



**Desert Garden Accountability Report Card
El Centro Elementary School District
November 1998**

persons, seven full-time and part-time support staff, and one principal. The ethnic distribution for Desert Garden School is as follows; 78% Hispanic, 14% White, 4% Black and 2% other.

A Message From The Principal And Staff

It is the hope of the administration and staff of Desert Garden School that you will find this annual school report informative and that it will give you a better understanding of our instructional program and our school. We invite your comments about this report and any comments you may have for better serving our students and informing you of El Centro Elementary School District's policies and curriculum. You may call us at 352-2051 if you have any questions about this report.

Providing a positive learning environment in which all children can learn is the mission of Desert Garden Staff. We want to instill within our students positive self-esteem, high expectations and goals that will enable them to lead successful and productive lives.

Desert Garden School, one of the three schools in the Tri-Team School configuration, is located in the center of the team. Our school includes the Desert Garden neighborhood kindergarten, and the fifth and sixth grades for the neighborhoods of the Tri-Team Schools: DeAnza, Desert Garden and Washington. We also receive students from other schools in our district on an overflow basis.

Kathleen Brandenburg, Principal
Desert Garden School

1. School Staffing/Student Population

Last year Desert Garden School had 21.5 full time teachers and 3 part time certificated music and art teachers, 9 instructional assistants, 1 secretary, two custodians, four part-time food service

2. Student Attendance

Last year our school had a total enrollment of 485 students who generated 87,300 student attendance days. About 7% of the student attendance days were generated by students who did not attend full minimum instructional days because of unexcused absences. The school district receives ADA (about \$16 per student) for excused absences, while losing money for each unexcused absence. This is not acceptable to us, as when children are absent or late, they miss out on an important part of their education. To encourage students to attend school regularly and to be on time, teachers and office staff often called home when students were absent. Students were given perfect attendance certificates.

3. Student Achievement

Student achievement is measured by the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT) and APRENDA in Spanish. For the school years 1995-96 and 1996-97 the scores reported are for reading Comprehension and Math Applications. For the 1997-98 school year the scores reported are for total Reading and total Math. Scores in the 50th percentile indicate average achievement.

As a staff we are working together to improve all areas. In math instruction we are placing more emphasis on critical thinking, problem solving and math application. Our computer lab enhances our curriculum in the areas of critical thinking, the writing process, reading and language. We strongly encourage students to read for pleasure to improve their reading ability.

SAT Percentiles Scores

Sch. Yr.	SAT-8 95-96		SAT-8 96-97		SAT-9 97-98	
	Reading/Math		Reading/Math		Reading/Math	
Grade 5	34	39	36	43	30	32
6	36	39	41	43	34	39

APRENDA Percentiles Scores

Sch. Yr.	95-96		96-97		97-98	
	Reading/Math		Reading/Math		Reading/Math	
Grade 5	58	45	52	32	50	31
6	65	41	67	30	28	28

4. Expenditures

Last year, the El Centro Elementary School District spent \$33,558,622 or \$5,495 per student. These expenditures included general and special education, and State and Federally funded projects and were made in these amounts.

Employee Salaries, and Benefits:	\$4,286
per student or 78% of the total budget	
Books and Supplies:	\$330
per student or 6% of the total budget	
Services and Operating Service:	\$330
per student or 6% of the total budget	
Capital Outlay (Equipment)	\$330
per student or 6% of the total budget	
Other Outgo:	\$219
per student or 4% of the total budget	

Also included were amounts spent in School Improvement, Economic Impact Aid, Gifted & Talented, Bilingual, Special Education and Mentor Programs. In 1997-98 Desert Garden School received \$217,101 in State and Federal funds for special programs. \$96,113 or 44.27%, went to employee salaries and benefits paid for our computer language lab teacher, our community liaison person, our instructional resource clerk and four instructional assistants. The remainder of the funds \$120,988 or 53.73% were used to supplement the instructional program. The items purchased included technological equipment to allow each classroom to go online; many new books for the library in English and Spanish; software and books for the Accelerated Reading Program; conference attendance in the areas of

fine arts, math, and technology. Categorical expenditures were approved by the Desert Garden School site Council.

5. Class Size

The El Centro School District implemented the State Class Size Reduction Program of 20 students per teacher in grade 1 for the 1996-97 school year, in grades 1 and 2 for the 1997-98 school year, and in K-3 in the 1998-99 school year. Desert Garden School class sizes last year ranged from 31 students in kindergarten, to 35 students in fifth and sixth grades when classes were full. In an effort to reduce class sizes, teachers were given time to work with half their class while the other students worked in the computer lab.

