



A SCHOOL WHERE ALL STUDENTS ARE CHALLENGED AND SUPPORTED



At another school, Dayshaun Davis might have fallen through the cracks. His mother was seriously ill. He was missing his classes at California's Seaside High. He was falling behind and checking out.

Instead, Mr. Davis graduated and matriculated to a four-year university.

"Mr. Moran, he always said I'd be a role model, leader," Davis said of his principal, Carlos Moran, in an "ATTN:" video about his school that was watched over a million times on Facebook alone.

Seaside's formula is both simple and effective: universally high expectations plus strong supports for students and their teachers. This gives students like Mr. Davis opportunities to succeed, even when the odds seemed stacked against them. The school was recognized as a School of Opportunity, as part of an NEPC program honoring public high schools that focus not just on achievement gaps but on the shortage of opportunities that are the root cause of the differences in test scores, graduation rates, and other outcomes emphasized by accountability-based systems.

All students at Seaside take core classes that prepare them for the University of California. The school *refuses to enroll students in low-track classes* that tend to provide watered-down coursework. Instead, the school's students, three-quarters of whom hail from low-income families, select from *more than 15 Advanced Placement courses*.

This carries over to the school's electives, as well. Vocational education—now called career and technical education—has a *shameful history* of providing reduced opportunities to stu-

dents of color and those from low-income families. Yet Seaside avoids that trap by blending college preparatory coursework with so-called “pathway” classes that prepare students for jobs in engineering/technology, health, safety, public service, hospitality, business, and arts/media.

It also carries over to students with more specific needs. Even the students with the most severe special needs spend at least part of the day in general classes. All teachers are prepared to work with emerging bilingual students whose first language is other than English.

“All students can be successful no matter what background students are coming from in terms of their demographics and socioeconomic status,” Moran told *The Monterey Herald*. “There’s this idea that one thing in order for us to authentically close that achievement gap is first we have to start with giving all students an opportunity.”

NEPC Resources on Schools of Opportunity

Seaside High in the News

- *The Washington Post*: *There are no low-track courses at this high-poverty school. Instead, there are strong supports and a focus on learning.*
 - *The Washington Post*: *A school targets the opportunity gap — not the achievement gap. Watch the video.*
 - *The Monterey Herald*: *Seaside High honored as ‘school of opportunity.’*
 - *Monterey County Weekly*: *Seaside High School is bridging achievement gaps, post-School Improvement Grants.*
 - *KION*: *Seaside High School receives national award.*
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