



SCHOOLS TO WATCH — ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS MIDDLE SCHOOLS

MODEL SCHOOL — VISITOR'S GUIDE



Kaneland Harter Middle School

*Insert photo
of school here.*

Designated in 2013

Re-Designated in 2016

Kaneland Harter Middle School

Kaneland CUSD 302 – Kane County Illinois

Mr. Brian Faulkner, Principal

1601 Esker Drive, Sugar Grove, IL 60554

Tel (630) 466-8400

kms.kaneland.org

2016-2017 School Statistics

(Sources: 2015-2016 Illinois School Report Card)

Community: Suburban-Rural

Enrollment: 1,104

Grade Levels: 6-8

School Schedule: Bell

Student Demographics

- 10.1% Hispanic
- 81.7% White
- 2.4% African American
- 0% American Indian
- 2.3% Asian
- 0.1% Pacific Islander
- 3.4% Multi-racial
- 15% Free/Reduced Lunch
- 1% English Learners

(View this school's data:

[*Harter Illinois School Report Card*](#)

School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

Academic Excellence

Kaneland Harter Middle School is committed to providing a rigorous curriculum that meets the needs of all students and addresses 21st century learning skills. KHMS continues to implement and reflect on the curriculum provided to all students to ensure the opportunity for all to graduate college, career, and community ready.

The curriculum at KHMS includes fully implemented online Math, ELA, and Science curriculums aligned to CCSS and NGSS standards. Our newly implemented Science curriculum is based on STEMscopes which provides digital resources, a hands on approach, and performance based assessments. In addition, we are currently embarking on a district wide curriculum review of CTE classes to ensure they are meeting 21st century learners. Our physical education classes focus on lifetime fitness activities, working collaboratively, and individual goal setting to meet the specific fitness needs of each student. Moreover, a district wide review of our Social Studies curriculum is in progress with a focus on theme-based learning and developing critical thinking skills. All of these reviews are done with our staff at the middle school to confirm that curricular goals are clearly defined, common assessments are created, and academic vocabulary is consistent throughout KHMS.

In addition to a rigorous and clearly defined curriculum, KHMS also has many supports in place to guarantee all students have an opportunity to succeed. First, we have a long standing tiered intervention system for reading. This includes Read180, small group interventions, and progress monitoring. We have also implemented a math intervention system using ALEKS math, targeted study halls, and fluid grouping of tiered math classes. All of this is tracked and communicated to all staff through a Data Wall for every student. KHMS also reaches the higher level students through differentiated classrooms and challenge programs for gifted students. This is aided through a full time instructional coach to help staff use best practice to differentiate and meet students at their level.

Kaneland has recently adopted its new district vision/strategic plan: Kaneland 2020. Our focus is on creating personalized learning paths for all students to enhance 21st century learning skills, which will also help us partner with the various communities we serve. At KHMS, we use multiple interfaces to communicate academic goals with parents, students, and the community. Furthermore, though dedicated PLC time and vertical articulation time, we are frequently exploring additional cooperative learning activities and inquiry based learning to add to the many learning activities we already provide. Academic Excellence is a large area of strength at Kaneland Harter Middle school.

Developmental Responsiveness

Kaneland Harter Middle School provides various activities within and outside of the school to build character. The amount of support services available to our students is extensive. The social and emotional needs of the students are considered a top priority at KHMS. Each grade level has a counselor that loops and supports our students for their entire middle school career. Our social workers and other related services work collaboratively to ensure our students needs are being met.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is provided to students in an organized manner with lessons built on school-related applications along with adolescent specific lessons. The students describe our school as inspiring. They like being a member of KHMS and feel our school is safe. Our students believe that there is at least one teacher (if not more) that they feel comfortable talking to if they were experiencing any problems. KHMS parents also echo many of the students' beliefs. Our parents feel that their child's school is a safe place to learn and we prepare their child for high school. Parents have shared that their child is enthusiastic about school and our communication systems are strong.

A partnership with the Sugar Grove Park District provides students a place to develop their interests along with our own extra-curricular offerings. Students give our after-school activities high marks and believe the wide choice of offerings is a hallmark of the school.

Staff at Kaneland Harter Middle School are grouped into small learning communities in order to personalize the environment for our students through an interdisciplinary approach. Co-teaching and inclusion, along with enriching our students, are always goals at KHMS. Meeting the needs of all students is our daily and yearly focus to ensure each child is given what they need in order to be successful.

Social Equity

Kaneland Harter Middle School prides itself in our commitment to students. At KHMS, students are exposed to many educational opportunities in core classes, physical education, and exploratories. Within these settings, lessons are student-centered, differentiated, and designed to meet the individual needs of each student.

Our faculty is comprised of self-motivated individuals continuously seeking to better their craft. This is evidenced through common planning times, vertical articulation meetings, committee work, and the attendance of professional

development workshops and seminars. Through these practices, KHMS has developed a culture of collaboration and sharing of best practices.

In addition to academics, KHMS has a comprehensive support system comprised of building administrators, grade level counselors, office staff, on-site technology personnel and a full time nurse. KHMS also houses its own related services team including a school psychologist, social worker, speech pathologist, occupational therapist, and has access to both a hearing and vision itinerant on a regular basis.

All students have equal access to technology, knowledge, and activities. KHMS continues to add technology to the classroom including chromebooks, online programs, and curriculum. Students with disabilities are supported daily in the regular classroom by paraprofessionals, Special Education teachers, co-taught classrooms, and the general education teacher. Students are offered a variety of exploratory classes, after school programs, clubs, and sports. Staff connect positively with students through daily interactions, homerooms, and SEL activities. Families are encouraged to be involved with our school through Open House, student-led conferences, Step Up Knight, conferences, Coffee with the Principal, and Career Day. Open communication with staff and teachers is encouraged through email, phone, social media, newsletters/blogs, and conferences. Parents are able to use the online grade program Tyler SIS, Google Classroom, online textbooks and resources to support student learning.

KHMS frequently looks for ways to honor and recognize its students. Beyond sports and academic awards, we honor students who have dedicated their own time and effort to community service. Equally, utilizing the KORT behavior matrix, we promote positive behavior for all students and recognize them often both privately and publicly. Because of the level of positive behavior, negative behavior is not a school-wide issue; however, to ensure student accountability, we implemented a discipline system that consists of a 5-step plan. Students, parents, and staff work collaboratively to improve negative behaviors using this system. This system is used school-wide and the expectations are clear and consistent. We take pride in the fact that our suspension rate is very low.

There is an obvious community feel at KHMS due in part to the large amount of Kaneland graduates who work as certified staff and support staff at our school. Due to this, KHMS works well with the community to ensure all stakeholders are involved.

Organizational Support

Our teachers collaborate on a weekly basis. Teams meet three times a week as an interdisciplinary team and twice a week as a curricular team. Our staff will lead and implement in-house professional development based on the desires and needs of the staff and also have ownership to create agenda items for staff meetings. Shared leadership is not only practiced, it is a part of the culture at KHMS.

Along with teacher to teacher collaboration, our RTI Coordinator and Instructional Coach work closely with our staff. Our data wall is referenced often to analyze student growth and also used to provide direct professional development for our staff. We encourage risk taking to maximize professional growth and will model or co-teach using instructional cycles to ensure the needs of our staff are met. Teachers routinely observe other teachers to promote professional growth. Our growth as a staff correlates directly with the growth of our students. Our continuous improvement mindset has become a staple at KHMS as we constantly inspire one-another to be our best.