

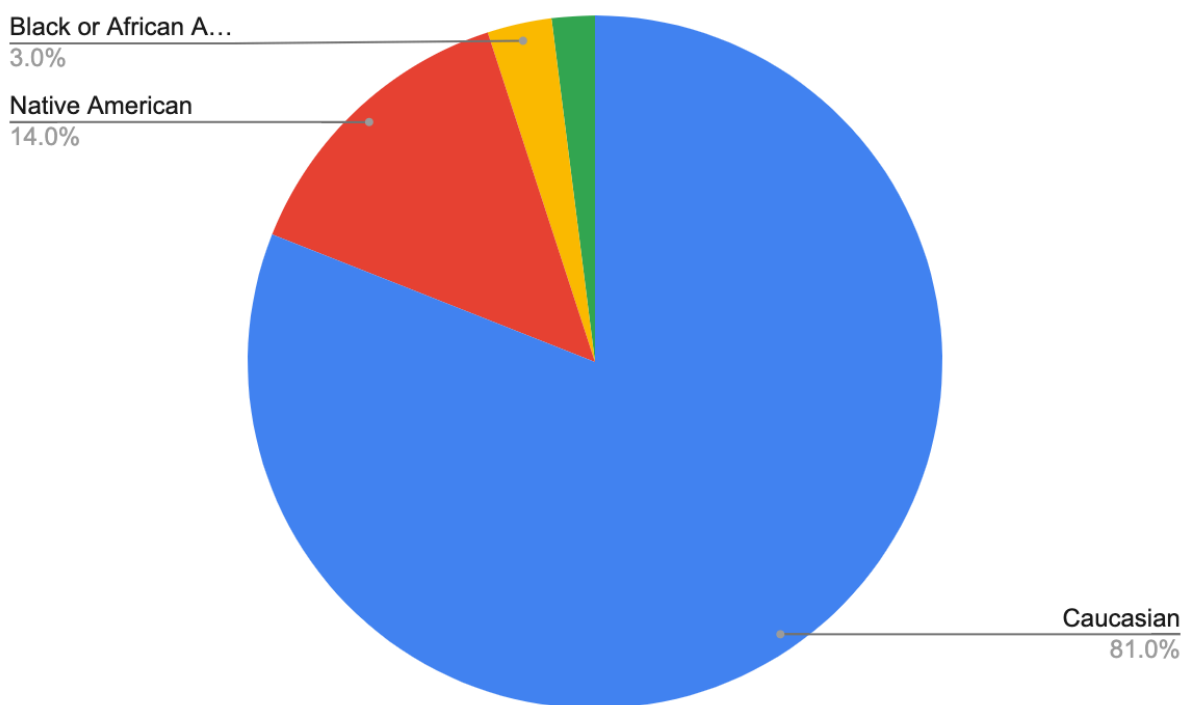
Alliance Middle School Profile

Community Background:

Alliance Middle School is located at 1115 Laramie Street in Alliance, Nebraska. The city of Alliance is found in the center of the Panhandle of Nebraska, on the western edge of the Sandhills. Currently the population of Alliance is approximately 8000 residents. The city is centered around the railroad and agricultural industries.

Our School:

Approximately 290 students attend Alliance Middle School in grades 6-8. The current student population consists of 81% Caucasian, 14% Native American, 3% Black or African American, and 2% Asian/Pacific.



Approximately 28% of our students receive special education services.

To help serve our 290 students, our staff includes 29 individuals. There are 21.5 FTE certified staff and 7 classified staff. Specialized services are overseen by speech, vision, occupational therapist, physical therapist, psychologist, instructional coach, ELL, and 3 school nurses that are shared throughout the district.

Alliance Middle School has one certified counselor on staff who provides personal, social, behavioral, and emotional instruction to all students. He is available to support students in a one-on-one setting or small group setting. AMS also has the support of an ESU-13 counselor that works one-on-one with our students twice a week.

Alliance Middle School has struggled to create a common subject planning time since staff was reduced to two-person departments in 2018, but this remains a goal of ours. Mentors and first year teachers do receive a common plan since the program began in the 2021/2022 school year. Focused training opportunities based on our learners' needs, and a viable and guaranteed curriculum are embedded in our vision.

We have implemented the use of Branching Minds to have all data in one place and to have access to MTSS processes. AMS is in the process of beginning to implement the MTSS process. The district began implementing MTSS with the elementary buildings in the past couple of years.

Alliance Middle School's building goals are focused on achievement, SEBL, and staff/student morale and respect.

Achievement:

One of the toughest challenges we are attempting to change has been the issue of achievement testing and proficiency levels, specifically on NSCAS where we have consistently been below the state averages for proficiency in math and ELA.

Percent Proficient By Grade - Alliance - Reading			
	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
2018-2019	29%	33%	39%
2019-2021	N/A	N/A	N/A
2021-2022	28%	34%	45% (1% below state)

Percent Proficient By Grade - Alliance - Math			
	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
2018-2019	26%	18%	26%
2019-2021	N/A	N/A	N/A
2021-2022	15%	23%	25%

Generally speaking, over the past 8 years, we have seen increases in proficiency levels from sixth grade to eighth grade. During the 2021-2022 school year, AMS decided to forego NWEA MAPs testing in Reading and Math to focus on through-year testing using NSCAS. This has created a new baseline for our data records.

In 2021-2022, the Board of Education approved the hiring of a third math teacher for the AMS staff based on our needs and goals. This has allowed us to specify a grade-level teacher at all three grades. It also allowed us to create a math interventions class that we call Math Plus. Math Plus is a “required elective”. The math department selects students from the 2nd quartile in NSCAS to take part in the semester-long course. Math Plus students have increased their scoring average by more than their peers. Again the data is new, but we are seeing success. Going into the 2022-2023 school year, we are looking to change the focus from remediation to more grade-level work with scaffolding.

SEBL:

The social emotional and behavioral health and skills of our students is a continuous challenge. During the 2021-2022 school year, students identified “respect for staff and others” as their greatest concern on the annual student survey. This has led to a few different strategies. Life 101, a sixth grade elective, was placed on the schedule, starting in 2021-2022. The class is taught by our school counselor and focuses on the transition to middle school, interpersonal skills, and conflict resolution. 8th to Great, an eighth grade elective, was implemented starting in the 2022-2023 school year. This course focuses on intrapersonal skills and strategies. Plans are to develop and implement a 7th grade course starting in 2023-2024. We also hope to use data from the DESSA Mini on Branching Minds to identify Tier 2 students and enroll them in the courses. Also, going into 2023-2024, we are planning on implementing PBIS.

Student/Staff Morale and Respect:

Staff morale, as identified by surveys, has been an issue for several years. During the COVID shutdown, staff began to work toward this goal with the idea of making our building more aesthetically pleasing. A nicer environment would hopefully lead to an increased sense of belonging. In the spring of 2020, staff used part of the shutdown time to paint the gym, hallways, and bathrooms. The organizers of this group became known as the BAT Squad

(Beauty and Aesthetics Team). The BAT Squad has evolved into a group that plans fun days for staff and students, a snack cart, and an approach to make people feel included and appreciated.

In the spring of 2022, the Building Leadership Team was created. Staff selected three of their peers to serve on the committee with building administration. The goal of the team is to give staff a voice on concerns and ideas, bridge the gap between staff and administrators, and to promote decisions made by the team..