

Lara J. Dixon

Director of Educator Preparation and Accreditation | College of Education

Assistant Professor | College of Education K-12 Administration

Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824

dixonlar@msu.edu

Education

Doctorate in Educational Leadership	Eastern Michigan University	December 2012
Specialist in Education	University of Toledo	May 2003
Masters of Administration & Supervision	University of Toledo	August 1998
B.A. of English & B.S. of Music Education	Bowling Green State University	May 1994

Certification

Michigan Administrative Certificate	Elementary, Secondary, and Central Office	Until June 30, 2024
Michigan Teaching Certificate	BA English 6-12 & JX Music K-12	Until June 30, 2026
<i>Michigan Leadership Institute</i> Graduate	Superintendent Academy I & Academy II	November 2015 & 2017
<i>Gerstacker Fellow</i> Graduate	Saginaw Valley State University	November 2014

Current Professional Experience

Michigan State University

2023-present

Director of Educator Preparation and Accreditation

Job Responsibilities:

- Serve and lead MSU programs and leaders that prepare Birth to P-12 educators, psychologists, administrators, in 8 colleges with 42-degree programs that lead to over 50+ licensures, furthering our preparation and accreditation work and strategic efforts for increased achievement, innovation, and sustained impact, individually and collectively

- 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, 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 liason for CAEP, MDE, MSU Accreditation, MiLEAP, MiSCHOOL Data, and University EPPs
- Forge partnerships and share research and innovative practices 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, PDK/EdRising, 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), Accrediation, Assessment, Curriculum, and Compliance Committee (AACCC), 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

Job Responsibilities:

- Teach master and doctoral level courses: EAD 853 Education Finance and Policy and 801 Leadership and Organization Development
- 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. Program Recruitment and GenAI Policy and Use
 - Member of DARTEP, NASSP, MASSP, and MEMSPA
 - Serve on MDE's Mental Health and Wellness Feasability Study Tri-State Committee, Well-Trained Educators and Best Practices Committee, and MiSCHOOL Data State-wide Leadership Team

Prior Professional Experience

Anchor Bay School District

2023

Director of Elementary Education

Job Responsibilities:

- 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

Troy School District

2007 – 2023

Director of Academic, Business, and Employee Partnerships and Initiatives

Job Responsibilities:

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

Principal, Troy Athens High School:

Job Responsibilities:

- Transformational leadership for a comprehensive high school of 1,600 students, 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 forwards 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 helping lead MTSS, SEL, NPDL, ELA, Fine Arts, Health, Counseling and Technology Committee

Accomplishments while Principal of Troy Athens High School:

- 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 & STEM.org's 2023, 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019 **Top STEM High School***
 - *Newsweek's 2023 **Top High School** recognition and for thirteen years have been in the top 1000*
 - *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***
 - *Michigan Department of Education as a 2014 **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 & increasing 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

2010-2014

Adjunct Instructor, Saginaw Valley State University: College of Ed. Leadership & Supervision

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

Saint Clair Shores

2006-2007

Principal, Lake Shore High School: Lake Shore Public Schools

Leadership for a comprehensive, suburban high school of 1,300 students and 110 building staff members

Ann Arbor

2001-2006

Elementary Interim Principal, Abbot Elementary: Ann Arbor Public Schools

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

Class Principal, Pioneer High School: Ann Arbor Public Schools

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 and support for a comprehensive, rural/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 127 staff members and 1,100 students, including a special education center for 109 students and oversight of k-12 feeder-school curricular and transitional programs/events

