

SCHOOLS TO WATCH

VISITOR'S GUIDE

Belding Middle School



Designated in 2008

Middle School: Belding Middle School
District: Belding Area Schools
County: Ionia County
State: Michigan
Principal: John B. Deiter, Ph.D.
School Address: 410 Ionia St., Belding MI, 48809
Phone: (616) 794-1796
E-mail: deiterj@bas-k12.org
School Web Site: www.bas-k12.org

2005-07 School Statistics

Community: Rural
Enrollment: 525
Grade Levels: 6-8
School Schedule:

Student Demographics

6% Hispanic
92% Caucasian
1% African American

50% Free/Reduced Lunch
1% English Language Learners

2005 AYP: MET

2006 AYP: MET

2007 AYP: MET

School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

Academic Excellence

- Daily activities are posted in nearly every classroom
- There is evidence of a strong effort to align curriculum and to be clear about what is being taught at each grade level
- Reflective conversations around student achievement were witnessed and use of rubrics was noted
- The KC4 curriculum assessments have promoted higher-order-thinking in several classrooms
- Many types of authentic assessments were observed
- Math students were being challenged at high levels (algebra in sixth grade)

Academic Excellence (continued)

- Parents mentioned that their children do much more writing now than they did two or three years ago in the middle school
- Unlike the usual pattern, achievement scores *increase* at Belding during the middle school years

Developmental Responsiveness

- Students are respectful of one another and their teachers. Students feel that Belding is a good school and cited teachers as the reason for their “rating” of the school as good; rapport between students and teachers/administrators was evident
- Mentoring program was exemplary and counseling groups offered were important for meeting the needs for all students; silent mentoring program is being revitalized
- The school has formed relationships with businesses and community organizations that have helped fund, direct, and support extended opportunities for students such as their service learning, and this is connected to the curriculum
- Responsible Thinking Process (RTP) program seems to be effective and is consistently used throughout the school

Social Equity

- All classes are available to all students. Teachers are beginning to work toward differentiated instruction to accommodate all students.
- Belding has implemented much more inclusion and we would expect to see improved achievement in special education students because of this programming
- Parents spoke of the desire and initial plans to increase parental involvement for ALL parents

Organizational Support

- The staff has common planning time that is used to engage in dialogue about teaching and learning and meeting student needs; grade level teams also meet to align curriculum and design assessments
- Professional Development opportunities are provided based on teacher input and student data. Differentiated instruction is an example of this.
- Central Office and ISD staff are very knowledgeable of the middle school and supportive of the work on behalf of young adolescents
- Parents are supportive of the school improvement efforts made at Belding and are proud of the school