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Great Start Readiness Program

State Evaluation 2023-24 Annual Report

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2023-24 Program Overview

The Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) state evaluation team, led by Community Evaluation Programs at the Michigan State University Office of University Outreach and Engagement, started the current longitudinal evaluation project in October 2017. This report documents major findings from Cohort 7 students and classrooms in the 2023-24 school year. Data include child demographics, program quality as assessed by in-person observations, and accessibility considerations. Staff data were not available this year; a change in the reporting system left the data incomplete, so they could not be properly analyzed and reported. Classroom Coach data were also not available, so quality data could not be reported for classrooms using this tool.

During the 2023-24 school year, the Michigan Department of Lifelong, Education, Advancement and Potential (MILEAP) awarded GSRP funding to 53 grantees consisting of 51 intermediate school districts (ISDs) and two consortia representing a total of four ISDs. (See Appendix A and Appendix B for maps of ISDs.) As in previous years, Barry ISD is reported together with Calhoun ISD. These 51 ISDs and two consortia oversaw subrecipients that managed 1,429 sites¹ and operated 2,702 classrooms.² The numbers of sites and classrooms rebounded from pandemic-era lows to top pre-pandemic records. Compared with 2022-23, the number of sites rose by 77 and the number of classrooms by 147. Anecdotal information suggests that many GSRP administrators struggle to fill vacant lead and associate teacher positions.

The 41,430 children served by GSRP in 2023-24 represent nearly 8% increase from last year's student count of 38,467.

Over half (54%) of the classroom were operated by schools: local education agencies (school districts), public school academies, or ISDs. The other 46% of classrooms were operated by community-based entities including non-profit organizations, for-profit companies, and universities.³ On average, each site had two classrooms, though the number varied significantly, ranging from one to 17 classrooms. Some classrooms were GSRP/Head Start blend, but most were funded exclusively by GSRP.

A new classroom schedule, GSRP Extended Week/Year, was introduced to this year's programming in response to families' demand for wraparound care. Classrooms that adopt this option operate essentially on an elementary school schedule: five days a week and at least 180 days per year, with the length of day corresponding to that of local first grade classrooms.⁴

- 1 A total of 1,445 unique site license numbers were reported to the state evaluation from various data sources. Among them, 13 license numbers could not be found as active sites in the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA), Great Start to Quality and Childcare Provider database system. In addition, three sites remained at the same location, just changed the license number. Therefore, the count of valid GSRP sites was deemed to be 1,429 for the 2023-24 school year.
- 2 Data on classroom counts were missing on 64 sites.
- 3 Data on provider types were missing on 64 sites.
- 4 *GSRP Implementation Manual*. Section: Program Administration and Staffing. Revised August 2023.

Population Served

Child Demographics

The child count in this report (41,430) is based on the data collected for the entire school year. It differs slightly from the official count of 41,120 GSRP children that is based on the enrollment data available in the middle of February used for funding purposes.

As in the past, a large majority of GSRP children (86%) came from low-income families, defined as families whose income is less than or equal to 250% of the federal poverty level (FPL). As shown in Table 1, children were about evenly distributed by gender. A slender majority were White (non-Hispanic), a little less than one-third were Black, and about one-tenth Hispanic or Latinx. Other racial groups were represented in smaller proportions. About 3% of participants switched sites during the year. Table 2 lists child demographics by ISD.

Most children were in GSRP-exclusive, rather than GSRP/Head Start blend, programs, and most were in school settings. About 29% were in sites managed by community-based organizations (CBOs). Almost all children attended a full school-day program rather than part-day. More than three-quarters attended four-day school-day classrooms, while 19% attended five-day programs. These counts are based on actual child enrollment, not funding allocation.



Picture credit: <https://pixabay.com>

Table 1. GSRP Child Demographics and Classroom Types

	Number of Children (Total = 41,430)	% of Children
Gender		
Female	20,539	50%
Male	20,891	50%
Race/Ethnicity		
White (Non-Hispanic)	21,287	51%
African American or Black	12,081	29%
Hispanic or Latinx	4,435	11%
Two or more races	2,378	6%
Asian	999	2%
American Indian or Alaska Native	215	<1%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	35	<1%
Service Program Type		
GSRP exclusive	36,404	88%
GSRP/Head Start blend	5,026	12%
Site Type		
School	29,501	71%
CBO	11,929	29%
Delivery Schedule		
Part-Day 4 days per week	1,095	3%
Part-Day 5 days per week	86	<1%
School-Day 4 days per week	32,481	78%
School-Day 5 days per week	1,154	3%
Extended Week/Year	6,614	16%

Table 2. GSRP Child Demographics by ISD

Agency	Total	F	M	White	Black	Hisp	Multi	Asian	AIAN	NHPI
Michigan	41,430	50%	50%	51%	29%	11%	6%	2%	<1%	<1%
Allegan Area ESA	290	52%	48%	77%	2%	14%	6%	<1%	1%	<1%
AMA ESD	190	51%	50%	93%	<1%	<1%	4%	1%	0%	<1%
Bay-Arenac ISD	551	47%	53%	77%	2%	14%	7%	<1%	<1%	0%
Berrien RESA	539	51%	50%	49%	33%	9%	7%	1%	<1%	<1%
Branch ISD	125	58%	42%	77%	6%	14%	2%	2%	0%	0%
C.O.O.R. ISD	311	56%	44%	90%	1%	4%	4%	0%	1%	<1%
Calhoun ISD *	913	47%	53%	57%	18%	9%	11%	5%	<1%	<1%
Charlevoix-Emmet ISD	345	46%	54%	91%	<1%	3%	4%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Cheb-Ots-Presque Isle ESD	188	47%	53%	93%	1%	0%	5%	0%	1%	0%
Clare-Gladwin RESD	337	53%	48%	93%	<1%	2%	2%	<1%	1%	0%
Clinton County RESA	189	44%	56%	78%	0%	14%	9%	0%	0%	0%
Copper Country ISD	155	45%	55%	87%	2%	<1%	5%	1%	4%	0%
Delta-Schoolcraft ISD	201	50%	50%	81%	0%	2%	8%	<1%	9%	<1%
Dickinson-Iron ISD	77	52%	48%	97%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Eastern UP ISD	219	49%	51%	68%	<1%	<1%	9%	0%	22%	0%
Eaton RESA	262	49%	52%	68%	5%	11%	12%	5%	0%	0%
Genesee ISD	2,036	50%	50%	48%	39%	6%	7%	<1%	0%	0%
Gogebic-Ontonagon ISD	47	40%	60%	89%	0%	6%	0%	0%	4%	0%
Heritage Southwest ISD	187	51%	49%	69%	8%	14%	6%	0%	2%	<1%
Hillsdale ISD	261	48%	53%	91%	2%	5%	2%	<1%	<1%	0%
Huron ISD	180	54%	46%	91%	0%	4%	4%	0%	<1%	0%
Ingham ISD	1,417	49%	51%	38%	25%	17%	13%	6%	<1%	0%
Ionia ISD	188	50%	50%	97%	2%	<1%	<1%	0%	0%	0%
Iosco RESA	135	47%	53%	95%	0%	0%	5%	0%	0%	0%
Jackson ISD	672	47%	53%	68%	11%	6%	14%	<1%	<1%	0%
Kalamazoo RESA	988	52%	48%	45%	37%	<1%	15%	2%	<1%	<1%
Kent ISD	3,178	49%	51%	32%	26%	31%	9%	3%	<1%	0%
Lapeer ISD	217	52%	48%	83%	2%	12%	3%	0%	0%	0%
Lenawee ISD	337	47%	53%	77%	4%	17%	1%	0%	<1%	0%
Livingston ESD	484	44%	56%	86%	1%	7%	4%	<1%	<1%	0%
Macomb ISD	3,428	51%	50%	46%	36%	4%	6%	8%	<1%	<1%
Marquette-Alger RESA	143	59%	41%	85%	0%	3%	8%	<1%	4%	0%
Mecosta-Osceola ISD	262	48%	52%	89%	2%	3%	6%	<1%	<1%	0%
Menominee ISD	98	49%	51%	82%	0%	8%	7%	0%	3%	0%
Midland County ESD *	682	49%	51%	81%	2%	9%	6%	1%	1%	0%
Monroe ISD	475	49%	51%	75%	7%	10%	8%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Montcalm Area ISD	404	48%	52%	87%	1%	7%	3%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Muskegon Area ISD	941	53%	47%	54%	28%	9%	10%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Newaygo County RESA	346	49%	51%	84%	<1%	11%	4%	0%	0%	0%
Northwest Education Services	654	49%	51%	87%	1%	3%	6%	<1%	2%	<1%
Oakland Schools	3,058	51%	49%	40%	38%	12%	4%	5%	<1%	<1%
Ottawa Area ISD	1,308	47%	53%	65%	4%	22%	6%	2%	<1%	<1%
Saginaw ISD	1,041	51%	49%	32%	51%	9%	7%	1%	<1%	<1%
Sanilac ISD	290	52%	48%	90%	1%	7%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Shiawassee RESD	496	54%	46%	89%	<1%	5%	6%	<1%	0%	<1%
St. Clair County RESA	470	47%	53%	83%	5%	6%	6%	0%	0%	0%
St. Joseph County ISD	328	41%	59%	68%	5%	20%	6%	<1%	0%	0%
Tuscola ISD	334	46%	54%	91%	2%	3%	4%	0%	<1%	0%
Van Buren ISD	403	52%	48%	52%	5%	35%	8%	0%	1%	<1%
Washtenaw ISD	773	52%	48%	34%	36%	15%	10%	4%	<1%	0%
Wayne RESA	9,633	50%	50%	29%	58%	9%	2%	2%	<1%	<1%
West Shore ESD	235	44%	56%	72%	3%	20%	3%	<1%	<1%	0%
Wexford-Missaukee ISD *	409	51%	49%	90%	2%	5%	2%	<1%	1%	0%