Teacher, Scott High School: Toledo Public Schools

Courses: American Literature & British Literature Honors

Teacher, Whitmer High School: Whitmer Community Schools

Courses: Drama, American Literature Honors & British Literature

Honors – Awards - Distinctions

Selected for MSU Spartan Bus Tour Alumni Advisory Team (SBT AAT)	January 2025
CAEP Accreditation Review Team	November 2024- Present
Selected for MSU Inaugural Presidential Spartan Bus Tour	October 2024
Selected for MDE MiSchool Data Statewide Leadership Team	February 2024
MDE Well-Trained Educators and Best Practices Committee	January 2024 - present
MDE and Region 8 Comprehensive Center Feasibility Workgroup	January 2022 - present
Michigan State Police School Safety grant selection committee member	October 2022
Above & Beyond Award from ESGR	April 2021
Patriot Award from ESGR (Employer Support of Guard and Reserve)	June 2020
MASSP Board Member for Region 12	April 2020-present
Honorary Troy Boys and Girls Club Board Member	January 2020-present
MASSP <i>Principal of the Year</i> nominee	November 2019
Top of Troy - Honoree at the Fall Troy Chamber of Commerce Women's Business Forum	February 2019
2018 & 2019 Governor's Service Leadership Award selection committee member	March 2018-present
2017 Governor's Educational Service Leadership Award recipient	June 2017

Gerstacker II Fellowship – Selected for the Educational Policy Trip in Washington, D.C.	August 2017
Gerstacker II Fellowship – Selected for an Innovative Learning Trip in Houston, Texas	March 2016
Gerstacker I Fellowship – Selected to study Educational Best Practices in Poland & Finland	April 2015
Michigan Department of Education <i>High Performing Reward School</i> award recipient	November 2014
Eastern Michigan University, Oral Defense & Dissertation <i>University Exemplar</i>	November 2012
“ <i>Honored Educator</i> ” at the University of Michigan’s College of Education Commencement	May 2005

Presentations and Publications

Invited Presenter, Urban Superintendent Association Of America (USAA) Spring National Conference	March 2025
Invited Speaker, MSU Center for Teaching and Learning Innovation workshop: GenAI Course Tutors & Partnerships	December 2024
Invited Keynote, Speaker MI Ed. Research Asso. (MERA): Leading in a GenAI World	November 2024
Invited Speaker, MSU’s Transforming Learning and Ethical Dilemmas	July 2024
– AI and Futuristic Teaching and Learning and Ethical Dilemmas	
– Women and Leadership	
– Literacy and Futuristic Teaching	
Invited Speak, K-12 Outreach Spring Retreat: Teaching & Leading and GenAI	May 2024
Invited Speaker, CED Informed Townhall Meeting: ASAO Strategic Initiatives & EPP	April 2024
Invited Speaker, Mike Sullivan’s Podcast Setting K-12 students UP for SUCCESS	September 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 – Senate Bills 395 & 396 Publication	December 2023

Invited Presenter at K-12 Outreach's MSU Future Teacher Career Day	October 2023
Host & Keynote for <i>Future Educators MSU Career Day Visit</i>	August 2023
Invited Panelist, MSU Emerging Leaders	July 2023
Character.org <i>Creating a Caring Community</i> article publication, 11 Principles Framework Guidebook	March 2023
MASSP <i>Headlines</i> publication, "Time to Reset"	July 2022
Invited Speaker, Oakland University College of Education Culminating Seminar	April 2022
Invited Presenter, Aspiring Principals Workshop , "Ensuring a Positive, Collaborative, & Successful School"	March 2022
Invited Speaker, SMAP Presentation Day with Shiga prefecture officials, Ritsumenikan University Professors, and Troy, Moriyama, & Hikone-Higashi Students	March 2022
MASSP <i>Headlines</i> publication, "A New Focus for the New Semester"	January 2022
MASSP <i>Headlines</i> publication, "You Can't Mask Awesome - Inspiration for Championing Belonging & Gratitude"	March 2021
Invited Speaker, City of Troy & Global Troy Advisory Committee's International Women's Day Celebration	February 2021
Invited Panelist, Aspiring Principals Workshop , "Building Community to Ensure Learning & Well-Being"	February 2021
Invited Presenter, Aspiring Principals Workshop , "Practice Interviews & Words of Advice"	January 2021
Invited Presenter, Leader2Leader , "Maximizing Engagement & Supporting Struggling Learners"	October 2020
Invited Presenter, EdCon , "Building Community in a Virtual or Hybrid Environment to Ensure Authentic Learning & Well-Being"	October 2019
Invited Presenter, Mental Health Summit , "Using Media to Shape Building Culture"	October 2019
Invited Presenter, Oakland Activities Association , "Feel Like an Elementary & Function Like a World Class High School"	October 2019

