

COLORADO TRAILBLAZER SCHOOL TO WATCH



Holmes Middle School



Designated in 2006 & 2009

Holmes Middle School • District 11 • El Paso County
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2006-08 School Statistics

(Source: 2007-2008 School Accountability Report. 2007 AYP Report)

Community: Predominantly Suburban community of Colorado Springs, CO (pop. approx. 375,000)

Enrollment: 720

Grade Levels: 6-8

School Schedule: Flexible block

Student Demographics

15%	Hispanic
75.8%	White
5.0%	African American
3.1%	Asian
1.1%	American Indian
31.3%	Free/Reduced Lunch
1.8%	English Learners

2006 AYP: Met 28 out of 28 targets

2007 AYP: Met 32 out of 32 targets

2008 AYP: Met 38 out of 38 targets

2006, 2007 & 2008 John Irwin School of Excellence

School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

Academic Excellence

- Flexible block schedule supporting 2-person and 4-person interdisciplinary teams. Individual blocks of time are adapted on a day-by-day, team-by-team basis in response to student needs
- Essential Skills period every day allows extra time for differentiation targeting areas below grade level or extension opportunities for GT
- Building curriculum maps aligned to district curriculum & pacing guides and aligned to state standards
- Horizontal and vertical curriculum development & articulation - meeting/collaboration times built into schedule
- Embedded staff development during bi-monthly grade level meetings
- Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) principals/Data Driven Decision making
- Student data folders focusing on individual goals and action plans; cyclic Plan-Do-Study-Act
- School wide Best Practices: Pre-AP Strategies, McRel Strategies, Differentiation, Common Writing Rubric, Cornell Note-taking, Socratic Seminar, Common Assessments, Word Walls
- Before and after school programs to extend learning opportunities

Developmental Responsiveness

- **RtI** (Response to Intervention) model with 3 tiers: geared toward each child's individual needs.
 - Tier 1 – Use of differentiation and best practices in the general classroom
 - Tier 2 – Supplemental tutorials, 45 min. each day, small groups (12 or fewer) for those performing below grade level in reading or math (Predominantly Success Maker with small group instruction)
 - Tier 3 – Supplemental tutorials, two 45 min. sessions each day, very small groups (5 or fewer) for those below grade level and not responding to Tier 2 interventions (LANGUAGE!, SIOP, Success Maker)
 - Problem Solving Team meets bi-weekly to support targeted student needs
- **PBS** (Positive Behavioral Supports) model with 3 tiers to address the social/behavioral needs of each student. Program complimented by **Bully Proofing**, **Holmes Life Skills** (Boys & Girls Town principles) and **Project Wisdom**

Developmental Responsiveness (cont.)

- **AVID** (Advancement Via Individualized Determination) – preparing students for college that normally
- Predominantly 2-person teams fostering effective rapport between teacher and student, and maximizing interdisciplinary collaboration
- Looping/continuum teams are offered, requested by parents
- Team planning on a daily basis – built into the schedule
- Before and after school programs to extend learning opportunities
- **CQI** (Continuous Quality Improvement) program implemented building-wide and fostering data driven decision-making at all levels.
- **Pre-AP** instructional strategies to develop critical thinking skills
- Rich exploratory program – art, industrial arts, personal resource development, Gateway to Technology, foreign language, band, orchestra, choir, drama
- Large variety of academic clubs – Math Counts, MESA, GLOBE, Knowledge Masters, Battle of the Books, Yearbook, Geographic Bee, etc.
- Rich intramural program accepting all interested students – from hacky sack to floor hockey

Social Equity

- A well established **Rtl model** meets the needs of all students at a complimentary yet challenging level
- Effective **Problem Solving Team** enables the possible tailoring of academic experience for each targeted student
- **WEB** (Where Everyone Belongs) – 8th grade student leaders
- Full-time social worker and Literacy Resource Teacher support teacher and student needs, and actively involved with Rtl, PBS & CQI processes
- School psychologist and nurse scheduled weekly
- Operation School Bell, Student Assistance Fund, Parent Forums, Love and Logic Training utilized to meet family and school community needs
- **World Cultures** classes for every sixth grade student
- Social Studies, Art, Music and Family Consumer Studies classrooms collaborate with parents and community to offer culturally and ethnically diverse experiences – food, crafts, music, speakers, etc.
- Annual Martin Luther King celebration & Black History Month projects; Hispanic awareness activities in May
- **Renaissance Program** recognizing academic accomplishments of all students
- **Colorado Youth Citizenship Awards** honoring outstanding students demonstrating high personal and social standards, reliability, integrity, service and citizenship
- **National Junior Honor Society** engages in multiple community activities demonstrating diversity, civility and service
- **200+ community volunteers** engage in all aspects of school operation – including the **Building Advisory and Accountability Committee** (directly working with administration and teacher leaders with data driven decision making), **Parent/Teacher/Student Association** (PTSA), working in classrooms, tutoring, field trip support, etc.

Organizational Support

- Well defined **Response to Intervention Model** including **Positive Behavioral Supports**
- **School Improvement Plan** written by a team of teacher leaders in conjunction with school administration and input from the Building Advisory and Accountability Committee (BAAC)
- **Continuous Quality Improvement**
 - Shared vision and mission originally developed by all staff and reviewed annually
 - Classrooms develop mission and vision statements as well as class goals which are monitored
 - Data driven decision making in all aspects of school operation – focused on results (includes academic data from numerous sources: state testing, Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), common assessments, classroom data and behavioral data from SWIS – School Wide Informational System)
 - **Student Data Folders** – students systematically analyze personal data, set goals, devise a plan of action, monitor progress and adjust accordingly
- **Professional Learning Communities** supported by schedule allowing systematic meeting times for teaching teams, horizontal and vertical curriculum teams, and common grade level team meetings
- **Professional Development** offered school wide, aligned to School Improvement Plan and differentiated to meet staff needs
- Professional Leave Days used to observe other teachers in our building or visiting other schools
- Student transitions between elementary and middle, middle and high supported in numerous ways
 - Where Everyone Belongs (WEB) supports incoming 6th graders with orientation and on-going activities throughout the year

Organizational Support (cont.)

- High school counselors visit the middle school to work with eighth graders and offer open house events in their buildings
- Team leaders network with other buildings on a monthly basis
- **Stakeholder involvement**
 - Communicating school goals and performance data
 - Collaboration with parent and community members to write the **School Improvement Plan** on an annual basis (BAAC, PTSA)
 - Systematic progress monitoring reported out to community
 - Annual **surveys** given to parents, students and staff monitor and adjust to stakeholder satisfaction/concerns regarding all aspects of school
 - **Parent Forums** given quarterly to inform and educate the community
 - **Latte with the Leadership** activities occur monthly and provide an informal opportunity to the public to discuss matters with school leadership