Note: F = female; M = male; Hisp = Hispanic or Latino; Multi = multiracial; AIAN = American Indian or Alaska Native; NHPI = Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander. ESD = Educational Service Agency; RESD = Regional Educational Service District.

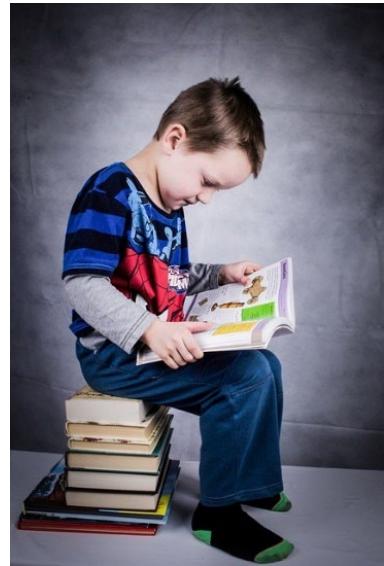
* Calhoun ISD includes Barry ISD, Midland County ESD includes Gratiot-Isabella RESD, and Wexford-Missaukee ISD includes Manistee ISD

GSRP Enrollment Policy

Michigan offers GSRP enrollment priority to low-income families. To determine which children to admit to the program, ISDs sort applications by family percentage of FPL into specified ranges: 0–50% of FPL, 51–100%, 101–150%, 151–200%, 201–250%, and 251–300%. Slots are given to the lowest-income families first, and then available spaces are filled with children from the next higher income group. If two families have the same percentage of FPL, the child with more eligibility factors is admitted. The six eligibility factors considered in the admission process are disability, abuse or neglect, home language other than English, severe challenging behavior, environmental risk, and low parental education. Moreover, admission priority is given to 4-year olds with one of three additional eligibility factors that automatically place children in the lowest FPL bracket, regardless of actual income: if the child has a qualifying IEP (individualized education program), is experiencing homelessness, or is in the foster care system.

In 2023-24, the income limit for eligibility was raised from 250% to 300% FPL.

Children whose family income is above 300% of FPL are considered to be “over-income”; grantees may admit over-income children up to 15% of total enrollment, but only if slots are available after all income-eligible applicants are enrolled. Over-income families pay a sliding-scale fee determined by the ISD.



Picture credit: <https://pixabay.com>

Distribution of Child Eligibility Factors

Because GSRP has continued to prioritize lower-income children for enrollment, the policy changes in the past few years have resulted in only a slight change in the family income profile of GSRP children. GSRP classrooms continued to serve Michigan children with the greatest need. During the pre-pandemic years, about 95% of GSRP participants were from low-income families. During the pandemic, when income limits were eased, the percentage of over-income children increased. Afterward, when eligibility rules tightened again, children with family incomes of 250% or less of FPL constituted 91% of the program population in 2022-23 and 86% in 2023-24.

Table 3 shows the breakdown of 2023-24 GSRP participants by income level. The percentage of participants whose family income level was over 300% of FPL rose slightly to 8% from 6% last year. The pre-pandemic average was 2%-3%.

Table 3. Federal Poverty Level Ranges of GSRP Children

Percentage of Federal Poverty Level	Number of Children (Total = 41,430)	% of Children
0% to 50% FPL	12,961	31%
51% to 100% FPL	6,683	16%
101% to 150% FPL	6,576	16%
151% to 200% FPL	5,289	13%
201% to 250% FPL	3,967	10%
251% to 300% FPL	2,562	6%
301% to 350% FPL	1,286	3%
351% to 400% FPL	743	2%
401% to 450% FPL	465	1%
451% FPL and above	898	2%

Table 4 lists the GSRP eligibility factors and the percentage of enrolled children who were eligible under each factor in 2023-24. A little under half of the children were reported to have environmental risks such as the absence of a parent, unstable housing, residence in a high-risk neighborhood, or prenatal or postnatal exposure to toxic substances.

About 15% of parents or guardians did not have a high school diploma. Table 5 lists the percentages of children with specific eligibility factors in each ISD. The distribution of eligibility factors remains closely aligned with that of previous years, reflecting stability in the makeup of the GSRP student population.

Table 4. Children Enrolled in GSRP by Eligibility Factors

Eligibility Factor and Definition	Number of Children (Total = 41,430)	% of Children
Low family income: Equal to or less than 250% of FPL	35,476	86%
Environmental risk: Parental loss due to death, divorce, incarceration, military service, or absence; sibling issues; teen parent (not age 20 when first child born); family is homeless or without stable housing; residence in a high-risk neighborhood (area of high poverty, high crime, limited access to critical community services); or prenatal or postnatal exposure to toxic substances known to cause learning or developmental delays	18,715	45%
Parent/guardian with low educational attainment: Parent has not graduated from high school or is illiterate	6,088	15%
Diagnosed disability or identified developmental delay: Child is eligible for special education services, child's developmental progress is less than that expected for his/her chronological age, or chronic health issues cause development or learning problems	5,238	13%
Primary home language other than English: English is not spoken in the child's home; English is not the child's first language	4,774	12%
Abuse/neglect of child or parent: Domestic, sexual, or physical abuse of child or parent; child neglect issues	3,526	9%
Severe or challenging behavior: Child has been expelled from preschool or childcare center	1,346	3%



