



SCHOOLS TO WATCH – TAKING CENTER STAGE

MODEL SCHOOL – VISITOR’S GUIDE



Holmes International Middle School



2009 School Statistics

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

Community: Large city
Enrollment: 1,456
Grade Levels: 6-8
School Schedule: Sixth grade has two-teacher cores; seventh and eighth grades have six periods (teamed)

Student Demographics

- 58% Hispanic/Latino
- 22% White
- 7% Asian
- 6% African American
- 6% Filipino
- 1% American Indian/Alaska Native
- 0% Pacific Islander

- 56% Free/Reduced Lunch
- 11% English Learners

2008 API Base: 799
2009 API Growth: 831 (up 236 points since 1999-00)
2009 AYP: Met 28 of 29 criteria

(Visit <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ar/index.asp> to view this school’s data for prior years.)

Designated 2007, Re-Designated 2010

Holmes International Middle School • Los Angeles Unified School District • Los Angeles County • Gregory Vallone, Principal • 9351 Paso Robles Avenue, Northridge, CA 91325 • Tel 818-678-4100, Fax 818-886-3358 • <http://www.holmesms.org/>

School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

Academic Excellence

- This is a large Title I school facing significant challenges, and yet the school is showing strong achievement growth over time.
- The school hosts a humanities magnet and School for Advanced Studies (SAS) program; the school focuses on international studies.
- Socratic seminars are used in instruction.
- Teacher collaboration is a key to offering a successful, student-focused, academic program.
- Student progress is carefully monitored; progress monitoring catches struggling students early.
- Interventions are tailored to student needs.
- Co-teaching provides strong support for special needs students.
- AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) and a college awareness program influenced by GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) work together to provide a schoolwide, college-going culture.

(Continued)

Academic Excellence *(continued)*

- The school supports students by providing:
 - Before-school, after-school, and Saturday-school homework and tutoring activities;
 - Academic interventions built into the regular school day.

Developmental Responsiveness

- An advisory at the beginning of the day allows students to start and end the day with the same teacher for guidance and organization.
- Interdisciplinary teams of four teachers and 165 students create strong supports in the seventh and eighth grades.
- A full array of comprehensive support services is provided to students.
- A diverse array of electives and exploratory classes are offered to all students.
- A highly developed music program offers over ten different music courses for students.
- A wide variety of technology is used to support student learning.
- A service learning component increases student connections and provides real-world learning opportunities.
- Students regularly go to local elementary schools to read books to children and help in their classrooms.
- A strong student transition program is in place for students coming from elementary school and students going to high school.

Social Equity

- There is intentional heterogeneous grouping of students across the whole school.
- A co-teaching program with resource teachers is carried out schoolwide.
- The school's uniform is a mark of pride.
- The school's international focus reflects respect for and support of all cultures.
- Many co-curricular activities are offered to all students.
- The AVID program targets underrepresented groups of students to participate in college readiness programs and rigorous coursework.

Organizational Support

- The school has a clearly stated common vision, and the community is committed to that end.
- The school-based management council involves many stakeholders in day-to-day decision making.
- A data monitoring system is based on benchmark assessments.
- Teamwork is systemic to the school; the school's master schedule includes common planning time.
- Using standardized test results, each teacher receives a detailed list of each student's overall areas of strengths and weaknesses and overall class data for the students they worked with the previous year.
- A connection with the local university ensures the special education program reflects the most effective practices based on current research.
- University students work as tutors to support struggling students in AVID class.