

BELLE PLAINE PUBLIC SCHOOLS DISTRICT 716 UPDATE



HIGHLIGHTING GRAPHIC DESIGN

Our students excel in so many different areas, and one of the greatest joys of being part of Belle Plaine Public Schools is witnessing the incredible talent of our staff and students across every aspect of our school system. Whether it's academics, activities, or the arts, our students continue to thrive and shine.

Our Graphic Design course is just one example of where our students' creativity and dedication take center stage. Their outstanding work is currently displayed in the windows of the Media Center, showcasing their unique talents in the arts.

Here are some of the featured projects:

Streaming Service Mockup

Created in Photoshop

Students designed screens for a faux streaming service featuring books instead of movies or TV shows. These creative layouts, intended for a library's screen savers, required students to focus on typography, gradients, and effective use of layers, all while selecting from six popular streaming service styles.

Animal Mashup

Created in Photoshop

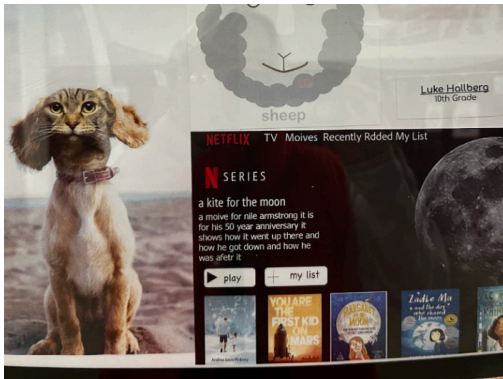
This project tasked students with creating hybrid creatures, combining animals or animals with objects for a video gaming company. They explored copyright law to ensure all images were free use, public domain, or under a Creative Commons license. Students applied layer and clipping masks to craft seamless and imaginative combinations.

Playing Cards

Created in Illustrator

Students developed a cohesive set of four playing cards for a gaming company, utilizing vector artwork. Each design was tied to a specific theme, and students justified their creative choices, explaining how their work fit the needs of their "client."





Animal Logo

Created in Illustrator

For this assignment, students crafted logos and icons for a zoo’s animal exhibits. This introductory vector artwork project challenged them to pair their designs with complementary fonts and demonstrate how their logos could adapt across different sizes and backgrounds.

How-To Review (Orange Slice)

Created in Photoshop, with Illustrator

Students selected a how-to video, followed it, and wrote a review for their peers. They then applied the learned skill to future projects. For instance, one student mastered a glowing effect technique and incorporated it into their final design of magical creatures.



We couldn’t be prouder of the creativity and hard work our students display in every project. Their talent and dedication are an inspiration, and we’re thrilled to celebrate their achievements.

STANDARDS UPDATE

As we look ahead, significant changes are coming to the state standards in math, science, and literacy. Our team has been proactively developing plans to help our staff adjust effectively, ensuring our students receive top-tier instruction aligned with the new expectations.

MATH

Math standards are shifting from 4 areas with 14 standards to 3 areas with 7 standards. A strong emphasis will be placed on Data Analysis and incorporating eight specific math practices throughout the standards.

- **Grades 6-12:** Our CPM curriculum already integrates these practices, positioning us well for this transition.
- **Grades K-5:** The current curriculum does not fully embed the new practices, requiring us to address gaps and new practices.

To meet these changes, a teacher group will begin meeting in February to map out adjustments, with the majority of work occurring over the summer.

LITERACY

We are ahead of schedule in literacy. Our science-based literacy curriculum, **AMPLIFY CKLA**, is in its third year, and all teachers are on track to complete CORE or LETRS training. This initiative has been a game-changer, engaging students across all grades with content that enhances their learning experience and introduces them to concepts they hadn’t encountered before.

SCIENCE

Science standards also bring exciting updates, a focus on phenomenon based inquiry as they embed the revised standards. A smaller group of science teachers will begin work this summer to dive into the changes. Some elementary teachers have already started reviewing the updates, and the Junior/Senior High Content Area Experts have been embedding these instructional strategies and standards over the past 2 years. We will share more information as we dig deeper into these strategies in K-6.

LITERACY WORK

In 2023, the state legislature passed the READ Act, which introduced several important initiatives to strengthen literacy education. Among the key requirements, all districts must adopt a science-based, research-backed literacy curriculum and ensure all teachers complete defined literacy instructional professional development by 2027.

At Belle Plaine Public Schools, we are proud to be well ahead of these requirements. Our teachers adopted a science-based literacy curriculum two years before the legislation mandated it. Additionally, they have demonstrated exceptional dedication by committing to this professional learning and are on track to complete the required training by the fall of 2025—two years ahead of the deadline.

Our students benefit every day from the incredible commitment of our staff, who consistently strive to provide the most current and effective curriculum and instructional strategies. Their efforts reflect their unwavering dedication to ensuring student success.

STAFF HIGHLIGHT

This year, Emily Seehusen made the move from teaching kindergarten to first grade at Chatfield, and she’s done it so smoothly! Emily is such a creative and passionate teacher who truly cares about her students and brings so much energy to her classroom.

During our recent eLearning day, Emily went the extra mile by hosting a Google Meeting, helping her students stay connected with each other, and bringing a bit of normalcy to a very different kind of school day. She’s amazing at creating her lessons to meet all her students’ needs. Emily always finds fun, creative ways to keep her kids engaged, whether that’s adding movement or bringing her unique flair to her lessons. The most recent time I was in her classroom, she was playing a game to engage them in literacy and learning tricky words by having students play word baseball.

We’re so lucky to have Emily on our team. She’s making a big difference for her students every single day!

Ryan Laager
Superintendent



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