

SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT CARD

MUIRLANDS MIDDLE SCHOOL

Cassandra Countryman
Principal

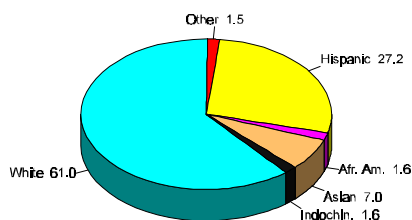
1056 Nautilus Street
La Jolla, CA 92037
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MARCH 2001
San Diego City Schools

SCHOOL PROFILE

Muirlands is proud to offer all students strong academic, enrichment, and extracurricular programs. The major strengths of the school program are our students' ethnic diversity, a dedicated professional staff, our schoolwide interdisciplinary curriculum, our strong foreign language and science programs, and our outstanding Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) seminar programs. In addition, district-supported Genre Studies and Math Intervention programs are offered at all grade levels.

Student Racial/Ethnic Composition
2000-01



Percentage of Total Enrollment

Muirlands is in La Jolla, just east of La Jolla High School and west of Mt. Soledad. Our school benefits from the strong support of the local community and the steadily increasing support from the parents of our Voluntary Ethnic Enrollment Program (VEEP) students. This is our eighth year as a Grade 6-8 middle school with 992 students.

About 20 percent of our students attend through VEEP, about 43 percent qualify and participate in the GATE program, and about 12 percent receive spe-

STUDENT LEARNING

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

How does Muirlands compare?

Standardized tests are one of many ways to measure student progress. Teachers and counselors monitor each student's progress in all areas. Parents are encour-

aged to talk with their child's teachers and counselor to get a complete picture of how their child is doing.

MISSION AND GOALS

The mission of San Diego City Schools is to improve student achievement by supporting teaching and learning in the classroom.

San Diego City Schools' Institute for Learning focuses on instruction and learning. The Institute helps schools improve student achievement by improving instruction. Teachers and administrators engage in ongoing professional development in literacy and mathematics instruction.

In Spring 2000, the district introduced the *Blueprint for Student Success in a Standards-Based System*, a comprehensive plan focusing the entire district on teaching and learning for all students.

The *Blueprint* established districtwide assessments and performance expectations in literacy and mathematics to ensure that district students are held to the same standards and receive support if they fall below grade level. *Blueprint for Student Success* strategies of prevention, intervention, and retention/acceleration are directed toward providing all students with the best teaching, the richest learning environment, and time and support to meet high standards.

Muirlands' mission is to prepare literate students to meet the challenges of a global and technological society by creating a setting that meets the needs of all ability levels, maintains high standards, enhances self-esteem, and provides a broad range of educational experiences. Our goals for this year are to:

REPORT CARD MEETING INFORMATION

Date: May 9, 2001

Time: 5:45 p.m.

Place: Muirlands Library

All public schools in California must provide information about themselves to the public through a School Accountability Report Card. This report card examines Muirlands' policies, programs, and progress. At a meeting on May 9 at 5:45 p.m. parents can discuss the report card and ask questions.

More information about all areas covered in this report card is available at Muirlands Middle School. We invite parents to come to Muirlands to look at these materials, to meet their children's teachers, and to expand their involvement in their children's education.

- Infuse literacy standards into all core curricular areas
- Raise all students' achievement test scores above the 50th percentile
- Promote student awareness of and involvement in school and community
- Expand communication and involvement between resident parents, VEEP parents, and the school
- Increase teacher collaboration across grade levels and disciplines
- Develop increased opportunities for exposure to technology during the school day.

aged to talk with their child's teachers and counselor to get a complete picture of how their child is doing.

San Diego City Schools students in grades 2-11 take the Stanford Achievement Test, Ninth Edition (SAT 9), to measure

their academic progress in basic skills as part of the state Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program. Spanish-speaking English learners enrolled in a California school less than 12 months or enrolled in a California school for more

than 12 months and receiving language arts instruction in Spanish are also tested on the Spanish Assessment of Basic Education, Second Edition (SABE/2), a Spanish Language Achievement Test measuring the same skill areas. The Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test (SDRT) is also offered to students on a yearly basis.

