

Benton Community Schools



“Quality Education for a Lifetime of Learning”

Report to the Community

October 2007



Benton Community Board of Education
Accountability to the Community

- George Martin, President 2007**
Chris Christensen 2006
Terry Harrington 2006
Daniel Voss 2007
Robin Allen 2008
Brenda Schanbacher 2007
Brian Strellner 2005

Gary Zittergruen, Superintendent

*Quality Education
for a Lifetime of
Learning*

**Annual Progress
Report to the
Community**

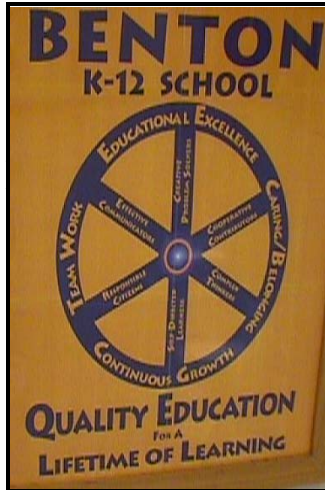
Published October 2007

A board of directors governs the Benton Community School District like every public school district in Iowa. They are responsible for determining policies, setting the budget, and maintaining standards of excellence in education on behalf of the community. Benton Community voters elect board members for three-year terms.

We welcome your comments!

The Benton Community School District prepared the community report. To receive additional copies or for more information about anything in this report or to comment, call (319) 227-7142.

- Superintendent** Gary Zittergruen, 228-8701, Ext. 501
- Asst. Superintendent** Doug Embray, 228-8701, Ext. 502
- Benton High School** **Principal**, James Bieschke, 228-8701, Ext. 350
- Benton Middle School** **Principal**, Jo Prusha 228-8701, Ext. 351
- Atkins Elementary** **Principal**, Jason West 446-7525
- Keystone Elementary** **Principal**, Tim Sanderson 442-3221
- Norway Elementary** **Principal**, Eric Huinker 227-7142
- Van Horne Elementary** **Principal**, Tim Sanderson 228-8701, Ext. 418



Mission Statement

“Quality Education for a Lifetime of Learning”

District Core Beliefs

Educational Excellence
Team Work
Caring / Belonging
Continuous Growth

District Goals

To be a district that:

- Will implement a comprehensive communications program to serve all stakeholders.
- Will support K-12 technology plan.
- Will practice fiscal responsibility by spending no more than it takes in on a cash basis.
- Will implement a uniform curriculum review and development process.
- Will develop and implement a three-year staff development plan for all district employees.
- Will develop a short and long-range plan for use of district facilities.

Benton Community Schools 2006-2007 School Year

At a Glance

Enrollment:

Benton High School	544
Benton Middle School	263
Atkins Elementary	185
Keystone Elementary	152
Norway Elementary	327
Van Horne Elementary	120
TOTAL	1591

District Elementary Sectioning:

	<u>Enrollment:</u>	<u>Number of Sections:</u>	<u>Average Class Size:</u>
K-6 Composite	768	41	18.73
K-3 Composite	426	24	17.75
4-6 Composite	342	17	20.11

Enrollment has been static in the Benton District over the past five years. Benton Community experienced a decline of ninety-four students in the 2002-2003 headcount. Our district enrollment was 1667 seven years ago (79 student decrease). Enrollment projections would indicate a consistent headcount over the next few years.

Essential Learnings

All students in the Benton Community School District will learn to become:

Creative Problem Solvers
Cooperative Contributors
Complex Thinkers
Self-Directed Learners
Responsible Citizens
Effective Communicators

Measuring Student Success

Student achievement is the bottom line for Benton Community School District. The district uses a variety of ways to measure the success of students. Classroom teachers assess student learning every day in a multitude of ways, both formally and informally. Our interest at the district level goes beyond individual student progress. Our interest is in measures that paint a picture of the overall success of the district in helping students to learn what is expected. This report to the community covers many of the measures we use to paint that picture of achievement district wide.

