Elkordy	February 2025
Invited Keynote, Speaker MI Ed. Research Asso. (MERA): "Leading in a GenAI World"	November 2024
Invited Guest, "Partnering in Support of High Quality K-12 Public Schools," Region 6 Superintendent Quarterly Leadership Event	November 2024
Invited Speaker on Mike Sullivan's Podcast: "Setting K-12 students UP for SUCCESS"	September 2024
Invited Speaker, MSU's Transforming Learning and Ethical Dilemmas conference: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "AI and Futuristic Teaching and Learning and Ethical Dilemmas" - "Women and Leadership" - "Literacy and Futuristic Teaching" 	July 2024
Invited Speaker, K-12 Outreach Spring Retreat: "Teaching & Leading and GenAI"	May 2024
Invited Speaker, CED Informed Townhall Meeting: "ASAO Strategic Initiatives & Innovation in EPP"	April 2024
Invited Presenter, MSU Create Seminar: "GenAI Teaching & Leading"	December 2023
Interviewed by Fox 47, WKAR MSU, and WILX-TV on Senate Bills 395 & 396	December 2023
MSUToday Faculty Q & A Publication – Senate Bills 395 & 396	December 2023
Invited Presenter at K-12 Outreach's MSU: Future Teacher Career Day	October 2023
Host & Keynote for Future Educators MSU Career Day	August 2023

Invited Panelist and Presenter, MSU CED, Emerging Leaders conference	July 2023
Character.org <i>“Creating a Caring Community”</i> article publication in 11 Principles Framework Guidebook	March 2023
Invited Speaker, MASSP Board Retreat: <i>“Improving Achievement with Multi-tiered Student Supports”</i> and <i>“Forwarding Student and Staff Belonging and Wellbeing”</i>	August 2022
MASSP Headlines publication: <i>“Time to Reset”</i>	July 2022
Invited Speaker, Oakland University College of Education Culminating Seminar: <i>“How to Get the Job and Do It Well”</i>	April 2022
Invited Presenter, Aspiring Principals Workshop: <i>“Ensuring a Positive, Collaborative, & Successful School”</i>	March 2022
Invited Speaker, SMAP Presentation Day with Shiga prefecture officials, Ritsumenikan University Professors, and Troy, Moriyama, & Hikone-Higashi Students: <i>“Collaborative, Global, Student-led, Deep Learning Projects”</i>	March 2022
MASSP Headlines publication: <i>“A New Focus for the New Semester”</i>	January 2022
MASSP Headlines publication: <i>“You Can’t Mask Awesome – Inspiration for Championing Belonging & Gratitude”</i>	March 2021
Invited Speaker, City of Troy & Global Troy Advisory Committee Annual Event: International Women’s Day Celebration	February 2021
Invited Panelist, Aspiring Principals Workshop: <i>“Building Community to Ensure Learning & Well-Being”</i>	February 2021
Invited Presenter, Aspiring Principals Workshop: <i>“Practice Interviews & Words of Advice”</i>	January 2021
Invited Presenter, Leader2Leader: <i>“Maximizing Engagement & Supporting Struggling Learners”</i>	October 2020
Invited Presenter, EdCon State Conference: <i>“Building Community in a Virtual or Hybrid Environment to Ensure Authentic Learning & Well-Being”</i>	October 2019
Invited Presenter, MDE Mental Health Summit: <i>“Using Media to Shape Building Culture”</i>	October 2019
Invited Presenter, Oakland Activities Association: <i>“Feel Like an Elementary & Function Like a World Class High School”</i>	October 2019
Invited Presenter, Oakland County Effective Practices Conference: <i>“Ensuring Deep Learning”</i> and <i>“Supporting All Through Social, Emotional Learning”</i>	November 2017
Invited Presenter, MDE AdvancEd Fall School Improvement Conference: <i>“Singular Focus – Combining Teacher Evaluation and School Improvement Work to Further Deep Learning & Increase Collective Efficacy for Students and Staff”</i>	June 2017