Muirlands' students performed significantly above the national average on the 2000 SAT 9. Muirlands ranked high among district middle schools in reading and math.

In addition to providing an academically challenging curriculum, Muirlands will continue to address the needs of students who have scored below the 50th percentile level to reduce the gap between those students and the school average. Individual standardized test scores are available in the counseling office.

■ SCHOOL-TO-CAREER TRANSITION

How are students prepared for the world of work?

Career development is an ongoing focus. The head counselor has enlisted the support of many area business people in our school's student recognition program and also arranges for guest speakers to discuss their occupations and share their stories. This has included the Chief of Police and NASA astronauts. Our annual Career Day is held each spring.

We work effectively with our community business partners to promote career awareness.

TEACHING QUALITY

■ TEACHING ASSIGNMENTS

Are our teachers qualified?

Muirlands has 46 full- and part-time teachers. Twenty-eight have been at Muirlands for over six years. Average teaching experience is 16 years. Every teacher is properly credentialed to teach at the appropriate grade level, and the majority have earned graduate degrees. All teachers are GATE-certified or working toward the credential.

Muirlands has four mentor teachers. Many of our teachers are asked to present

REPORT CARD COMMITTEE

A committee of parents and staff participated in developing this report card.

Attendance		
Year	Number of Absences	% Actual Attendance
1995-96	10,257	94.1
1996-97	8,474	95.5
1997-98	8,702	95.4
1998-99	7,886	95.6
1999-00	8,172	95.4

■ ATTENDANCE/DROPOUTS

Is attendance improving?

Muirlands has an outstanding student attendance rate. Our attendance rate was 95.4 percent. Students who miss school due to family commitments should request an independent contract so that state funds are not lost and the students do not fall behind in their work. An absence is followed by a telephone call, letter, and/or home visit.

The Muirlands counseling staff, district counselors, and grade-level consultation teams provide a strong support system for students at risk of repeating a grade or dropping out. At the end of each six-week grading period, counselors and consultation teams meet with these students and their parents to develop intervention plans and to monitor academic as well as social progress. This sustained support, along with the various alternative programs available at Muirlands (academic support within advisory classes, Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), the Reading Pull-Out Program, after-school reading program, after-school tutoring three days per week, and summer school), has resulted in 99.9 percent of the students ad-

vancing to the next grade level.

■ DISCIPLINE AND CLIMATE FOR LEARNING

Is Muirlands a good place to learn?

Muirlands offers a positive environment for learning. This is encouraged through participation in Associated Student Body (ASB)/advisory activities; yearbook and newspaper; academic, service, and student interest clubs; intramural sports programs; community service; academic competitions; educational trips; monthly interdisciplinary team recognition of students; and a peer mediation program.

We discuss our discipline code with all students and parents and apply it uniformly to all students to provide consistency and support. Staff members make every effort to identify and solve student problems at this level. Students who routinely fail to follow rules and procedures work with the counselors and vice principals. Options include Project Succeed, formal suspension, referral to district and outside agencies, and alternative school placement. Muirlands' suspension rate was 20.7 suspensions per 100 students.

Suspensions and Expulsions		
Year	Suspension Rate*	Expulsions
1995-96	11.2	0
1996-97	17.8	2
1997-98	13.2	0
1998-99	20.8	1
1999-00	20.7	0

* Suspensions per 100 Students.

at education conferences both locally and nationally. The administrative team visits classrooms frequently and provides feedback to enhance teaching and learning.

■ TEACHER/ADMINISTRATOR EVALUATION

How are teachers and administrators evaluated?

The principal and vice principals formally evaluate tenured teachers every two years. Temporary and probationary teachers are evaluated yearly. All teachers are observed frequently. If a teacher's performance is not effective, the principal identifies areas requiring improvement and develops a program for improvement with the teacher.

