

Blue Valley School District

Overland Park, Kansas

Location type: Suburban

District enrollment: 22,400 students

Percentage of students in district eligible for free and reduced price meals: 8.4

Key Takeaways

Blue Valley School District has administered the OECD Test for Schools annually, beginning in 2012. Although the district's results are high relative to the national average and have already risen since 2012, the district has identified areas for growth, particularly with regard to the higher proficiency levels in all content areas and developing deep and wide readers. Additionally, while comparing OECD Test for Schools results with data from other high school assessments, the district realized that the OECD Test for Schools established a uniquely high bar in terms of what students need to know and be able to do to be globally competitive. Finally, because the OECD Test for Schools uses a sampling technique, the results were representative of the progress of all Blue Valley students, not just those who participated in the assessment.

Actions Taken

-  Blue Valley shared its results with internal stakeholders, including feeder schools, and external stakeholders, including parents and community members. In 2014, Blue Valley School District created a district-level report of its OECD Test for Schools results by aggregating the data from its five schools and shared it with external stakeholders. The report highlighted important data points regarding the performance of Blue Valley's high schools and outlined areas of focus for improvement efforts for the 2014-2015 school year. Because Blue Valley performs well on standard outcome metrics, the effect of sharing the OECD Test for Schools results has been to create a greater sense of urgency to push for higher levels of achievement.
 -  School leaders cross-walked OECD Test for Schools, AP, and ACT results to determine gaps in students' knowledge and skills to inform school improvement plans.
 -  Working within feeder schools, the district's elementary, middle, and high school principals have partnered deeply in analyzing the results and making plans in response to their observations.
 -  The district facilitated a three-hour professional development session for all principals—elementary, middle, and high school—to review and analyze the OECD Test for Schools results. Sitting together with their “feeder families,” high school principals shared their individual schools' results with their elementary and middle school partners and explored the factors driving 15-year-olds' performance.
 -  As a result of this collaborative analysis, school leaders began to see the OECD Test for Schools as a middle grades assessment as much as (or perhaps more than) a high school assessment. Accordingly, high school principals have met separately with each feeder middle school's leadership team to discuss shifts within curriculum and instruction that can support students in achieving at levels 5 and 6 on the OECD Test for Schools.
-  Professional learning communities have examined sample questions from the OECD Test for Schools to assess the rigor of their day-to-day instruction and assessment, with the goal of elevating their questioning to better develop students' critical thinking skills.
-  Since 2013, many school and district leaders from Blue Valley have participated in the Global Learning Network's webinars and national convenings to collaborate with their peers, understand their results, and make plans for improvement.

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