Picture credit: <https://www.canva.com>

Table 5. GSRP Child Eligibility by ISD

Agency	Total Children	Low Income	Environmental Risk	Low Parental Education	Disability/Delay	Home Language Non-English	Abuse/Neglect	Severe/Challenging Behavior
Michigan	41,430	86%	45%	15%	13%	12%	9%	3%
Allegan Area ESA	290	74%	27%	6%	14%	6%	11%	8%
AMA ESD	190	81%	68%	31%	31%	0%	27%	6%
Bay-Arenac ISD	551	80%	59%	20%	21%	<1%	7%	2%
Berrien RESA	539	91%	21%	6%	8%	7%	3%	<1%
Branch ISD	125	93%	93%	31%	10%	23%	38%	2%
C.O.O.R. ISD	311	81%	57%	23%	20%	0%	23%	3%
Calhoun ISD *	913	86%	29%	14%	12%	7%	5%	3%
Charlevoix-Emmet ISD	345	68%	40%	8%	8%	0%	19%	<1%
Cheb-Ots-Presque Isle ESD	188	88%	86%	21%	19%	0%	18%	6%
Clare-Gladwin RESD	337	85%	99%	20%	8%	0%	33%	2%
Clinton County RESA	189	79%	30%	10%	28%	1%	5%	6%
Copper Country ISD	155	85%	11%	8%	14%	0%	10%	3%
Delta-Schoolcraft ISD	201	76%	56%	31%	21%	2%	29%	12%
Dickinson-Iron ISD	77	88%	36%	5%	5%	1%	1%	3%
Eastern UP ISD	219	68%	69%	13%	16%	0%	11%	<1%
Eaton RESA	262	77%	90%	22%	20%	6%	39%	5%
Genesee ISD	2,036	88%	46%	10%	12%	3%	6%	5%
Gogebic-Ontonagon ISD	47	70%	15%	13%	38%	2%	9%	6%
Heritage Southwest ISD	187	72%	36%	13%	21%	7%	8%	2%
Hillsdale ISD	261	80%	32%	19%	13%	<1%	16%	2%
Huron ISD	180	80%	17%	6%	16%	<1%	12%	23%
Ingham ISD	1,417	86%	36%	4%	14%	8%	3%	3%
Ionia ISD	188	86%	64%	9%	24%	1%	7%	0%
Iosco RESA	135	87%	70%	21%	15%	0%	13%	2%
Jackson ISD	672	82%	66%	21%	16%	3%	21%	12%
Kalamazoo RESA	988	88%	1%	2%	9%	9%	1%	<1%
Kent ISD	3,178	82%	5%	14%	14%	17%	10%	4%
Lapeer ISD	217	87%	30%	27%	10%	9%	22%	5%
Lenawee ISD	337	89%	56%	31%	20%	<1%	12%	16%
Livingston ESA	484	57%	72%	43%	53%	2%	15%	1%
Macomb ISD	3,428	86%	29%	12%	11%	14%	3%	2%
Marquette-Alger RESA	143	69%	43%	6%	17%	<1%	3%	4%
Mecosta-Osceola ISD	262	78%	66%	36%	13%	0%	19%	5%
Menominee ISD	98	72%	90%	26%	18%	8%	18%	9%
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Montcalm Area ISD	404	78%	100%	17%	15%	3%	10%	3%
Muskegon Area ISD	941	86%	50%	13%	12%	2%	8%	1%
Newaygo County RESA	346	79%	70%	22%	31%	4%	7%	10%
Northwest ES	654	74%	39%	13%	9%	1%	26%	3%
Oakland Schools	3,058	85%	38%	6%	11%	11%	6%	3%
Ottawa Area ISD	1,308	64%	16%	4%	11%	8%	3%	4%
Saginaw ISD	1,041	95%	87%	19%	7%	2%	4%	4%
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St. Clair County RESA	470	85%	51%	20%	15%	2%	8%	9%
St. Joseph County ISD	328	82%	30%	17%	22%	11%	9%	9%
Tuscola ISD	334	82%	43%	15%	18%	0%	20%	5%
Van Buren ISD	403	82%	47%	18%	20%	18%	11%	2%
Washtenaw ISD	773	95%	64%	19%	12%	20%	13%	5%
Wayne RESA	9,633	95%	60%	20%	7%	25%	5%	1%
West Shore ESD	235	79%	77%	8%	11%	7%	9%	2%
Wexford-Missaukee ISD *	409	89%	78%	19%	7%	1%	49%	2%

* Calhoun ISD includes Barry ISD, Midland County ESA includes Gratiot-Isabella RESD, and Wexford-Missaukee ISD includes Manistee ISD.

Classroom Quality

ISDs have discretion in determining how and when their classrooms will be evaluated for program quality. In their individual evaluation plans, ISDs determine which classrooms will be evaluated each year. At least one-third of classrooms must be reviewed annually, and every classroom must be included in an assessment at least once every three years.⁵ Further, ISDs can choose from two evaluation tools: Classroom Coach by HighScope or Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) by Teachstone. Traditionally, larger ISDs use CLASS because they co-operate with the federally funded Head Start program, which requires CLASS. Some ISDs use both Classroom Coach and CLASS for a more robust evaluation.

Assessments are conducted annually between March and May by an early childhood specialist (ECS). ECSs are reliable, trained assessors hired by ISDs or subrecipients to provide an external Classroom Coach and/or CLASS evaluation. ECSs are required to have an advanced degree in child development or education, five years of experience working with young children, and certification using GSRP-approved evaluation tools.⁶ ECSs provide subrecipients with an evaluation report and work with GSRP staff to set goals for quality improvement. All teachers receive documented oral feedback from their classroom's evaluation, but some may not see the full evaluation report.



Picture credit: <https://pixabay.com>

5 GSRP *Implementation Manual*. Section: Program Evaluation. Revised August 2023.

6 GSRP *Implementation Manual*. Section: Early Childhood Specialist. Revised August 2023.

CLASS Assessment

The CLASS program quality assessment has mainly been used by Head Start Programs. It was first approved for standalone use in GSRP during the 2018-19 school year. The CLASS tool focuses on teacher-child interactions in three domains containing the following items:

- **Domain 1** - Emotional support
 - Positive climate
 - Negative climate
 - Teacher sensitivity
 - Regard for student perspectives
- **Domain 2** - Classroom organization
 - Behavior management
 - Productivity
 - Instructional learning formats
- **Domain 3** - Instructional support
 - Concept development
 - Quality of feedback
 - Language modeling

Quality ratings range from 1 to 7, with scores 1-2 representing low quality, 3-5 representing middle quality, and 6-7 representing high quality.

Most programs in Michigan continued to use the original version of CLASS, developed in 2008. The second edition, which became available in 2023-24⁷, was used in about 7% of classrooms. These classrooms received slightly higher average scores in all three domains (see Table 6). In both versions, domains remain the same, and domain scores are combined to represent overall quality. More GSRP classrooms are likely to transition to the second edition in the next few years.

Table 6. Average CLASS Scores by CLASS Edition

CLASS Domain	2008 Version N = 689 classrooms	2nd Edition N = 49 classrooms	Total N = 738 classrooms
Emotional support	6.4	6.6	6.4
Classroom organization	5.9	6.4	5.9
Instructional support	3.8	4.0	3.8

Scores range from 1 to 7 (best).

Results in Table 7 indicate that most classrooms provided high-quality emotional support to the children (Domain 1). They created a positive climate, avoided negativity, were sensitive to children's needs, and responded to children's interests. The percentage of classrooms with a high score for Domain 1 remained at the same high level in 2023-24, as in 2022-23. The percentage of classrooms with high scores in classroom organization (Domain 2) reached 76%, one percentage point more than in 2022-23. Providing instructional support (Domain 3) was more of a challenge, with most classrooms receiving a middle score and only 8% receiving a high score. These percentages were about the same as in the previous year.

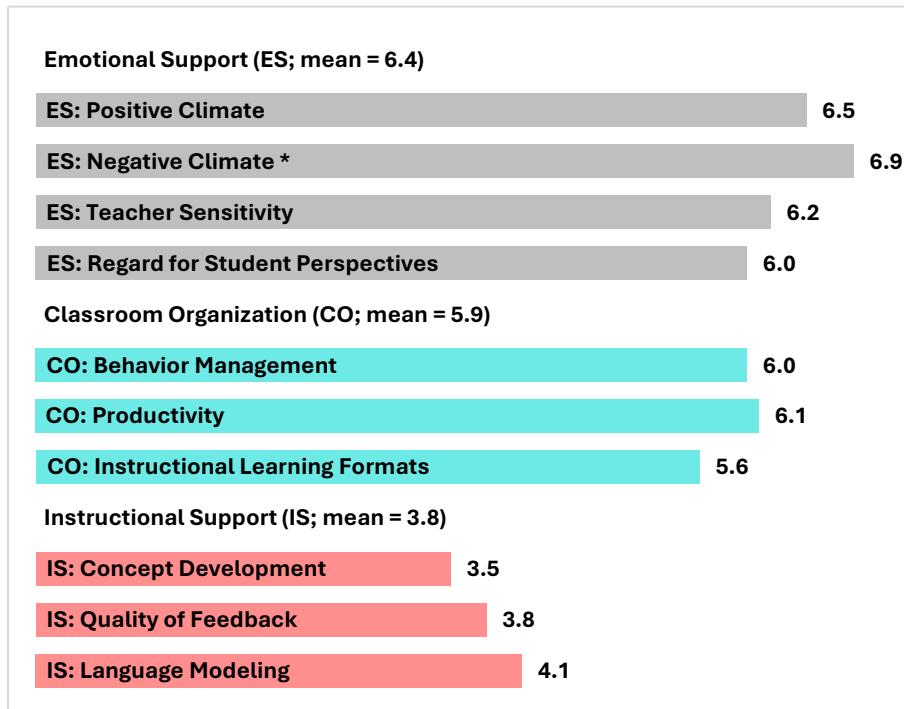
⁷ CLASS® 2nd Edition Crosswalk. 2022 Teachstone, Inc.

