



VIRGINIA SCHOOLS TO WATCH
A Community of Learners
SCHOOLS TO WATCH – VISITOR’S GUIDE



Sterling Middle School
Loudoun County, Virginia



2015 STW Redesignation
Sterling Middle School
Loudoun County Public School
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2015 School Statistics

Community: Suburban Community
 Enrollment: 993
 Grade Levels: 6 – 8
 School Schedule: Four Block Alternating Schedule

Student Demographics (2015)

7% African American	97% Attendance Rate
15% Asian	
58% Hispanic	
16% White	50% Male
4% Two or More Races	50% Female

33% English Language Learners	
15% Special Education	
6% Gifted	64% Free/Reduced Lunch

Accreditation Scores 2015-2016
 75% English 89% History 73% Math 83% Science

School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

Academic Excellence:

- School received full accreditation status for the 2015-16 school year.
- Students receive rigorous lessons that ensure they think critically (high levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy).

- Collaborative Learning Teams (CLTs) work together to deepen their knowledge, improved their standards-based practices, and analyze student data to identify and provide interventions for students.
- Lesson plans for English and Math are reviewed by administrators on a weekly basis.
- Teachers receive ongoing professional development in the areas of: Reading/Writing across the Content Areas; Differentiated Instruction; One-to-the-World Projects; and Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP).
- Teachers post and refer to in their lessons a daily content and language objective (CLO) along with a mastery criteria component so students can self-monitor when they have mastered a concept/skill.
- Teachers use formative/summative assessments, exit tickets, journal entries, reflections, and critique sessions with student peers to obtain a variety of methods by which to assess students.
- School developed school-wide common policy for retaking summative assessments.
- Teachers provide students with benchmark assessments that act as a pre- and post-test so that they can monitor academic growth in a given content area.

Developmental Responsiveness:

- Students are grouped into houses by grade levels to provide a smaller community.
- Students meet every morning with their advisors in our research-based Advisory Program where one adult is responsible for at least 12 students. This new program has a full teacher's handbook, curriculum for 6-8 grade students, and teachers loop with their students from year to year.
- Counselors meet with students to form groups such as lunch buddies, group sessions, friendship groups, and eating disorder awareness so that students have access to comprehensive services that foster healthy physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development.
- The school offers a Parents as Educational Partners (PEP) program that offers support to Limited English Proficiency (LEP) parents.
- The school's parent liaison assists families in obtaining food, clothing, school supplies, and medical attention during times of need.

- The school is growing its Achievement via Individual Determination (AVID) program to create a college-bound culture.
- Local college students visit Sterling Middle School to discuss college and their own experiences, challenges, and college life in general.
- Students develop as knowledgeable critical thinkers, communicators, collaborators, creators, and contributors through the district's One-to-the-World work.

Social Equity:

- Sterling Middle School students have access to high-quality teachers who provide rigorous learning opportunities.
- English Language Learners (ELL) and Special Education (SPED) students are given the same opportunities as mainstreamed students. Furthermore, they participate in all our after-school activities.
- Students are identified for push-in and pull-out opportunities, through their Resource block, so that they receive academic interventions as an extension to their classroom learning.
- Students and staff value diversity, and they have ample ongoing opportunities to learn about their own and others' cultures, such as Hispanic Heritage month.
- Bilingual Connect-Ed calls go out every Sunday evening to let parents in our community understand all the events for the upcoming week, to include all the opportunities they have to volunteer at the school.
- As part of our community outreach for our ELL families, our school provides PEP meetings for our parents.

Organizational Structure and Support:

- Part of our vision is to create a supportive environment where the faculty is committed, through our Advisory Program and other programs, to inspire and motivate students.
- Personal academic achievements by the faculty and administration are communicated by displaying diplomas, certificates, and awards.
- Transitional activities such as hosting an Open House and Picnic for rising 6th graders result in a smooth transition to middle school.

- Spectrum provides enrichment opportunities for identified general intellectually-gifted students.
- New teachers receive support from the Mentor Program, their CLTs, and from professional development designed specifically for them.
- The administration provides teachers with immediate and constructive feedback on their lesson plans or observed lessons.
- The administrative leadership team conducts non-evaluative walkthrough observations regularly to gauge the climate of the school, assess the teaching practices of the teachers, and to allow the students to recognize that both the administration and the teachers are resources for learning.
- The High School Peer Program is comprised of former Sterling Middle School students currently at Park View High School.
- Aside from their OTTW experiences, local business partnerships provide students with access to real-world experiences.