Invited Presenter, Oakland Country Effective Practices Conference: <i>“Using Teacher Evaluations and Collaborative Inquiry to Further Deep Learning”</i>	November 2014
Invited Presenter, MDE AdvancEd Fall School Improvement Conference: <i>“Improving A School’s Function, Feel, and Focus Through Purposeful, Passionate, Positive Leadership”</i>	April 2013
Invited Presenter, MDE AdvancEd Spring School Improvement Conference: <i>“Listening to Student Voice to Improve Achievement”</i>	January 2013
Invited Presenter, MASA Midwinter Conference: <i>“Increasing Student Achievement Through Purposeful Planning and Action”</i>	January 2013
Invited Presenter, Macomb ISD Fall School Improvement Conference: <i>“Increasing Student Achievement Through Purposeful Planning and Action”</i>	November 2012
Doctoral Dissertation Public Talk: <i>A Comparison of Priorities and Effectiveness of Female and Male Superintendents in K-12 Public School Districts, Eastern Michigan University</i>	November 2012
Invited Presenter, Saginaw Valley Educational Leadership Seminar: <i>“Using Data to Inform Decisions”</i>	April 2008
Invited Presenter, Eastern Michigan University Department of Education, Elementary Education Curriculum Development Course: <i>“Increasing Learning Through Collaborative Play”</i>	July 2006
Invited Presenter: <i>“Using Technology to Further Learning,”</i> University of Michigan College of Education	April 2005
Invited Presenter: <i>“School Improvement and Federal Mandates,”</i> University of Michigan College of Education	March 2005
Invited Presenter: <i>“IDEA – Supporting Students with Special Needs,”</i> University of Michigan College of Education	February 2005
Freshmen Orientation Invited Keynote Speaker, University of Michigan College of Education	September 2004
Invited Presenter: <i>“Portfolios and Interviewing,”</i> University of Michigan College of Education	March 2004
Invited Presenter: <i>“No Child Left Behind - Impacts and Expectations,”</i> University of Michigan College of Education	February 2004
Invited Presenter: <i>“Actions & Priorities of a Great Teacher,”</i> University of Michigan College of Education	April 2003
Invited Presenter: <i>“Creating a Culturally Competent School,”</i> University of Michigan College of Education	February 2003
Invited Presenter and Panelist: <i>“Practical Advice for New Teachers,”</i> University of Michigan College of Education	March 2002

Professional Organizations and Activities

Urban Superintendent Association Of America (USAA) National Conference	April 2025
ASU+ GSV Summit and AirShow: <i>“Leaning at the Speed of Light”</i>	April 2025
MSU <i>Bus Tour Alumni Advisory Board</i>	Jan. 2025 - Jan. 2026
MSU CAEP Advisory Council	Dec. 2024 – present
MSU President <i>Inaugural Spartan Bus Tour</i>	Sept. 2024 – present
MSU <i>Transformational Learning and Leading Institute</i>	July 2024
CAEP Accreditation Review Training	July 2024
ASU+GSV GenAI Summit & AirShow: <i>“Here Comes the Sun”</i> and <i>“AI Revolution”</i>	April 2024
MiSCHOOL Data Statewide Leadership Team	Feb. 2024 – present
Michigan Association of Professors of Educational Leadership - Secretary and Treasurer	Oct. 2023 – present
GenerativeAI Catalyst - Conferences and Trainings	October - Dec. 2024
CAEP Accreditation Conference	September 2023
Special Education Law and Compliance Training and Certification	January 2023
KIP Team Training and Certification	October 2023
Threat Assessment Training and Certificate Level II	Sept. 2023
ADL Partnership & No Place for Hate School	May 2022 - 2023
National Equity Project	2021-2023
Oakland Activities Association Executive Board	June 2018 - 2023
Oakland Activities Association Executive Board	June 2018 - 2023
RULER - Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence	August 2018 - 2023
Threat Assessment Training and Certificate Level I	March 2022
MASSP EdCON Conference	June 2020 - 2025
ALICE Active Shooter Certified Initial Trainer	June 2018
Trauma Informed Schools	November 2018

Michigan Leadership Institute, Superintendent's Academy II	August-Oct. 2017
New Pedagogies for Deep Learning	2016 - 2023
Michigan Leadership Institute, Superintendent Academy I	August – Nov. 2015
Gerstacker Fellowship	2014 - present
Cultures of Thinking and Making Thinking Visible Cohort	2014-2016
MACUL - Michigan Association for Computer Users in Learning	2014-2018
TRIG – Technology Readiness Infrastructure Training	2013-2015
Leaders in Transition Institute – Harvard and Reeves Foundation	2008-2009
Oakland ISD Educational Consortium	2007-2023
Oakland Administrative Association	2007 - 2023
Learning Achievement Coalition	2007-2011
Effective Practice & Educational Rounds	2007-2010
Galileo Consortium for Teacher Leaders	2006-2007
Washtenaw Leadership Consortium	2004-2006
Michigan Association for Secondary School Principals	2001 - 2024
National Association of Secondary School Principals	2001 - 2024
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development	1998 - present
Phi Delta Kappa International	1994 - present