School Information

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<th>Information</th>
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<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>Los Angeles County</td>
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<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>Bellflower Unified School District</td>
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<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>Bellflower Middle School/High School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civic Coor</td>
<td>Susan Nicoletti</td>
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<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:snicoletti@busd.k12.ca.us">snicoletti@busd.k12.ca.us</a></td>
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<td>Site Admin</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:awhitney@busd.k12.ca.us">awhitney@busd.k12.ca.us</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Michael Lundgren</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:mlundgren@busd.k12.ca.us">mlundgren@busd.k12.ca.us</a></td>
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Site Validation Team

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<th>Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of Visit</td>
<td>April 14, 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team Leader</td>
<td>Michelle Herczog</td>
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<tr>
<td>Signature</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agency</td>
<td>Los Angeles County Office of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>(562) 922-6908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Magda Ruz Gonzalez, LACOE</td>
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<td>Signature</td>
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Site Validation Team Recommendation

- The Site Validation Team has validated information to confirm that high quality civic learning is institutionalized to enable every student to participate in a civic inquiry and investigation at least once during their high school career. The team, therefore, recommends that this school be selected as a California Democracy School.

- The Site Validation Team was unable to validate the full implementation of high quality civic learning for all students and cannot recommend that this school be selected as a California Democracy School.
Additional Comments

After examining a great deal of evidence, observing classrooms, and interviewing students, teachers, school administrators, and community stakeholders, it is abundantly clear that Bellflower Middle School/High School has established systems and practices to ensure that all students engage in civic inquiry and investigation activities to prepare them for civic life in the 21st century. There is also ample evidence to confirm that the initiative will be sustained in the years to come as a result of intentional capacity building and commitment of the staff and school community.

Members at Meeting:

- Arlene Whitley, Asst. Principal
- Susan Nicoletti, Civic Learning Coordinator
- Todd Davenport, Teacher
- Michael Lundgren, Principal
- Deborah Guzman, Teacher
- Babak Aminitehrani, Teacher
- Parents
- Students
- Cindy Van Meeveren, Bellflower Volunteer Center
- Dan Coops, Mayor of Bellflower
- Edgar Estrada, representing Assemblywoman Christina Garcia

Evidence of Institutionalization and Sustainability:

- Civic inquiry and investigation is implemented in
  - All history classes in grades 7, 8, 10, and 11.
  - All Government classes in grade 12 (year long course)
  - All World Geography classes in grade 9 – required one semester course for all ninth graders
  - 10th grade English department has also integrated civic learning components.
- The entire social studies department has participated in California Democracy School Training.
- Bellflower High School/Middle School 2016-17 budget proposal for LCAP spending includes funding for a full time Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) for civic learning and funding for civic learning professional development.
- A Bellflower School Board Resolution was adopted to support civic learning
- Bellflower USD Mission Statement includes
  - Become responsible, informed, productive, independent and contributing citizens.
- Civics referenced in WASC Accreditation, and Single Plan for Student Achievement
- Bellflower Middle School/High School recently received the California Civic Learning Award of Excellence from California Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson.

Perspectives from Principal:

- I have seen students become empowered. They have learned by doing and that the process will and does make a difference.
- Students come to me regularly with ideas for the school that are well researched and clearly articulated i.e. hand dryers in restrooms, water filling stations for drinking water.
- Our students now go to board meetings and are learning how local government works.
- Students are actually seeing that solving a problem is not actually in a book – they can actually go out and do something about it.
- The relationship between the city and the school community has improved significantly. I believe this is largely due to the civic learning initiative here at Bellflower.
Perspectives from Asst. Principal:
• In the past, you would give students information and they would just sit on it. Now they ask questions about things presented to them. And their questions are intelligent and respectful. They are now active thinkers and learners.
• I haven’t heard any complaints from parents. They are open to the idea. I attribute that to the way the process is learned in the classroom.

Student perspectives:
• It really opens your eyes to what is happening. Most people don’t think beyond school and the community but this (project) gets us thinking about the world around us.
• It gives us a sense of belonging to know we can have an impact on our community.
• We’re working on getting more people to register to vote.
• It helps to see what other students are doing to help the community.
• The civic initiative brings more attention to problems and what I can do to help.
• It makes you understand what is going on in our country and what we can do.
• We are the future of tomorrow and will be running the world. We need to learn how to do that.
• We learned that we can take action. This project is giving me encouragement to take that first step.
• This helps me develop my own understanding without listening to the media all the time.
• This helps me now in making decisions about important things and situations.
• Voting is the start of adult life and this project will help me think about voting and the problems in the world.

Parent Perspectives:
• My son is very excited about going to board meetings. He’s all into it and wants to study political science.
• The project is making them more sensitive to issues they may not have thought about in the past.

Stakeholder Perspectives:
• Assemblymember representative: With our Young Legislators Program, we work with students at Bellflower to attend City Hall meetings. Students are motivated to get involved and get involved in their future.
• Mayor: It’s a great program. Seeing students come en masse to City Hall making presentations is fantastic. My message to students is “trust the system.”
• Coordinator, Volunteer Services: This project has really helped students develop critical thinking skills by getting them out and seeing the world, take ownership with projects, and realizing how difficult it is to solve problems. I have seen so many students learn about problems but then take the next step on how to solve it. They are becoming prepared to work in groups, to have a stronger voice to get out there and make a difference.