

Castro Valley Unified School District Model Programs and Practices

District Information

CD (County District) Code: 0161150

County: Alameda

District (Local Educational Agency): Castro Valley Unified School District

Demographics

Enrollment: 9,377

Location Description: Suburban

Overview

Castro Valley Unified School District (CVUSD), serves over 9,300 students in Preschool through Adult Education in 15 schools: 1 State Preschool, 1 special needs preschool; 9 elementary schools; 2 middle schools; 1 comprehensive high school; 1 Model Continuation High School; and an adult school with programs for adults with disabilities and a parent co-op preschool. Canyon Middle School is on the Schools to Watch List. Three elementary schools, Marshall, Castro Valley and Palomares, were designated as Gold Ribbon Schools, including two that also received the Title I Academic Achievement Award. In 2015, Canyon and Creekside Middle Schools were recognized as Gold Ribbon Schools. This year, two more elementary schools have been nominated for California Distinguished Schools.

Our families are ethnically, racially and economically diverse, with approximately 30% White, 25% Latino, 25% Asian, 7% African American and 10% two or more races. 29% of our students are English Learners (EL), Socioeconomically Disadvantaged or Foster Youth. 13% of our students have been reclassified as English Proficient. Our EL population has more than doubled since 2003. Nearly 30% of our students speak a second language at home. Our student attendance rate is 96.8% and our district graduation rate is 97.7%.

We are proud of our diversity and are committed to creating a welcoming culture. We provide a rigorous and equitable education to ALL students with enrichments and supports to ensure their success. Our Strategic Plan was created through an inclusive process with input from many stakeholders. It reflects a strong commitment to equity

and guides our decisions to serve our students' academic as well as social/emotional needs and aspirations.

We invest heavily in professional development for equitable instructional practices, robust Response to Intervention (Rtl) programs, rigorous curriculum and high academic achievement. We empower parents and students through programs such as Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE), School Smarts, and parent workshops during the weekly Mariachi Music program where students are provided music instruction while parents receive information on topics of interest. We believe in student voice and formed several diverse student groups, such as the District Student Leadership Alliance made of diverse students who meet with the Superintendent and Executive Cabinet to share ideas on how to support ALL students. Our Equity Task Force is made up of students, staff, parents and board members.

The Castro Valley Community Alliance, includes agencies, organizations and community members advocating for social justice and a safe, welcoming community. The group's work includes a film series focused on social justice and provides a platform for community conversations. The vision of the Community Alliance states, "Our school district is the heart of a rapidly evolving Castro Valley." We are proud to be the hub of our community.

Model Program/Practice

Name of Model Program/Practice

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

Summary

Length of Model Program/Practice: 2–4 years

Description

The CVUSD motto, All Means All, ties together our efforts to ensure that all students learn and develop at high levels. All Means All is translated into specific goals with the CVUSD Strategic Plan and LCAP. Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS), in turn, is our action plan to achieve the goals of the LCAP and Strategic Plan. MTSS combines Rtl, Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS) and Parent Empowerment to create a program that develops the whole child. We use data analysis, collaborative decision-making and stakeholder outreach to design the most effective systems of support. MTSS helps create positive learning environments, empowers parents and ensures that all students receive high quality instruction.

Effective, research-based, Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching is the base of Tier I instruction for all students, regardless of socio-economic status, primary home language, disabilities, gender and/or ethnicity. We engage students in a curriculum that

promotes critical thinking, inquiry, discourse, and collaborative problem-solving. We provide Chromebooks and Internet access to disadvantaged students to keep during the school year and summer.

Students learn best when academic and socio-emotional supports are aligned. PBIS helps students to develop emotionally and behaviorally so that they can be more engaged, successful students. PBIS helps to create and maintain safe campuses that have positive behavioral outcomes and rigorous academic instruction. Unproductive student behaviors are seen as teaching and learning opportunities rather than just discipline. PBIS's data collection system, SWIS (School Wide Information System) is used to identify areas of need to be addressed in a timely manner.

All teachers and administrators in CVUSD have been trained in RtI strategies and schools have adopted MTSS tailored to their school culture and needs. Schools examine data on an ongoing basis and look at ways to improve their intervention systems to ensure all students are supported through a well-focused set of essential academic and behavioral goals. There is clear commitment to Tier I and best first instruction.

