

FONTANA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT CARD • SPRING 1996

Almeria Middle School

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A Message from the Principal

By implementing numerous recommendations from Caught in the Middle, School Quality Criteria, and Turning Points, Almeria Middle School has distinguished itself as a model middle school in the State of California. Because of our innovative programs and reputation as leaders, Almeria hosts up to twenty visitors a month who come to see our model programs in action.

Using our Restructuring Grant, we continue to produce students who possess the computer based skills needed to be successful in the 21st century. Teachers have been trained in bringing technology to the classroom through integrated curriculum. Students demonstrate their learning through student led conferences.

Almeria has received a State Department of Education Grant and is a Mathematics Demonstration School. We were honored in 1996 with a California Distinguished School Award.

Almeria is a center for community education through our "Open Almeria" education program. The chance to learn from various classes including English and keyboarding skills through Open Almeria is, for many parents, the key that opens the door to opportunity. This program has been expanded through our Goals 2000 grant and now includes our local elementary and high schools.

At Almeria Middle School we always keep our eye focused on the future. While we may constantly revise our goals to meet new challenges, our central focus is always, "How is this going to help our students become successful adults?" At Almeria we believe there is no finality in our efforts because there is never a point in education where one can say everything is complete. The nature of our society changes, and we must continue to meet the changing needs of youth.

Richard Roth, Principal
Almeria Middle School

School Description

Almeria Middle School is one of six middle schools in the Fontana Unified School District. Over the past few years the student population in the district has changed rapidly, and today Almeria Middle School is a rich mixture of Caucasian, Hispanic, Black, and Asian students. The 1410 students are divided roughly as follows: White - 21%; Hispanic - 60%; Black - 15%; Asian - 1%; and Other - 3%.

The Mission of the school, as adopted by the entire team (teachers, administrators, classified, students and parents) is:

In an environment of mutual cooperation the students of Almeria Middle School are learning to respect themselves and others while pursuing academic excellence. Our school community - students, staff and parents presents a positive and enthusiastic atmosphere in which students can grow into responsible adulthood.

Our school slogan is:
"Oceans Above the Rest"

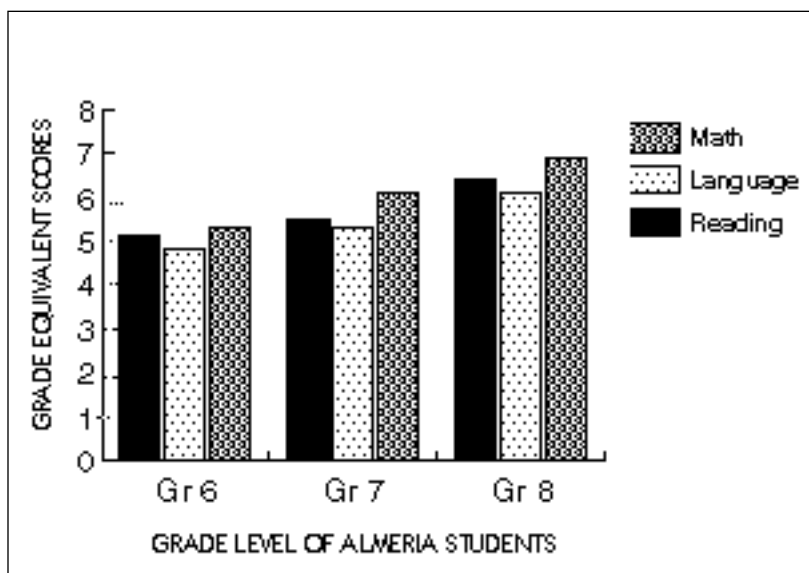
Our performance slogan is:
"Striving to be the 21st Century School Today"

In its effort to achieve this Mission, the school works closely with several community groups: the Fontana Teachers Association, the City of Fontana through Parks and Recreation and the Fontana Police Department.

