

SCOTTS VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL



2018-2019 SCHOOL STATISTICS

Designated in 2013

Re-Designated in 2018

Community Size - Suburban

School Enrollment - 535

Grade Levels - 6-8

School Calendar - traditional

Free & Reduced Lunch - 12%

English Learners - 1%

Students with Disabilities - 11%

Scotts Valley Unified School District
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Principal - Mary Lonhart
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School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

Academic Excellence

Academic Excellence

With the shift to a Common Core-aligned academic program, Scotts Valley Middle School (SVMS) continues to provide an outstanding academic program that meets the needs of all levels of learners with a variety of learning styles and needs. The collaborative SVMS Academy Program continues to be an effective structure for the students of SVMS. With the Enrichment period as the daily cornerstone of our schedule, student needs are foundational in the planning and delivery of instruction. Based on the results of our Self-Study Rubric, staff believes we are very effective in providing instruction that

2018-2019 School Demographics

- African American - 1%
- Asian - 1%
- Caucasian - 74%
- Filipino - 0%
- Hispanic - 14%
- Native American - 1%
- Pacific Islander - 0%
- Other - 0%
- Two or More - 8%

emphasizes a deep understanding of concepts while also supporting the development of essential skills. Additionally, we continue to maintain high academic standards and a variety of means for students to meet these standards.

As a member of the Silicon Valley Math Initiative (SVMI), all of our SVMS math teachers have received extensive training in the Common Core and all of its facets as it relates to mathematics instruction. After an extensive review and pilot of possible mathematics curriculum materials, our department members chose the College Preparatory Mathematics series. Extensive staff development was provided to support the adoption of this new curriculum and staff finds it to be user-friendly and supportive of optimal mathematics instruction. Additionally, this curriculum blends well with the components of the SVMI. Preliminary CAASPP data indicates that our extensive professional development and collaborative schedule have been effective in supporting students' mathematical understanding.

The Professional Learning Community structure that is a natural product of our Academy Program has allowed our staff to work cooperatively to continually review, refine and improve our interventions and learning extensions available to students. Within the regular school day, all students are afforded the opportunity to meet one on one, or in small group with their teacher during the Enrichment period. The flexibility of this period within our school day is instrumental in the development of skills and the deeper understanding of concepts. Additionally, our faculty Team Time within the Academy structure provides our staff with daily opportunities to review student data, meet with families, plan for cross-curricular instructional activities and work collaboratively toward common goals.

Our generous Parent Teacher Association, in conjunction with district funds, has enabled SVMS to purchase Chromebook sets for every classroom. Site-based professional development has supported increasing teachers' ability to infuse technology within the classroom and the Chromebooks are a natural extension of this learning. Students have daily access to technology and through the Google tools, are able to become 21st century learners. These Chromebooks are instrumental in frequent student assessment and hands-on skill development.

With activities like our Makers' Faire, the County Science Fair and Math Challenge Groups, students are regularly challenged to work collaboratively on project-based lessons that reflect their personal interests as well as their individual skill levels. Teachers, instructional aides and parent volunteers support these activities throughout the entire school day with cross-curricular lessons and individualized attention during Enrichment.

As our CAASPP scores and other data demonstrate, SVMS continues to be an academically rigorous, high-achieving school that places students at the center of all our work. Our Self-Study rubric indicates we are doing well in many areas of our school program. We strive to be a student-centered learning community that meets the needs of all of our learners.

Developmental Responsiveness

Developmental Responsiveness:

The structure of SVMS is uniquely designed with students' needs in mind. With our "family-like" structure, the Academy teams support the academic as well as the social/emotional components of our students. Our teams allow teachers to focus on smaller groups of students, thereby

ensuring that needs can be more easily identified and response time can be more efficient. With the support of a full-time principal and assistant principal, teachers are skilled at seeking the resources our students may need. We are so pleased to have a full-time counselor on staff this year. She provides one on one counseling (dictated by both an on-site assessment system and via the IEP process), small group counseling and support groups for identified needs. Students regularly seek her out when needing support.

