

The To&Through Middle Grades Network (MGN) is a group of CPS schools dedicated to creating more equitable and responsive educational environments where middle grades students thrive. The network aims to *increase the number of students with attendance at or above 90% and GPAs at or above 3.0 (i.e. condensed elementary on-track) through a meaningful increase in students' sense of belonging.*

Participating schools in each cohort work to redefine the middle grades experience by using qualitative and quantitative data to understand student experiences, develop a problem of practice, and test change ideas that positively impact the experiences and outcomes of middle grades students.

This profile shares the journey of one MGN school in hopes of inspiring others to reimagine systems and structures to ensure that middle grades students thrive.

KELVYN PARK JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL LOCATED IN HERMOSA



SY2022-23 TEAM MEMBERS

- Assistant Principal
- Junior High Art Teacher
- Junior High Math Teacher
- Junior High Social Studies Teacher
- Junior High Science Teacher
- Three Junior High Diverse Learners Teachers
- Counselor
- Physical Education Teacher

STUDENTS

School Grades: 7-12

Number of Students: 515

Middle Grades Enrollment: 119

DEMOGRAPHICS

87% Hispanic (Largest racial group)

21% Diverse Learners

48.3% English Learners

DEFINITION OF STUDENT SUCCESS

Students at Kelvyn Park are successful when:

- They define their version of success with support of the people and resources at the school
- Build skills to have a sense of empowerment, self-efficacy, and self-advocacy to make a path to success

Kelvyn Park Junior and Senior High School

Year One Improvement Story

YEAR ONE

CHANGE IDEA RATIONALE

In spring 2022, the Kelvyn Park (KP) team conducted surveys and student shadows with their middle grades students. Analysis of this data revealed that though most students felt safe in school and connected to an adult, many students did not feel connected to what they were learning in their classes and did not perceive instruction as challenging. The staff member conducting the student shadows shared that, *“Generally students seem to ask adults for academic support rather than other students. I saw some peer-peer interactions in gym and maybe also in English but for the most part it seems like if students want clarification or feedback on their work they are more likely to ask the teacher than to ask another student.”* One student stated that, *“it’s hard to be a student here.”* The team also identified continued struggles with attendance and grades and observed differences in connectedness depending on student groups and grade levels.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

- Students will rise to the occasion when given a challenge that engages them.
- Students are more reflective and full of wonder than we as educators give them credit for

Data Sources

- Quarterly Elevate survey results related to the Classroom Community and Meaningful Work learning conditions.
- Staff and student surveys following KP Quest Days
- Quarterly Grades Monitoring Tool

YEAR ONE

CHANGE IDEA

One-on-One Student-Teacher Check Ins

- The team developed KP Quest Days, a five month experiential arts integration learning event, to build relevancy and peer relationships that focused on learning about the community and sustainability.
- The theory of change is that more project-based, community-centered projects would create a shared bond between students who focus on differences rather than similarities.

YEAR ONE

IMPACT

KP Quest Days helped staff actively use student feedback to adjust teaching and scheduling to better meet students’ needs. Students also had new experiences with peers they wouldn’t otherwise have had and became more willing to work with new people and less reluctant to try new things with the support of their teachers. In Elevate, Kelvyn Park saw a 6% increase in Classroom Community and a 7% increase in Meaningful Work, with all learning conditions seeing positive growth by the end of the year. Specifically, they saw an 11% increase in the amount of students who felt comfortable sharing their thoughts and opinions in class and a 7% increase in students who felt what they were learning was connected to their real life.

End of the year survey results from the staff highlighted how the team met their goals around strengthening classroom community and peer-to-peer relationships. One staff member reflected, *“I see a lot more cross-grade friendships and talking in the hallways, and more willingness to work in groups with less conflict.”* While another noted, *“Students interacted with some students with whom they never have interacted before. Students also organically engaged in some meaningful conversations with their peers regarding specific targeted issues.”*