Table 7. CLASS Quality Levels of GSRP Classrooms

CLASS Items (N = 887 classrooms)	Percentage of Classrooms at Quality Level		
	Low (1-2)	Middle (3-5)	High (6-7)
Emotional support	0%	6%	94%
Positive climate	0%	7%	93%
Negative climate*	0%	0%	100%
Teacher sensitivity	0%	15%	85%
Regard for student perspectives	0%	23%	77%
Classroom organization	0%	24%	76%
Behavior management	0%	22%	78%
Productivity	0%	18%	82%
Instructional learning formats	0%	39%	61%
Instructional support	11%	81%	8%
Concept development	21%	73%	7%
Quality of feedback	12%	77%	11%
Language modeling	8%	77%	15%

* Data were reverse coded, so that higher scores are better.

Figure 1 breaks down the three domains' subscale scores. In general, classroom teachers were able to maintain a positive climate, be sensitive to student needs, manage student behavior, and be productive. They were less effective in content development, providing quality feedback to students, and language modeling.

Figure 1. CLASS Average Quality Scores

* Data were reverse coded, so that higher scores are better.

Classrooms' CLASS scores were further analyzed by types of managing entities. Table 8 shows scores of the lowest, 10th percentile of classrooms by managing entity type. Table 9 shows the breakdown of average scores by types of managing entities. GSRP classrooms' CLASS scores did not significantly differ by the type of managing entity, and the average score of instructional support was consistently rated the lowest at 3.8 across all entities.

Table 8. 10th Percentile CLASS Scores by GSRP Managing Entity Type

CLASS Domain	CBO	School-based	Total
	N = 344 classrooms	N = 394 classrooms	N = 738 classrooms
Emotional support	5.8	5.7	5.7
Classroom organization	5.0	4.8	4.8
Instructional support	2.4	2.3	2.4

10th percentile means that 10% of classroom scores were below the indicated value. Scores range from 1 to 7 (best).

Table 9. Average CLASS Scores by GSRP Managing Entity Type

CLASS Domain	CBO	School-based	Total
	N = 344 classrooms	N = 394 classrooms	N = 738 classrooms
Emotional support	6.4	6.4	6.4
Classroom organization	5.9	5.9	5.9
Instructional support	3.8	3.8	3.8

Scores range from 1 to 7 (best).

Classroom Coach

Due to extraordinary circumstances, data were not available for the hundreds of GSRP classrooms evaluated using Classroom Coach in 2023-24.

Accessibility

GSRP Availability

GSRP classrooms that are close to families' homes are more accessible than those farther away. In Figure 2 each dot represents a single GSRP site:

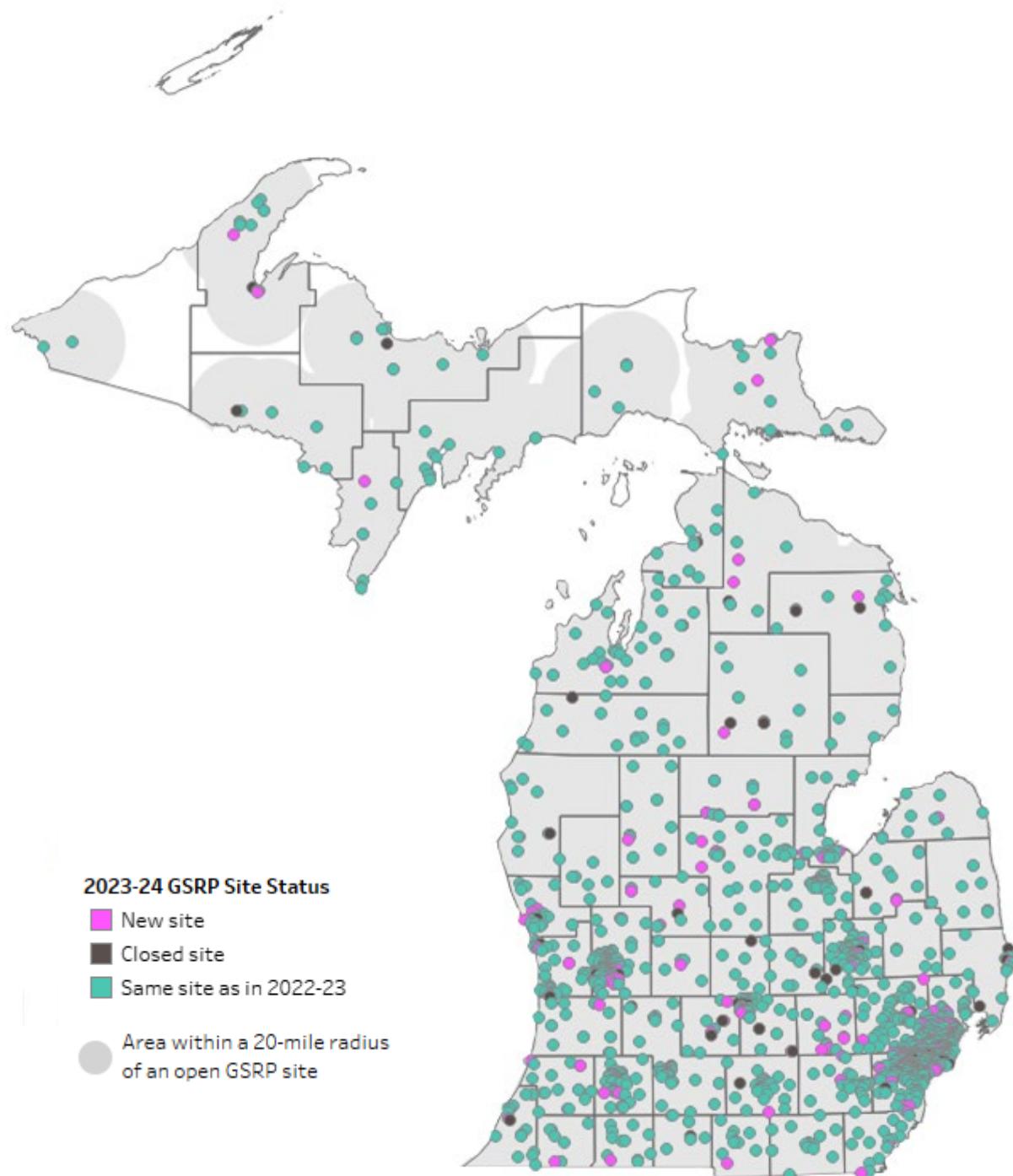
represents a single GSRP site:

- Black dots indicate 2022-23 sites that were not operating as GSRP sites this year.
- Pink dots show newly opened sites in 2023-24.
- Teal dots represent sites that were open in both 2022-23 and 2023-24.

More than 1,200 sites were in operation both last year and this year. The gray-shaded circles around the 2023-24 dots represent a viable catchment area around each site, defined as a 20-mile radius. In 2022-23, a vast majority of

Michigan land fell within the catchment area of a GSRP site; in 2023-24, the coverage remained about the same. Comparing Figure 2 with the Michigan population density map in Appendix C shows that GSRP sites are concentrated in the highest-density areas of the state.

Figure 2. GSRP Sites and Areas Within 20 Miles of a Site



GSRP Program Availability in Relation to Neighborhood Child Opportunity Index

Current research has shown that the extent to which children have access to opportunities in their neighborhoods greatly affects the quality of their experiences, their health and education, the norms and expectations for their future, and their chances of success in adulthood.⁸ The Child Opportunity Index (COI), created and expanded by diversitydatakids.org, is a metric that tracks contemporary opportunities for over 84,000 neighborhoods (census tracts) across the U.S. The latest COI (version 3.0), published in 2024, covers data from 2012 to 2021.

