



KENTUCKY SCHOOLS TO WATCH SCHOOL PROFILE

South Oldham Middle School



Designated 2006 and 2009

South Oldham Middle School

- Oldham County Public Schools, Kentucky
- Principal: Rob Clayton
- School Address: 6403 West Highway 146
Crestwood, KY 40014
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School Statistics

Community: Suburban area near Louisville

Enrollment: 674

Grade Levels: 6-8

School Schedule: Regular schedule with trimester enrichment schedule

Student Demographics

2.9% Hispanic

88.7% White

5.5% African American

19% Free/Reduced Lunch

1% English Learners

2006 AYP: 12/12

2007 AYP: 13/13

2008 AYP: 12/13

School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

Academic Excellence

- All students are held to high academic and performance standards that are clearly communicated to students, assessed regularly, and used to determine student growth and improvement over time.
- Teachers monitor student progress using multiple assessment tools that allow students to repeat or retake assessments to demonstrate mastery in various ways other than only on paper and pencil tests.

- Common assessments have been developed and are used and analyzed to inform instruction.
- Multiple intervention strategies and programs (e.g., ESS, teacher support, RTI, mentoring, Homework Club) are in place to support the school's no zeroes, no failure policy.
- Learning labs provide students identified as needing help in reading and mathematics additional support in the appropriate area.
- The Renzulli Learning program is used to extend learning opportunities for identified gifted and talented students.
- All teachers display and include thinking literacy strategies in their instruction. There is a specific focus on writing strategies in all content areas.
- A variety of technology is available in classrooms and is used by students and teachers. Clickers are used to check for understanding and technology is used by students for creating presentations and doing research. Use of classroom microphones by students encouraged turn-taking and attention to small group report-outs.

Developmental Responsiveness

- The belief in and attention to relationships permeates the school and has created a true community of learners for students and teachers. All students and adults at the school are focused on maintaining a positive climate that is conducive to learning.
- The AIM room is utilized to help students as the teacher positively interacts with students. There is an organized process for intake and returning to class so that everyone involved is well informed and the student accomplishes what is necessary.
- Student achievements in various areas (e.g., athletic, behavioral, attendance, academics) are recognized and celebrated (e.g., assemblies, Wall of Fame, Goal Getters, Kudos for Kids, students of the week, notes on lockers, teacher comments).
- Staff and parents communicate regularly concerning student progress. Newsletters to parents keep them informed of what is happening and planned for the school.
- Counseling services are available to students on a self-referral basis. A counselor is designated to work with each team and attends the team meeting weekly.
- Sophie, the school dog, is a unique way to reach out to some students who are struggling socially. The concept of a school dog is a definite and positive aspect of the school culture.
- Student-led conferences are a time for students to share their work with their parents or caregivers and to be involve in self-evaluation of their academic progress.

Social Equity

- A safe, orderly, nurturing environment that is conducive for learning has been developed and maintained for all students. School rules are clear, fair, and consistently applied. As one student commented "There is not all that drama here."
- Language that encourages rather than discourages is stressed. Negative talk is not tolerated and students know that hurtful words are not allowed. Students self-monitor and correct others.
- Bullying message boxes for anonymous information support this effort as do Words of Wisdom.
- Teachers use non-confrontational techniques for changing student behavior and are aware of the needs of their students.

- All students are supported and “adopted” if they are in need. Staff has students they mentor and the staff believes that they should do whatever it takes to address the needs of these students.
- A Boy’s Club for male African/American students has been established. Contracts are developed for these students and monitored by the principal. The administration uses a field trip as a motivating tool with this group.
- Collaboration is utilized whenever possible, allowing maximum opportunities for the mastery of standards.

Organizational Support

- Professional learning communities (PLCs) provide a weekly time for grade level content area teachers to work together analyzing student work, developing common assessments, and planning instruction. Once a month the lead teachers meet with the PLCs and periodically the literacy coach and gifted/talented coach meet with the PLCs.
- The G-drive has all information teachers and administration need to make decisions about students and to run the school smoothly and efficiently.
- Job-embedded professional development is possible as teachers have common and individual planning times. Teachers observe lessons taught by other teachers, participate in book studies, and meet weekly in their PLCs.
- Team leaders and lead teachers are a means of empowering teachers and building leadership capacity. The lead teacher concept allows for others to learn from the master teachers in their building.
- Teachers view teaching as a profession and demonstrate a strong sense of professionalism. The administration reinforces this by recognizing Nationally Board Certified Teachers and by identifying team leaders and lead teachers.
- Programs are used in a very intentional way. Selection is based on students needs as determined by data analysis and perceived student needs. Programs are monitored and evaluated for their effectiveness and changed as needed.
- The grading structure includes separate academic and effort grades. This way the grades really inform parents and the academic grade reflects the true level of mastery of standards.
- All stakeholders are a part of the mission of high performance in the school and this mission drives every facet of school change. Parents, teachers, administrators, and students work together to reinforce the vision. There is not only shared decision-making but also shared ownership.
- Structures are in place to support strong instructional practice (e.g., learning walks, teacher mentoring for new teachers, use of lead teachers) and all function at high levels of effectiveness. The faculty are provided time (i.e., daily common planning time for each grade level, grade level department meetings) for working and meeting with colleagues for the purpose of enhancing student achievement.