

SCHOOLS TO WATCH – TAKING CENTER STAGE

MODEL SCHOOL – VISITOR’S GUIDE



Coopersville Middle School



2009 School Statistics

Community: The Coopersville Area Public Schools serve 2,600 students in a rural community located in southwest Michigan.

Enrollment: 564
Grade Levels: 6-8
School Schedule: Flexible Schedule 7:35-2:22

Student Demographics

- 7% Hispanic
- 91% White
- .1% African American
- .5% Native American
- .7% Asian

- 31% Free/Reduced Lunch
- 3% English Learners

2007 AYP: Yes

2008 AYP: Yes

2009 AYP: Yes

Designated in 2010

School: Coopersville Middle School
District: Coopersville Area Public Schools
County: Ottawa County
State: Michigan
Principal: Ryan Pfahler
School Address: 198 East Street
Coopersville, MI 49404
Phone/Fax: (616) 997-3400 / (616) 997-3414
Email: rpfahler@coopersville.k12.mi.us
School Web Site: www.coopersvillebroncos.org

School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

Academic Excellence

- We have a flexible schedule that allows time for interventions. This process for scheduling was featured in the newest MS RTI book “How RTI Works in Secondary Schools”.
- Each of our departments has their own curriculum map that is aligned with State standards and Benchmarks. These are used to align the curriculum from grade to grade and building to building in our district.
- Our new technology, which includes one to one computing, has given us a wonderful tool that teachers use to give students opportunities in each class to research information, take notes, write, read informational websites, and develop multi-media presentations using information across the disciplines. Our technology allows our students many opportunities. Podcasting, digital storytelling, SmartBoard lessons, interactive websites, and simulations to incorporate into our lessons are just a few of these opportunities used currently.
- We have a study skills intervention class for students who are struggling in their core academic classes. This class meets every day and allows the students to seek help on concepts and additional time to complete tasks. The student - teacher ratio is no higher than 8-1 for this class.
- We have set standards of proficiency in line with NCLB. These standards are communicated through newsletters, the annual report, teacher blogs and mass team e-mails, as well as individual newsletters and reports from our teacher teams.

Developmental Responsiveness

- All students are assigned to grade level teams that are located in their own academic wings (school-within-a-school).
- Our student council (Student Leadership Development Program) develops a monthly character trait that is displayed in a central location. They also plan many of the activities for the students at CMS.
- Coopersville Middle School works closely with Coopersville Cares (community outreach program). Our students have collected many food and clothing items as well as raising thousands of dollars on a yearly basis.
- We offer a luncheon for all new students as a way to foster new relationships and communication.
- We have a life skills class for low functioning students that provides them with necessary life skills such as cooking, cleaning, and personal hygiene.
- We have several staff who are actively involved in our district crisis team, which provides emotional support to grieving students, faculty, and community members.
- Each 8th grade student will read and analyze “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens” during their character ed/health class. All students, by the time they leave 8th grade, will have a written personal mission statement along with long and short term personal goals.
- All teachers have a SmartBoard in their classroom to enable them to implement creative activities in their lessons.
- 7th and 8th grade students are exposed to a current issues class devoted to discussing local, national, and world events.
- Our 8th grade students explore career options by using career cruising, our career pathways program.
- Since all students have their own mini computer, technology is integrated within every class.
- Our parents can access daily classroom information via our teacher blogs, and parent portal (grading system).
- Our district has a bi-monthly “Show N Tell” newsletter mailed to all the homes communicating each buildings activities.

Social Equity

- All students who require additional assistance are placed in a tutorial or study skills class where they receive instruction and interventions. Students who meet academic requirements have the option to enroll in an exploratory class at the end of each marking period. This class offers learning opportunities beyond the core curriculum.
- All teachers have been trained in differentiated instruction and effectively employ it on a daily basis.
- We are able to offer Spanish translation for all meetings. Our migrant program also puts on a fall fiesta celebration for all students and family members. This is held at the middle school.
- We use the RTC for discipline. This process is outlined in our handbook and printed in our student agendas. Our school rules are also posted on the middle school website.

Organizational Support

- We have team leaders from each grade level who communicate on a regular basis with administration and teaching staff to cultivate our school vision.
- We have a teacher from each core and elective area who represents the middle school at our district coordinating council (DCCE). The principal is a key member of our school improvement team. The principal has appointed team leaders, department representatives, steering committee members, and DCCE reps.
- Our use of professional learning communities includes: Collaboration on a monthly basis where all teachers meet with their departments to work on common assessments. In addition, our common planning times are used to create lesson and unit plans, and discuss student issues.
- We have incorporated a daily professional development tool by using our technology coaches to work closely with all teachers to assimilate technology into our lesson plans and units.
- Our principal, assistant principal and one staff member is involved in a county wide change network devoted to middle school best practices.
- Our teachers use the IRIS program (an on-line data warehouse) to disaggregate our MEAP and IOWA data. This program highlights areas of excellence and areas needing improvement. This gives teachers a chance to make adjustments to their lessons to better teach those standards.
- Several of our teachers attended a summer leadership academy that promoted use of a pyramid of interventions to help ALL students succeed.
- At CMS we have parents involved on several of our committees: school improvement, health advisory, district academic content advisory, PTA, and band boosters, to name just a few.