The COI consists of three domains:

- **Education**, determined by factors such as grade-level proficiency in grade 3 and high school graduation rates.
- **Health and environment**, determined by factors such as air pollution levels and the availability of healthy food and green spaces.
- **Social and economic factors**, determined by measures such as the proportion of adults with high-skill jobs and rates of employment, home ownership, and poverty.

Each neighborhood receives a score for each of the three domains and a composite COI score of *very low*, *low*, *moderate*, *high*, or *very high* in comparison with state and national averages.⁹ A *low* score means an area is underresourced; a *very high* COI score means the neighborhood has abundant resources for child success.

In Michigan, COI scores were available for 3,309 neighborhoods (census tracts) for 2021, the latest year available. Table 10 breaks down the availability of GSRP classrooms in 2023-24 by neighborhood COI score levels. In general, GSRP classrooms tend to be located in high-need neighborhoods, as reflected in low COI scores. Figure 3 shows a Michigan map of GSRP site locations in relation to neighborhood COI scores. For detailed information about specific locations, visit <https://cep.msu.edu/projects/great-start-readiness-program-state-evaluation/maps/sites-by-child-opportunity-index>.

Table 10. Neighborhood Child Opportunity Index Levels and GSRP Availability

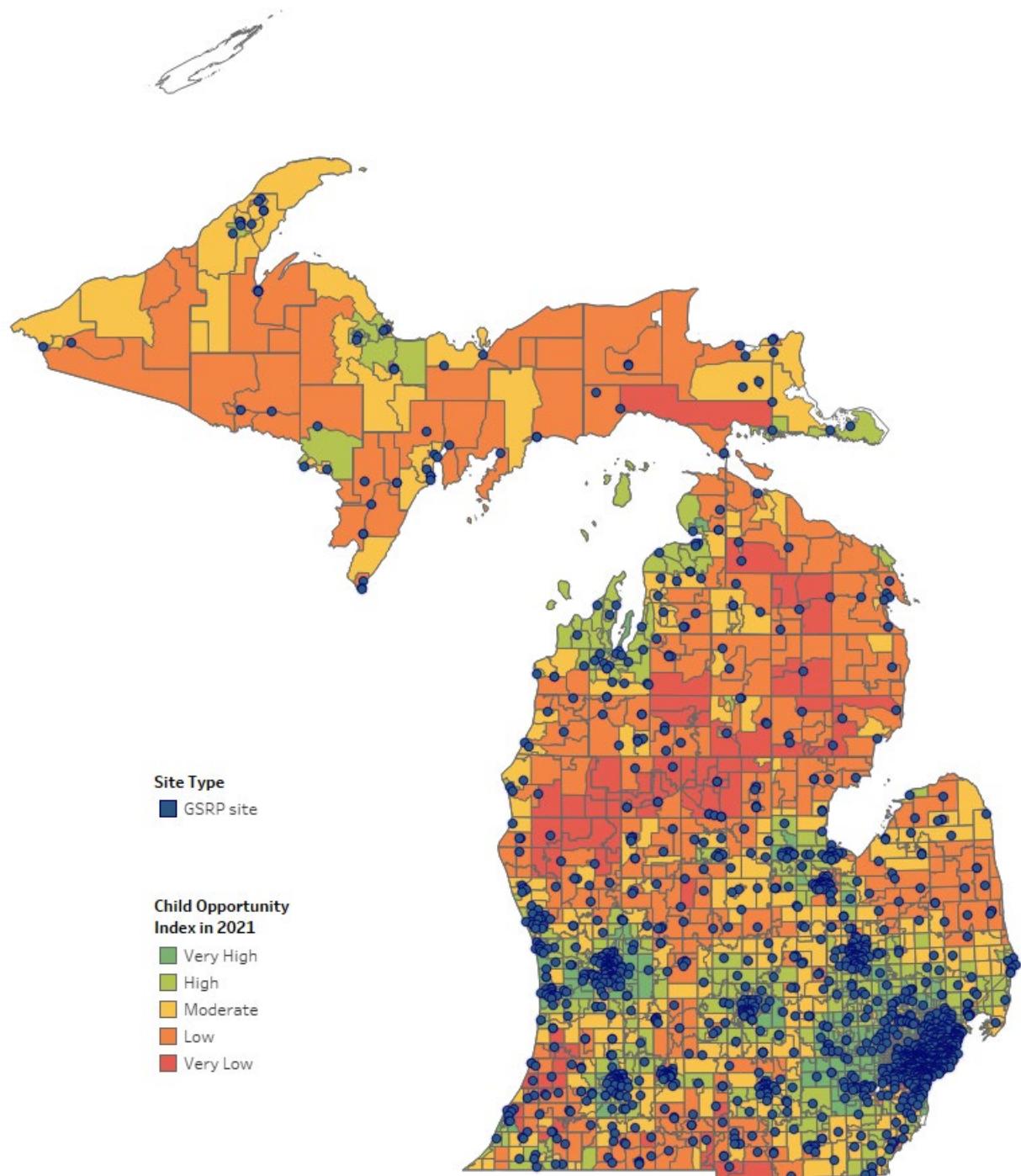
COI Level	Number of Michigan Neighborhoods (N = 3,309)	% of Michigan Neighborhoods	Number of GSRP Classrooms (N = 2,696*)	% of GSRP Classrooms
Very Low	716	22%	715	26%
Low	763	23%	804	30%
Moderate	679	20%	573	21%
High	623	19%	426	16%
Very High	528	16%	178	7%

* Of the 2,702 GSRP classrooms reported in 2023-24, COI scores were not available for six classrooms in three sites.

8 Acevedo-Garcia, D., Noelke, C., & McArdle, N. (2020). The geography of child opportunity: Why neighborhoods matter for equity. Introducing the Child Opportunity Index 2.0. Waltham, MA: diversitydatakids.org: Brandeis University, Heller School for Social Policy and Management.

9 Noelke, C., McArdle, N., DeVoe, B., Leonardos, M., Lu, Y., Ressler, R.W., & Acevedo-Garcia, D. (2024). Child Opportunity Index 3.0 Technical Documentation. diversitydatakids.org, Brandeis University. Retrieved from <https://www.diversitydatakids.org/research-library/research-report/coi-30-technical-documentation> on January 3, 2025.

Figure 3. GSRP Site Locations by Neighborhood Child Opportunity Index Levels



Service Utilization

To examine the extent to which eligible Michigan children were enrolled in publicly funded preschools, the evaluation team added the number of GSRP-funded slots in 2023-24 to the number of Head Start children in each ISD to estimate the number of children attending a free public preschool program. To arrive at an estimate of the four-year-old population, the team used U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey data estimates for 2023-24.

The income-eligibility threshold changed this year from 250% of FPL to 300%. Therefore, to understand what proportion of the target population in an ISD enrolled in a public preschool program, the evaluation team analyzed 2023-24 data based both on the current income-eligibility threshold (0-300% of FPL), shown in Figure 4, and on the low-income threshold used in 2022-23 and in the years before 2020 (0-250% of FPL), shown in Figure 5. The shading in Figure 4 and Figure 5 indicates the extent to which income-eligible children attended a GSRP or Head Start program, with darker shading representing higher utilization. The numbers of children served in GSRP, Head Start, and blended programs are displayed as columns with bases situated in the corresponding ISDs.



Picture credit: <https://pixabay.com>

A breakdown of the percentages of the income-eligible population and low-income population served in each ISD is in Table 11. One ISD served slightly less than half of the income-eligible children (up to 300% of FPL). Less than 60% of eligible children participated in a publicly funded preschool classroom in 12 ISDs; these are marked with hollow circles in Table 11. The 14 ISDs that enrolled at least 90% of income-eligible children are marked with black circles.

Table 11 also shows participation using the low-income (up to 250% of FPL) threshold. All ISDs accommodated at least 50% of low-income children. Twenty ISDs accepted at least 90% of such children; of these, 13 enrolled all low-income children in their area.

