



## CALIFORNIA SCHOOLS TO WATCH

California Schools to Watch™ is a statewide program implemented by the California League of Schools, California Department of Education, California Middle Grades Alliance, National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform, and the California Schools to Watch model schools. For more information, visit [www.leagueofschools.org](http://www.leagueofschools.org).



### RANCHO-STARBUCK INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

#### Designated 2017; Re-Designated 2020

Lowell Joint School District

Los Angeles County

Linda Takacs, Principal

16430 Woodbrier Drive, Whittier, CA 90631

[edline.net/pages/rancho](http://edline.net/pages/rancho)

#### SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

Community: Suburban; Enrollment: 791; Grade Levels: 7-8; School Schedule: Seven period day, including 90 minute ELA block. Twelve-minute homeroom daily and flex intervention/enrichment class for 38 minutes twice a week. One day shortened schedule for collaboration.

#### STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

65% Hispanic, 0.12% American Indian, 3% Asian, 2% African American, 0.63% Filipino, 0.50% Pacific Islander, 28% White; 31% Free/Reduced Lunch; 8.1% English Learners.

#### SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS AND REPLICABLE PRACTICES

- Common rubrics and benchmark assessments have been developed to support curriculum and schoolwide focus on argument writing. Results are analyzed and shared in PLC meetings on early release days. Department teams meet on Monday afternoons to collaborate.
- To support students who are struggling, math tutorial is offered for seventh grade students. Flex every Tuesday and Thursday for 38 minutes benefits all students in need of intervention as well as offering enrichment in three week cycles.
- Eighth grade students benefit from an innovative construction and design class where students use hands-on activities to reinforce math concepts.
- Chromebooks and iPads are utilized in classrooms, and through Project Lead the Way students are offered design and modeling, automation and robotics, and green architecture. The school also offers a one of a kind class that teaches students the science behind sound engineering and recording music.
- Three mornings a week student tutors and parents help students in the Power Start and Power Finish program before school.
- Teachers are supported by in-house coaches trained in Visible Learning to implement research-based instructional practices.
- In addition to serving on a variety of advisory committees in the schools, parents are engaged in conferences, activities, assemblies by Teen Truth and parent nights. Students with social and intellectual needs are assigned to a “Why Try” class after school.
- Students at Rancho are offered a wide variety of curricular and extra-curricular activities. Although over 200 students participate in the music program, drama, Junior Achievement, Science Olympiad, yearbook, Math Field Day, drawing, painting and 3D Design are available as well as a comprehensive sports program.
- Through collaboration, staff have developed Rancho-Starbuck Tools and Strategies for Learning Success, a handbook on argument writing, as a resource for students and staff. Within the handbook are examples of strong writing, rubrics, learning logs for student reflection and peer editing, guides which are used across disciplines.