

Blue Valley High School

Blue Valley School District, Stilwell, Kansas

Location type: Suburban

District enrollment: 22,400 students

School enrollment: 1,402 students

Percentage of students at school eligible for free and reduced price meals: 6

Key Takeaways

When Blue Valley High School (BVHS) took the assessment during the pilot of the OECD Test for Schools in 2012, 22% of students performed below level 2 in math, meaning that almost a quarter of students were ill-prepared to compete with their global peers.

Actions Taken

-  In response to these results, the school began its improvement process by sharing the data with staff and students. Conversations with students regarding the data led to increased buy-in among students as they learned about global assessments and why the OECD Test for Schools is valuable. The school felt that these conversations prompted students to become more motivated to take learning seriously and perform well.
-  BVHS also began working closely with its feeder middle schools to establish specific curricular approaches, including solving problems in class to provide students with support and ensure understanding and making problems more interesting and relevant to students' lives.
-  BVHS and its middle schools also promoted struggling as acceptable and as a way to promote deeper understanding.
-  At the high school level, BVHS put in place a number of initiatives, such as developing critical thinking activities during professional learning community meetings, administering frequent formative assessments to ensure that students understand the basics, promoting test corrections (where students first explain why their response to a test question was incorrect and then must solve it correctly), and devoting class time to working through problems.

-  BVHS attended both the 2013 and 2014 Global Learning Network national convenings and served as a featured presenter during the Global Learning Network's webinar on math.

-  Moving forward, BVHS is continuing conversations with staff about the proficiency levels so that teachers understand what students need to know to be globally competitive. The school is also focusing on reviewing sample questions and incorporating those into classroom assignments and assessments.

When the school took the OECD Test for Schools again during the 2013-2014 school year, the proportion of students performing below Level 2 in math dropped to less than 2 percent. In the 2014-2015 administration of the test, the number of students performing at the highest proficiency levels (levels 5 and 6) rose 12 percent in math compared with the 2013-2014 results.

Those wishing to learn more about the practices at Blue Valley High School may visit the school's website [here](#).