INDICATORS OF THE CONDITIONS OF THE SCHOOL

Student Achievement

This graph represents results from Reading, Language and Math sections of the ITBS Achievement Test for Almeria Middle School. Our students took this test in the Spring of 1995. The ITBS is a standardized, multiple choice test, and the results compare our students according to a national "norm" group. Students from various parts of the United States took this test to establish the "norm" or expected scores for students at each grade level. The bars on the graph indicate the average "Grade Equivalent" scores for each grade level at Almeria.



Teachers have noted that the children appear to be excited about coming to school and are on task in the classrooms. Curriculum changes in all grade levels have led to an overall upward surge in the children's enthusiasm and creativity. Samples of children's work are on display throughout the school.

Expenditures & Services Offered

Although funding in many budget categories for Almeria Middle School is established in the District budget adopted by the Board of Education, valuable information is available at the school site. The following are significant:

- For 1995/96 the school received \$60,000 for instructional purposes.
- In 1995/96 the school received funding in categorical accounts amounting to \$343,000. This money serves students/programs in the following areas: special education, programs for limited and non-English speakers, and School Improvement.

Attendance Rate

Almeria Middle School teachers note that over the past year the students have been very excited about coming to school. Only about 5% of our students are absent on a given day and 99.42% of the absences are verified, excusable absences.

INDICATORS OF THE CONDITIONS OF THE SCHOOL (Continued)

Class Sizes and Teaching Loads

As a result of an agreement negotiated with the Fontana Teachers Association, the district staff was at an average of 29 students per class. Obviously, individual classes may be higher or lower depending on the course.

1995 Distribution of Children for Each Teacher

Below you will find a breakdown of the number of classes and the number of students in the classes. Keep in mind the smaller classes indicate classes for learning handicapped students and the larger classes include physical education classes, band, choir, etc.

- The 6th grade academic classes averaged 34 students per classroom for the 1995 school year. The 7th and 8th grades averaged 33.
- Computer classrooms averaged 37 students at 6th grade. The 7th and 8th grades averaged 36.
- The 6th grade P.E. classes averaged 34 students. The 7th and 8th grades averaged 40.
- Instrumental/Vocal Music averaged 29 students per class. Other electives for 7th grade averaged 34. The 8th grade averaged 34. SDC classes averaged 15.

Teacher Assignment

Every teacher at Almeria Middle School is properly certified to teach at the appropriate grade level. Almeria is unique in that 80% of the teachers have multiple subject credentials which allows us to provide a flexible program for our students. Almeria teacher, Sherry Hamilton was honored as F.U.S.D. Teacher of the Year for 1996-97.

Counseling & Student Support Services

Our school enjoys the services of a full-time librarian, two counselors, part-time speech therapist, psychologists, an adaptive P.E. teacher, a nurse, a five-hour health clerk, two community aides, and a Fontana Police school resource officer. The present ratio of seven hundred students per counselor is far from adequate, but basically our academic counseling needs are being met, through individual counseling, group counseling, peer counseling services, Almeria Peer Leaders and the Almeria Student Peace Team.

Substitute Teachers

As is the case with all surrounding school districts, the Fontana Unified School District is not always able to find substitutes who are qualified to teach in our school. On occasion, when this occurs, our teachers substitute during their conference period. We call them guest teachers. This provides an uninterrupted instructional process.

School Facilities and Safety

The recent influx of students has created problems of space that are being relieved with the use of temporary trailer classrooms. Approximately 25% of the student population at Almeria Middle School attend classes in these units.

According to the Standard School Crime Report for the first semester of 1995/96, there were 201 safety related incidents at Almeria Middle School. This normally includes fights which are grounds for suspension, several types of vandalism and property crimes, and incidents related to weapons or substance abuse.