The principal and vice principals are evaluated every year: the principal by a

central office supervisor and the vice principals by the principal.

If you are concerned about a teacher, administrator, or other staff member, there are steps that you can take. You should discuss your concerns with the principal. You may call the district Support Systems office for assistance after you have talked to the principal.

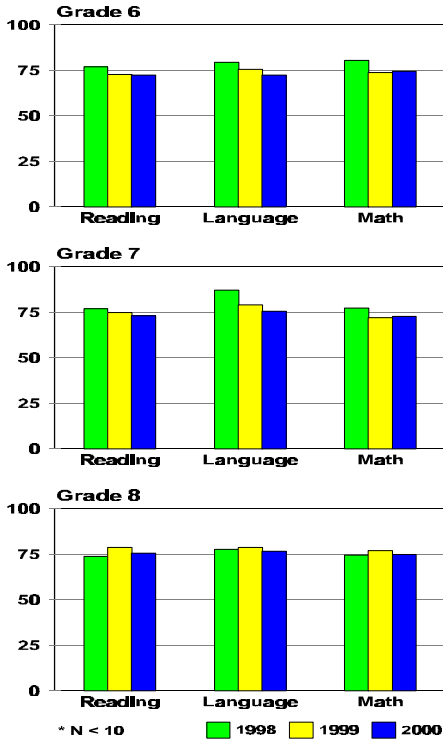
■ SUBSTITUTES

Are our substitutes qualified?

The district has a pool of substitute teachers available for assignment when a classroom teacher is absent. By state law, credentialed teachers may substitute at any grade level and in any subject. Every effort is made to place substitute teachers in their areas of expertise.

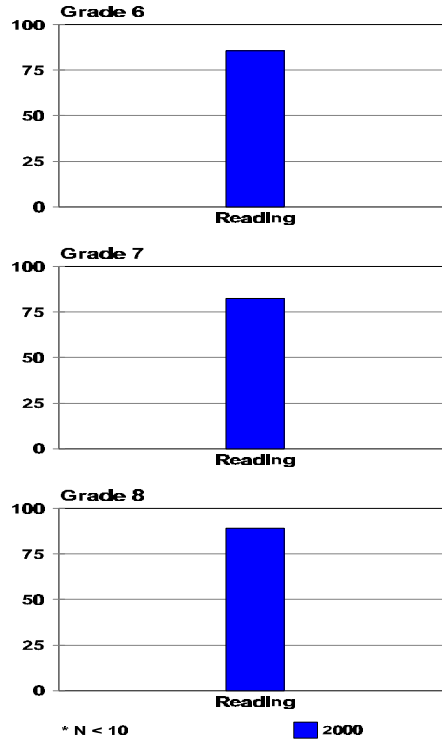
SAT 9 Results

Pct. scoring at or above 50th percentile



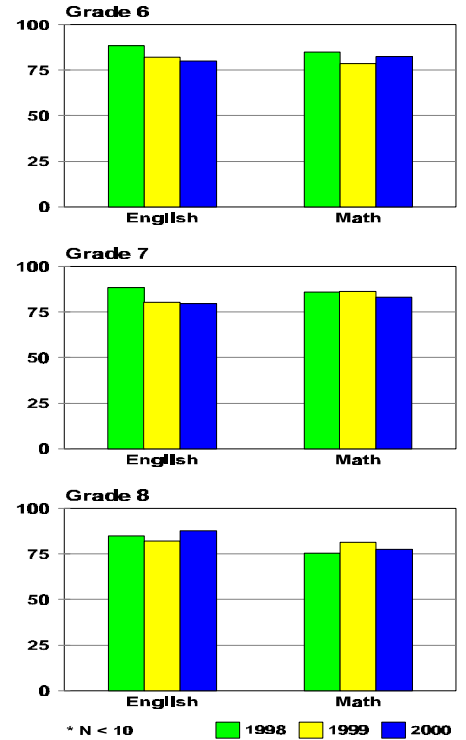
District Assessments

Pct. scoring near, at, or above grade level



Grade Results

Pct. achieving at or above C



ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE INDEX

The Academic Performance Index (API), the cornerstone of California's accountability system, measures the academic performance and growth of schools. The index, ranging from 200 to 1000, indicates a school's performance level. The statewide API goal for all schools is 800. Annual interim targets are set for each school. API scores are calculated on the basis of SAT 9 test performance for each school and for the school's numerically significant subgroups

