

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** February 28, 2025  
**CONTACT:** Superintendent Nate Parker



# Michener Elementary Students Host "Leaders and Dreamers" Event

Adrian, MI – Michener Elementary School's fourth-grade students recently hosted the inaugural Leaders and Dreamers event, where local community leaders from organizations such as the Adrian City Commission, Adrian Public Schools, Old National Bank, Meijer, Wallich Construction, MI Region 2 STEM, Washtenaw Promise, and the Adrian Center for the Arts engaged with students to inspire them and share insights into their careers. The event gave students the unique opportunity to connect with leaders in small groups, ask thoughtful questions about their career journeys, and present their vision for an outdoor learning area, showcasing their creativity and leadership skills.

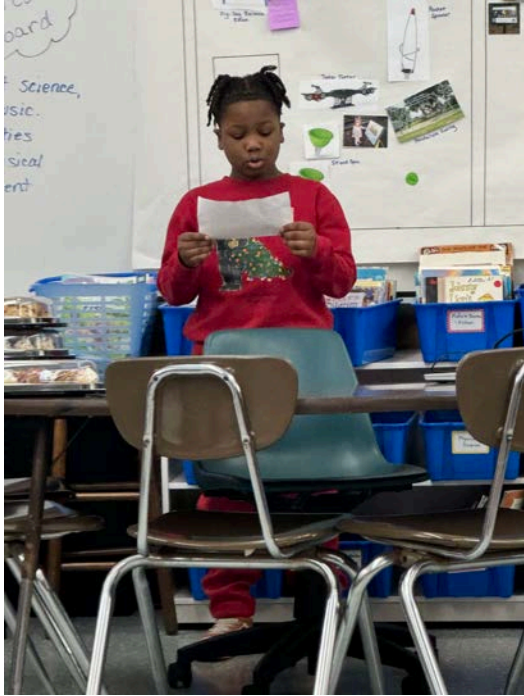
One of the participating leaders, Ben Negron, Meijer Store Director, shared his enthusiasm for the event: "This event inspired me—I feel like I should be in class with them! The kids bring such excitement and brilliance, constantly throwing out ideas and exploring different solutions. Being with the students today, I found them to be an absolute delight."

Lora Wallich and Trisha Fischer, both fourth-grade teachers at Michener Elementary, led this inaugural event. Wallich emphasized the event's impact: "This was a unique experience for our students. We combined an opportunity to learn about career paths from local leaders with a chance for students to present their 'dreams' to adults who may help us turn our dream of this outdoor space into a reality. I was equally impressed by the leaders' generosity and the students' enthusiasm throughout the event."

The project is off to a strong start, thanks to the generous support of local businesses and organizations. Adrian Steel has pledged funding for a climbing system, the Adrian Schools Educational Foundation has awarded grants for project materials, and KKE contributed funding for additional swings. These contributions highlight the community's commitment to making this outdoor learning space a reality. The Leaders and Dreamers event also provided another step forward in developing this space.

Superintendent Nate Parker highlighted how the event aligns with the District's broader vision: "The Leaders and Dreamers was an excellent event and aligns well with the work we are doing through the Portrait of a Graduate and Diploma Plus initiatives. Providing real-world learning experiences and mentorship ensures that our students develop critical skills like problem-solving, communication, and collaboration. Events like this demonstrate the power of education in shaping future-ready students. It also highlights our community partners' ongoing support and commitment to a strong and vibrant school system."

To learn more about Adrian Public Schools, please visit <https://www.adrianmaples.org/> or follow us on [Facebook](#).



4th Grade student Isaac Broadnax presents to the leaders in the room for the 4th-grade students' dream of the outdoor learning space and playground.



Meijer Store Director, Ben Negron, meeting with students during the session.



Adrian City Commissioner Bob Behnke, Washtenaw Promise, Tim Wilson, Principal Ann Lacasse, and APS Board President Beth Ferguson meeting with students.



Michener Elementary Teacher Lora Wallich and Trischa Fischer