



**Alena Zachery-Ross, Superintendent**  
**Ypsilanti Community Schools**  
**1885 Packard Road \* Ypsilanti, MI 48197**  
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December 20, 2024

Dear Grizzly Family:

In this holiday season, I want to take a moment to express my thanks for your continued dedication to serving as our partner in your child's education. Your involvement makes all the difference for our entire school community. I see how your active encouragement is positively impacting our students through their schoolwork and in being good citizens.

I would also like to express my appreciation to all our teachers and staff members. Being an educator is more than leading a class; it's late nights, early mornings, and missed lunches to ensure all students are receiving the support they need to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. As you are counting your blessings this holiday season, I encourage you to recognize the individuals who educate your children in the classroom each day, as well as the professional staff who transport them safely to and from school, make them nutritious meals, and share with them the joys of art, music, and athletics.

Speaking of honoring our staff, I'm proud to share that Tyler Rindo, a teacher at Erickson, recently won the 2024 DTE Energy Foundation Educator of the Year award and received a Teaching Excellence Award from Embracing Our Differences. Mr. Rindo is an example of the kind of exceptional talent and leadership we have among our teachers and staff. Please join me in congratulating him on his recent recognition.

Similarly, Megan Carr, a teacher at Perry, has secured funding to build an emotion regulation space in the school's old gym. Her care for our scholars shines through this project, and we support her through this endeavor for our scholars.

I'm also proud to highlight Dylan Presley and Shanaijah Rosega, two Ypsilanti Community High Schoolers who recently spoke at the State Board of Education Meeting about how the district's specialized courses have introduced them to their postsecondary plans. Their leadership is admirable, and we can't wait to see what the future holds for Shanaijah and Dylan.

I want to take a moment to highlight Jerilyn Lynn, our technology resource specialist, and our media specialists from across the district. Through the support of LEAP awarding Ypsilanti Community Schools a five-year \$3.7 million grant, Jerilyn and the media specialist team brought nine book vending machines to our schools. Their work will enhance our libraries and learning opportunities for all.

Finally, join me in thanking Board of Education Trustees Gainsley and Schindler, whose terms end at the end of this month. Both of them have made invaluable contributions to YCS and the entire community during their terms, and their impact in this role will be missed. I am grateful to know that they will continue to seek opportunities to support our school and community.

*Stronger Together*



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As we near the end of the calendar year, I want to take a moment to extend a warm “happy holidays” to you and your loved ones. Please note that the district will be closed from December 23 through January 3, with students returning to school on Monday, January 6.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alena Zachery-Ross". The signature is written in a dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Dr. Alena Zachery-Ross  
Superintendent