



SCHOOLS TO WATCH – TAKING CENTER STAGE

MODEL SCHOOL—VISITOR’S GUIDE



Gaspar de Portola Middle School



Designated 2006

Gaspar de Portola Middle School (GdPMS) • San Diego Unified School District • San Diego County • Elizabeth Gillingham, Principal • 11010 Clairemont Mesa Boulevard, San Diego, CA 92124 • Tel (858) 496-8080, Fax (858) 576-4419 •

2005-2006 School Statistics

(Sources: 2006 API Growth Report; 2006 AYP Report)

Community: Large city
Enrollment: 1,006
Grade Levels: 6-8
School Schedule: Eight-period day including a zero period and a seventh period extended day

Student Demographics

- 47% White
- 27% Hispanic/Latino
- 13% African American
- 7% Asian
- 3% Filipino
- 2% Pacific Islander
- 0% American Indian/Alaska Native

- 35% Free/Reduced Lunch
- 8% English Learners

2005 API Base: 811

2006 API Growth: 810 (up 35 points since 2001-02)

2006 AYP: Met 23 of 25 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

- There is a school-wide emphasis is on higher-order thinking skills and real-world applications.
- Rigorous, grade-level curriculum and instruction is aligned with California standards.
- Writing is emphasized across the curriculum.
- Extensive after-school tutoring is aligned with the regular program.
- The school is an AVID leadership site.
- Strong teacher-to-teacher mentoring supports including professional book clubs exist.
- The library media center adds substantial support to the school and teachers and is available before-school and in the evening hours.
- Kick-Back-And-Read (KBAR) is a schoolwide literacy program.

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Developmental Responsiveness

- The Six-to-Six Program provides before- and after-school care for students on campus.
- All students have adult advocates with whom they can connect.
- A wide variety of school clubs and co-curricular activities provide positive social environments for students, including many activities organized by student leadership.
- Comprehensive services are in place to address students' physical and psychological needs including a full-time nurse and a therapy dog.
- An effective parent communication system informs the entire "community of parents."
- Character education is taught through an anti-bullying program.

Social Equity

- The highly diverse student population is valued, respected, supported, and celebrated.
- Because of many military families, there is a high mobility factor, yet every student is given opportunities to create friendships and experience success.
- Through programs like Parents at Lunch (PAL), many adults are available on campus to assist with supervision and to offer support to students.
- Students are acknowledged in many ways and recognized often for improvement, achievement, and positive social behavior.
- Rules are consistently enforced for all students.

Organizational Support

- The principal and administrative team employ a philosophy of continuous improvement.
- Parents and volunteers provide thousands of hours of on-campus involvement; the PTA raises substantial funds to support necessary academic and extracurricular programs.
- Strong links have been established between the school, community and local business organizations.
- Professional development is directly connected to the school's vision.