

## Letter: Test scores show Michigan is failing students

**The Detroit News**

Published 10:45 p.m. ET Sep. 15, 2021

The 2021 M-STEP statewide student achievement results are in: Math scores dropped for every grade tested, social studies scores dropped and reading scores dropped or showed minuscule improvement.

While, due to the pandemic, many fewer students took the tests during the 2020-2021 school year, the results are consistent with what we have seen time and time again: Our state's rates of proficiency in every subject matter are unacceptably low, and students in vulnerable communities continue to fare worse on assessments than their counterparts in other neighborhoods.

Low levels of literacy are not unique to Michigan. Decades-long educational stagnation in the U.S. has left millions of Americans functionally illiterate, deprived of the dignity and upward mobility that comes with an education. For these citizens, illiteracy is a life sentence. Those who cannot read cannot participate meaningfully in society.

For 20 years, we at Beyond Basics have intensively tutored students who are furthest behind in reading, and we have partnered with Detroit area schools to change this narrative for thousands of children and their families. Our tutoring proves children are capable, and our alumni finish school prepared to pursue their dreams. These students flip the script.

As we embark on this new school year, let us all work together to create positive change for our youth. May our leaders have the wisdom to focus on achieving solid educational outcomes by investing in our students and sending them to their classrooms knowing how to read and write the curriculum that they are entitled to learn.

We have a moral obligation to redress educational declines with the zeal that is required and utilize all resources at our disposal to make sure every student can read.

The need is great. The solution is clear. The time is now.

Pamela Good, co-founder and CEO of Beyond Basics