

BELLE PLAINE PUBLIC SCHOOLS DISTRICT 716 UPDATE



Coming out of the disruptions of COVID our staff has worked very hard to find and implement the best core curriculum possible to help our students overcome any learning loss that so many students across the state experienced. We are thrilled to share some exciting news about the progress our students have made on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) this year. Our district has seen a significant improvement in both math and reading scores, a testament to the hard work and dedication of our students, teachers, and staff.

Highlights of Our Achievement:

Math Proficiency: Two years ago we adopted a new math curriculum in grades 6-12. We knew there would be some growing pains during the first year. There is a significant professional development component for staff and it moves kids to a modern, real world approach to learning math through working in collaborative teams. We also knew by reviewing the research and talking to districts who had been using the curriculum it would be highly beneficial for our students.

As a result of the hard work of our math teachers and students this year, Belle Plaine Public Schools have seen an increase of nearly 8% in math proficiency across all grade levels. Looking specifically at where we implemented CPM (grades 6, 7, 8) we saw significant year-over-year growth as well as cohort growth. Specifically at 7th grade we saw 18% growth and 8th grade we saw 20.6% growth.

Year-over-year math growth:

- 6th grade 1.8%
- 7th grade 18%
- 8th grade 20.6%

We also saw significant improvement in cohort growth (cohort growth means all 6th grade students in 2022 and how they did as 7th graders in 2023).

Cohort growth:

- 6th graders (2022) scores as 7th graders 2023 improved by 4.5%
- 7th graders (2022) scores as 8th graders 2023 improved by 13.6%



**HOME COMING
FOOTBALL GAME**



**Friday, September 27
vs St. Peter @ 7:00PM**

Our students have outperformed their previous scores, demonstrating strong mathematical understanding and problem-solving skills. This improvement reflects the effectiveness of our math curriculum and the innovative teaching strategies employed by our educators.

The Prior Lake-Savage School District adopted and is just implementing CPM this school year (2024-2025).

READING PROFICIENCY

Our reading scores are showing steady growth both year-over-year as well as by cohort. Two years ago we adopted a science based literacy program after a comprehensive review led by our teachers and administrators to select the best available curriculum for our students. Students have displayed a deeper comprehension of texts, improved critical thinking, and enhanced literacy skills. The progress in reading is a direct result of the targeted reading programs and literacy initiatives that have been implemented over the past few years.

As a result of the hard work of our teachers and students this year, Belle Plaine Public Schools have seen an increase of 6.5% in reading proficiency across all grade levels.

Year-over-year reading growth:

- 3rd grade 8.1%
- 4th grade Flat
- 5th grade 1.4%
- 6th grade -2.5%
- 7th grade 7.9%
- 8th grade 11.1%

We also saw steady improvement in cohort growth (i.e. cohort growth means all 3rd grade students in 2022 and how they did as 4th graders in 2023)

Cohort growth:

- 3rd graders (2022) scores as 4th graders 2023 improved by 2.5%
- 4th graders (2022) scores as 5th graders 2023 improved by 5.7%
- 5th graders (2022) scores as 6th graders 2023 improved by 1.6%

- 7th graders (2022) scores as 8th graders 2023 improved by 13.4%
- 6th graders (2022) scores as 7th graders 2023 declined by 11.2%

KEY FACTORS

Key Factors Behind the Success:

1. Dedicated Educators: Our teachers have been at the forefront of this achievement, continuously adapting their teaching methods to meet the diverse needs of our students. Their commitment to professional development and their passion for teaching have been instrumental in driving this success.

2. Enhanced Curriculum: Over the past few years, we have made strategic changes to our curriculum in both math and reading, focusing on rigorous academic standards and 21st Century real-world application of knowledge. These changes have provided our students with the tools they need to excel in both math and reading.

LOOKING AHEAD

While we are incredibly proud of these achievements, we remain committed to continuous improvement. Our goal is to ensure that every student in Belle Plaine Public Schools has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

We will continue to refine our instructional practices, provide targeted support where needed, and celebrate the successes of our students.

Thank you for your ongoing support and partnership in making Belle Plaine Public Schools a place where excellence in education thrives. Together, we can continue to build on this momentum and ensure that our students are well-prepared for the future.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Kim (Witt) Gwozdziwicz's contributions to Belle Plaine Public Schools are invaluable. As a Belle Plaine graduate, she has played a crucial role in advancing the district's literacy efforts, particularly by leading the selection of a science-based literacy curriculum.

Kim's dedication to her students is evident in the profound impact she has on their lives, and both students and parents alike recognize the difference she makes every day in the classroom.

Courtney (Hoelz) Schmidt's dedication to her profession is truly inspiring. As a Belle Plaine graduate, she has not only returned to contribute to her community but has also gone above and beyond by being one of our first teachers to complete the rigorous LETRS training on her own time. Her commitment to mastering the Science of Reading through over 140 hours of professional development demonstrates her passion for teaching and her desire to provide the best education possible for her students.

Tony Hartman's return to Belle Plaine as a teacher has been a tremendous blessing for the district. His natural talent as an actor, combined with his dedication as an educator, has not only led to the success of the One Act Play program but has also inspired his students to believe in their potential. Tony's ability to connect with and motivate his students is a testament to his gift as an educator, and the impact he has on the community is profound.

Tracy (Fahey) Witt's dedication to Belle Plaine's youngest learners is truly commendable. As a Belle Plaine graduate, she has returned to her roots to contribute to the success of the district's preschool program, which is a cornerstone of students' academic development. The growth and achievements of these young students are a testament to the hard work and commitment of Tracy and her fellow preschool teachers. The district is fortunate to have such passionate and dedicated educators who make a lasting impact from the very beginning of a child's educational journey.

Ryan Laager
Superintendent

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