

Beresford Republic and School Newsletter Articles

September, 2008

Brian Field, Superintendent

Beresford School District Named a 2008 “Distinguished School District”

Beresford Elementary School and Beresford Middle School Named “Distinguished Schools”

The South Dakota Department of Education has named the Beresford School District as a 2008 “Distinguished School District.” This is the first time that the Beresford School District has received this honor in the six year history of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the Dakota State Test of Educational Progress (STEP). The Beresford School District is one of eighteen school districts in South Dakota to receive this honor in 2008 and the largest school district to receive this honor. The other seventeen school districts that received the honor include: Agar-Blunt, Arlington, Armour, Bridgewater, Britton-Hecla, Deubrook, Emery, Ethan, Garretson, Haakon, Jones County, Parker, Parkston, Sioux Valley, Wall, Warner, and Webster.

The Beresford Elementary School and Beresford Middle School have been named 2008 “Distinguished Schools” by the South Dakota Department of Education. This is the fourth consecutive year that the Beresford Elementary School has received this honor. This is the second time that the Beresford Middle School has received this honor. There are 153 individual South Dakota schools that received this honor, including elementary schools, middle schools, junior high schools, and high schools.

A distinguished school or district must meet adequate yearly progress (AYP) for two consecutive years in both reading and math. The school or district must also decrease the achievement gap for one or more subgroups by 10% over a two-year period OR the percentage of students in the “all student” group that have met the state’s proficient and advanced levels of student performance in both reading and math is 10 percentage points higher than the current year’s annual measurable objective (AMO) for reading and math.

Academic Achievement Report Card for 2008

NCLB and AYP

The federal law, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires that each state adopt challenging academic content standards that define what all students should know and be able to do in the areas of reading and math. Currently, NCLB focuses on performance in reading and math. Schools must demonstrate and measure adequate yearly progress (AYP) toward all students in becoming proficient (performing at grade level) or advanced (performing above grade level) in their learning. AYP is based on separate reading and math achievement objectives based on the South Dakota essential core content standards. AYP for reading and math must be met by all students; ethnic/racial groups; economically disadvantaged students; special education students with disabilities; and limited English proficient students. School districts must also make AYP in K-8 attendance rate and high school graduation rate. School districts that do not make AYP are placed in school improvement.

Last April, Beresford students in grades 3-5, 6-8, and 11 took the Dakota State Test of Educational Progress (STEP) as required by NCLB and the South Dakota Department of Education. Official results were sent to our school district in late August. We are very pleased to report that all of our schools and district made adequate yearly progress. This is a true reflection upon the quality of our staff, dedication and work ethic of our students, and the district's commitment to professional development.

Reading

In grades 3-5 reading, 97% of our students were proficient or advanced, compared to the state average of 89% and well beyond the state target of 82%. In grades 6-8 reading, 89% of our students were proficient or advanced, compared to the state average of 83% and well beyond the state target of 82%. These are the highest reading scores that our elementary and middle schools have had in the six year history of the Dakota STEP. In grade 11 reading, 79% of our students were proficient or advanced, compared to the state average of 69% and well beyond the state target of 72%. It is the second highest reading score that our high school has had in the six year history of the Dakota STEP. As an overall district in reading, 91% of our students were proficient or advanced, compared to the state average of 84%. This is the highest reading score that our school district has had in the six year history of the Dakota STEP. In comparison to our Big Sioux Conference public school districts, our district reading results ranked first.

Math

In grades 3-5 math, 93% of our students were proficient or advanced, compared to the state average of 79% and well beyond the state target of 72%. In grades 6-8 math, 89% of our students were proficient or advanced, compared to the state average of 76% and well beyond the state target of 73%. These are the highest math scores that our elementary and middle schools have had in the six year history of the Dakota STEP. In grade 11 math, 71% of our students were proficient or advanced, compared to the state average of 66% and well beyond the state target of 63%. As an overall district in math, 88% of our students were proficient or advanced, compared to the state average of 76%. This is the highest math score that our school district has had in the six year history of the Dakota STEP. In comparison to our Big Sioux Conference public school districts, our district math results ranked first.

Attendance Rate and Graduation Rate

In regards to school attendance, our K-8 grades had an attendance rate of 96.04%, compared to the state average of 95.21% and well beyond the NCLB goal of 94%. In regards to graduation, our high school had a graduation rate of 92%, compared to the state average of 88.39% and well beyond the NCLB goal of 80%.

Dakota STEP—Individual Student Results

At parent-teacher conferences on October 29-30 or through the mail, parents will receive a copy of their child's Dakota STEP test scores for reading and math that he/she took last spring. The individual report will allow parents to see how their child fared on the test in relationship to the math and reading core standards adopted in our curriculum. Parents will see the scaled score and achievement level listed on the report. Students are given the rating of below basic (performing several grades below level), basic (performing one grade below level), proficient (performing at grade level), or advanced (performing above grade level). Parents will find a description for their

child's achievement level in both reading and math. Parents should keep in mind that this is one test and one accountability measure for their child. Parents should feel free to contact their child's teacher at anytime or utilize the campus parent portal to receive more specific information on their child's progress in school.

State, District, and School Report Cards

If you are interested in receiving a power point of our entire 2008 Beresford School District Academic Achievement Report Card, please contact our central office at 763-4293 or email me at Brian.Field@k12.sd.us. The power point will include our 2008 Dakota STEP results for grades 3-5, 6-8, and 11; state writing assessment results for grades 5, 7, and 10; and ACT results for the class of 2008.

You may also view our state, district, and school report cards at <https://nclb.ddncampus.net/nclb/index.html>. The report cards will present information related to student achievement on the Dakota STEP test. Assessment results are displayed in percentage of students scoring at four levels: advanced, proficient, basic, or below basic. A State Report Card shows the combined performance of all schools in South Dakota. A District Report Card shows the combined performance of all schools in each district. A School Report Card shows the combined performance for each public school and each grade that was tested in the school.

Please be assured that our district remains committed to providing the best possible educational opportunities for our students and professional development opportunities for our staff. We will continue to focus on improving our student learning results. If you have any questions regarding the information in this letter, please contact me or your child's principals.