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Response from ISANA Himalia Academy



ISANA Himalia Academy

INNOVATIVE, SOCIALLY AWARE, NETWORK OF ACHIEVERS



SBE Report-June 1, 2020

ISANA Himalia Academy takes great pride in providing a high-quality instructional program to enhance students' growth through academic and enrichment lessons, standardized, internal assessments and other indicators of academic achievement. The CAASPP and the California School Dashboard for the 2018 - 2019 school year, shows that there was an overall decline in ELA, math, SpEd, English Learners, and absenteeism. As a result, we have developed a strategic, intentional, and targeted action plan to increase student outcomes for these student groups for 2019 - 2020 school year, which will continue for the 2020-2021 school year.

Chronically Absent Students

For the 2019-2020 school year, ISANA Himalia Academy has implemented a "systems of support" approach for students who are chronically absent or at-risk for chronic absenteeism at 10.1%. The following actions have been implemented to address students with high absences: 1) COST referral program 2) Regular outreach to families 3) Closely monitoring daily attendance data. One focus of our COST program is to quickly identify the challenges preventing students from attending school, provide coordinated programs and services to assist families, and monitor each students' absences. The Student Family Service Coordinator serves as a new member of the staff and will identify and monitor, through calls and home visits, chronically absent students. The SFSC works extensively to meet the needs of families by providing school, District and community resources to eliminate barriers to a student's attendance through contact with parents, coordinating running truancy letters and scheduling parent meetings to develop a plan and agreement to partner together for the strategies to facilitate consistent attendance. Lastly, our School Operations Manager sends a daily email to the school-site administrators as well as Central office documenting the following: the attendance report, daily phone calls to the home of all reported absent students to follow up on the reason for the student's absence, the date of the student's return and any supports or assistance that can be provided to families and reduce absenteeism.

Students with Disabilities

ISANA Himalia is committed to providing our Students with Disabilities an academic program that promotes their achievement. ISANA Himalia Academy's 2019 Dashboard data for Special Education indicated a decline by 8.6 points in English Language Arts and a decline by 19.8 points in Mathematics. In response to this decline, the following actions have been implemented to increase student achievement. First, three school days have been dedicated to collaboration among Resource Specialist Teachers and General Education teachers to co-plan and discuss the learning needs of their students with IEPs. The increase in dedicated collaboration time has proven to increase the opportunities for discussions relating to individual student goals and targeted support, while encompassing their individual academic plan. GE and RSP teachers continue to collaborate and share pertinent information during weekly grade-level meetings as well. GE and RSP teachers communicate with one another as well as with our Instruction and Compliance Specialists regarding service providers who provide direct services to students. Principals and Admin in Trainings regularly attend IEP meetings and remain informed of students' goal(s), progress and services. Second, there has been a greater focus on providing students with push-in support directly in the general education classroom using co-teaching practices. This framework allows for more effective and strategic planning, while striving to meet the individualized needs for all students. Also, our Resource Specialist Teachers (RSTs), with the GE Teachers, participated in deeper discussions about CAFE strategies and expectations of use within the classroom; strategies and resources shared in this training could be used during RSP services in which ELD goals were being targeted. Third, Himalia has been selected for Targeted Review to create a Special Education Plan to address Indicators 3 for Academic Achievement. Himalia Targeted Review Team will be meeting to gather data and conduct a root cause analysis to determine the reasons for the decline in CAASPP scores for our SWD population. A suspected area of need is academic accommodations and modifications being more strategically



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provided. This year, Himalia has piloted the use of Co:Writer and Snap&Read to assist our students with significant reading and writing needs. Through the Targeted Review process and continued professional development for all of our staff to ensure full educational benefit, Himalia will continue to improve upon the ways our SWD are supported academically.