SVMS parents benefit from access to the Triple P Program (Positive Parenting Program). Triple P offers classes to parents, on campus, with snacks and childcare provided. Parents receive education on a variety of topics related to adolescents. Furthermore, in conjunction with the Scotts Valley Police Department and Scotts Valley High School, parents may attend a class on social networking. A local police officer provided parents with the most up to date social networking sites and advised them on how to monitor these and support their children in their use of social media.

Newer to SVMS is our Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) program. We are thrilled to be implementing this program district-wide in support of our students' social and emotional well-being. In response, SVMS has created our own acronym as the pillar of PBIS at our school:

I=Integrity
C=Compassion
A=Achievement
R=Respect
E=Engagement

ICARE allows us to have a framework for discussions about student behavior in all areas of student-life. Additionally, staff is able to recognize students and honor them for their positive contributions at school. With this "common language", we are able to create opportunities for increased student success. To highlight this program, SVMS created "swag" to go along with the ICARE acronym that increases student interest in the program. T-shirts, posters, postcards mailed home and more help us to keep this important pillar as a strong focus in our work.

Our Health class continues to provide a safe, productive environment to foster discussions and learning about challenging adolescent topics. Our highly-qualified teachers review a variety of age-appropriate material to ensure our curricula is student-centered and meets the social/emotional needs of our students. Newly adopted, our Health teachers use the Teen Talk curriculum that meets the guidelines for California Healthy Youth Act. Additionally, within the Enrichment period, teachers are able to address the rules and expectations of SVMS, promote school-spirit competitions and address global concerns as they arise.

Data from the Fall 2017 Healthy Kids survey indicates that overall, students believe that SVMS fosters high expectations and caring relationships. Students feel connected to school and feel safe as well. 65% of our students feel a part of school and even more indicate that they try hard on their school work. This data represents an overall positive, caring and productive school environment. Data from our Site Council survey is as equally indicative of a learning community that supports academics as well as social/emotional needs.

One of our most effective programs continues to be our structure for students with identified special needs and our English Language learners. Each year, our small team of specialists, in conjunction with the administrative staff, builds our master schedule around the unique needs of

our special needs population. We have found this to be a successful base-planning model to provide a multitude of learning opportunities within our Academy program for all learners at SVMS.

In October of 2017, our entire staff was able to participate in the Capturing Kids' Hearts professional development workshop. We provided substitute teachers for two days for our faculty to allow total participation in this influential session. With a focus on social-emotional well-being, our faculty came away with new strategies to support students and colleagues alike.

Team time is an essential component of the Academy program and is effective in addressing the individual needs of students. Often, team meetings, including the parents and student are held to address questions, needs and concerns. Faculty include other members of our staff or resource personnel as appropriate, depending upon the need to the student. Parents appreciate the access to all their child's teachers at one time and the ability to problem-solve and support each other on behalf of the student. Students are able to practice self-advocacy skills and represent their needs accurately and effectively.

Social Equity

Social Equity:

Before we begin to build our master schedule each year, we first outline the needs and mainstream placements of our students with disabilities and our English learners. These needs become the backbone of the schedule and all other facets are built around these needs. This time intensive process facilitates an excellent environment of acceptance and high expectations for all of our students. It also allows us to provide appropriate support where needed. Again, this is also where our Enrichment period is a key element of success. It allows all students to receive instruction in the core subjects from a highly qualified teacher and receive appropriate support and individualized instruction during the Enrichment period. Our Intervention program allows for fluid, short-term interventions that meet both the discreet skill needs of students as well as supports them in the daily coursework needs. This valuable service is provided during Enrichment.