Invited Panelist, Top of Troy , Chamber of Commerce Women’s Business Forum	June 2019
Invited Presenter, Oakland Country Effective Practices Conference , “Ensuring Deep Learning” and “Supporting All Through Social, Emotional Learning”	November 2017
Invited Presenter, MDE AdvancEd Fall School Improvement Conference , “Singular Focus - Combining Teacher Evaluation and School Improvement Work to Further Deep Learning & Increase Collective Efficacy for Students and Staff”	June 2017
Invited Presenter, Oakland Country Effective Practices Conference , “Using Teacher Evaluations and Collaborative Inquiry to Further Deep Learning”	November 2014
Invited Presenter, MDE AdvancEd Fall School Improvement Conference , “Improving A School’s Function, Feel, and Focus Through Purposeful, Passionate, Positive Leadership”	April 2013
Invited Presenter, MDE AdvancEd Spring School Improvement Conference , “Listening to Student Voice to Improve Achievement”	January 2013
Invited Presenter, MASA Midwinter Conference , “Increasing Student Achievement Through Purposeful Planning and Action”	January 2013
Invited Presenter, Macomb ISD Fall School Improvement Conference , “Increasing Student Achievement Through Purposeful Planning and Action”	November 2012
Doctoral Dissertation: A Comparison of Priorities and Effectiveness of Female and Male Superintendents in K-12 Public School Districts	November 2012
Invited Presenter, Saginaw Valley Educational Leadership Seminar , “Using Data to Inform Decisions”	April 2008
Invited Presenter, Eastern Michigan University Department of Education , Elementary Education Curriculum Development Course, “Increasing Learning Through Collaborative Play”	July 2006
Invited Presenter, University of Michigan College of Education:	
• “Using Technology to Further Learning”	April 2005
• “School Improvement and Federal Mandates”	March 2005
• “IDEA - Supporting Students with Special Needs”	February 2005

- **Keynote Speaker for Freshmen Orientation** September 2004
- "Portfolios and Interviewing" March 2004
- "*No Child Left Behind* - Impacts and Expectations" February 2004
- "Actions & Priorities of a Great Teacher" April 2003
- "Creating a Culturally Competent School" February 2003
- Panelist: "Practical Advice for New Teachers" March 2002

Professional Organizations & Activities

MSU Bus Tour Alumni Advisory Board	January 2025-January 2026
MSU CAEP Advisory Council Member	December 2024 - present
MSU President Inaugural Bus Tour	September 2024 - present
MSU Transformational Learning and Leading Institute	July 2024
CAEP Accreditation Review Training	July 2024
MASSP EdCon	June 2024
ASU+GSV GenAI Summit & AirShow	April 2024
MiSCHOOL Data Statewide Leadership Team	February 2024 - present
MAPEL Secretary and Treasurer	October 2023 - present
GenerativeAI Catalyst Conferences and Trainings	October-December 2024
CAEP Accreditation Conference	September 2023
Special Education Law and Compliance Training and Certification	January 2023
KIP Team Training and Certification	October 2023
ADL Partnership & No Place for Hate School	May 2022 - 2023
Threat Assessment Training and Certificate Level I & II	March 2022 & Sept. 2023
National Equity Project	2021-2023
Oakland Activities Association Executive Board	June 2018 - 2023
RULER	August 2018 - 2023

ALICE Certified Trainer	June 2018, Renewed 2021, 2022, 2023
Trauma Informed Schools	November 2018
Michigan Leadership Institute, Superintendent's Academy II	August–October 2017
New Pedagogies for Deep Learning	2016 – 2023
Michigan Leadership Institute, Superintendent Academy I	August – November 2015
Gerstacker Fellowship	2014 – present
Cultures of Thinking and Making Thinking Visible Cohort	2014–2016
MACUL	2014–2018
TRIG – Technology Readiness Infrastructure Training	2013–2015
Leaders in Transition Institute	2008–2009
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 – present
National Association of Secondary School Principals	1998 – present
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development	1998 – present
Phi Delta Kappa International	1994 – present