Data on the numbers of children placed on GSRP waitlists due to space limitations are shown in Table 12 and Figure 6. These displays show the numbers of children who were on waitlists at the end of the school year. The numbers most likely were higher at the beginning of the year; some children who were waitlisted early on would have been accepted into a GSRP program at some point during the school year. A total of 372 children from 29 ISDs completed applications but did not get a seat in a GSRP classroom in 2023-24. However, the waitlist numbers went significantly down in 2023-24 from the 2022-23 level. GSRP State Evaluation Advisory Committee members suggested that, in some sites, lack of staff rather than lack of space was the reason children were waitlisted; whole classrooms' worth of children could not be served because there were not enough teachers.

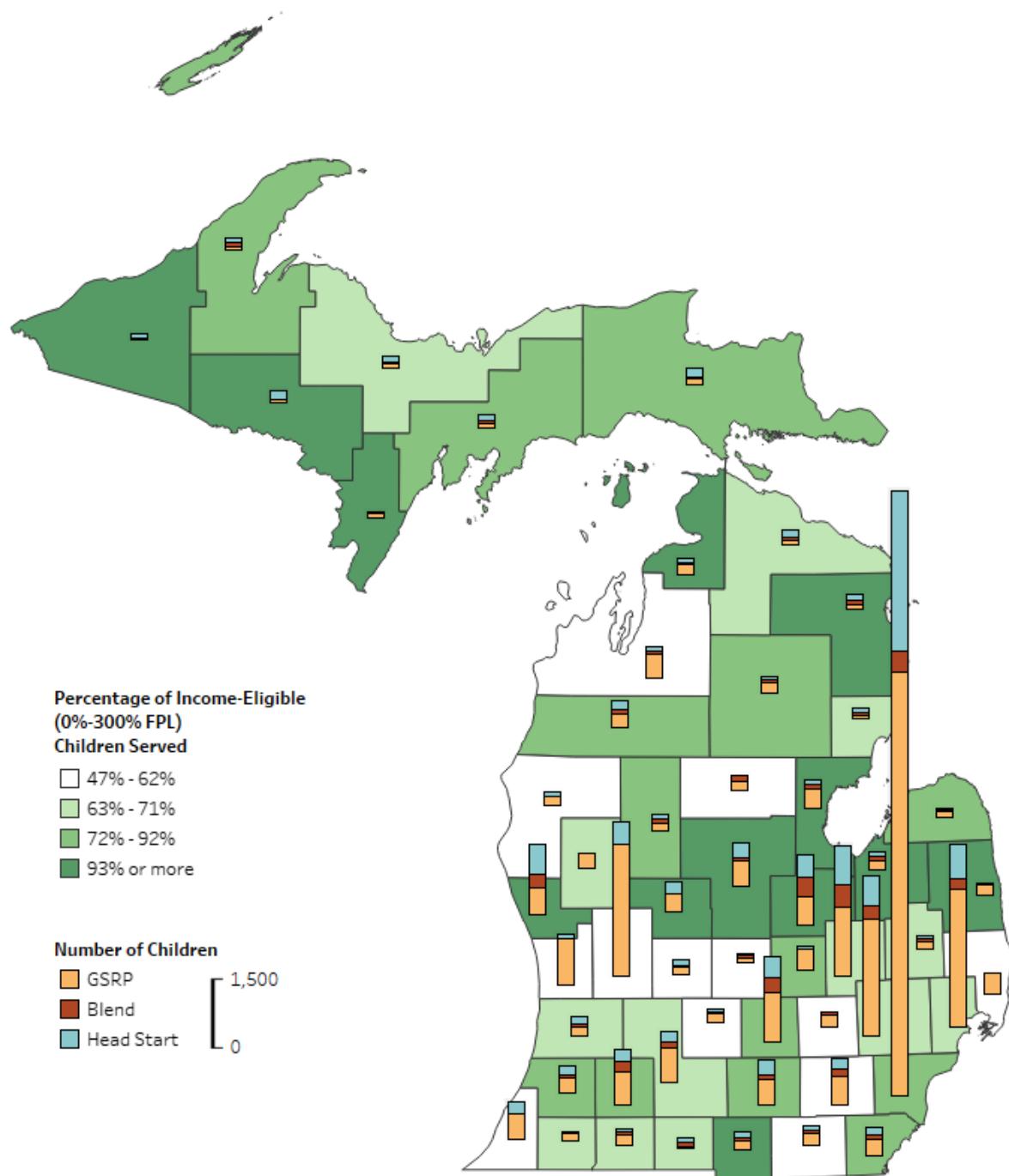
Table 11. Income-Eligible and Low-Income Children Served in Publicly Funded Preschool Programs by ISD

Agency	Percentage of Income-Eligible (0-300% of FPL) Children Served by GSRP or Head Start	Percentage of Low-Income (0- 250% of FPL) Children Served by GSRP or Head Start
Allegan Area ESA	68%	74%
AMA ESD	95% ●	100% ●
Bay-Arenac ISD	100% ●	100% ●
Berrien RESA	51% ○	54% ○
Branch ISD	66%	72%
C.O.O.R. ISD	79%	91% ●
Calhoun ISD *	68%	70%
Charlevoix-Emmet ISD	97% ●	100% ●
Cheb-Ots-Presque Isle ESD	66%	85%
Clare-Gladwin RESD	58% ○	58% ○
Clinton County RESA	51% ○	54% ○
Copper Country ISD	72%	73%
Delta-Schoolcraft ISD	90% ●	100% ●
Dickinson-Iron ISD	100% ●	100% ●
Eastern UP ISD	86%	96% ●
Eaton RESA	52% ○	53% ○
Genesee ISD	70%	80%
Gogebic-Ontonagon ISD	100% ●	100% ●
Heritage Southwest ISD	64%	62%
Hillsdale ISD	100% ●	100% ●
Huron ISD	82%	95% ●
Ingham ISD	88%	89%
Ionia ISD	62%	75%
Iosco RESA	68%	66%
Jackson ISD	72%	80%
Kalamazoo RESA	73%	84%
Kent ISD	59% ○	66%
Lapeer ISD	70%	72%
Lenawee ISD	56% ○	64%
Livingston ESA	47% ○	66%
Macomb ISD	71%	80%
Marquette-Alger RESA	66%	71%
Mecosta-Osceola ISD	88%	85%
Menominee ISD	100% ●	100% ●
Midland County ESA *	100% ●	100% ●
Monroe ISD	75%	93% ●
Montcalm Area ISD	100% ●	100% ●
Muskegon Area ISD	100% ●	100% ●
Newaygo County RESA	70%	72%
Northwest Education Services	54% ○	57% ○
Oakland Schools	71%	89%
Ottawa Area ISD	50% ○	58% ○
Saginaw ISD	100% ●	100% ●
Sanilac ISD	96% ●	95% ●
Shiawassee RESD	88%	90% ●
St. Clair County RESA	54% ○	60%
St. Joseph County ISD	63%	68%
Tuscola ISD	100% ●	100% ●
Van Buren ISD	86%	87%
Washtenaw ISD	52% ○	56% ○
Wayne RESA	74%	80%
West Shore ESD	54% ○	55% ○
Wexford-Missaukee ISD *	87%	91% ●

* Calhoun ISD includes Barry ISD, Midland County ESA includes Gratiot-Isabella RESD, and Wexford-Missaukee ISD includes Manistee ISD.