ELA & Math

In the fall of 2019-2020, ISANA Himalia fully adopted the i-Ready program to serve as an online assessment to support teachers in providing all students a pathway to proficiency and growth in reading and mathematics. This program addresses individual needs and empowers educators to make informed instructional decisions with the analysis and utilization of data. The data provided by i-Ready reports provides teachers with a foundational understanding of student strengths and areas of need, as well as actionable steps to inform instructional practices. I-Ready also supports teachers in providing access to varying resources, such as the Teacher Toolbox, to support them in reteaching at individualized, small group, and whole class levels of instruction. Under the guidelines of i-Ready, a schoolwide adoption of 45-60 minutes of online learning in reading and math lessons across all grade levels has been implemented. Himalia has set the expectation for teachers to reference i-Ready data points when planning weekly lessons, as well as identifying individual student goals. As an extension of this goal, Himalia has hosted family data chat events on a trimester basis to serve as opportunities to engage in conversations with parents centered on current student data and progress, while identifying goals for the following trimester. Himalia Academy has also initiated Fun Focus Fridays that includes allocating 30 minutes of standard mastery review/reteach for reading and mathematics every Friday and utilizing vital data to inform instruction from i-Ready diagnostics and SMA data. Finally, Himalia Academy also established Small Groups binders that include 1. Review the data and needs of targeted Tier 2 or 3 students 2. Calendar planning 8 -10 weeks of targeted instruction for these students 3 times each week. 3. Identify the i-Ready tools and lessons to be implemented for each ELA and mathematics lesson, including reassessment at the close of the targeted instruction. 4. Use the Student Tracker to monitor progress and assessment toward proficiency in ELA and mathematics.

Overview of Student Demographics and Performance of English Learners

ISANA Himalia Academy's 2019 dashboard data for English Learners indicated a decline by 22 points in English Language Arts. In response to this decline, the following actions have been implemented to increase student achievement support for all students, particularly English Learners. First, professional development to all staff and implementation of CAFE strategies and techniques continue to be at the forefront of evidence-based. Secondly, during the winter of 2020, ISANA Himalia Academy developed the position and onboarded an English Learner Coordinator to support and further develop the staff in implementing evidence-based instructional techniques during Integrated and Designated English Language. The EL Coordinator works alongside the academic team of instructional coaches and administration. The academic team has invested dedicated time in professional development aimed to increase effectiveness in classroom observations, both formally and informally, to provide meaningful feedback to teachers regarding their implementation of best practices. Consequently, this directly impacts the conversations with teachers to better strategize on ways to further enhance their teaching practices. Thirdly, ISANA Himalia Academy has continued to receive ongoing professional development through the organization to ensure teachers and staff are equipped with current strategies and knowledge regarding the ELD standards and ELPAC. Furthermore, the instructional staff at ISANA Himalia has received site-based professional development in which they were provided modeled designated ELD lessons, a lesson planning template to directly address gaps observed in designated ELD lessons. Additionally, grade-level collaboration time focused on analyzing internal data to create actionable steps, which include strategically grouping EL students across all grade-levels to target instruction for the various EL levels. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, English Learners will continue to be at the forefront of our strategic academic planning for the 2020-21 academic school year. This will include an increase in the number of continued professional development for all educators, including collaboration with our families to

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provide them with resources as partners in their child's education, while maintaining ongoing communication to discuss academic progress at various points in the school year.

School-Wide Areas of Focus

The mission of ISANA Himalia Academy is to provide a learning environment where all students will thrive in an atmosphere of high expectations, engaging curriculum, and challenging learning opportunities. As part of its 2019-2020 strategic planning, Himalia designated three areas of focus in responding to the needs of our student and school community: 1. Innovative Learning, 2. Data-Driven Culture, 3. Academic Discourse.

Area of Focus: Innovative Learning

Recognizing the importance of innovative learning experiences for all students is an area of focus as we proceed with planning for the 2020-2021 school year. Through the implementation of a 1:1 student technology ratio, students will gain real world experiences in exploring and uncovering new ways to problem solve through creativity and discovery. In doing so, innovative learning will enhance student learning environments to promote lessons, activities, and projects designed to adopt new mindsets, such as Growth Mindset, that encourage risk-taking strategies through critical thinking that extends to the real-world and delivers innovative learning experiences. This design will also increase the ability for parents and families to partner with the school and better equipped to support their children at home. Additionally, through the continued use of various online platforms, such as i-Ready Teacher Toolbox and RAZ Kids Plus, tailored to meet the needs of all students, including EL and SPED populations.

