

Valley View Middle School

Valley View Middle School opened a little over two years ago. From the start our priority has been to educate the whole child. In the beginning, we met with the teachers to decide on our vision and goals for the school. We wanted everyone to have a voice and be invested in the same vision. The staff's vision for the school was to cultivate compassionate learners who adapt, work, and serve—C.L.A.W.S.

To cultivate compassion, our staff has implemented Restorative Practices and circles, a protocol that guides students through emotional regulation and conflict resolution. We teach social skills lessons based on our C.L.A.W.S. vision. To emphasize the importance of our vision, we tie our citizenship grades to the vision and categorize them through our acronym, C.L.A.W.S.

To help develop the whole child we put recess in our schedule, so students can move and receive the benefits of exercise and socialization.

To encourage friendships among the students and also to enable the teachers to know the students better, the school is organized into a pod system. The student body is broken into ten pods. Each pod has a Math, English and Science teacher where around 90 students are broken into three groups and rotate between the three classes. Teachers in each pod have a common prep period to enable them to plan cross curricular lessons, pod parties, and intervention times together.

We wanted the students to read, write, and speak more during the school day. At the end of last year, we all read the book *Focus* by Mike Schmoker. We read; we trained; we collaborated over the summer to make sure that we had a common language and knowledge on what authentic literacy looks like in each department. Departments worked together on where in their curriculum map they would input authentic literacy lessons.

From the beginning, we have been a Standards Based Grading school. We are constantly refining our standards and rubrics. By keeping this a priority, parents, students and teachers clearly know what is being taught and what the expectations of learning are in each classroom.

4=A	Standard Met - Student demonstrates an understanding of the ideas and processes that were explicitly taught and practiced during class. There may still be some errors or omissions that do not interfere with the key concept.
3=B	Standard Nearly Met - Student demonstrates basic understanding of the ideas and processes that were explicitly taught and practiced during class, but still lacks some key conceptual understanding. There are still some errors or omissions when demonstrating key concepts of the content.
2=C	Standard Partially Met - Student is beginning to demonstrate an understanding of the simple ideas and processes that were explicitly taught and practiced during class. However, the student demonstrates significant conceptual errors that impede their understanding of key concepts.

1=D	Standard Not Met - Student demonstrates limited understanding of the basic ideas and/or has difficulty retaining the ideas and processes that were explicitly taught and practiced during class. There are consistent errors or omissions when identifying the key concepts of the content.
0=F	No Evidence - there is not enough evidence of learning to determine a grade at this time

We have discovered that as time passes and the faculty changes, it is important that we share our vision with the new employees and provide adequate training. We want everyone to be focused on educating the whole child. When everyone shares a vision and is invested in the same goal, we can cultivate compassionate learners who adapt, work, and serve.