2000 API Summary	
Category	Result
Schoolwide API	802
Growth from Prior Year	-11
State Decile Rank	9
African American API	—
Asian API (incl. Indochinese)	—
Filipino API	—
Hispanic API	583
White API	894
Economically Disadvantaged API	604
Met All Targets?	No

Subject Area	1–10	11–20	21–30	31–40	41 +
Art			4		
Computer Ed.			3		
English				25	
Foreign Lang.				13	
Health Ed.				1	
Mathematics			30		
Music					2
Physical Ed.					21
Science				24	
Social Science				10	
Grade 6 Core				38	
Special Ed.	4				

Subject Area	1–10	11–20	21–30	31–40	41 +
Art				4	
Computer Ed.			5		
Drama/Theater				1	
English			15	8	
Foreign Lang.	2	2	9	4	
Mathematics	2	3	10	10	
Music				2	1
Physical Ed.		1	8	2	7
Science	1	1	6	14	
Social Science		2	14	9	
Grade 6 Core			4	5	

Subject Area	1–10	11–20	21–30	31–40	41 +
Art				4	
Computer Ed.				3	
English/Genre			15	14	
Foreign Lang.				11	
Mathematics			13	13	
Music				3	
Physical Ed.					30
Science				24	
Social Science				26	
Special Ed.	9				
Grade 6 Core			12		

Year	Number of Classroom Teachers				Working Outside Subject Area of Credential
	Total	With Appropriate Credential	With Emergency Credential	Without Credential	
1998–99	45	36	1	0	8
1999–00	45	36	1	0	8
2000–01	45	37	0	0	8

All teachers are appropriately credentialed to teach the core curriculum. However, in some cases teachers may be teaching a one-period wheel/elective outside their area. We use a standards-based curriculum.

INSTRUCTIONAL AND LEADERSHIP QUALITY

How good is it?

Instruction at Muirlands is standards-driven. Interdisciplinary teaching supported by the literacy framework is a key aspect of this goal.

All content areas are working to improve literacy instruction through the San Diego Literacy Framework. To support reading instruction, the San Diego City Schools Institute for Learning provides relevant staff development focused on literacy. Our teachers have been extensively trained in read aloud, independent and shared reading strategies. Muirlands has recently trained teachers in guided reading and higher level questioning strategies. Readers’/Writers’ Workshop, and higher order discussions which are infused into all content areas. We also have a staff developer who works directly with teachers to improve teaching and learning.

Muirlands’ literacy-based GATE cluster program includes GATE students in all grades to provide a challenging curriculum.

Our talented staff includes numerous EXCEL award winners, California Mathematics Teacher of the Year, San Diego County Hats Off To Teachers honorees, several district mentor teachers, and several published authors.

Our site-based decision-making occurs through the cooperation of parents, teachers, students, and administrators who serve on our governance council. These groups meet monthly.

INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

How much time is there for instruction?

All district schools meet or exceed state requirements for annual instructional minutes. We have four minimum days this year.

Instructional Minutes, 2000–01		
Grade Level	Annual Instructional Minutes	
	School	State Requirement
6–8	65,060	64,800

TRAINING AND CURRICULUM IMPROVEMENT

What do we do to improve our staff?

There are no staff development days held on school days. For the last two years there have been three staff development days held before the school year be-

gan. Two years ago there were two such staff development days.