Area of Focus: Using Data to Drive Instruction

This academic school year, the implementation of i-Ready proved to promote academic achievements in both English Language Arts and mathematics, as reflected in our Diagnostic #2 data. In the month of December 2019, the internal data points for i-Ready indicated a growth by 9% of students performing at grade level. Concurrent to this growth, Diagnostic #2 for math also indicated growth by 10% of students performing at grade level. Furthermore, students across all proficiency bands exhibited measurable growth toward academic performance at or above grade level. This upward growth validates the research-based benefits of the i-Ready model as intended to provide a comprehensive way to address Common Core literacy and math skills.

Area of Focus: Academic Discourse

In consideration of the student demographics of ISANA Himalia Academy, with 50% of its students classified as English learners, during the 2018-2019 school year, this student group was prioritized as schoolwide targeted goals and areas of need were identified when planning for professional development of our staff. As a result, ISANA Himalia Academy continues to partner with the California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE) in providing a professional development structure for the 2018-2019 school year that would target this area of need. Throughout the school year, all ISANA Himalia Academy educators received 24 hours of formal training from CABE in addition to weekly support from the academic team tailored to meet the needs of its EL population. Specific CABE strategies and techniques were implemented in all classrooms, including within services to support students with special needs. Such strategies focused on increasing collaborative conversations and academic discourse between students, which included, but are not limited to: think-pair-share, table talk mats, sentence frames/starters, thinking frames/starters, passport pair-share, stand up-hand up-partner up, concept development word sorts, etc. Teachers are required to cite on their weekly lesson plans the CABE strategies they are implementing to increase student discourse and support academic language acquisition for English Learners. Instructional Coaches review each teachers' lesson plans and provide targeted feedback on the strategies being implemented.

**ISANA Himalia Academy Academic Memo Addendum
October 2020**

1. A description of how the charter school will provide continuity of distance learning instruction during the school year to ensure pupils have access to curriculum.

ISANA Himalia Academy will ensure that no matter what the format of instruction, students will continue to access curriculum and receive high quality instruction without interruption. We will follow guidance from the California Department of Education, Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health, the Governor's office, and state and local governmental and health agencies to plan for in-person scenarios as health conditions in Los Angeles permit us to return to in-person instruction in the school year ahead. In order to effectively plan for classroom-based instruction, we have taken several action steps, including:

- Preparing our schools with PPE, shields, signage, identified walk paths and entrance/exits, sanitation stations, regular disinfecting schedules.
- Developing standard operating procedures for health and safety based on health and governmental guidance that included items such as: schedules and materials for regular sanitation, procedures for safe social distancing, classroom procedures related to safety, hand washing, required mask wearing, signage to be posted at the school, health screenings and temperature checks, rearrangement of classroom furniture and an analysis of outdoor space that can be used.

ISANA will also ensure that the instructional content and curriculum provided through Distance Learning will be at a level of quality and intellectual challenge that is substantially equivalent to the in-person instruction that students would otherwise receive. All instruction in this model will be delivered through enhanced distance learning practices in which students engage in both live, teacher-directed instruction and asynchronous, self-paced digital content. Professional development provided throughout the school year will provide educators with continued guidance on delivering content and communicating with students to ensure continuity of service. The following elements will be present in all instructional models:

- **Daily Live Interaction** – ISANA Himalia Academy exceeds state guidelines for daily instructional minutes and daily synchronous instruction minutes.
- **Small Group Instruction** - Teachers conduct much of both in-class and virtual time in targeted small groups, with larger group sessions for class connectedness and social-emotional wellness.
- **Expanded Learning Services**- The ISANA Expanded Learning Program is a standards-based extension of the school day and supports students socially, emotionally, academically, and physically.
- **Instruction in the Arts**- ISANA's Arts department is dedicated to providing high quality Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) standards-based instruction through the Project-Based Learning model in the areas of vocal, dance, acting, and visual arts.

2. A description of how the charter school will ensure access to devices and connectivity for all pupils to support distance learning.

