

SCHOOLS TO WATCH-TAKING CENTER STAGE

Schools to Watch™-Taking Center Stage is a statewide program implemented by the California League of Middle Schools, California Department of Education, California Middle Grades Alliance, National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform and the Schools to Watch™-Taking Center Stage Model Schools

For more information, visit www.clms.net/stw.



FRUITVALE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Designated 2018

Fruitvale Elementary School District

Kern County

Erick Rouanzoin, Principal

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SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

Community: Suburban; Enrollment: 720; Grade Levels: 7-8; School Schedule: Six periods of daily instruction with 72-minute block classes in both English and mathematics. Wednesday is an early release day for professional development, instructional planning, and data reflection.

SCHOOL DEMOGRAPHICS

Free/reduced lunch: 44%; English learners: 6%

REPLICABLE PRACTICES

- Fruitvale Junior High provides weekly time for staff collaboration and most core teachers have a common prep period. In addition, the district has scheduled 50 release days to be shared between all departments to work with an instructional coach to assist with deconstruction of standards, data reflection, development of assessments, and tasks that align to appropriate standard rigor and planning for instructional improvement. Staff also receive coverage to observe peers a minimum of four times in the school year.
- Fruitvale offers four “Project Lead the Way” courses and over seventeen elective choices that connect to high school pathways and beyond.
- Placing an emphasis on excellent first instruction, teachers begin every class with a focused direction—the standard to be mastered. Two bullseye graphics are used to communicate to students the “big bullseye,” the result to be reached, and the “daily darts” represent the subskills to be mastered on the route to the destination. Common assessments inform instruction and re-teaching, including re-deployment of students among teachers to master specific standards.
- A school-wide focus on the “analysis of main ideas and supporting details in diverse media and formats” is demonstrated by a commitment to common instructional practices and literacy skills in all subjects.
- Students in need of intervention benefit from a targeted math intervention program offered after school three days a week, as well as tutoring in the “General Homework Connection” program. In addition, during school hours students can access a study skills course or an eighth grade intensive, personalized intervention course.
- Fruitvale considers their extensive, career-focused, elective program to be the most impactful program for student connectedness by providing a personalized environment supporting student development that intellectually, ethically, socially, and physically helps each student “find their niche.”
- Parents at Fruitvale are offered several opportunities for parent training and participation in the school, including an October meeting where parents meet with every teacher in their student’s schedule.
- Fruitvale offers an agriculture class, a career pathway that is highly relevant to the community, which gives students the opportunity to operate a garden from start to finish by studying the world of science and technology from an agricultural perspective.