Through our twice-monthly professional development meetings as well as our Team Time, teachers continue to refine instructional strategies that meet the needs of all types of learners. Essential standards are taught in a variety of manners to ensure that all students reach proficiency. For example, in English 7, students are working on character analysis of the main character of Tangerine. Activities to support this are role playing as characters in the family, short essay responses about the thought processes the character might have prior to taking action, round table discussions on topics of interest specific to the main character, and character trait comparisons between the student and the main character. For our students struggling to achieve proficiency on this topic, the teacher may provide role-playing clues, reduce the number of character traits comparisons required, or provide background on the topic of interest the student will be discussing so they are prepared to actively participate.

Technology use continues to expand at SVMS. Within the last two years, we have been fortunate enough to buy class sets of Chromebooks for all of our classrooms. All teachers use an Elmo document camera, an LCD projector and a laptop in their daily work. The extent of this use varies among teachers and is a regular topic for professional development sessions. Another

contribution from our PTA has been Ipads and Apple TVs for each classroom to further enhance teachers' instruction. SVMS provides wireless Internet and computer access to all students during the school day when required for an activity or lesson. Each year, our Rotary Club supports two to three "at risk" youth with a personal laptop and four hours of personalized instruction on its use. Through the recommendation and application process, students are provided with a laptop.

Because SVMS overall lacks diversity, we are acutely aware to be inclusive and representative of all students at SVMS. Teachers work to include community members and parents in presentations when the curriculum allows for this enhancement. For example, when the 6th graders are studying the ancient culture of India, a community-volunteer shares elements of her culture with our students, including food and clothing demonstrations. Our library is rich in resources about other cultures and students have access to these materials within the school day.

SVMS has a variety of ways to recognize students for their individual successes. We honor academics via an Honor Roll and Principal's List designation. We support athletics through publication of game scores and individual hard work on our Daily Announcements. Teachers regularly distribute "Terrific Tickets" to students exemplifying good citizenship, appropriate participation, helping others and for many other admirable actions and qualities. With the implementation of our ICARE program, teachers mail home simple postcards monthly to those students who have exemplified one or all of our ICARE qualities. Via our PTA, teachers can nominate a student each month for "Student of the Month". These students have their pictures displayed in the administration building and have a lunchtime pizza party. Administrators also distribute "Teacher/Staff Terrific Tickets" for the same actions and qualities. New this year, our local Togo's Restaurant allows SVMS staff to recognize a Student of the Week who exemplifies the ICARE qualities. Our Rotary Club helps us to recognize the outstanding academic achievement of students as well as recognition for the performing arts and exemplary community service of students.

Because the principal speaks fluent Spanish, parents that are Spanish speakers seem comfortable contacting the school with questions and concerns. However, this is an area of weakness due to the small number of non-English speaking students. We have worked to provide translated forms of all necessary documents as well as translation at any parent meeting that is needed. Additionally, the district employs a "community liaison" to support outreach to our disenfranchised families. She helps facilitate communication between home and school and support families at meetings when needed.

Communication is excellent at SVMS because the majority of our families use email and Internet services. Families can track student attendance and progress at any time during the day or night. If applicable, teachers mail home or students hand-carry home progress notes should the family not have Internet access. Our website is rich with a variety of information and our regular "email blasts" and monthly newsletter keep families informed. The addition of an SVMS Facebook page has provided further opportunities for communication. The staff is directed to respond to any parent inquiry within twenty-four hours of receipt and our Site Council Parent Survey notes that this is a strong, positive component of SVMS. Additionally, our district Parent Advisory Committee survey noted that 80% of parents report that they get the information they need regarding school activities. Via the Scotts Valley Educational Foundation, the School Site Council, the PTA and Team Time meetings, parents have a multitude of ways to have a voice in SVMS.

At SVMS, we are fortunate to have many staff members who live in the community and whose children have or do attend SVMS. This helps us to be better integrated into the community and

understand its needs. Additionally, it helps to create a warm, family-type atmosphere at our school.

