



## Essential Elements Schools to Watch Model School – Visitor’s Guide

### PIONEER MIDDLE SCHOOL



#### Designated in 2017

Pioneer Middle School  
Pioneer Central School District  
Cattaraugus County  
New York State  
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### School Statistics

NYS School Report Card

Community: Size/characteristics

Enrollment: 718

Grade Levels: School Schedule:

Student Demographics

51% Male

49% Female

1% Hispanic/Latino

96% White

0% American Indian/Alaskan Native

1% African American

1% Asian/Pacific Islander

20% Students with Disabilities

56% Free/Red.Lunch/Econ.Disadvantaged

— English Learners

AYP: ELA PI 102 AMO 99 Math PI 144 AMO 96

## School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

### Academic Excellence

- The assimilation and integration of common core standards within and across the various curricula are positive and well managed.
- There is ample evidence of differentiated instruction, cooperative learning, interdisciplinary work including cross curricular learning and project-based learning, as well as 21<sup>st</sup> century skills development.
- The maintenance of essential skills in mathematics through the use of spirals has great promise.
- The web of support-both in school and out of school-for struggling learners is impressive (teach time, targeted learning, labs, after school homework help, AIS, homebase, co-teaching models, mentoring, SPLAT lab).
- The new STEAM program being piloted in grade eight has great potential.

- The i-Ready program for formative assessments is used well and positively enhances the locally developed assessments that are aligned to the common core and New York State Learning Standards.

### Developmental Responsiveness

- The “Check and Connect” system with teacher mentors is exciting and innovative.
- The variety of exploratory offering is exceptional as are the opportunities for the student to investigate new and varied interests.
- The robotics enrichments for fifth and sixth grades appears to meet the needs of advanced learners.
- Student voices are heard and appreciated via student government and student initiatives.

### Social Equity

- Mentoring and tutoring activities during non-instructional time are well done and commendable.
- After school homework sessions are of great value.
- Up-to-date technology is available to all.
- Diversity Month meets the needs of the student population.
- Summer school is available for students that require it.
- The rapport between and among staff and students is amazingly positive.
- It is evident that all staff-administration, instructional and support-take their commitment seriously to help each other and every other student develop academically and personally.

### Organizational Structure and Processes

- Efforts toward vertical and horizontal alignment are commendable.
- The systematic audit of grading consistency and practices are commendable.
- The current schedule, including changes in fifth and sixth grade contact time for various subjects is well thought out and is in the best interest of students.
- The availability of time for interdisciplinary teams, grade level teachers and subject specialists to meet and plan is outstanding. The schedulers and the district are to be commended for supporting the schedule.
- Teacher teams work collaboratively to insure that students are not burdened with too much homework or too many tests on any given day. Students recognize and appreciate the effort teachers cooperatively put into their planning.

- **The administrative team works together well and has a great rapport with staff and students.**
- **The variety of professional learning opportunities available to staff and the amount of staff collaboration and cooperation are exceptional.**
- **The focus on vertical and horizontal alignment, particularly as it relates to the transition in and out of the middle grades, is commendable.**
- **The Superintendent understands and endorses the importance of middle-level best practices and the focus on the development of the whole child, academically and personally.**
- **Pioneer Middle School's priorities for the 2016-2017 school year (ie, revise the I-Ready program, conduct grading audit, focus on positive behaviors, improve communication among teachers, counselors and administrators, strengthen Special Education, continue technology rollout) are timely, important and relevant.**