Staff development time is focused on closing the achievement gap via literacy instruction, standards and accountability, educational technology, and program assessment. Our school administrators attend monthly instructional conferences to receive training on specific areas of the San Diego Literacy Framework. This information guides staff development. Teachers can study and improve instructional practice through grade-level/department meetings, visitations to other classrooms to observe instruction, participation in study groups, and direct training on specific instructional strategies.

English and Genre Studies teachers have received extensive training in reading instruction. Teachers attend the Middle Level Conference and other professional development conferences as needed. Staff members were presenters and participants at this year’s National Middle School Association conference as well as at district and county workshops. Staff has been engaged in informal book groups that discuss various professional texts. Muirlands was the recipient of the Edna McConnell Clark collegial grant which allows teacher participation in the Readers’ Workshop, professional book reviews, and higher order discussion related to curriculum development.

COUNSELING AND SUPPORT SERVICES

What support do we offer students?

Muirlands has a homework hotline to help students who are absent or don’t remember assignments.

There are two counselors, a district counselor two days a week, a nurse, and other part-time support staff. We have four full-time resource specialists to assist special education students.

Each counselor has a case load of about 500 students. Counselors are responsible for four-year plans for eighth graders and for developing at-risk and intervention strategies. They work with vice principals and interdisciplinary teams to resolve disciplinary problems. We have two group facilitators for a student assistance program where staff members work with small groups of students who have substance problems. Our Student Study Team (SST) meets weekly to discuss referred student cases. Our district counselor works with the SST on a weekly basis.

Muirlands offers three extended-day reading classes. This is an intervention

program for students in grades 7 and 8 who are having difficulty with literacy objectives.

Genre Studies classes are offered at grades 7 and 8 for students reading below grade level. Placement is based on SDRT scores. All 6th grade students attend various levels of Genre Studies.

TEXTBOOKS AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Are our materials acceptable?

The district adopts textbooks and instructional materials each year based on a six- to eight-year cycle implemented by the state. This year teachers and students in middle level schools are using newly adopted textbooks and instructional materials in social studies, photography, Latin, Pilipino, music, band, and chorus.

State funds specifically designated for library materials and equipment were provided again this year to update our library media collections. We have been able to renew our library collection with current, appealing, and challenging materials, including fiction, non-fiction, multimedia, and reference materials, to meet the curriculum and literacy needs of our students.

Each teacher has an Apple Macintosh and Iie computers in their classroom for daily student use.

SCHOOL FACILITIES AND SAFETY

How clean and safe is our school?

All district schools have developed a comprehensive school safety plan that meets state requirements. The safety plan includes disaster procedures, procedures for safe entry and exit of pupils, procedures for serious disciplinary problems, a sexual harassment policy, child abuse reporting procedures, any school dress codes, and school discipline policies.

Muirlands, built in 1963, has five permanent buildings. The grounds are well-kept and attractive. Students take an active interest in keeping the campus presentable. We look forward to Proposition MM improvements.

We are located on a busy street; students using crosswalks, riding their bikes, or being let off from cars must be extremely cautious. The City of San Diego, after reviewing our concerns for improving student safety, has provided a flashing beacon at the turn on Nautilus Street, east of the school.

Muirlands permits no gang-related activity. We do not allow hats, colors, bandannas, identifiable styles of dress, tagging, or any

form of claiming. Any graffiti is immediately removed. We are proud of the fact that students are safe on our campus.

Vice principals routinely monitor the grounds. Supervision is provided before and after school and during passing periods.

ods. A school police officer from La Jolla High School and a San Diego Police Task Force officer are available when needed. A disaster preparedness plan and procedures for emergencies are reviewed and practiced with staff, students, and parents.

■ CLASS SIZE

Are classes too large?

Muirlands' class sizes for the last three years are shown on page 4.

INTEGRATION AND DIVERSITY

■ RACE AND HUMAN RELATIONS

Do students get along with each other?

Muirlands' race/human relations program has a classroom and a campus focus. Our goal is to make race/human relations a natural component of our students' daily lives. In the classroom, teachers have expanded multicultural content to include an appreciation of ethnic cultures. School-

wide, we have taken advantage of our advisory format to offer race/human relations activities for students.