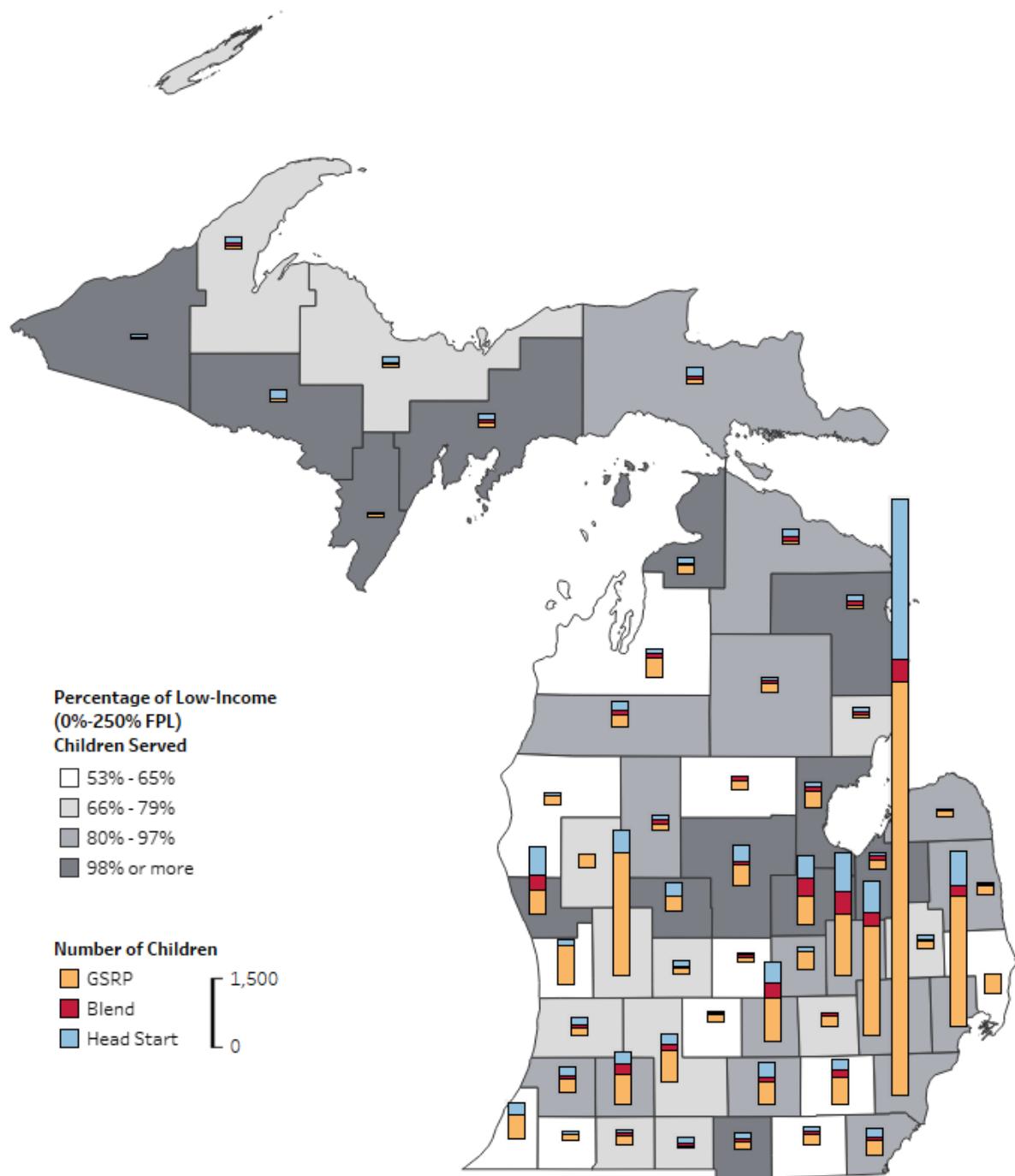
● - at least 90%; ○- less than 60%.

Figure 4. Map of Income-Eligible Children Attending Publicly Funded Preschool Programs



Note: Calhoun ISD includes Barry ISD, Midland County ESA includes Gratiot-Isabella RESD, and Wexford-Missaukee ISD includes Manistee ISD.

Figure 5. Map of Low-Income Children Attending Publicly Funded Preschool Programs



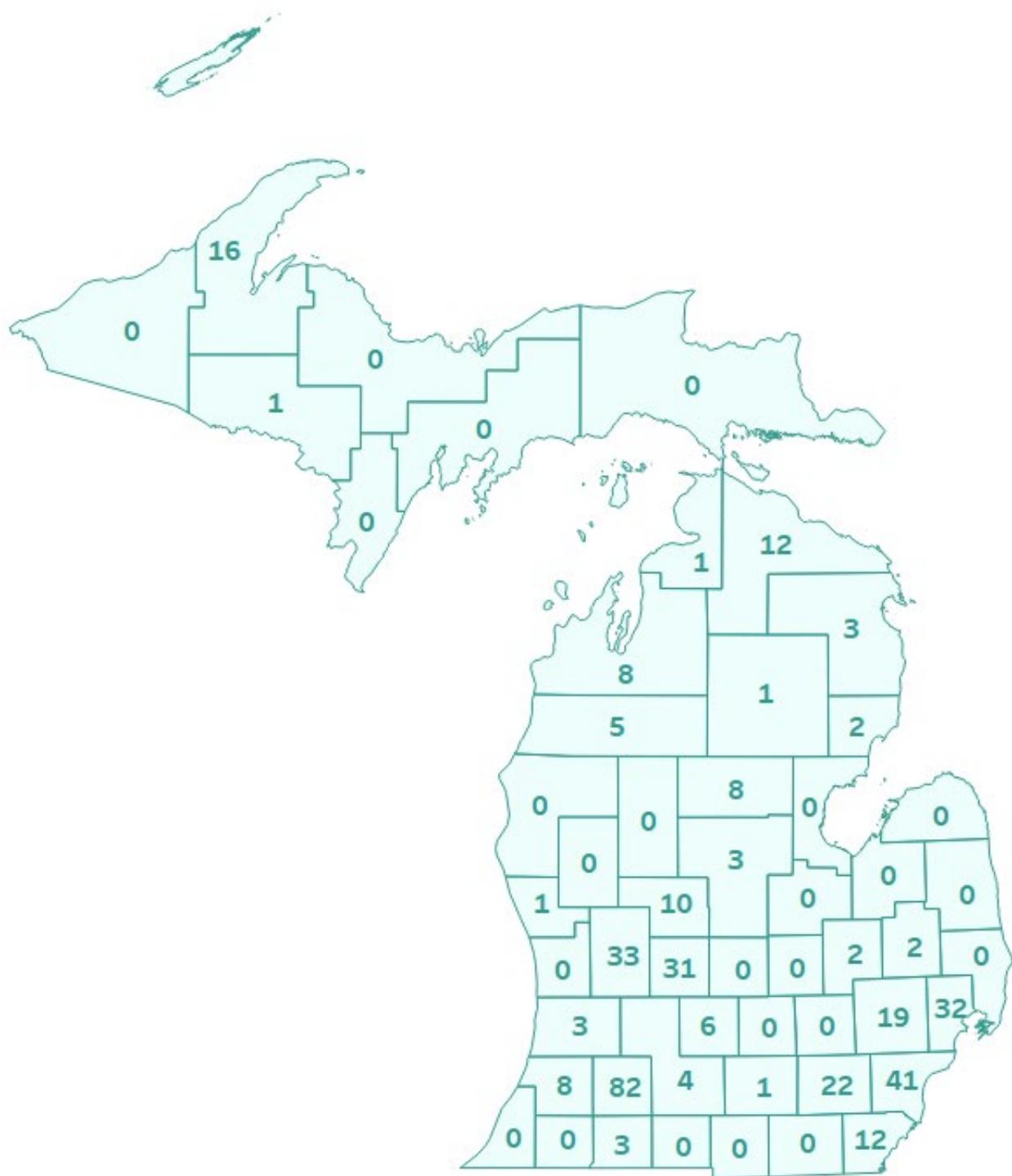
Note: Calhoun ISD includes Barry ISD, Midland County ESA includes Gratiot-Isabella RESD, and Wexford-Missaukee ISD includes Manistee ISD.

