



Miramonte Elementary School



Miramonte Elementary School is a school that serves children in South El Monte, California from kindergarten to the sixth grade. It is part of the Mountain View School District, located in the eastern portion of the San Gabriel Valley. The school is typical of many urban schools in Los Angeles County. Nearly all of the students qualify for free and reduced lunch, and a large majority of students enter kindergarten speaking a language other than English.

SMP began working with the teachers and principal of Miramonte four years ago. The school qualified to apply for a Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) Grant and SMP partnered with them in writing the application. From the beginning, SMP knew that there was something special about Miramonte. They were a very congenial group, with strong friendships and frequent potlucks. They knew the children and their families, often for generations. They deeply believed in their students' abilities to be successful and were frustrated when student test results did not reflect their hard work and dedication. They knew something had to change. Thus began the journey for teachers and students to build upon existing strengths, reorganizing teachers' efforts to provide the best educational experience for all students.

Miramonte began their journey with funding provided by the CSR grant and plan designed by the leadership team. Led by their fearless leader, Principal Jayne Van Langeveld, Literacy Coach Debbie Pak, and each and every teacher, the school began a process grounded in data analysis and professional inquiry. The journey was not without its challenges, roadblocks, and disagreements. However, their common vision to provide the best learning experiences for all children was constant. They developed a system that transformed their congeniality to true collaboration. They met weekly to examine data, explore new strategies, plan, and reexamine the results of their efforts. One example of their efforts is the *Miramonte Test Thinking Method*, developed by sixth grade teacher, Laura Gaber, and now used by schools across Southern California and in the Northeast.

Their perseverance has paid off. Miramonte has exited from Program Improvement (PI) status designated by the State. SMP is privileged to have partnered with Miramonte, and continues to share their story of success with other schools beginning the same journey.