Attendance

Student attendance is a valuable indicator of success in school as well as success in a career. The State K-8 average daily attendance for the school year 2006-2007 was 95.85 percent. On average, 95 percent of Benton Community students are in attendance each day.

Average attendance rates for each level were:

Elementary 96.44% **Middle School** 95.25% **High School** 93.4%



Curriculum

The Benton Community Schools curriculum is designed to ensure that Benton students achieve the district's essential learning.

Our district's elementary and middle school curriculum is designed around proven practice in education to provide students with a foundation in basic skills; problem-solving, team work, citizenship and behavior.

The high school curriculum offers students a variety of course offerings in language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, foreign languages, art, music, industrial technology, health and physical education, business education, agricultural science, family consumer science, work place vocational programming, and driver's education. Students may also elect from distance learning courses for high school or college credit and postsecondary enrollment options for college credit.

The high school has just completed their 9th year of the block schedule. Students enroll in 4 courses each nine-week term during the school year.

Results for the Class of 2007
Graduation Rate

The Benton Community High School Class of 2007 had a graduation rate of 96.2 percent.

Completion of a Core Program

Students who complete a rigorous program of required and elected courses in core areas generally score substantially higher on college entrance exams. A core program is defined as four years of English/language arts and three or more years of mathematics, science and social studies.

Of Benton Community's **142** graduates in the class of **2007**, **Ninety-one** percent completed a Core Program; **nine** percent did not.

Graduates who Intend to Pursue (N=129)

Postsecondary Education/Training:

Intend to Pursue	92 %
Do not intend to pursue	8%

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act

Due to the federal requirements of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, the Department of Education is required to publish state graduation rates (not individual district graduation rates). However, NCLB does require that districts include graduation rates in their Annual Progress Report (APR). The graduation rate is defined as the number of students receiving a diploma divided by the number of these students present as 9th graders. The number of high school graduates collected through the Basic Educational Data Survey (BEDS) is defined as the sum of the following diploma recipients. The high school graduation rate is calculated by dividing the number of high school graduates in a given year by the sum of the number of high school graduates in that year and dropouts over the four series year period. More specifically, the total dropouts include the number of dropouts in grade 9 in year 1, the number of dropouts in grade 10 in year 2, the number of dropouts in grade 11 in year 3, and the number of dropouts in grade 12 in year 4. The high school graduation rate in year 4 equals the number of high school graduates in year 4 divided by the number of high school graduates in year 4 plus the sum of dropouts in grades 9 through 12 from years 1 through 4, respectively.

The 2006 Graduation Rate for Benton Community School District is 95.3 Percent. The Statewide Graduation rate for 2005 is 90.7 Percent.

American College Testing Program

Benton Community Schools had **106**, 2007 graduates participate in ACT testing on a national test date. Of those students tested the percentages of students scoring at or above the state's identified college success indicator of an ACT score of 20 are indicated below.

ACT Composite: Average Score

<i>Local</i>	24.1
<i>Iowa</i>	23.1
<i>Nation</i>	22.0

ACT English

<i>Local</i>	78%
<i>Iowa</i>	66%
<i>Nation</i>	58%

ACT Math

<i>Local</i>	73%
<i>Iowa</i>	50%
<i>Nation</i>	43%

ACT Reading

<i>Local</i>	81%
<i>Iowa</i>	69%
<i>Nation</i>	60%

ACT Science

<i>Local</i>	80%
<i>Iowa</i>	76%
<i>Nation</i>	63%

College Entrance Scores – The American College Testing Program (ACT) is the usual college entrance exam for students who intend to go to college. A score of 20 or higher on the 36-point scale for the test indicates probable success in college. Sixty-Eight, Benton Community High School students took this test during their sophomore, junior, or senior year on a national test date. If a student tested more than once, only their most recent score is used in the displayed data.



