

Blue Valley West High School

Blue Valley School District, Overland Park, Kansas

Location type: Suburban

District enrollment: 22,400 students

School enrollment: 1,346 students

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

Key Takeaways

For Blue Valley West High School (BVW), the OECD Test for Schools serves as an invaluable data point to assess how students are measuring up and where strengths and weaknesses lie. In addition to analyzing its results against international benchmarks, BVW also looks at its performance relative to the other high schools in Blue Valley School District, all of which participate in the OECD Test for Schools. The school's OECD Test for Schools results from the 2013-2014 administration showed that fewer than 20 percent of students performed at the highest levels (5 and 6) in math, reading, and science.

Actions Taken

-  BVW has focused on educating its stakeholders – including its feeder middle schools – about the OECD Test for Schools to build understanding of what is required of students to compete globally. This includes working directly with feeder middle schools' staff to examine sample questions and study their level of rigor closely.
-  School leaders have similarly collaborated with other district high schools to share their results and ideas for how to improve student achievement.
-  BVW has focused its improvement efforts on increasing rigor in its curriculum and instruction, which was already an area of focus as part of the school's commitment to implementing the challenging Kansas College and Career Readiness Standards (based on the Common Core State Standards). Teachers are working especially on cultivating students' problem solving skills through more rigorous academic tasks.
-  To support students and encourage them to challenge themselves academically, BVW inserted a 90-minute, flexible support period into the school day. During this time, students are able to receive extra, targeted help from teachers, enroll in mini-courses (e.g., AP exam support), and other academic support offerings.

-  Leaders from BVW have attended both the 2013 and 2014 national convenings, using these as opportunities to deepen their understanding of their OECD Test for Schools results and share best practices with other Global Learning Network members.

In the 2014-2015 administration of the OECD Test for Schools, the percentage of students performing at levels 5 and 6 rose by 4 percent in reading, 10 percent in math, and 3 percent in science, while the proportion of students performing below Level 2 fell in all three subjects.

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