Classroom Discipline

There is general agreement among all school staff on the instructional goals of the school. The students practice our behavioral guidelines, Rules to Live By: trustworthiness, truthfulness, active listening, personal best, and no put-downs. The school and District administration have been especially supportive of the on-going process of improving our instructional and discipline programs. Each parent is provided a copy of our school's discipline plan at the beginning of each school year or upon enrollment. The plan includes state, district and school guidelines. Behavioral Expectation Assemblies are held with all students at least twice a year. Multimedia small group meetings were held to teach students laws, their rights and responsibilities and how to demonstrate qualities reflective of positive citizens.

Teacher Evaluation & Professional Improvement

In accordance with the negotiated agreement, all permanent teachers in the Fontana Unified School District are evaluated on a two-year cycle. The evaluation procedures used are consistent with the research on useful evaluation and State law, and administrators are fully trained in using the instrument.

Probationary teachers (those working less than two years in the District) are observed at least three times per year and receive two formal evaluations annually. Teachers are evaluated using clinical observation and teacher portfolios.

Quality of Instruction & Climate for Learning

There are a variety of programs on the campus to meet the diversity of the students' needs. These programs include: integrated social studies/language arts program, integrated math/science program, lunchtime intramural program, Peer Leaders, ASB/Leadership, Club Live, Travel Club, Drill Team, Wilderness Club, Dolphin Club (weightlifting), Chess Club, Ski Club, Yearbook, Peace Team, Newspaper, Homework Club, and Academic Pentathlon. Our staff opens its doors to our community with classes taught in a program called Open Almeria. Our students consistently win in local, county, and state competitions for History Day. Each grade level expands their curriculum through field trips to places such as Museum of Tolerance, J. Paul Getty Museum, Rubidoux Nature Center, Orange County Marine Institute, Workshop in the Woods, and Cabrillo Beach Aquarium. We are known for our innovative instructional practices which allow all students to be successful. We believe each student is responsible for their learning as demonstrated through our student led conferences. The 1995-96 school year sees the addition of schoolwide Literacy Training to improve student reading and our Basic Skills Homework Plan to reteach, reinforce, and improve student skills in literacy and computation.

Training & Curriculum Improvement

Almeria Middle School has a plan for training and curriculum development which was developed jointly by the teachers and administration after much research and discussion. Features of the plan include: opportunities for teachers to observe and coach each other, travel to select conferences, the use of consultants from the department of instruction at the local universities, the District Staff Development Department and from outside the District. Teachers are also trained in the use of technology through a two-week Summer Technology Institute. We are most appreciative of the days of student non-attendance when teachers spend entire days acquiring new skills and developing new programs. Almeria teachers also conduct training for other schools and districts.

Salary Reporting 1995-96

The law requires we report our salary structure compared to similar district statewide averages. The most current data provided by the California Department of Education is for the 1995-96 school year.

The lowest beginning teachers' annual salary is \$28,280 for 182 days of service or \$155.38 per day. The statewide average for beginning teachers in districts similar to ours is \$26,980 annually.

The average mid-range salary is \$42,600 for 182 days of service or \$228.57 per day in our district. The statewide mid-range salary is \$42,403 in districts similar to ours.

The highest salary for a teacher in our district is \$53,182 or \$292.21 per day in our district. The statewide average for the highest paid teachers in districts similar to ours is \$49,859.

All teachers salaries represent 42.7% of the total budget.

Principals' salaries vary according to time in the position and work year; however, when salaries are averaged for all such principals, their annual averaged salary is \$62,399 or 299.77 per day of service. The statewide average for principals is \$67,192.

Our district superintendents' salaries vary based on responsibility; however, when salaries were averaged their annual average salary (1994-95) was \$90,124 which equal 0.3% of the total budget. Superintendents are paid to work 220 days excluding weekends, holidays, and vacation at an average daily rate of \$409.65. They are responsible for the services performed by 2,414 certificated and classified employees and for about 31,000 students. Data is not available for districts with similar numbers of students; however, the 1994-95 state average for superintendents in similar districts was \$114,830.

All certificated and classified administrative salaries and board stipends in our district represent 4.53% of the total budget.