

BELLE PLAINE PUBLIC SCHOOLS DISTRICT 716 UPDATE



October has been an exciting time at Belle Plaine Public Schools. From Homecoming celebrations and classroom learning, to student activities and community events, there continues to be a great deal to celebrate throughout the district.

One of the things that makes Belle Plaine Public Schools special is the commitment to providing students with a well rounded educational experience. Academic achievement remains a priority, but so do the programs, relationships, and opportunities that help students discover their interests, develop important life skills, and prepare for their futures.

REFERENDUM UPDATE

The Belle Plaine Public Schools referendum project has reached another major milestone. The design phase for the middle school/high school project and elementary school remodel is officially complete, and we are now moving into the bidding process. This week, notices were published in area newspapers inviting contractors to submit bids for the project.

The next step will be a contractor open house on Wednesday, October 28, at 3:30 p.m. at Oak Crest. Contractors will have the opportunity to walk through the building, review site plans, and ask questions as they prepare their bids.

Bids for this first phase (the high school project) are due November 10, with the School Board expected to review the first round of contracts at the November 23 meeting. Additional contracts will be awarded as the review and selection process continues, including those requiring a more extensive "best value" evaluation.

It is important to note that this phase of bidding is focused specifically on the middle school and high school project at Oak Crest. The elementary school project is scheduled to go out for bids in 2027.

This is an exciting milestone as we move from months of planning and design toward construction. Each step brings us closer to making the improvements our community supported through the referendum a reality.

The community can continue to follow the project's progress and learn more about upcoming milestones. -- <https://www.isd716.org/referendum>



OAK CREST ELEMENTARY: BULLYING PREVENTION

As part of National Bullying Prevention Month, Oak Crest third, fourth, and fifth grade students participated in Tiger Strong lessons led by Mr. Tressel and Ms. Drescher. Through an interactive Fishbowl Problem Solving activity, students discussed real-life situations, explored positive solutions, and learned strategies for responding to hurtful behavior. The lessons focused on building confidence, encouraging kindness, and empowering students to stand up for themselves and others. Students concluded by signing a Tiger stripe, symbolizing their commitment to preventing bullying and making Oak Crest a welcoming and respectful place for everyone.

CHATFIELD ELEMENTARY

A colorful Celebration of Students & Community

Chatfield Elementary recently hosted its first Chatfield Challenge Color Run, and the event was an incredible success!

The idea was developed by Karissa Tye, who is currently teaching physical education, and Abby Burtness, who supports students through the district's Title I intervention programs. Their creativity, enthusiasm, and hard work helped turn an idea into an unforgettable experience for students and families.



More than 300 family and community members attended to support students as they participated in the event. The energy and excitement were contagious, and students had an absolute blast. Many described the experience as the "best day ever!"

The event was also a tremendous fundraising success, generating nearly \$19,000, with final totals still being calculated. Funds will help support student opportunities, including field trips, playground equipment, school events, and other experiences.

A special thank you goes to Karissa and Abby, along with the many staff members, families, and community supporters who made the event possible.

Events like the Color Run demonstrate what makes a school community special. Bringing students, families, staff, and community members together to create memorable experiences for children is something worth celebrating.

HOMECOMING BRINGS THE DISTRICT TOGETHER

Homecoming is always one of the most exciting times of the school year, and this year's celebration was another great example of Tiger pride throughout Belle Plaine Public Schools.



At Chatfield, the youngest Tigers welcomed high school royalty, band members, and other students for a special pep fest. Students participated in cheers, enjoyed friendly competitions, and proudly sang the school song. A special thank you goes to Melanie McDonald for helping teach the school song to students in preschool through second grade.

Oak Crest students also participated in Homecoming activities throughout the week, including dress up days, visits from high school royalty, and the opportunity to attend the high school pep fest.

At the secondary level, students and staff worked together to organize activities and celebrations that helped create a memorable week.



Homecoming is about much more than a football game. It is an opportunity to build connections across grade levels, celebrate traditions, and remind students that they are part of something bigger than themselves.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

As the school year continues, there is a great deal to be proud of across Belle Plaine Public Schools.

The examples shared in this newsletter reflect the district's commitment to providing students with strong academics while maintaining the programs, opportunities, and relationships that make a meaningful difference in their lives.

From teachers working collaboratively to improve instruction, to students discovering new interests, to families and community members supporting school activities, the success of Belle Plaine Schools is truly a collective effort.

Thank you to the dedicated staff, supportive families, community volunteers, and students who continue to make Belle Plaine such a special place.

Together, the district will continue working toward its mission of excellence in academics, programming, and the social and emotional development of every student.

Ryan Laager
Superintendent

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