

Venado Middle School

END OF THE YEAR REPORT

2007-2008

School Targets for 2007-2008

- A. Improve learning for each student by using the Professional Learning Community model to analyze the cycle of learning.
- B. Implement and refine interventions for students who are not learning.
- C. Expand our schoolwide Positive Behavior Intervention Support, PBIS, system.

School Achievements for 2007-2008

- Refine and expand our work using the Professional Learning Community (PLC) structure. Our Professional Learning Communities met on our Thursday late starts. Initially, as a group we defined the PLC process, identified groups, and established norms. PLCs reconsidered what constitutes “essential standards,” developed of common assessments and rubrics, and normed those assessments. Based on analysis of student data, curricular and instructional changes were made in each department. One third of the staff went through the PLC training with the DuFours. The work of PLCs is on-going.
- Rewrote our mission: “That we lead every student to realize their gifts and to reach their highest potential.”
- Refine our understanding of how to use assessment data to increase student learning. We use CST scores routinely and have begun to use IOLA as a formative assessment tool, including the rewriting of the IOLA assessments to meet our needs.
- Adopt the district model for the writing process, the Venado Humanities teachers collaborated to refine the teaching of writing.
- For students whose reading is below proficient, we offer double-blocked Read 180 classes, imbedded in the school day, at both the 7th and 8th grade level. Those students then travel together to a grade level Social Science. Each of these classes has an instructional assistant or collaborative teacher to assist the regular teacher in supporting these students.
- Based on recommendations from last year’s English Learners Task Force, we reorganized our EL program. Our program now includes two different Language Arts classes in which both 7th and 8th graders were placed based on their English skills. Students went to a sheltered Social Science class based on grade level. Each of these classes has an instructional assistant or collaborative teacher to assist the regular teacher in supporting these students.
- Our special education students are clustered in smaller Humanities classes at both the 7th and 8th grade level, with instructional aides or collaborative teachers to assist with instruction and to support those who are struggling.
- Venado Intervention Academy, VIA, was created as an after school program to support “at risk” students who were not finding success as measured by grades, behavior, attendance, and/or proficiency on standardized and classroom tests. We expanded VIA to include a mandatory lunch tutorial for students who were not completing work, and therefore, not passing their classes.
- The “Red Zone” Committee met every few weeks to identify students in need of support and to review student achievement in order to recommend inclusion in VIA.
- Implementation Day was held the first day of school for 7th and 8th graders, introducing all students to the elements of our PBIS program and our HONOR code.
- HONOR cards were used to acknowledge students who were caught in the act of engaging in positive behavior.
- Students were routinely recognized for positive behavior and academic achievement through Super Knight and HONOR card drawings, in advisement assemblies, citizenship assemblies, and Making the Grade lunches.
- A new program WEB, Where Everyone Belongs, was put in place for this school year. The WEB trained staff members trained over 60 incoming 8th graders as WEB leaders. Each WEB leader received two days of training during the summer and then conducted WEB Orientation for all incoming 7th graders on August 29, a day before registration. They continued to meet with their 7th grade mentees in advisement, throughout the school year. In addition, there were WEB sponsored activities yearlong. For next year, over 70 new WEB students have been selected and have participated in their initial WEB May Play Day event.
- Under new leadership, the Youth Action Team, YAT, expanded their offerings and involved more students than ever before in both community service and in athletic completions. In addition, they initiated a can and bottle recycling program campus wide.
- The PAL, Peer Assisted Leadership, club organized a number of very effective activities for Red Ribbon Week.
- The City of Irvine recognized three people from Venado, a student, a counselor, and the assistant principal with OSP, Outstanding Supporter of Prevention, Awards for our VIA, WEB, and PAL programs.
- All students participated in a Going Green Environmental Day. Organized like a professional conference, students circulated through rotations, including a keynote speaker, exhibits, individual sessions based on interest, and a Who Wants to Be a Millionaire style game wherein students competed to answer questions about the environment.
- Several school-to-home communication systems were introduced, continued, and expanded. Nightly homework assignments are posted on our website. Most of the staff uses the ABI grade book that allows parents to view up to the minute completion of assignments and grades on tests, quizzes, and assignments, using the Parent Portal. This year we began using parents’ email addresses to send communications to both our current students and our incoming 7th grade students from both the school and the PTSA. Finally, the autodialer was used to send messages to the entire parent community or to groups of selected parents.
- Venado increased our Academic Performance Index by 21 points over the previous year.

Fran Antenore, Principal