



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.

Princeton Elementary School

Lowest Chronic Absenteeism- 4.23%
Based upon 3-year average from 2017-2020 CA School Dashboard

Delano Union Elementary School District
Kern County
Mr. Mark Ruiz
1959 Princeton Street, Delano, Ca.
(661)721-5080
Website: www.duesd.org/princeton
Date: October 2021
Email: mruiz@duesd.org



School Profile

Founded in 1993, Princeton Street Elementary School is a preschool through 5th grade neighborhood school consisting of approximately 433 students located in the northeast section of Delano, California, on the corner of Princeton Street and 20th Avenue. The school has a total of 32 classrooms, plus a music room, computer lab, literacy intervention, and Resource Specialist Program.

School Demographics

The ethnicity of the student population is as follows: 88% Hispanic/Latino, and 10% Filipino. The additional student groups from this population include: 14.3% Students with Disabilities, 52% English Learners, and 81% Socioeconomically Disadvantaged students.

Self-Identified Contributing Factors

- Attendance teams:
 - The attendance team, consisting of administration, school nurse, psychologist, and attendance clerk, is responsible for identifying students at risk of being chronically absent. Once they identify those students, the team connects with the family.
 - The team identified through data analysis that chronic absenteeism can be avoided or reduced before absences become chronic by addressing the needs of students and families.
 - Princeton Street School meets with families to identify needs and how those needs directly impact student attendance. Such needs can include housing, transportation, students and family health, social-emotional, mental health, clothing, food, and utilities.
 - To address these needs, the administration works closely with the Director of Student Support Services, who serves as the liaison for foster youth and McKinney-Vento students, and who also works with students who are chronically absent to provide families the appropriate support.
 - The District Director of Health Services helps assist families with any needs regarding clothing, food, and utilities.
 - To address the physical and mental health needs of students and families, the school district provided a school psychologist, school social workers, marriage and family therapist, and school nurses.
 - Once the basic needs of families and students are met, the school tries to identify any issues that are more directly related to attendance. Those can include transportation, babysitting, student or family member health, parenting, understanding attendance expectations, and connection to school.
- Connecting with families:
 - One of the most impactful strategies used to help reduce chronic absenteeism. Their goal is to help these families understand they are valued members of the school community, as well as provide the school an opportunity to connect informally. Leadership has found that the relationships we've developed with our families has been one of the most effective strategies we use to address not only attendance issues, but behavior and classroom performance issues as well.
 - Providing parent and family events is a great way to accomplish this.
 - These events (awards assemblies, Fall Carnival, paint nights, Back to School Night, Parent Education, Valentine Social, and Literacy Night) help families feel connected to the school and families are more inclined to regularly participate in school events and send their children to school regularly.
 - Invites to events are unique.

- They include personal invitations, provide event passes, preferred seating, and tickets for games and activities. The goal is to help these families understand they are valued members of our school community, as well as provide the school with an opportunity to connect informally. They have found that the relationships developed with their families has been one of the most effective strategies used to address not only attendance issues, but behavior and classroom performance issues as well.
- Attendance incentives:
 - Incentives include student prizes, classroom celebrations, extended recess, field day activities, Fun Friday movie nights, dress-up days, and field trips. During distance learning, staff use a virtual spinning wheel to select students who are meeting the attendance expectations, and deliver those prizes or have parents pick them up. Leadership also uses the school Facebook page to recognize students as well.
 - Incentives for students at risk of being chronically absent are given when students meet short term attendance goals created between the attendance team and student. Those can include perfect attendance for several weeks or months. Working together with students and parents to help obtain incentives for attendance is another way the leadership team works to form relationships with families.
- Daily announcements about the benefits of regular attendance, helps encourage students to be present and on time.