



SCHOOLS TO WATCH – TAKING CENTER STAGE

MODEL SCHOOL – VISITOR'S GUIDE



Canyon Middle School



Designated 2007; Re-Designated 2010

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<http://www.canyon.cv.k12.ca.us/>

2010 School Statistics

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

Community: Suburban
Enrollment: 1,350
Grade Levels: 6-8
School Schedule: Six periods with daily zero period

Student Demographics

- 26% White
- 26% Asian
- 22% Hispanic/Latino
- 12% Two or more races
- 9% African American
- 2% Filipino
- 1% Pacific Islander
- 0% American Indian/Alaska Native

- 27% Free/Reduced Lunch
- 8% English Learners

2009 API Base: 841

2010 API Growth: 853 (up 108 points since 1999-00)

2009 AYP: Met 34 of 37 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

- The California standards drive expectations and the curriculum.
- Teachers use Step Up To Writing and Prime Numbers programs to enhance instruction.
- English-language arts and math teachers are coached by a district coordinator; the coaching program has enhanced rigor in the classroom and orchestrated articulation with the elementary schools.
- Inquiry labs in science enhance student understanding of concepts.
- A zero period provides instructional time for AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination), Spanish, interventions, music, and enrichment.
- A modified block schedule (Tuesday and Wednesday) is in place.
- Schoolwide Literacy Implementation Team (CALT) structures reading programs.

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Developmental Responsiveness

- An advisory period allows for informal time to address student concerns; students participate in a daily student-facilitated advisory broadcast.
- Sixth grade students are grouped into small, family-like teams to provide positive personal connections between students and teachers.
- Teachers use a variety of instructional strategies to excite and motivate students; strategies include projects, games, simulations, group activities, partner activities, hands-on activities, field trips, and student-directed learning.
- The school offers a strong program of electives and exploratory classes such as video journalism, wood shop, technology, and over five types of music classes.
- Thirty percent of students participate in music classes.
- Technology is used daily—computer lab, mobile computer labs, i-Movies, PowerPoint, LCD projectors, and Quizdom clicker systems.
- The school has many supports, including the ACADEMY program, for at-risk students.
- The district-wide Homestead independent study program is an alternative education program for K-8 students housed on the Canyon campus; middle school students must apply and receive district permission to attend this program.

Social Equity

- English language learner programs are at all grade levels.
- The Renaissance reward system is designed to value diversity, civility, service, democratic citizenship, good attendance, behavior, team sports, and academics.
- The student Diversity Council addresses cultural differences, tolerance, and bullying.
- Many opportunities exist for students' voices to be heard.
- Students have access to adult and high school mentors.
- The library has a wide selection of materials and technology.
- Community-Based English Tutoring (CBET) classes are given to teach parents ways they can assist their children with schoolwork.
- Families are offered many ways to become involved at the school site, such as the Canyon Parent Patrol to augment supervision.
- Rules and expectations are made clear to students; a peer mediation process effectively engages students in positive behavior.

Organizational Support

- The Canyon leadership team regularly meets with administrators to discuss the effectiveness and focus of the school.
- Every Tuesday, staff members gather to engage in professional development, book studies, and collaborative discussions about specific teaching practices and student achievement.
- School staff members actively gather and analyze data from a wide array of sources.
- An active PTA and community fundraising groups help the school meet additional student needs.
- The Castro Valley Parent Project—a ten-week series designed to change destructive adolescent behavior—is hosted on Canyon's campus and facilitated by Canyon's eighth grade guidance counselor.