Table 12. Children on GSRP Waitlists by ISD

Agency	Children Waitlisted in 2023-24	Change	Children Waitlisted in 2022-23
Michigan	372	▼	481
Allegan Area ESA	3	▼	4
AMA ESD	3	▼	11
Bay-Arenac ISD	0	--	0
Berrien RESA	0	--	0
Branch ISD	0	▼	17
C.O.O.R. ISD	1	▼	2
Calhoun ISD *	4	▲	0
Charlevoix-Emmet ISD	1	▲	0
Cheb-Ots-Presque Isle ESD	12	▼	27
Clare-Gladwin RESD	8	▼	21
Clinton County RESA	0	--	0
Copper Country ISD	16	▼	20
Delta-Schoolcraft ISD	0	--	0
Dickinson-Iron ISD	1	--	1
Eastern UP ISD	0	--	0
Eaton RESA	6	▼	22
Genesee ISD	2	▼	12
Gogebic-Ontonagon ISD	0	--	0
Heritage Southwest ISD	0	--	0
Hillsdale ISD	0	--	0
Huron ISD	0	--	0
Ingham ISD	0	--	0
Ionia ISD	31	▲	21
Iosco RESA	2	▲	0
Jackson ISD	1	▼	5
Kalamazoo RESA	82	▼	117
Kent ISD	33	▲	0
Lapeer ISD	2	▼	6
Lenawee ISD	0	--	0
Livingston ESD	0	--	0
Macomb ISD	32	▼	39
Marquette-Alger RESA	0	--	0
Mecosta-Osceola ISD	0	▼	9
Menominee ISD	0	--	0
Midland County ESD *	3	--	3
Monroe ISD	12	▲	0
Montcalm Area ISD	10	▼	25
Muskegon Area ISD	1	▼	3
Newaygo County RESA	0	--	0
Northwest Education Services	8	▲	5
Oakland Schools	19	▼	26
Ottawa Area ISD	0	--	0
Saginaw ISD	0	--	0
Sanilac ISD	0	--	0
Shiawassee RESD	0	--	0
St. Clair County RESA	0	▼	8
St. Joseph County ISD	3	▲	0
Tuscola ISD	0	--	0
Van Buren ISD	8	▼	11
Washtenaw ISD	22	▼	28
Wayne RESA	41	▲	20
West Shore ESD	0	▼	5
Wexford-Missaukee ISD *	5	▼	13

* Calhoun ISD includes Barry ISD, Midland County ESD includes Gratiot-Isabella RESD, and Wexford-Missaukee ISD includes Manistee ISD.

Figure 6. Map of Children on GSRP Waitlists by ISD



Note: Calhoun ISD includes Barry ISD, Midland County ESA includes Gratiot-Isabella RESD, and Wexford-Missaukee ISD includes Manistee ISD.

Conclusion

The total number of children GSRP sites served in 2023-24, at 41,430, was nearly 8% higher than in 2022-23, as enrollment rebounded after the pandemic. The fact that children from families with higher incomes, up to 300% of FPL, were allowed into the program may have contributed to the increase. Still, 372 children remained on waitlists for various reasons till the end of the school year. It is also worth reiterating that the number of GSRP children reported in other documents (41,120) was based on the enrollment count in the mid-February, not the entire school year.

About 92% of GSRP children came from families with household income of up to 300% of FPL. A large majority of the children (86%) came from families designated as low income (up to 250% of FPL). About 66% of the children had at least one eligibility factor other than income. About 49% of GSRP participants were members of racial or ethnic minority groups, as compared with 21% of all Michigan children under five years of age.¹⁰ Less than 3% of enrolled children attended more than one site. Families whose children attended more than one site may have relocated, or they may have switched to a site perceived to be more appropriate for the child or more convenient for the caregiver.

The 53 ISDs and consortia that managed MILEAP GSRP grants in 2023-24 oversaw subrecipients that operated 2,702 classrooms in 1,429 sites—an increase of 77 sites and 147 classrooms over 2022-23. Over half (54%) of GSRP classrooms were operated by school entities, including districts and ISDs. The other 46% were operated by a variety of organizations ranging from community-based non-profits to institutions of higher education and a few for-profit companies. About 88% of children were funded exclusively by GSRP and 12% by a blend of GSRP and Head Start funding. Most children attended school-day rather than part-day programming; 16% of children attended Extended Week/Year programs, which essentially follow the elementary school schedule.

The vast majority of Michigan's land area was located within 20 miles of a GSRP site. Because Michigan's population is concentrated in urban and surrounding suburban areas, this finding suggests that the proportion of residents who live near GSRP sites is high.



Picture credit: <https://pixabay.com>

Encouraging trends have been observed again this year: the number of sites and classrooms increased, and more children were served. However, program administrators have indicated that staffing remains GSRP's biggest challenge. Due to the lack of complete data on GSRP staffing in 2023-24, evaluators were not able to assess the number of teachers, their qualifications, or their compensation and benefits. However, findings from past years suggest that the ability of ISDs to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers depends on continuous improvement in pay and benefits, aiming toward the compensation enjoyed by K-12 teachers.

¹⁰ U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/MI/AGE135222>. Accessed: January 17, 2025.

Appendix A. GSRP Grantees (Simplified)

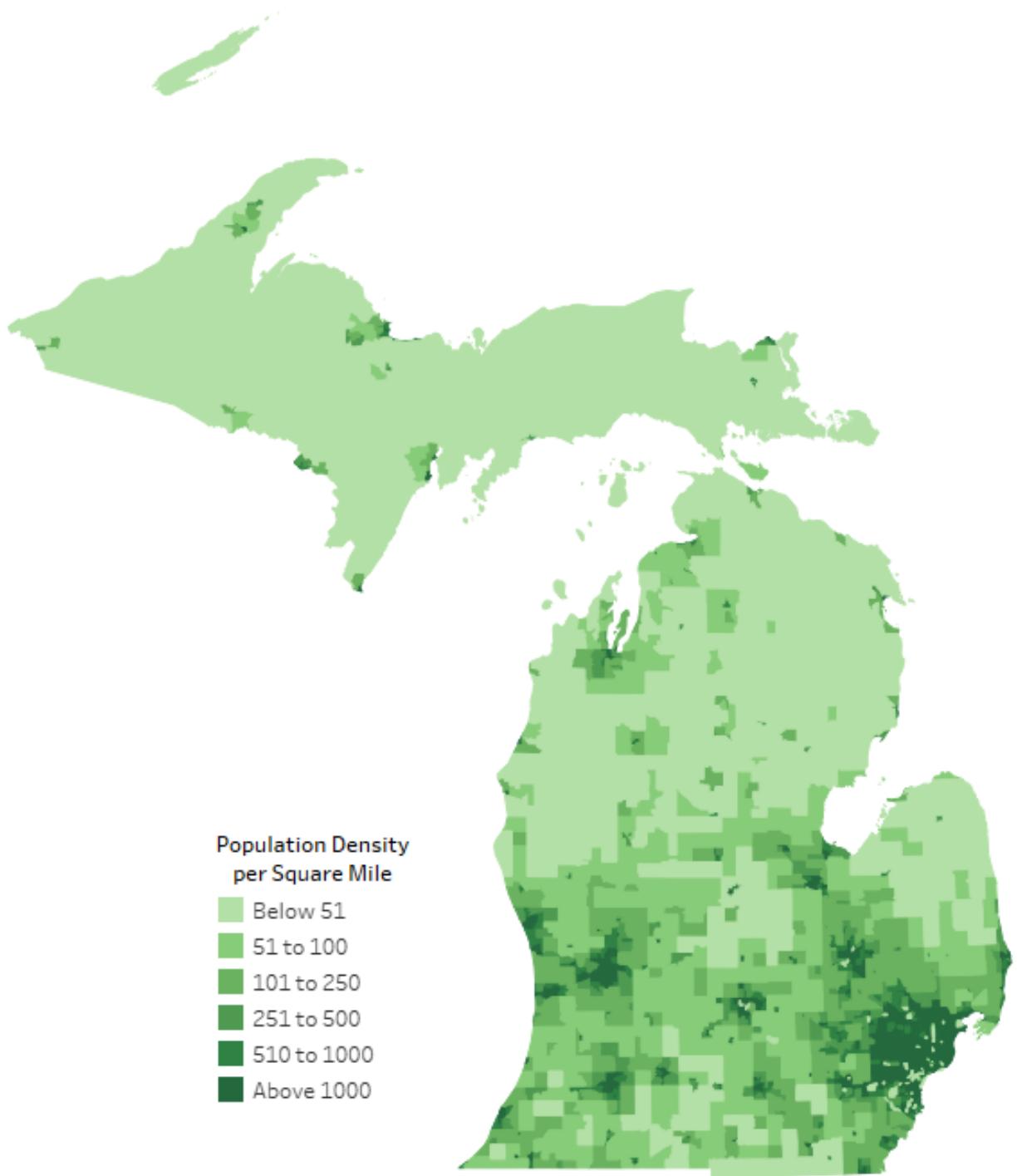


Appendix B. GSRP Grantees (Actual Boundaries)



Note: Midland County ESA includes Gratiot-Isabella RESD, and Wexford-Missaukee ISD includes Manistee ISD.

Appendix C. Michigan Population Density Map



Data sourced from American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year averages (2018-2022). Accessed via IPUMS NHGIS, University of Minnesota, www.nhgis.org.