6. Teacher Assignments

All Desert Garden School teachers are assigned to teach within their credentialed subject areas. Our school has experienced no problem with the proper assignment of teachers, because California law permits teachers in the elementary grades to instruct students across all subject-matter areas.

Desert Garden School also employs other certificated specialist who are properly credentialed to teach or provide service in their specialty area. One RSP teacher is currently enrolled in classes to complete her Special Education Credential. She is also working with an experienced mentor teacher in the district.

7. Textbooks and Instructional Materials

The El Centro Elementary School District sets a high priority on providing sufficient textbooks and instructional materials to support each school's instructional program. A district wide committee, representing each of the schools, chooses textbooks and instructional materials from the State Board of Education approved list. These programs are adopted districtwide in each subject area to provide continuity and consistency throughout the district. The El Centro Elementary School District follows the State Department of Education Instructional Materials adoption cycle

to ensure that instructional materials are relevant and up to date.

Desert Garden School also has a library and an instructional resource room which provide a variety of library books, reference books, and other instructional materials. There is also a computer lab with various software programs available for student classroom use and a library of video tapes for classroom use. A Language Arts Program called Accelerated Reader was added to our curriculum in every classroom two years ago and each year it has been expanding. This program provides many additional books to supplement each classroom library and the software to enable students to test their knowledge of the subject matter once they have completed a book

8. Counseling and Support Services

Students at Desert Garden School receive non-instructional support services from a highly qualified staff which includes: a school psychologist, a speech/language specialist, a library assistant, and an instructional resource clerk. Some services are available daily, and others at least once a week.

9. Substitute Teachers

Desert Garden School has not experienced any difficulty in obtaining qualified substitute teachers to cover classes for teachers who are absent except on a few occasions. On these occasions, the lack of a large substitute teacher pool has made it difficult to provide enough substitutes for schools in the district on days of heavy teacher absence.

10. School Facilities And Safety

Our intent is to provide a safe and orderly environment as well as an attractive and well maintained campus. The Desert Garden School staff, parents, and students take great pride in keeping the physical environment clean and safe for children. To safeguard the well-being of students and staff, safety drills, including monthly fire drills and regularly scheduled earthquake/disaster drills, were conducted. To

ensure that playground rules were followed and safety maintained, the playgrounds were supervised by teachers and the principal before, during recess, and after school. Playground and noon duty supervisors assisted in the supervision on the playground during lunch, and before and after school

All staff members, including two custodians and a part-time groundskeeper, worked towards establishing a well maintained campus. Security was bolstered by a schoolwide alarm system, and vandalism and theft have been kept to a minimum.

11. Teacher Evaluation

Teachers at Desert Garden School are evaluated on a regular basis by the principal. Permanent teachers are evaluated at least every other year and probationary teachers are evaluated every year. The evaluation procedure includes assessment in each of the following areas: Pupil Progress, Instructional Techniques and Strategies, Adherence to District Curriculum and Programs, Learning Environment, Pupil Control and Behavior Management, Interpersonal Relationships, Attendance and Punctuality, Professional Growth, and Other Duties.

12. Discipline and Climate for Learning

The principal, staff, parents and students at Desert Garden School are committed to a disciplined, stimulating and supportive learning environment. Our school wide discipline plan, which reflects high standards for student behavior, is implemented in a consistent and positive manner; rules are posted in every classroom.

Other school wide programs which recognize and promote high expectations for student behavior and achievement include: honoring student of the month, attendance certificates, and end-of-the-year-awards for academic and school service efforts. There were also various activities to promote school pride and beautification efforts including: wearing school T-shirts, school color days, and many rewards for positive behavior. For the last 3 years suspensions and expulsions have been as follows;

1995/1996 142 Suspensions 0 Expulsions

1996/1997	63 Suspensions	2 Expulsions
1997/1998	63 Suspensions	0 Expulsions

The staff worked closely with parents to alleviate serious behavior problems and to encourage success at school.

13. Training and Curriculum Improvement

The El Centro Elementary School District devotes high priority to staff professional growth and curriculum improvement. During the 1996-1997 school year, 6 staff development days were scheduled to inservice certificated staff on strategies to work with English learners. During 1997-1998, a total of 5 inservice days were scheduled. These district wide inservice days focused on language arts and two days focused on the needs at individual schools. For the 1998-1999 school year, teachers were given the opportunity to attend two optional district wide staff development prior to the beginning of school. Focus areas were science, reading and classroom management. Individual schools had the opportunity to schedule up to two days of optional staff development.

