



KERN COUNTY INNOVATIVE & IMPACTFUL SCHOOLS
Academics | Engagement | College & Career Readiness

Kern County Innovative & Impactful Schools (I²S) is a county wide program implemented by Kern County Superintendent of Schools to acknowledge schools who are high-performing and improving student outcomes based on these three pillars of success.

Veterans Elementary School

Award based on 2019 CAASPP ELA and Math

Based on 3-year average

ELA: 22.2 points above Distance from Standard

Math: 17.3 points above Distance from Standard

Norris School District

Kern County

Principal: Ms. Mara

6301 Old Farm Road

Bakersfield, Ca. 93312

661.387.7050

Website: <https://ves.norris.k12.ca.us/>

Date of Visit: 1/20/20 @ 8:30 am

Email: paula.mara@norris.k12.ca.us.



“Veterans is all heart. It is a part of who we are. Love for our community and school.”

School Profile

Veteran’s Elementary School is a suburban school of 921 students in TK-6th grade. The school boasts a supportive staff which includes a counselor, dean, physical education teacher, learning center and RSP teachers. The school follows the tenets of “Leading Impact Teams” which creates a positive culture and conditions for every teacher every day.

School Demographics

The ethnicity of the student population includes: 53% White, 34% Hispanic or Latino, and 3% Filipino. The additional student groups from this population include: 27% Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, 21% English Learners, and 10.5% Students with Disabilities.

Self-Identified Contributing Factors

- [Impact Teams](#) was a 2- year training for Veterans staff under direction of author Barb Pitchford. Impact Teams create the culture and conditions for every teacher every day to answer the question: “What is my impact?” The Impact Teams model is a strengths-based approach to help teachers operationalize the highest influences on student learning by focusing on critical learning goals, analyzing evidence, and taking collective action through the following:

- Partner with students to strengthen student ownership of learning and develop assessment-capable learners.
 - Engage students in self and peer assessment by embedding formative assessment into the classroom.
 - Build a culture of efficacy based on strengths, trust, collaboration, and the use of practical, easy-to-implement protocols.
 - Teacher clarity through unpacking standards as a collaborative practice, and building teacher efficacy.
 - [Growth Mindset](#) focused on progress over proficiency.
 - Success criteria through a rubric with self-evaluation by students.
 - Create a culture of a teachable staff willing to change for the benefit of the students.
- Writing in every grade level:
 - Expectations are articulated across grade levels through teacher collaboration.
 - Thinking Maps are used in classrooms.
 - Exemplars are given for scoring. Students compare and evaluate their writing with exemplar examples.
- Kindergarten Readiness:
 - High expectations for TK/Kindergarten classes.
 - Calendar time includes whole class instruction.
 - Use of common language begins in kindergarten with proper language/terms used K-6th.
 - [Phonemic Awareness](#) includes Haggerty’s pedagogy of phonemes and phonics.
 - Kindergarten readiness class for parents one year prior to enrollment gives parents ideas on how to prepare their child for school.
 - Math-centers focus on learning with manipulatives.
 - Accelerated Reader assessments are given K-6th.
- Intervention:
 - Pull out programs are provided in grades 1st thru 6th with small group instruction with reading specialists. Programs include the following:
 - [Read Live](#) and [Read Naturally](#).
 - Dibels and Teacher generated assessment for a running record.
 - SIPPS ([Systematic Instruction in Phonological Awareness, Phonics, and Sight Words](#)).
 - [Orton-Gillingham](#) used for students with Dyslexic tendencies.

- Common themes and language utilized in grades K-6:
 - Block schedule given for ELA and math
 - Differentiation in the classroom
 - Uses *California Expressions* math textbook which is rigorous and maintains high expectations
 - Common academic language
 - Classroom sign language
 - [Restate, Answer, Cite, Explain](#) (RACE)
 - Computer use beginning in kindergarten with 1:1 devices and daily practice
 - Surface knowledge to deep learning from Blooms vocabulary
 - [Whooo's Reading App](#) in conjunction with Accelerated Reader as a prep prior to taking the AR test
 - Classroom libraries

- Positive School Culture:
 - Volunteers trained on specific jobs within the classrooms and around the school.
 - Administrators are visible at the gates and during recess.
 - PBIS is implemented in all classrooms.
 - Kindness week participation across the campus.