



# SCHOOLS TO WATCH – TAKING CENTER STAGE

## MODEL SCHOOL – VISITOR’S GUIDE



### Mistletoe School



#### Designated in 2010

Mistletoe School • Enterprise Elementary School District •  
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<http://www.eesd.net/education/school/school.php?sectionid>

### 2009 School Statistics

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

Community: Mid-size city  
Enrollment: 449  
Grade Levels: K-8  
School Schedule: Seven periods; core teachers have same students for 100-minute blocks

#### Student Demographics

- 70% White
- 15% Hispanic/Latino
- 6% Asian
- 5% American Indian/Alaska Native
- 4% African American
- 1% Filipino
- 0% Pacific Islander
  
- 65% Free/Reduced Lunch
- 8% English Learners

2008 Base: 828

2009 Growth: 837 (up 259 points since 1999)

2009 AYP: Met 15 of 15 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

- Teachers avidly search out rigorous/challenging curriculum and urge academic discourse between students.
- REACH pull-out program gives intensive support in English language-arts and Skills Tutor in math.
- School-wide teacher visitation walkthroughs happen twice a year for peer observation and feedback.
- Teachers draw from a common subset of instructional strategies and activities.
- Instruction includes outlining, Cornell Notes, research reports, projects and labs, field trips, guest speakers, elaborate simulations, Interwrite technology, and tessellation art.
- Core teachers have same students for 100-minute blocks to meet rigorous academic standards and give time for hands-on projects.
- District assessments and its analysis allow teachers to provide academic interventions while spiral learning occurs and mastery is achieved.
- After-school formal intervention programs include Zeros Aren't Permitted (ZAP), After School Childcare Education (ACE), study hall, and additional tutoring by teachers during the day at lunch and after school.

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### **Developmental Responsiveness**

- Each student connects with their homeroom teachers as the primary mentor/advisor; all teachers foster relationships with students.
- Small learning communities are built on sixteen common character traits that define respectful relationships.
- Reading Buddies program connects middle grades students with the younger ones to assist in reading.
- Teachers deliberately teach study and organizational skills (Kate Kinsella) and develop organizational systems through collaboration with the high school.
- Teachers use an interdisciplinary approach to reinforce important concepts and skills, and to address real-world problems through a variety of simulations and projects.
- Elective classes offer curriculum that is socially significant and relevant to career interests.
- Current technologies are used to integrate creative activities in the lessons.
- Site literacy program with full-time site literacy teacher orchestrates highly effective intervention services.
- Parent communication includes education classes (Love and Logic classes, anti-bullying, Internet safety training sessions), family nights, and a monthly school newsletter featuring “Nutrition Corner,” and “Enjoying Adolescence Corner.”

### **Social Equity**

- Flexible schedule allows for fluidity in math advancement, interventions, core classes, and electives.
- Grades are a composite of different learning experiences and products defined within categories.
- Enriching and diverse elective wheel, including foreign language (Spanish, Latin, Mandarin), performing arts, visual arts, community service, science exploration, career awareness and exploration.
- Special education students are in regular classrooms; resource specialist teacher works closely with staff to support and accommodate students.
- Online textbook resources are used to accelerate or remediate learning as well as provide parents with tools to support their children with homework.
- Progressive Discipline Plan is operational schoolwide and includes after-school Love and Logic classes.
- Positive recognition includes “Caught You Being Good” referrals with prizes, trimester postcards, and trimester assemblies that recognize academic achievement, character, attendance, physical abilities, reading achievement, and social development.

### **Organizational Support**

- Vision and mission statements are displayed and drive constant improvement.
- Student learning considerations are the most important criteria.
- Weekly staff collaboration used for assessment, data analysis, and sharing best practices.
- Vertical teaming help prepare students organizationally and academically for the rigors of high school.
- Leadership team is responsible for establish and articulating the new goals for school each year.
- Ventures for Excellence program facilitates collecting data on potential employees who will support the “whole child.”
- Relationships between the school, district and surrounding colleges for student teachers and formal dialogues regarding teaching and administrative preparation programs.
- Classroom guests serve as learning resources (for example, college instructor demonstrates dissections in science class, retired high school teacher co-teaches history unit).
- Staff believes that providing a family-like environment that is strongly connected to the parent community is fundamental to the ongoing support and development of each student’s high performance.