Staff development activities at Desert Garden School last year reflected staff and instructional program needs as well as focus areas identified in the School Plan. Some training activities included: the writing, process, integrated language arts strategies, meeting the needs of LEP students, science and math activities, new methods of student assessment, and the use of technology in the classroom. The staff at Desert Garden School will continue to make a strong commitment to the area of professional development for all staff members.

14. Quality of Instruction and Leadership

Desert Garden School maintains a school instructional plan which is evaluated and updated each year and rewritten as needed.

A new plan was written by the principal and staff during the school year, and two curricular area were refined to match State Frameworks and Program Quality Criteria.

Desert Garden School applied for and received School-Wide status during the year. Our school participated in a Program Quality Review process

in 1996-97. Last year, the plan was updated to meet student needs. In addition, weekly meetings were held. These meetings ensured total staff input and shared decision making. The School Site Council formed another valuable part of our leadership, and its input was vital to our instructional improvement process.

Our school also works hard to meet the needs of special student populations. Classes were provided in Special Education, Bilingual Programs, and Gifted and Talented Education. Special needs were further supported through the services of the district speech and language specialist, and psychologist.

15. Instructional Minutes

During the 1997-1998 school year, Desert Graden School offered a total of 36,000 instructional minutes per year in Kindergarten as required by the State of California. In grades five and six, 56,070 instructional minutes per year were offered as compared to 54,000 instructional minutes required by the State of California. Desert Garden School offered a total of 180 instructional days during the 1997-1998 school year that met or exceeded the State of California minimum requirement for instructional minutes.

The following average number of instructional minutes per year were offered in each of the following subject areas:

	<u>Kdq.</u>	<u>5th & 6th</u>
English Language and Literature	21,600	32,400
Mathematics	6,300	10,800
Science	1,800	3,600
History-Social Science	1,800	3,600
Foreign Language	-0-	-0-
The Arts	1,800	2,700
Physical Education	2,700	2,970

16. Comparative Salary and Budget Information

State law requires that comparative salary and budget information, which is taken from documents available to the general public, be displayed in each School Accountability Report Card. The information reflects 1996-1997 school year salary and budget information for the El

Centro School District. Daily rates of pay were computed based on the employee's required work year. The number of required work days varied by position. Hourly rates were based on a required work day of eight hours for administrators and the contractual agreement of approximately six hours for teachers.

In addition to the regular salary schedule, off salary schedule bonuses have been paid to teachers and administrators of approximately 1.97% of their regular salary from lottery funds. Budget percentages reflected the percentage of the total district budget that was spent for teachers and administrative salaries in 1996-1997.

This has been the ninth annual report that you have received from Desert Garden Elementary School. One of the most important goals in the El Centro School District is to have open communication among our staff and parents. I hope that this report has contributed to that goal. We look forward to sending you a report like this each year.

Dr. Michael Klentschy
Superintendent

**El Centro Elementary School District
Board Members**

Janie Signorotti Dianna Newton
President Clerk

Steve Walker Ron Hull Jon Edney
Trustee Trustee Trustee

SALARY CATEGORY (1996-97)	EL CENTRO SCHOOL DIST. DISTRICT AVERAGE			COMPARISON STATE AVERAGE		COMPARISON STATE AVERAGE	
	Annual Salary	Daily Rate	Hourly Rate	Annual Salary	Daily Rate	Annual Salary	
Teacher Beginning	\$26,844	\$145.89	\$24.32	\$28,974	\$158	\$23,609 - \$32,614	
	Mid-Range	\$43,245	\$235.03	\$39.17	\$47,464	\$259	\$39,943 - \$57,157
	Highest	\$55,489	\$301.57	\$50.26	\$55,623	\$304	\$50,016 - \$62,744
Principals	\$68,509	\$334.19\$	\$41.77	\$71,543	\$344	\$56,203 - \$82,468	
Superintendent	\$89,585	\$407.20	\$50.90	\$101,2711	\$456	\$80,671 - \$124,190	

BUDGET PERCENTAGES (1996-97)			
For Teacher's Salaries	43.97%	44.99%	37.51% - 51.68%
For Administrative Salaries	5.49%	5.34%	3.93% - 6.95%