



West Portal Elementary School

West Portal Elementary School is located above the West Portal Tunnel at the top of a steep hill on Lenox Way near Taraval Street in San Francisco. The school is in the Forest Hills/West Portal residential area. The school day starts at 8:40 A.M. and dismissal is at 2:40 P.M.. Growth and Learning Opportunities (GLO), our exemplary non-profit parent-run day care program, opens its doors at 7:00 A.M. and provides childcare until 6:00 P.M.

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The primary purpose of West Portal School is learning. This perspective is consistently supported by the students, the staff, and the parents. Our vision and mission statements reflect our belief in some very basic premises: 1) All students can learn and succeed, 2) Success breeds success, 3) Schools control the conditions of success within the school environment, and 4) Collaboration amongst the stakeholders is essential.

West Portal's strengths, accomplishments, programs, and high levels of parent participation distinguish it from other schools and promote its success as an exemplary learning institution. West Portal consists of a General Education program strand that presently includes 16 classrooms and a Chinese Immersion program strand that includes 8 classrooms. We have several demonstration classrooms that have met selected criteria in the areas of classroom environment, project-based instruction, language-rich climate, and adult support for students. The leadership teachers in these classrooms have had extensive training through the Early Primary Professional Development Project.

The General Education program is known for its developmentally appropriate practices, and for the ability of teachers to incorporate science, cultural, and artistic enrichment into the curriculum. Our Chinese two-way language immersion alternative program has provided a Cantonese bilingual and cultural education at West Portal since 1984. West Portal has also won national recognition as a model school for inclusive education. Exceptional Parent Magazine, a national publication, named West Portal a "Model of Excellence in Education for 2000."

Parents and guardians play a vital role in the school. They volunteer in the classroom and at home, come on field trips, work in the library, plan class festivities, share in decision-making, support the instructional program, and serve as curriculum resources. They started our noontime game room, organize Exploratorium science nights at West Portal and after school activities, coordinate our annual participation in the Chinese New Year Parade, and provide other support for our children. All parents and guardians are invited to join the West Portal Parents Club, and participate in the fund-raising programs that provide instructional materials as well as enrichment activities. Parents and guardians are our most valuable resource.

We extend a warm welcome to you to visit our school and classrooms as a more complete introduction of who we are. Our visiting days are Thursday mornings at 9:00AM. During your visit, you will and teaching and learning are what we are about and that we "treat the education of the next generation as the most important shared responsibility of the entire school community."