Muirlands' Village Club and Builder's Club, which includes a variety of ethnic groups, have taken an active role in developing student understanding and cooperation through student activities, fundraisers, career awareness, and community involvement. All clubs and organizations on campus foster a

respect for the cultural and ethnic diversity of our students. Our lunchtime and after-school intramural sports program have been extremely successful.

Muirlands is anxious to continue its successful participation in the VEEP program. Our seventh grade multicultural faire, and other grade-level activities provide many opportunities for students to experience diversity.

SHARED DECISION-MAKING

■ COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

How are parents and community involved in Muirlands?

The involvement of Muirlands parents is at an all-time high. Their support and visibility on campus is greatly appreciated. Muirlands currently has a number of parent involvement programs: Parent Teacher Association (PTA), Muirlands Foundation, governance council, and Home-School Collaboration Team. Parent groups support activities such as "Say No To Drugs" Week, after-school student workshops, classroom volunteers, monthly student recognition, and fundraising.

Supporters of our Student of the

Month Program include In-N-Out Burger, Pacific Drive Skateboard, the Edge, Mitch's Surf Shop, Reef Brazil, Wahoo Fish Taco, Froglanders, Harry's, Kono's, Rimel's Rotisserie, and Subway. Our ASB and Sector Nine have sponsored a positive reward program (GOTCHA) to promote good citizenship.

Our business partnership with National University has provided many exciting educational opportunities for staff and students.

The school nurse has developed extensive ties to the health and wellness community. Muirlands will host a community health fair in the spring and a parent speaker series that focuses on topics relevant to students.

Currently, Muirlands is a participant in the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation initiative for disadvantaged youth. The University of California, San Diego (UCSD) Early Outreach Program has been a positive connection for our eighth graders. We are continuing a mentor program, that provides tutoring and counseling, with UCSD students. Our YMCA after-school tutorial program is the largest in the city. These efforts have resulted in a reduction of students at risk and an overall increase in achievement.

We would like you to become more closely involved, please call PTA President Patti Nussbaum at 459-4211 or Pat Spire community aide at 459-4211.

FINANCES

■ EXPENDITURES AND SERVICES OFFERED

Where does the money go?

The adjoining budget chart shows the major areas of district funding for Muirlands Middle School and other district schools. It includes all monies budgeted from the general fund except those for transportation, maintenance and operations, and district administration.

With few exceptions, little latitude is offered Muirlands to determine use of funds. Each school receives an instructional budget based on enrollment and programs and on formulas set by Board of Education policy, state law, agreements with employee bargaining units, and guidelines of outside funding agencies.

School Budget, 1999–2000		
Budget Category	Dollars per Pupil*	
	School	Middle Avg.
General Operations	3,503	3,376
Special Education	239	436
Integration	59	133
Gifted and Talented	175	57
Special Projects	217	409
Total	4,194	4,411

General Operations—services, materials, and support to the general education program

Special Education—programs offering students with special needs appropriate, individualized education

Integration—the district's voluntary integration effort to counter the racial/ethnic isolation of pupils

Gifted and Talented—specialized learning assistance for students with great ability, achievement, or potential

Special Projects—monies from agencies (e.g., federal, state) earmarked for specific services

* Based on total student enrollment.

Salary and Budget Data, Teachers and Administrators, 1998–99		
Position	Unified Districts (20,000+ ADA)	San Diego (129,630 ADA)
	Annual Salary (\$)	
Beginning Teacher	31,680	29,663
Midrange Teacher	49,481	45,074
Highest Teacher	59,895	60,311
School Principal Avg.	78,145	81,184
Superintendent	137,350	185,000
Salary Category	Pct. of Budget†	Pct. of Budget†
Administrative	4.8	4.0
Teacher	43.7	41.4

† Percentage of general fund expenditures. Does not include benefits.