



[Return to article](#) | [Return to Education](#)

Q&A with Eileen Nurani, Van Buren Elementary principal

The Desert Sun
September 26, 2005

Position: Principal, Martin Van Buren Elementary School, Indio

Age: 53

Career background: Ten years teaching; mentor teacher, two years; coordinator for state and federal programs, four years; principal, 11 years.

Family: Husband Nick Nurani, a physician; son Michael, a music teacher; and daughter Katherine, a computer consultant

Hobbies and interests: Tennis, playing bridge, reading and traveling.

QUESTION: What is new at your school this year?

ANSWER: We are implementing a program called "Polite Child." The goal is to teach children the "Social Smarts" they will need to be successful in life. We are working hard to improve academics, but in addition, we want each child to have the social skills needed to go out into the work world and interact appropriately with others.



Luis Ochoa Martinez, The Desert Sun
Eileen Nurani, Van Buren Elementary School principal

QUESTION: What challenges does your school face?

ANSWER: Our biggest challenge is the large population of English Language Learners (ELL) at our school. With 90 percent of our students identified as English Language Learners, we have the challenge of helping our students acquire the language skills needed to be successful academically.

Last year we started a full-day kindergarten program that is really paying off. Our first-grade teachers are really pleased to see the increase in language proficiency of their entering first-graders. We also use lots of strategies that increase academic achievement for our students.

QUESTION: What makes your school special?

ANSWER: Our wonderful students, parents and teachers make our school special. I have never worked with such delightful and sweet children. They come to school eager to learn, and their parents are so appreciative and supportive of our teachers. Our teachers have a passion for student learning and work collaboratively with each other. Each grade level team sets yearly academic goals and then they work together to achieve these goals. I am pleased to see the continual and steady academic growth our school is making every year.

QUESTION: How do you interact with the students?

ANSWER: I am in the classrooms every day observing instruction. Each morning I am on the playground greeting the children and then in the lunch room helping the children through the lunch lines. I also make time to go into every classroom during the year and read to the children. It's important that they know I value reading and I try to pass on to them that reading is fun.

We also have monthly awards assemblies and each month children are selected by their teacher to receive the "Principal's Award" for academic achievement. I enjoy calling each child up in front of their peers, teachers and family members to receive their award.

QUESTION: What's been your most memorable, amusing or unusual experience as a school principal?

ANSWER: Well, that's a hard question. I think that the most special experiences for me are ones in which something I did impacted a child in a profound way. Just last week one of my students saw a book I had about motivating children to read. He saw the book and commented "That's what you did for me Mrs. Nurani. You helped me to really enjoy reading." That's what makes this job so special, making a positive impact on the lives of students.

[Customer service](#) [About this site](#) [Contact us](#) [F.A.Q.](#) [Subscribe Now!](#) [Advertise](#)
CLASSIFIED PARTNERS: [Jobs: CareerBuilder.com](#) | [Cars: Cars.com](#) | [Apartments: Apartments.com](#) | [Shopping: ShopLocal.com](#)

Copyright © 2005 The Desert Sun

Use of this site signifies your agreement to the [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#), updated June 7, 2005