POINTS OF PRIDE

- Students with 4.0 GPA's: **5**
- Students receiving local/state or college/university scholarships: **100**
- Benton Scholarship Recipients: **63**

Follow-Up Study: Results for the Class of 2006

Attending Post-secondary school	108
Employed, including military	17
Unemployed	0
Unknown	0

Dropout Rates, 2006-2007

Of the **817** students in grades **7-12** in **2007-2008**, **9** students dropped out during the academic year. The Benton Community Schools offer extra assistance to students considered at-risk of dropping out. In addition, Benton Community Schools collaborates with the Kirkwood Community College Learning Centers to offer another learning setting for students who don't thrive in the regular school surroundings.

<u>Total</u>		
<u>Subgroup</u>	<u>Dropouts (7-12)</u>	<u>%</u>
Male	6	67%
Female	3	33%
TOTAL	9	100%
White	9	100%
Students without/IEPs*	7	78%
Students with IEPs	2	22%

(Individual Education Plan's, are for students receiving special services)

Commitment to Success For All

Many students have a disability or difficulty learning. The Benton Community School District serves these students through support in the regular classroom and through specialized programming outside the regular classroom.

2006-2007 Statistics

Number of students receiving services	232
Percentage of student population	15%

Types of Services: Assistance in reading, writing, math, and other academic needs are provided to students; speech and language support; occupational and physical therapy; child study teams meet on a regular basis in all attendance centers with participation from our GWAEA 10 team.

Testing Program

The Benton Community uses the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills and the Iowa Tests of Educational Development as an accountability and improvement measure at the district level. For accountability to the Benton Community patrons, we report achievement test results in reading, math and science at grades 4, 8, and 11. Students in Benton Community Schools, post generally average test scores when compared to other students in Iowa. These test scores improve as our students are compared to other students across the nation. Testing experts' stress that this information is best used to identify areas of strength and weaknesses for individual students and classes, and to measure growth. Because of the way the tests are designed and demographics that influence results, standardized test scores alone are not a reliable method for comparing teachers, schools, or districts.

Early intervention monies received by Benton Community stipulate an assessment procedure for our K-3 students that can be reported to our parents bi-annually. Students are assessed in comprehension, fluency, and letter identification. These results are used to improve instructional strategies in our reading program. The district has continued to provide alternative assessments in reading, language, mathematics, and science during the 2005-2006 school year. The reading, language, and mathematics constructed response supplements were administered to the fourth and eighth grade levels. The district designed science assessment was used at the eighth and eleventh grades. Results are provided in the following goal sections. This second form of assessment is designed to provide a more accurate view of our student's performance related to our school district's mission and standards.

Benton Community administrators and teachers use test data in planning curriculum, developing school improvement plans, and making instructional decisions in the best interest of students. The district focuses on improvement goals, including looking at the percentage of students scoring below the 40th percentile rank, with a goal of reducing the number.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Reading:** **92** percent of fourth graders, **72** percent of eighth graders, and **75** percent of 11th graders are proficient or advanced in performance based on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills / Iowa Tests of Educational Development.
- **Math:** **95** percent of fourth graders, **74** percent of eighth graders, and **75** percent of 11th graders are proficient or advanced in performance based on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills / Iowa Tests of Educational Development.
- **Science:** **87** percent of fourth graders, **89** percent of eighth graders and **75** percent of eleventh graders are proficient or advanced in performance based on the ITBS / ITED.