SVMS faculty and staff support honor the school rules which has created a safe and supportive learning environment. Parents and students have access to the school rules in their Binder Reminder which is used as a daily organizational tool. Additionally, faculty members present a common PowerPoint to students during Enrichment in the first weeks of school to ensure exposure to and understanding of the rules. Since the inception of our Academy system, disciplinary referrals have reduced dramatically because teacher teams are able to respond more effectively and with individualized attention to student concerns. Additionally, it is the understanding of students and all adults on campus, that everyone on campus is responsible for monitoring and supporting safe and appropriate behavior.

Organizational Support

Organizational Structures and Processes:

Through a variety of systems, it is evident that SVMS believes and supports shared leadership. Teacher leadership is seen in a variety of ways: department chairpersons, Power Users (technical experts for both hardware and software), participation in district-level leadership committees (Curriculum Council, Assessment Committee, District Arts Task Force, etc.), participation in School Site Council, teacher representation on PTA, Silicon Valley Math Project Lead Teacher, site-based leadership committees (Safety, Technology, etc.), and teacher representation on community-based groups (Scotts Valley Educational Foundation, etc.). It is with these teacher-leaders that the principal begins and builds consensus.

The movement from a traditional schedule to our Academy schedule is an example of a student-centered, teacher-leader driven decision. We spent eighteen months from beginning discussions to final product to reach where we are today. Because it was an organic movement, we continually reflect and refine together to better meet the needs of our students. At the forefront of our continued discussions and reflections is the vision we have for all of our SVMS students to be academically successful and contributing members of our school community and the community at large.

Professional development at SVMS is borne both out of administrative needs and teacher needs. A recent district-wide survey noted teachers' interest in continued instructional technology training. Additionally, site leadership met to review departmental professional development needs and those too were built into our collaboration time. With an increasing interest in the social-emotional needs of our students, this has been an area of focus for many professional development sessions. Faculty meeting time can be used to support this area of need and interest. We also utilize those outstanding teachers at SVMS as Instructional Leaders to provide professional development. Our science team continues to evolve units of study for the Next Generation Science Standards and have had constructive professional development time to do so.

As the transitional school within the district (5th to 6th then 8th to 9th), SVMS recognizes the importance of strong transitional programs for our students. Our placement processes are extensive and comprehensive and help to ensure the best possible placement for our students. We begin transition discussions in February and work together continually with our elementary schools and our high school to ensure proper placement and smooth transitions. We also work diligently to keep parents informed of transitional practices and provide a variety of orientation activities for both students and families, for example: 5th grade field trip to SVMS (6th grade students present about our school and student-led tours), invitation to new parents to attend SVMS Open House, New Parent Orientation Meeting, Welcome Everybody Orientation Days for students in August, and Shadow Day (new students "shadows" a current SVMS student) for students coming from non-feeder elementary schools.

As the only middle school in the district, SVMS seeks support and collaboration outside to the district. We participate in a variety of county-sponsored staff development opportunities as well as in groups such as the Secondary Principals' Network. For the last two years, SVMS has been a member of the Santa Cruz county College and Career Initiative. Our 7th grade students participate in a field trip to a local university where they tour the campus, can ask questions of current students and learn the next steps they must take for college preparedness.

Built into our schedule are monthly Admin Advisory meetings that include the principal and each grade level team. This meeting allows for evaluation of grade-level specific data and its relationship to student progress towards standards. Target student data is reviewed as well as whole group data. Teachers are required to delineate strategies being used to support target student growth as well as those being employed to support skills identified as weak for the grade level overall. These meetings allow us to reflect on current practices and programs and adjust if needed.

Our School Site Council is an active, reflective group that has the opportunity to review and reflect upon data and the school's progress toward our goals. The council supports that development of the Single School Plan as well as the presentation of achievement data to the Board of Trustees. As two of our key stakeholder groups, the opportunities for reflection and discussion are extensive and inclusive.