

# OHIO SCHOOLS TO WATCH

## MODEL SCHOOL—VISITOR’S GUIDE

### Erwine Middle School



#### Designated in 2005; Redesignated 2008

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### 2005-07 School Statistics

Community: Size/characteristics  
Enrollment: 568  
Grade Levels: 5-7  
School Schedule: 7:35 A.M. - 2:40 P.M.

Student Demographics

0.2%	Hispanic
94.3%	White
1.6%	African American
n/c%	Filipino
0.5%	Asian
n/c%	Pacific Islander

35% Free/Reduced Lunch  
n/c% English Learners

2005 AYP: Met  
2006 AYP: Met  
2007 AYP: Not met

## School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

### Academic Excellence

- PRO-Ohio short cycle assessment program to target students for remediation.
- Blocked mathematics courses are offered for struggling students based upon data allowing for differentiated instruction.
- All students have the opportunity to participate in residential, environmental field experiences that provide real-world educational problem-solving skills.
- Special education teachers are included on grade level teams for planning and differentiation of instruction and activities.
- “Erwine Family Testing Night” with learning centers for parents and students for the purpose of providing information and resources for families regarding state mandated tests. Childcare for small children and dinner are provided.
- Professional development for all educators in the district to address the needs of students from economically disadvantaged families.
- A “Skills Tutor” is employed to meet the needs of the students, identified through data analysis, that require assistance to meet grade level academic goals.
- All students are provided the opportunity to enroll in both band and choir if they choose. School owned instruments enable economically disadvantaged students to participate regardless of the ability to pay for an instrument. 2/3 of our students are involved in a music program.
- Enrichment educational opportunities are provided for gifted students to enhance their educational experience.

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### **Academic Excellence** *(continued)*

- Junior Achievement partnership allows for real-world applications and simulated learning experiences consistent with our school's mission.
- Partnership with the University of Akron for pre-service teacher preparation and professional development opportunities for existing staff.
- All 7<sup>th</sup> grade choral music students participate in the production of a musical theatre performance each year to pursue their love of music, which is research proven to improve student achievement.
- Interdisciplinary units are planned on a continuing basis throughout the year that provide students the opportunity to be involved in learning strategies, foster communication with teachers and their peers and provide for individual learning differences.
- Students are provided classroom experiences with interactive technologies on a continuing basis to prepare them for life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- Interdisciplinary units culminate in student presentation of their work for peers, teachers, parents and others.

### **Developmental Responsiveness**

- FOCUS behavior support program enables SED students to be educated in the regular education setting.
- 7<sup>th</sup> grade "Team Challenge" as a culminating educational activity at the end of each grading period to review learning goals and encourage teamwork and school spirit.
- Each student in the building is assigned an advisor so that every student in the building regularly meets with and establishes a meaningful relationship with an adult advocate.
- All parents and students are invited to participate in student-led conferences twice during the school year.
- Community members are invited to the building to speak with students in an educational setting for Veteran's Day and the Disability Awareness Unit.
- Students attend the Ohio Department of Natural Resources facility located in our community several times per year to complete hands-on experiential learning.
- 7<sup>th</sup> grade has established "Comet Pride" reward system for students based upon a variety of criterion that is not totally academically based.
- Students who are "at-risk" or have significant social difficulties are invited to an after school gaming club where they learn valuable social skills. This program is sponsored by the district's Parent Mentor.
- Incoming 5<sup>th</sup> grade students take a "Transition to Middle School" course that focuses on the unique developmental needs of adolescents which enhance and accommodate their diverse skills and abilities.
- Awards and recognition for our students for a variety of reasons including academics, sports, random acts of demonstrating good character, citizenship, improved effort, attendance, and community service.
- Responsible Social Values Program (RSVP) an abstinence based program sponsored by the county health agency is provided to all students.
- Face-to-face lunch time groups for select at-risk students with the guidance counselor and behavior specialist that foster the development of peer level social skills identified as deficits of these students.
- Students are assessed in a variety of mediums including illuminated journals, electronic portfolios, self-evaluation and teacher/student made rubrics.

### **Social Equity**

- O Ambassadors program for 7<sup>th</sup> graders to enhance student knowledge of the issues of world poverty, education, health, and sustainable development so that they will understand their role in changing the current paradigm.

### **Social Equity** *(continued)*

- “Comets with Character” wall established for recognizing students for demonstrating random acts of good character, enabling staff members to “catch them being good.”
- All students are invited to participate in the planning of our Scholastic Book Fair. The entire event is student planned and managed and includes parent work volunteers and a breakfast for grandparents.
- Students participate in the national “Mix-it-up” at lunch campaign where differences are respected and celebrated.
- Student Council Officers serve as “student advisors” who meet with the principal on an on-going basis.
- The “Girls World” program, an outreach of Free the Children and O Ambassadors, provides the opportunity for female students to share letters, photos, and stories about their schools and communities with an exchange group of female students at a partner school in Kenya.
- Parents, community members and high school leadership students are encouraged to participate as volunteers at Comet Camp for incoming students, as guest speakers for Veteran’s Day and Diversity Day activities, outdoor experiential learning days, Family Testing Night and other activities as appropriate.
- Partnership with the local policing agency to support a “Juvenile Diversion” program that enables first time offenders to complete community service in lieu of a court record.
- Partnership with Big Brothers and Big Sisters to help at-risk students develop positive relationships with high school students who serve as mentors and supervised by a volunteer from the organization.
- MD students participate in on-going community based learning field experiences that provide real-world navigation experience.
- District provided Parent Mentor connects the parents of special needs students to community based resources.
- Student artwork is on display at various community locations including the local hospital, library, and zoo earning students many community based awards and recognition.

### **Organizational Support**

- Flexible Schedule to allow for interdisciplinary large group projects and instruction.
- “Comet Camp” allows students new to the school to experience “middle school” prior to the start of school to alleviate “first day jitters” for students and parents and to address transition needs.
- A Building Leadership Team (BLT) works collaboratively with building administrators to set goals for the building and determine the steps for the achievement of those goals.
- Staff development needs are determined by the BLT and planned accordingly.
- A new course to address the transition needs of our students with disabilities was created by a team of professionals that includes special education teachers, school counselor, school psychologist, parent mentor, therapists, behavior specialist and the county work study specialist.
- Early student release days are included in the school calendar to provide valuable professional development as determined by BLT.
- Grade level teams are provided 90 minutes of daily common planning time.
- Inclusion special needs students to the greatest extent possible in the regular education setting and all residential, experiential learning opportunities.
- Interdisciplinary teams regularly conference with parents as active participants during common planning time via telephone and in-house meetings to enhance school climate.
- On-going assessment of curriculum during district provided release time and common planning time with necessary adjustments made to enhance the student learning experience.
- A building representative of both classified (CLASS-SAC) and professional teaching staff (PRO-SAC) serves on a district level leadership advisory group to the Superintendent.
- Classified staff members are a key component to the success of Comet Camp, as the school cafeteria must be up and running for this event three days prior to the start of school.