**District Reading, Mathematics, and Science Proficiency Levels for
Grades 4, 8, and 11 as Compared to State and National Proficiency Data 2007**

Grade 4 Reading

Proficiency Comparison Local, State, Nation

<i>Benton</i>	92
<i>State</i>	78
<i>National</i>	60

Grade 4 Mathematics

Proficiency Comparison Local, State, Nation

<i>Benton</i>	95
<i>State</i>	78.8
<i>National</i>	60

Grade 8 Reading

Proficiency Comparison Local, State, Nation

<i>Benton</i>	72
<i>State</i>	70.6
<i>National</i>	60

Grade 8 Mathematics

Proficiency Comparison Local, State, Nation

<i>Benton</i>	74
<i>State</i>	73.8
<i>National</i>	60

Grade 8 Science

Proficiency Comparison Local, State, Nation

<i>Benton</i>	89
<i>State</i>	79.2
<i>National</i>	60

Grade 11 Reading

Proficiency Comparison Local, State, Nation

<i>Benton</i>	75
<i>State</i>	77
<i>National</i>	60

Grade 11 Mathematics

Proficiency Comparison Local, State, Nation

<i>Benton</i>	75
<i>State</i>	78.4
<i>National</i>	60

Grade 11 Science

Proficiency Comparison Local, State, Nation

<i>Benton</i>	75
<i>State</i>	79.7
<i>National</i>	60

The Benton Community Staff
Dedicated to Continuous Growth and Educational Excellence

The Staff of Benton Community is Trained, Experienced, and Committed to Lifelong Learning.

- **Total number of employees** **252**
Includes full-time and part-time employees

- **Classified Staff** **114**
Includes teacher associates, secretarial and clerical staff, bus drivers and mechanic, maintenance staff, and food service staff

- **Teaching Staff** **129**
Includes teachers, nurses, media specialists, and counselors

- **Administration** **9**
Includes principals and central office administrators

Teacher Qualifications

Number of Teachers	120
Certified teachers	100%
Percentage with Bachelor's Degree	56%
Percentage with Master's Degree	44%

Teaching Experience:

0-4 years	28 teachers
5-9 years	28 teachers
10-14 years	14 teachers
15+ years	50 teacher

Ensuring Teacher Quality

The district supports quality of staffing in several ways:

Mentoring Program: Support for new teachers includes a mentoring program that links beginning teachers with master educators. Benton Community has previously supported seven staff members in Pathwise Training and ten staff members in the Grant Wood Area Education Agency Mentor Academy Training. This also includes resources for all new teachers. We believe that the benefits associated with providing this type of program will be essential in maintaining a quality educational experience at Benton Community.

Staff Development: Comprehensive Professional Development Pilot Proposal

Purpose: To create a comprehensive professional development model aimed at increasing student learning.

Target: To increase overall student learning and reduce the performance gap through a coherent and purposeful professional development plan.

Measures:

1. Classroom data collection and assessment practices increase student learning per accepted multiple measures.
2. Instructional practices yield low-performer gains per accepted multiple measures.
 3. Teacher perception indicates an increased sense of control over student achievement targets.
4. Administrator actions provide support and resources aimed at increasing learning per internal and external surveys.

Description:

The district will provide the following opportunities for teacher development:

- On-going opportunities to collaborate with colleagues and peers.
- Professional development activities will occur on-site, in districts.
 - Adult learning practices will be employed to deliver learnings.
- Professionals will discuss, collect, share and analyze classroom data and practices as to their impact on student learning results.

Vehicles/Actions:

1. Current AEA staff and district teacher-leaders will be supported to conduct and sustain the improvement efforts. Professional development to begin in Spring/Summer 2006.
2. Staggered staff development days throughout the school year to support and promote learning teams. This allows teachers to visit team members in other district classrooms to share, and discuss pertinent issues related to their work.
3. AEA support staff to coach and support district teams during in-service days and times as well as in classrooms and buildings in on-going ways.

