

Community Facilities and Services

One of the principal functions of local government is to provide services and amenities to residents, such as public safety and infrastructure. The following chapter will inventory community facilities and services near and around Leelanau Township.

Township Hall and Library

The Township Hall holds the offices for all Township administrative staff including the Supervisor, Clerk, Treasurer, Assessor, and Zoning Administrator. The regular meetings of the Township Board and Commissions are held at the Township Hall. Attached to the Township Hall is the Township Library. The Township Library has one full-time director and two part-time assistants. As of 2021, there are 3,048 library cardholders and despite the COVID-19 pandemic the library circulated over 18,000 items.¹ The Township Library is funded through... Typically, libraries operate independently of local government, are managed by an independent library board, and funded through a local millage. The unique governance format of the Township Library means that library decisions and management are made by the Township Board, which has numerous other responsibilities. To adequately cover library management and operations an advisory board should be formed to explore alternative governance and funding formats. The advisory board can then make recommendations for the Township Board for how the library should operate in the future.

Woolsey Airport

Woolsey Airport is an unmanned airport terminal with two runways and four hangars. The grass runways are lined with pilot-activated landing lights and a lighted windsock. The historic terminal has restroom facilities, picnic tables, and an emergency telephone. The small nature of the airport mean that it is only used by small private aircraft. Potential improvements for Woolsey Airport, as outlined in the 2022 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, include developing a parking area, adding a canoe/kayak launch on Mud Lake, and a viewing platform on Mud Lake. There is a community desire to use the airport for more community events which would require further development and improvement of existing facilities.

Emergency Services

Leelanau Township provides emergency fire and ambulance services to residents. Current services provided include fire response and EMS services. The Township Fire Department has ____ full-time and ____ part-time staff. In addition to supporting emergency services, the Fire Hall serves as a public meeting place. In 2020, the Emergency Services Department responded to 390 calls, an increase of 8.6% from the year prior. In 2020 a millage was approved by voters for continued operation of the emergency services.²

Wastewater Treatment

The Village of Northport and Leelanau Township operate a joint wastewater system. The system extends outwards from the Village south, along N Dawn Haven Rd and north from the Village along N Shore Dr and Northport Point Rd (figure XX). All new development within the service area

¹ Leelanau Township Supervisors Report 2020-2021, https://www.leelanau.gov/downloads/supervisors_annual_report_april_2021_final.pdf

² Ibid.

must connect to the system and neighboring property owners can petition the authority to connect to the system. The system has available space and capacity to expand, if needed in the future. One private system exists in the Township and serves the developments on Northport Pointe.

Schools

The Township is intersected by two school districts, Northport Public Schools and Leland Public Schools. The majority of the Township is in the Northport School District and a few areas on the western side are in the Leland Public Schools District.

