



# SCHOOLS TO WATCH – TAKING CENTER STAGE

## MODEL SCHOOL – VISITOR’S GUIDE



### Granger Junior High School



#### Designated in 2010

Granger Junior High School • Sweetwater Union High School District • San Diego County • Maryrose Peralta, Principal • 2101 Granger Avenue, National City, CA 91950  
• Tel 619-472-6000, Fax 619-267-4107 •  
<http://www.suhsd.k12.ca.us/gjh/>

### 2009 School Statistics

(Sources: 2009 API Growth Report; 2009 AYP Report)

Community: Large city  
Enrollment: 1,063  
Grade Levels: 7-9  
School Schedule: Six 52-minute classes with 28-minute advisory class

#### Student Demographics

- 74% Hispanic/Latino
- 19% Filipino
- 3% African American
- 3% White
- 1% American Indian/Alaska Native
- 1% Asian
- 1% Pacific Islander
  
- 83% Free/Reduced Lunch
- 30% English Learners

2008 Base: 757

2009 Growth: 782 (up 267 points since 1999)

2009 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

- Weekly school-wide formative assessment with immediate analysis of quiz scores results in immediate intervention after school as well as driving instruction.
- Teachers work together on common lessons based on the California State Standards.
- Every teacher clearly states and writes the lesson objective on the board.
- Because of the rigorous curriculum, the local high school opened up new sections of advance placement courses.
- Desks and chairs in every classroom are arranged in pairs/groups so that students speak about their learning using academic vocabulary.
- Teachers use Marzano strategies along with academic discourse, higher order thinking questions, and cooperative learning.
- Students keep portfolios and are shared with parents twice a year at student-led conferences.
- There are eight sections of AVID so that all students are provided with skills necessary for success; local colleges provide AVID tutors and after-school tutors.
- Cornell Notes are used school-wide.

(Continued)

### **Developmental Responsiveness**

- There are six 52-minute classes with a 28-minute advisory class at the end for sustained silent reading.
- Students and their families having trouble receive help from school and community organizations.
- Students are encouraged and rewarded for their participation in the community.
- Counselors speak to students and parents about requirements for college acceptance; students take annual field trips to local universities, research institutes, and biotech labs.
- Students play a vocabulary Internet game to earn grains of rice for students in impoverished countries.
- Students participate on the Principal's Advisory Council.
- Students initiated Family Literacy Night where families come for a spaghetti dinner and a book give-away.
- Students have multiple opportunities to explore a variety of interests: State of the art fitness center, arts and crafts, music and dance classes, cheerleading, flags, leadership development (Link Crew), career development class, and service learning.

### **Social Equity**

- Special education students are in mainstream classes that are co-taught by the resource teacher.
- Math support classes are provided during the school day.
- If students do not do their homework, they are given same-day after-school support class.
- Rising Stars, students with multiple F's, are placed in an after-school support class.
- When students have trouble focusing in class, they are given an after-school class to make up work.
- If a student is disruptive in class, he or she is picked up at the end of the day and stay for character development until 5:30 p.m.
- Saturday workshops give students support in core classes.
- Students who are Below Basic receive a support class during the day; students who are Far Below Basic are automatically enrolled in a seventh period support class.
- Summer four-week orientation class gives incoming seventh graders a jump-start.
- An open year-round sports league includes football, softball, baseball soccer, volleyball, and basketball.
- Each day a student is recognized as the Star of the Day; their story is told over the intercom.
- Childcare, translation, and refreshments are provided to parents on meeting days.
- The ASB regularly schedules students versus teachers games.

### **Organizational Support**

- The mission drives what the staff does and is stated at every meeting.
- Administrators meet with teachers monthly to review lessons which are analyzed for Marzano strategies.
- Administrative team is responsible for observing five classes per day.
- Professional Learning Communities create leadership opportunities.
- Teachers in same departments have common prep periods; teams of teacher meeting daily to analyze data and use it to drive instruction.
- Departments meet twice monthly to collaborate on assessments and smart goals.
- Every year, the faculty experiments with something new.
- Professional development cafes are offered after school; teachers are constantly learning what is on the cutting edge in technology helped by a local university that works with the staff departments to incorporate informational technology and develop short videos for their classes.
- A parent center on campus gives them access to computers, the Internet, parenting books and magazines, as well as volunteer opportunities.
- "Coffee at the Curb" event gives parents coffee and a breakfast bar as well as a chance to talk with the principal and teachers.
- "Breakfast with the Teachers" gives parents a chance to meet with teachers in a relaxed setting.