Focus Areas:

1. Classroom data collection and analysis. Use of data collection to inform instruction and provide for more control over student learning.
 2. Differentiated instruction.
 3. Communication of results
4. Math curriculum alignment and assessment development
5. Writing for Meaning

BENTON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS TECHNOLOGY 2006

Benton Community School District continues to work on technology implementation. The District has purchased network servers, workstations, network printers, network wiring and associated software to connect the Benton District. Following the approved District Technology Plan we have accomplished several of the recommended projects, covered by the Plan. Currently all buildings are connected via a Novell network, each classroom is equipped with plan approved voice, video and data hardware. The percentage of workstations with Internet access is over 95 percent. To assist with staff/student utilization of technology, each building has at least one technology representative to act as a trouble-shooter for users. In addition, administrators, staff and students have come to rely on technology to carry-out the day to day operation of the District and its educational programs. The District has employed a fulltime technology supervisor in the 2004-2005 school year.

In fiscal 2003 the District approved a new three-year Technology Plan that will be rewritten in 2007. The focus of this new plan shifted to student achievement and maintenance of existing network equipment and software. Over the life of this plan we plan to maintain our network connection through the ICN and upgrade network backbone hardware from hubs to switches and enhance server productivity.

TECHNOLOGY PLAN GOALS FOR 2005-2006-2007

The Benton Community School District will:

1. Identify and assess student and District technology needs.
2. Integrate technology into the district curriculum consistent with state and local benchmarks and the School Improvement Plan.
3. Establish/revise recommended minimum standards for infrastructure, software, hardware and deployment at all centers.
4. Maintain and improve the current level of District connectivity.

District and Building Technology Support Personnel

District Supervisor: Doug Embray

Atkins: Doris Markwitz,

Norway:

Ms-Hs: Mike Embretson

District Technology Tyler Maschino

Keystone: Judy Pieper

Van Horne Elem.:

District Web Page: Jan Andreesen

Services

E-mail service: Staff USER NAMES and PASSWORDS have been added to the District email system by the Network Administrator. Passwords must be 6 or more characters and should not be something that can easily be figured out. Capitalization is important with e-mail passwords. If you have questions contact Tyler Maschino. Your e-mail is also available on the web at <http://benton.k12.ia.us>.

Novell Network Services: Staff have been added to the District Novell network system. This will allow you 10MB of storage space on drive F and the capability to use shared printing and shared programs. If you have questions contact Tyler Maschino.

Library Services: Building media centers can add users to the District patron list. District Media Centers use Winnebago Software.

Staff Listserv: Talk to your building technology support person to be included on the appropriate staff listserv(s).

Productivity Software: Currently the District is using Microsoft Office 2000 and XP Professional for word processing, spreadsheet, databases, and presentation applications.

Management Software: Benton Community uses Web based applications for: Purchase orders, financial accounting and reporting, student databases, and AEA Media services. Contact your building principal, building technology representative.

Centerpoint: Student management system used by the K-12 staff at Benton. Operating instructions will be provided through building administrators.

Students: All students have individual user names and passwords to Centerpoint which allows them to check their current grades, as well as communicate with staff members.

Benton Community Communications Team 2006-2007

The Benton Communication Team serves as the school district advisory committee. The goals of the team are as follows:

- 1) Improve the quality of education at Benton through shared decision-making,
- 2) Monitor the progress in achieving goals of the school improvement plan for the school district,
- 3) Foster communication between the district and our attendance centers.

The BCT met five times during the 2006-2007 school year. The committee is represented by administrators, teachers, support staff, parents, and the board of education.

This year the committee focused their attention on long-range facility planning for the school district in addition to monitoring the efforts of our school improvement initiatives.

The team also spent time in discussing:

1. Budgetary impacts on the school district as a result of the across the board cut in state aid.
2. School District Calendar for 2006-2007
3. Building Site Reports
4. Legislative Updates as it relates to School
5. Student Assessment Data and the Impact on the District
6. Discussion of Comprehensive School Improvement Goals and Future Planning
7. Discussion of what is needed in the district to further create a more comprehensive educational program for Benton Community

Benton Scholarship Foundation
Awards \$54,900 in 2007

The Benton Scholarship Foundation, a Dollars for Scholars Chapter, awarded 60 scholarships totaling \$23,900.00, from their endowment fund, on May 16, 2007 at the Benton Community Senior Awards Ceremony. Awarded also were two scholarships from the LaVerne Kerkman Estate for \$15,5000.00 each. These Kerkman scholarships were awarded based on academic accomplishment and financial need to students attending Iowa State University, University of Iowa or University of Northern Iowa.

