



SCHOOLS TO WATCH – TAKING CENTER STAGE

MODEL SCHOOL – VISITOR’S GUIDE



Bernice Ayer Middle School



Designated 2005; Re-Designated 2008, 2011

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2010 School Statistics

(Sources: 2010 API Growth Report; 2010 AYP Report)

Community: Urban fringe of a large city
Enrollment: 813
Grade Levels: 6-8
School Schedule: Modified block with zero period

Student Demographics

- 62% White
- 28% Hispanic/Latino
- 7% Two or more races
- 2% Asian
- 1% Filipino
- 0% African American
- 0% American Indian/Alaska Native
- 0% Pacific Islander

- 20% Free/Reduced Lunch
- 6% English Learners

2009 API Base: 876

2010 API Growth: 894 (up 148 points since 1999-00)

2010 AYP: Met 18 of 21 criteria

(Visit <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ar/index.asp> to view this school's data for prior years.)

School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

Academic Excellence

- Rigorous standards-based, hands-on projects, including project-based learning, provide an engaging curriculum.
- Spanish/English dual immersion classes benefit all students.
- Integrated academic-technology projects keep students involved.
- Consistent practices—such as Cornell Notes, SchoolLoop, and the student planner—support student learning in all classrooms.
- A rotating block schedule two days a week supports differentiation and teaming.
- The weekly Articulation and Collaboration for Excellence (ACE) period allows teachers to collaborate.
- The Educational Support Period (ESP) facilitates an end-of-day study skill session.
- School staff analyzes the schools longitudinal California Standards Test data to assess how the achievement gap is closing.

(Continued)

Developmental Responsiveness

- Target Group Counseling (Individual, group, and family) address the emotional needs of students and their families.
- PAL (Peer Assistance Leaders) students are trained in conflict mediation for student issues.
- At-risk students are regularly reviewed by teacher teams.
- Students broadcast daily editions of Breaker News as well as student-created short feature films.
- Exploratory classes in art, music, drama, technology, and foreign language enrich the curriculum.
- The AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) program supports student success.
- Parent and student book clubs build knowledge, relationships and alliances.
- The school is a safe, clean, supportive, and friendly campus.
- Student activities program is extensive and highly inclusive.

Social Equity

- All students get scheduled into rigorous classes.
- Special education students are mainstreamed into classes with co-teachers.
- Systematic approaches to interventions for struggling students—outlined in the Pyramid of Success—provide for mastery of the curriculum.
- The dual immersion program hosts cultural evening events.
- Recognition of all students for “as many reasons as we can create” is a priority.
- The school has developed a “safe to be smart” environment.
- An effective behavior support team monitors discipline data and provides direction for school climate decisions.

Organizational Support

- The principal fosters high levels of teacher involvement in the shared leadership professional learning community.
- Effective routines and systems allow teachers to focus on student data and learning.
- Teams of teachers use the ACE period to analyze data and strategize about how to close gaps and minimize discrepancies.
- Teacher common planning teams hold themselves accountable for student achievement.
- Teachers conduct professional development sessions for their peers during ACE and at the annual staff retreat.