



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

Carrie Palmer Weber Middle School



Designated in 2011; Redesignated in 2014

District: Port Washington County: Nassau State: N.Y.
Principal: Christopher Shields
School Address: 52 Campus Drive, Port Washington, NY 11050
Phone: 516-767-5505
Website: <http://www.portnet.k12.ny.us/weber/site/default.asp>
Email: cshields@portnet.org

School Statistics

Enrollment: 1203
Grade Levels: 6-7-8
School Schedule: 8:07 a.m. - 3:10 p.m.

Student Demographics:

47 % Male
53 % Female
16 % Hispanic/Latino
68 % White
0 % American Indian/Alaskan Native
2 % African American
1 % Filipino
13 % Asian/Pacific Islander
16 % Students with Disabilities
15 % Free/Red. Lunch/Econ. Disadvantaged
4 % English Learners

2011 AYP: ELA 177 Math 187

* 2012 AYP: ELA 147 Math 153

* First year of Common Core Assessments

School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

Academic Excellence

- Weber has been recognized for its outstanding academic teams: Science and Math Olympiads, National French, Latin and Mythology, NYSSMA performances, American Math Contest, and NY Math League.
- High scores on NYS Assessments and Regents exams, Gap Closing School.
- Accelerated classes in math, art, and science.
- Integration of curriculum and the arts in partnership with the American Ballet Theatre.
- School-wide common assessments/benchmark exams support NYS Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS).
- Data analysis informs instruction.
- AIS, WINS (academic peer mentoring program), extra-help, and grade-specific homework clubs, provide students with small group instruction to strengthen and support all academic areas.
- Word walls, Weber’s Mission Statement, 7 Essential Elements, and NYS CCLS are clearly posted in classrooms.
- Sharing “best practices,” integration of technology, multi-modal lessons and differentiation of instruction are at the forefront of our teaching philosophy.
- Lunch-Time Enrichment (LTE) provides additional self-selected “challenge” opportunities for all students.
- Flexible block schedule enables team teaching and common planning times for grade-level teachers and departments to collaborate; maximizing instructional time.

Developmental Responsiveness

- Principal proactively seeks input from all shareholders: Principal/Students Cabinet, Principal/Parents Cabinet, Building Reps, and Building Cabinet meetings are regularly scheduled. Students, parents and staff have easy access to the Principal to directly share challenges, successes and concerns.
- The Mental Health Support Team helps the entire school community to develop and implement programs and strategies to address the “whole child,” improving overall social, emotional and academic well-being.
- A wide-range of before and after school co-curricular activities include clubs, intramurals, sports teams, drama, art, and music enhancements.
- Students are provided with opportunities for leadership development in *core/encore* classes and co-curricular activities, student government and the peer leadership club provide activities with elementary school students.
- Comprehensive transitional programs between elementary/middle/high schools and between grades 6, 7 and 8.
- Team teachers for all “core” subjects in grades 6, 7 and 8.
- Anti-bullying workshops, sensitivity training, “upstander” presentations, SEL coursework and awareness are provided through assemblies, classroom instruction and team activities.
- *Active Parenting* workshops are facilitated by school counselors to foster better understandings of parenting adolescents and teens; home communication improvement is the goal of the program.
- Strong and collaborative working relationships with our home/school association (H.S.A.).
- Teachers have WebPages with homework, test dates, project due dates, and links to curriculum-related sites.
- Organizational skills are taught and reinforced through the use of Weber’s Agenda book.
- Use of e-mail for most correspondences has made Weber “greener.”

Social Equity

- Consistent discipline code created and published with the input of parents, staff, students and administration.
- Student-staff-parent recognition programs: Weber Stars, Weber Pride pins, and positive phone calls home.
- Staff development workshops on RTI, SEL, SIOP, and math differentiation foster greater awareness.
- Full continuum of special education and ESL/ELL services include mainstreaming for *encore* classes.
- Late buses are provided so that all students may participate in after-school activities.
- Heterogeneous teams and houses. Differentiation of instruction enables students to access enriching content.
- Founding member of the Nassau County Anti-Bias Consortium of Schools.
- Service learning is a critical component of our over-arching philosophy and program: students are involved in charitable endeavors volunteering time, talent and monies to make positive differences in our school, community, country, and the world.
- Parents/staff appreciation luncheons and multi-cultural feasts, celebrate and share culture, music and food.
- Open lines of communication with parents and community are enhanced through ConnectEd (automatic phone calling system), printed newsletters, district Websites (equipped with Google Translator), school WebPages, and parent-volunteer translators.

Organizational Support

- Large school, divided into four equitable “houses,” creates smaller learning communities.
- Grade-level common team periods are able to be “flipped” enabling teachers to see students at different times of the day. Team teachers share the same students.
- Assistant principal, school counselor and psychologist remain constant for each student in grades 6, 7, and 8.
- Professional development is ongoing and opportunities are created based on staff-expressed needs.
- Faculty meetings are true staff development and school-wide team-building opportunities and “book of the year” focuses discussions.
- Staff mentoring provides support to new staff members.
- Weekly team meetings with school counselor and assistant principal evaluate students and team progress.
- Shared decision making is the norm. Professional learning communities are nurtured.
- Careful and deliberate placement of houses and teams throughout the building facilitates smooth transitioning between instructional periods of time.