Northport Public Schools

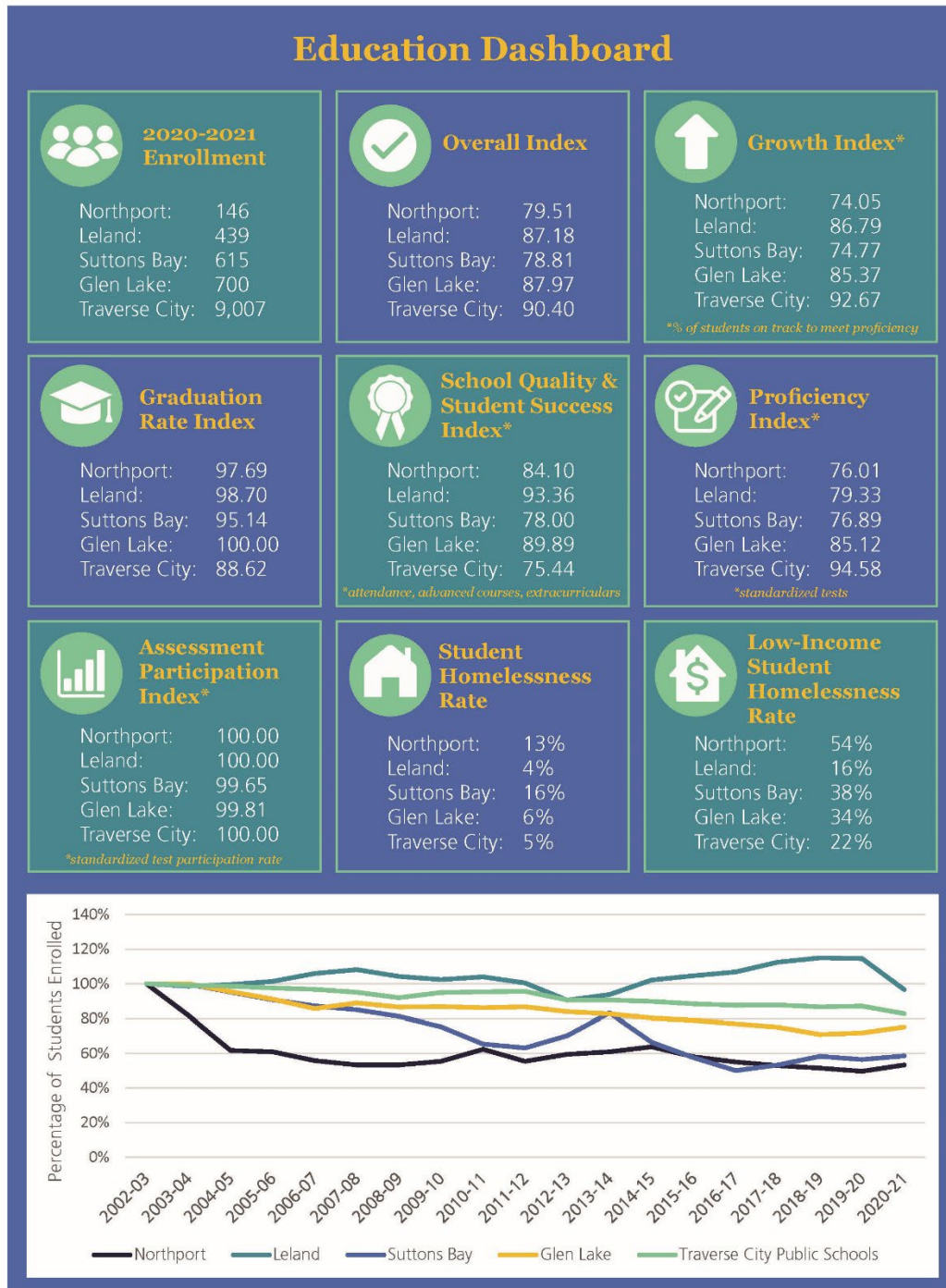
Northport has a total enrollment of 146 students K-12, making it one of the smallest public schools in the region. Despite its small size the Northport Schools provide drama, art, music, and Spanish courses. Additionally, students have the opportunity to participate in soccer, basketball, and volleyball at the varsity and junior varsity level. The State scores schools on a scale of 0-100 on various metrics (see education dashboard), overall Northport Public Schools scored a 79.51 due to their high graduation rate and student success.³ Since 2003 the number of students enrolled has declined but remained relatively consistent over the past 10 years (see education dashboard), however given the small student body the loss of even a few students has a profound impact. According to a 2018 student homelessness report by the Poverty Solutions Center at the University of Michigan, Northport Public Schools has the highest rate of low-income student homelessness in the State. Of the low-income students in the school, 54% of the students experience housing instability at some point during the school year, significantly higher than the district with the second highest rate, Suttons Bay Public Schools (38%).⁴ Housing instability is positively correlated to lower graduation rates which can foster a generational cycle of poverty and housing instability because those who do not graduate high school tend to have the lowest incomes.

Leland Public Schools

Leland is slightly bigger than Northport Public Schools with an enrollment of 439 students K-12 in the 2020-2021 school year making it the second smallest school district in the County. In addition to the core curriculum students have the opportunity to participate in extracurricular robotics, music, drama, and athletics. Overall, Leland Public Schools received a score of 87.81 from the State, due to its high marks in the assessment participation and graduation rate indexes.

³ School Index, MI School Data, <https://www.mischooldata.org/school-index/>

⁴ Erb-Downward, J., Evangelist, M., "A Snapshot of Homelessness and Housing Instability in Michigan Schools", Poverty Solutions – University of Michigan, 2018
http://sites.fordschool.umich.edu/poverty2021/files/2021/03/Student-Homelessness-in-Policy-Brief_4.19.18.pdf



Actions

- Form a Library Advisory Board to explore alternative library governance formats and funding sources.
- Continue to collaborate with the Village of Northport on wastewater treatment services