



## CALIFORNIA SCHOOLS TO WATCH

California Schools to Watch™ is a statewide program implemented by the California League of Schools, California Department of Education, California Middle Grades Alliance, National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform, and the California Schools to Watch model schools. For more information, visit [www.leagueofschools.org](http://www.leagueofschools.org).



### VISTA VERDE MIDDLE SCHOOL

**Designated in 2011; Re-Designated 2014, 2017, 2020**

Val Verde Unified School District

Riverside County

Esperanza Arce, Principal

25777 Krameria St., Moreno Valley, CA 92557

Phone (951) 490-4690 | Fax (951) 490-4695

[vistaverde.valverde.edu](http://vistaverde.valverde.edu)

#### SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

Community: Suburban Mid-size City; Enrollment: 960; Grade Levels 6-8; School Schedule: Six period day with minimum day on Wednesdays for staff collaboration. Activity Day Schedule two times per year.

#### STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

54% Hispanic; 27% African American; 2% Asian; 4% Filipino, 3% Two or more; 9% White; 1% Pacific Islander. 72% Free/Reduced Lunch. 6% English Language Learners.

#### SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS AND REPLICABLE PRACTICES

- An AVID Demonstration School, AVID strategies are used school wide. College bound culture is also enhanced by GEAR UP activities, PSAT for every eighth grader, SAT for 7th graders, and development of an individual six-year plan for each student with the goal of college.
- In every classroom teachers are utilizing technology-based instruction benefiting from 1:1 access to computers both at home and at school. Students create presentations, post lab results, and use the Engineering Design Process in content and elective classes.
- Vista Verde has implemented the “5-Phase STEAM Approach” which includes: school-wide STEAM Focus (Nutrition), STEAM elective classes, library STEAM Innovation and Research Center, Universal STEAM for Special Education students and STEAM access for all students via cross-curricular PBL’s.
- All VVMS teachers focus on five agreed upon school-wide strategies, and each week one of these strategies is highlighted by all teachers in their classrooms. (Focus Note-taking, Student Led Discussions, Think Pair Share/Group Share, Checking for Understanding strategies and Quick Writes.
- In addition to early release time one day per week for collaboration, teachers meet on Mondays and Fridays with their PLCs-subject or STEAM team- where they conduct data analysis, review lesson planning and participate in vertical and horizontal articulation. In addition, VVMS employs a roving substitute teacher and an “Impact Substitute Teacher” to provide support for academic and behavioral intervention for students requiring additional support.
- To encourage positive relationships and healthy emotional development, the school kicks off every semester with a “Social Skills Day.” Students attend every period and teachers provide students with specific social skills lessons and activities.
- Sixth grade students are divided into two teacher teams for their core classes and P.E. to help them transition to the middle school program.