

# Emerson Middle School

Bakersfield City School District

April 30, 2017

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## **Recommendations:**

In looking at Emerson's chronic low academic achievement data over the years, it is evident that fundamental changes must happen at the site to accelerate student achievement. The recommendations below are based on current student achievement data, Audit Team interviews with representatives of all stakeholder groups, classroom and school site observations:

1. To accelerate student learning, an instructional framework should be implemented. This framework should provide a common language shared by every teacher and all other support staff.
2. To accelerate student achievement in all academic content areas and based on a history of chronic low achievement at all grade levels, an engaging, rigorous, standards-based instructional program must be consistently implemented in all classrooms. To accomplish this, classrooms environments must be print rich. These kinds of classrooms should incorporate such things as critical thinking, problem solving, students taking risks, students working in collaboration with each other, students using rich academic language, both peer to peer and student to teacher. In these kinds of classrooms, the teacher regularly incorporates a Socratic approach to teaching and learning. There must be on-going teacher assessment of student's academic skills so that teaching can be prescriptively tied to what students need, so that they can become advanced and proficient in their grade level standards.
3. To help students become advanced and proficient in their grade level standards, teachers must have Professional Development that re-enforces how to scaffold instruction to support student's ability to access and master content matter.
4. To accelerate the academic achievement of students and to improve their literacy skills, reading and writing across the curriculum must be a school site focus. All teachers in core subject areas must have Professional Development on how to teach reading and writing.
5. To accelerate student's achievement in reading and writing, all 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms must have libraries, with hundreds of leveled books, available to students that support guided reading, independent reading and the development of other literacy skills.
6. To accelerate the achievement of each child needing additional academic support, a well-funded, After School Academic Support Program, tied to the overall instructional program of the school, must be in place.
7. To support teachers and the implementation of their learning into their teaching practices, Professional Development topics must be fewer in number, strategically

selected in collaboration with teachers, and focused on the needs of teachers. Professional Development must be about depth and not breadth.

8. To support teachers and their practice, Leadership should, on a regular basis, provide teachers with feedback and next steps as it relates to the teacher's implementation of what was learned in Professional Development.
9. To meet the academic/social/mental health/medical needs of Emerson students, Leadership, both at the Site and District level, must make certain that Emerson's budgets are based on *Equity* and are aligned to support the students.
10. To make PBIS more effective, all staff must consistently implement it across the campus and consequences and rewards for student behavior must be implemented appropriately and fairly.
11. To connect children to relevant and real life experiences and to enhance their learning, Leadership must provide more opportunities for students to have mentorships, field trips and other outside of school experiences.
12. To expand student's learning experiences, a Master Schedule must be developed and implemented that includes a variety of electives for students to enjoy.
13. To help meet the needs of families, the District and the School must provide expanded, on-site social/mental health/medical wrap around services for students and their families. This includes developing partnerships with City, County, State and Federal social/mental health/medical resource agencies and organizations.
14. To improve Parent Engagement, Leadership and Staff must create venues of opportunities for parents to be engaged in the school. This includes increasing the number of parents actively participating in the PTO, School Site Council and DLAC, developing a booster club, having more parent/teacher conferences, developing a variety of ways of communicating to parents and developing a before the beginning of the school year activity to help parents understand the school's expectations related to teaching and learning and the importance of students attending school every day.
15. To create a positive image of the school in the District and the community, the District, the Leadership Team, the staff, students, parents, community members and businesses, in collaboration with each other, must develop ways to rebrand Emerson MS to change the negative perception the school has in the District and the City.
16. To help improve attendance, the District must examine ways to expand Transportation options for students and their families. The District should partner with the City's Public

Transportation system to increase the number of pick-up and drop-off locations for students and families.

17. To show that positive change for next year is happening, to boost School pride and morale and to change the image of Emerson in the City of Bakersfield, funding should be provided by the District to upgrade the Physical Plant in some of the following ways: (1) upgrade the lighting systems in all classrooms and offices, (2) paint the interior of all classrooms, (3) upgrade the technology and (4) enhance and expand the landscape with more trees, flowers and grassy areas.