Benton Scholarship Foundation (BSF) is part of the Dollars for Scholars program. More than 450 post-secondary educational institutions nationwide -- 42 in Iowa--have formed partnerships with BSF and Dollars for Scholars. These partnerships enhance the scholarships provided by BSF by committing to use BSF Dollars for Scholars awards to fill any unmet student need remaining after the institution's financial aid package has been calculated. When unmet need no longer exists, the scholarships are used to adjust the self-help portion of the students financial aid package. This agreement guarantees that it is the student, not the institution, who benefits from the scholarships. In many instances, colleges match the funds provided by BSF. It is important that the post-secondary institution of each BSF scholarship is aware that the BSF scholarship is also a Dollars for Scholars award, so that each student reaps the benefits of BSF's and Dollars for Scholars partnership with participating colleges.

If any individuals or service organizations would like to be part of the Foundation, please feel free to contact the Benton Scholarship Foundation, PO Box 129, Van Horne, Iowa 52346.



Benton Scholarship Foundation Winners 2007

1st Row L to R: Andrea Smith, Erin Lawrence, Amanda Eliff, Lucas Robinson, Kaitlyn Mell, Ashlynn Gessner, Kaylee DeNeve, Danielle Gordon, Miranda Franzenburg, Emma Miles, Jareth Schmuecker, Matt Rammelsburg, Ashley Ness, Kelsie Geiger

2nd Row L to R: Laurie Werning, Katie Zittergruen, Jennifer Nulty, Leona Anderson, Nicole Havarán, Ellie Ritscher, Krista Vogel, Tara Pickart, Emily Larsen, Amanda Albertsen, Logan Wittmer, Crystal Wilhelmi, Jena Andreesen, David Manternach, Luke Schmidt

3rd Row L to R: Cody Lafler, Brett Heishman, Caitlin Runge, Abby Gleason, Alison Campbell, Sarah Parr, Kyra Alcott, Megan Jurgemeyer, Josie Schmuecker, Wes White, Kyle Kaiser, Anna Frese, Zach Goodsell, Drew Hagen

4th Row L to R: Alex Volesky, Danny Schmidt, Austin Shawinsky, Michael McCloskey, Mark Visser, Nathan Weekly, Jamie Choplick, Andrew Miller, Adam Rathje, Adam Becker, Nick Butz, Kevyn Werning, Tyler Mather, Eric Emanuel, Brad Penning, Marissa Hopper

A standard error of measurement (SEM) is an estimate of possible error associated with an individual student's test score. The SEM can be described as a band of error. A test score is an estimate of a student's true test performance; however, when the SEM is applied, it indicates that a reasonable chance exists that the student's true score may be slightly higher or slightly lower than what is reported. For the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) and Iowa Test of Educational Development (ITED), the SEM's are presented in ranges, indicating where the student's true score would likely fall (see table below).

	Reading Comprehension			Mathematics		
	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 11	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 11
41 st Percentile (Fall Testing)	27-55	31-51	28-56	26-58	26-55	28-56
41 st Percentile (Mid-year Testing)	27-53	31-51	30-53	26-56	27-55	27-55
41 st Percentile (Spring Testing)	30-53	31-51	30-53	28-56	28-54	26-55
90 th Percentile (Fall Testing)	81-96	82-95	83-94	80-96	81-96	83-94
90 th Percentile (Mid-year Testing)	81-96	84-95	83-94	79-97	82-95	83-91
90 th Percentile (Spring Testing)	80-95	83-95	84-94	79-97	83-96	83-95