

BELLE PLAINE PUBLIC SCHOOLS DISTRICT 716 UPDATE



Last month, we proudly celebrated the grand opening of our new adaptive playground at Chatfield Elementary. This inclusive space is a wonderful addition for our students, ensuring that all children, regardless of ability, have a safe and fun environment to play. We had an amazing turnout for the dedication ceremony held on Wednesday, September 25th, with the community coming together to mark this exciting occasion. We believe this is only the 5th adaptive playground in the state that has been built at a school. There are adaptive playgrounds in communities across the state but most of them are not located on school property.



NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENT LEARNING

One of our core strategic goals is to close the opportunity gap by continually offering unique and engaging learning experiences for our students. Here are just a few of the exciting new courses we've introduced in recent years:



College-Level Chemistry: Students now have the chance to earn college credit while still in high school, giving them a head start on their academic careers.



Podcast Development: This innovative course has drawn over 80 students, providing a platform for creative expression and modern communication skills.

Agriscience Expansion: Our Agriscience department has rolled out multiple new courses, enriching students' understanding of agricultural science & related fields.



Physical Education Certification: Students can now become certified officials through a new PE course, gaining practical, job-ready skills that can lead to immediate employment.



Construction Trades: In a hands-on course this fall, students are building a 50x12 shed at the softball field, providing real-world construction experience.

This year, we have 40 students enrolled in courses at Southwest Metro, taking advantage of specialized programs in a variety of fields. These courses include Automotive, Cosmetology I & II, Criminal Justice, Culinary Arts, Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) and EMR Internship, Residential Electric, Computer Repair, and Computer Networking.

We are excited to see how these opportunities help our students grow academically and professionally, preparing them for a bright future.

MN TECHNOLOGY & ENGINEERING EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION (MTEEA) Professional Support Award

We are thrilled to announce that our administrative team, including Superintendent Ryan Lager, Business Director Chuck Keller, Principal Mindy Chevalier, and Assistant Principal Margot Hansen, has been selected to receive the 2024 MTEEA Professional Support-Administration Award. This honor will be presented at the upcoming fall conference on September 27th in St. Cloud. The team was nominated by Ryan Giles, who shared the following in his submission:

"After 20 years at my previous school, I took a leap of faith and joined Belle

Plaine and I couldn't be more grateful. The leadership and support I've received here—from scheduling classes to promoting new Industrial Technology programs—have been unmatched in my career. It is with great enthusiasm that I recommend our Administrative Team for this award." - Ryan Giles

Congratulations to the entire team on this well-deserved recognition!

LITERACY WEBSITE

Over the past few years, we've worked diligently to establish ourselves as a leader in implementing a cutting-edge literacy curriculum based on the Science of Reading. This research-backed approach is designed to enhance reading skills for all students, ensuring they build a strong foundation for lifelong learning.

We're excited to announce a new section on our website dedicated to providing valuable literacy resources for parents, staff, and students. Whether you're looking for information on the curriculum, strategies to support your child's reading journey, or helpful materials for educators, you'll find it all in this new resource hub.

If you have any questions about our literacy initiatives or would like tips on how to support your child's reading development at home, we encourage you to explore our new website. Stay tuned as we continue to expand and update this space with the latest tools and information.



STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Michelle Amundson, has been a teacher in Belle Plaine Public Schools since the fall of 1997, totaling 27.5 years of service in our district. Michelle



currently teaches Physical Education and Developmental Adapted Physical Education at Oak Crest to 3rd through 6th graders. Michelle has built great relationships with all of the students who have passed through her gym and is responsible for the creation and implementation of many celebrated BP traditions. Mrs. Amundson is the founder of the 5th grade dance and has worked with music teachers to teach ballroom dance skills for the memorable event. Michelle teaches roller skating to all 3rd-6th graders which is a unique unit of study in any school. She also organizes track and field days for our Oak Crest students and invites high school track athletes to instruct at each station creating a community connection. Finally, we have renamed our spring OC 5k run to the Amundson Annual 5k in honor of her efforts to keep this challenge alive for 25 years. Michelle believes in the importance of physical and social health and wellness. She has used the PE classroom as a place to teach life skills, improve fitness, and help students gain confidence and belief in themselves. Michelle has made a lasting impact on the lives of many students and adults and will be missed greatly in our schools as she retires in early December.

THANK YOU MRS. AMUNDSON!

Ryan Laager
Superintendent



ECRWSS
POSTAL PATRON
STANDARD
US POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT #24
BELLE PLAINE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