ISANA will ensure that all students have access to the necessary devices and internet connection to allow students to fully participate in the educational program and complete assigned work by providing computers and hotspots to any student who needs one. When schools initially closed to in-person instruction in March of 2020, we conducted a survey with families regarding their access to computers and internet, and provided computers to all who needed it (at the time internet companies were providing 3 months free internet to everyone). Families were contacted to arrange safe-practice pick-up procedures at locations convenient to them. Teachers were then able to remotely monitor student participation in online learning, assess the student's familiarity with the tools and software, and provide additional support where needed. In July, we conducted surveys again via phone, and continued to issue computers to students who needed one; we now also provided internet hot spots to families (as the free internet trial

had ended). We have also purchased replacement computers should one break or should a new student enroll, to avoid delays in student learning. When in-person learning resumes, IT is ensuring the teachers have a full classroom set of devices in order to allow students to keep their assigned devices at home. At minimum, every ISANA Academy student will have access to a personally assigned ISANA-provided laptop for use at home and at school. ISANA Academies has also purchased Wi-Fi or Hotspot devices for distribution to families, when reliable internet access is not available. Parents or students may request additional equipment, such as headphones, if needed. Bilingual technical guidance and support are available to all staff, students and families via a call center number and email helpdesk. Additionally, we have held parent trainings and created English and Spanish videos for parents on topics such as how Zoom works and how to navigate the LMS system. We also offer one-on-one consultations for families who may need additional technological support. For any students who may need it, ISANA will provide alternate methods to deliver comparable educational content. Also, each teacher at ISANA will receive a comprehensive “Distance Learning Technology Kit for Teaching,” consisting of technology items such as 2-in-1 Windows touchscreen laptops with a stylus, noise-canceling Bluetooth headsets with microphones, document cameras, projectors, and drawing tablets to facilitate virtual learning.

3. A description of how the charter school will address pupil learning loss that results from COVID-19 during the 2019–20 and 2020–21 school years with consideration to the charter’s demographics and grade levels served.

In order to address learning loss while simultaneously teaching grade level content, we have adopted a pacing plan based on the Achieve the Core Priority Instructional Content for ELA and Math. We have measured learning loss by having all students take a norm-referenced academic Diagnostic Assessment through the i-Ready program. This assessment not only identifies strengths and gaps of knowledge in students, it also provides targeted intervention material, a growth trajectory to success at or above grade level, and a personalized instructional plan for students’ progress to these goals. All students will also have access to modules/lessons or projects that will provide more rigor or depth within content areas. Based on need for all students, including students with disabilities, English learners, students experiencing homelessness and foster youth, teachers will continue to provide additional support such as:

- Small group instruction
- Re-teaching and differentiated instruction via video-conferencing and recorded lessons
- Targeting specific skills and providing tailored support for small group instruction based on data
- Providing accelerated learning opportunities for all learners
- Utilizing ISANA-adopted interventions and programs
- Providing access to mini-lessons recorded for students to access as often as needed
- Monitoring the SEL and academic needs of all students by classroom teachers with the support of school and other ISANA personnel as needed
- Training staff such as paraprofessionals, instructional aides and others to provide instructional assistance and tutoring to support each student’s educational needs
- Coordination of Services Team (COST) team will evaluate student data and student work to identify students for Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) levels. Delivery of intervention will acknowledge appropriate models.

4. A description of how the charter school will monitor and support mental health and social and emotional well-being of pupils during the school year.

ISANA is committed to supporting the mental health and social and emotional well-being of students and staff, as the direct and indirect impacts of the global COVID-19 pandemic are expected to have a lasting effect. ISANA will reinforce and enhance curriculum focused on social-emotional learning, relationship building, and successful transitions to schools, classrooms, and environments, whether in-person or through distance learning. ISANA Educators will also participate in a series of professional learning modules on social-emotional learning and mental health sessions to support their own well-being. Specific strategies will include:

- Morning meetings or check-ins, and intervention blocks used to provide instruction in social-emotional learning and relationship building.
- Counseling staff providing mental health support and resources, including group or individual counseling and consultation for students and families, as needed.
- Behavior intervention teachers and school psychologists supporting students and caregivers with additional interventions and resources.
- Weekly Check in Calls with Families
- Implementation of newly purchased Social Emotional Curriculum: *Second Step*

5. A description of how the charter school will address the anticipated apportionment deferrals. ISANA Himalia Academy is closely monitoring and discussing its cash position in light of the anticipated apportionment deferrals. We have been holding monthly fiscal meetings with school leaders, central office leaders, and leaders from our fiscal back office providers to analyze cash position and needs, actual to budget revenues and expenditures to date, as well as professional development in fiscal areas. We are also looking into options of lines of credit and other outside funding to combat upcoming deferrals.