Tier II and III supports can include academic support classes (math boosters and tutoring) college readiness support (AVID, Puente, college counseling) and ELD. Second Step curriculum and Restorative Justice Circles help to maintain a positive learning environment in CVUSD schools. Forming collaborative teams of teachers, counselors and administrators has been very effective in supporting students in need of Tier III intervention.

Students with disabilities, Socio-economically disadvantaged and English Learners benefit from a comprehensive MTSS focused on equity, academic success, community inclusiveness and the socio-emotional well-being of students. We are proud to offer a rigorous, standards-based program that meets the academic and behavioral needs of ALL students.

Implementation and Monitoring

The CVUSD implementation of MTSS involves a coalition of stakeholders, a wide-variety of initiatives and programs and is monitored by a diverse, collective group. Academic interventions, parent outreach, behavioral supports, community involvement, professional development and collaboration are leveraged toward improving behavioral and academic outcomes. We utilize systems thinking tools to see connections between all parts of our system in order to better serve our students.

Illuminate, our academic data management system, monitors student performance on everything from teacher-designed formative assessments to English Learner progress and California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP). SWIS, the PBIS data management system, tracks and analyzes student discipline and informs school leaders about patterns in student behavior including disproportionality. SWIS and Illuminate produce information for districtwide and site-level collaboration about school,

districtwide, and individual student performance. As one principal stated, “by putting a face to the academic and behavioral data they are no longer data; they are children”.

In order to ensure sustainability, we have invested in providing additional teacher collaboration and lesson planning time, strong site-led professional development, and compensated teachers to create model grade-level and subject-area lessons and units of study. Elementary schools utilize intervention specialists, instructional aides and classroom teachers as a team.

Pathways to become college and career ready include CTE, dual enrollment, “a-g” and

AP/honors courses. Professional development included two days of training for all certificated staff with Mike Mattos. We are continuing professional growth even during periods of tightening resources by narrowing our focus on MTSS and developing a multi-year plan to deepen its implementation. We improve the representation of all communities in our textbooks by including teachers, parents and students from diverse backgrounds in the selection process, and assessing the inclusiveness of these materials.

All students receive rigorous Tier I instruction, which is then complimented by Tier II or III for those in need of additional support. Additional sections are provided for small group instruction, AVID, EL blocks, and intervention support during the school day. Secondary schools are restructuring their schedules to further improve access to Tier III supports.

Students receive social-emotional support through Second Step, PBIS and restorative practices. CVUSD has also hired counselors to support elementary students’ social-emotional needs and has opened a Wellness Center. The Wellness Center is staffed with a coordinator, social workers and mental health counselors from several community organizations. Support groups and individual counseling are available to students, and being in a common space has allowed for better coordination of services.

Results and Outcomes

By monitoring student academic progress and feedback, we are able to identify the effectiveness of our strategies, and areas for growth. Overall academic performance in CVUSD is strong. CVUSD saw strong performance with most groups in its graduation rate data. The overall graduation rates for CVUSD is very high and increased to 97.7%. African American, Filipino, White, Homeless and students with disabilities all increased, as well. Homeless (100%), African American (96.7%), Asian (98.9%), Filipino (100%), Hispanic (95.8%), two or more races (98.1%) and white (97.7%) students all had very high graduation status, while socio-economically disadvantaged students (94.7%) also have a high graduation rate. Although English Learners received a medium graduation status, English Learner progress status maintained remained high.

One area of focus for CVUSD is our College/Career Indicator. By increasing dual enrollment, a-g and AP courses, as well as CTE pathways, we improve students’

college and career readiness. Our middle school career pathways summer program exposes students to the four CVUSD CTE pathways. Focused outreach to underserved families ensures that all students have access to information on CTE pathways, college nights, SAT prep, and scholarships. All students take the PSAT, and SAT prep is available to all students.

We are examining our Tier II and Tier III supports to improve performance of our underserved groups on the ELA and Math CAASPP assessments. The implementation of Illuminate helps our school leaders and teachers to analyze data from formative assessments to better adjust instructional practices, collaboration and supports to meet the needs of all students. Additionally, by examining our SWIS data, school sites have adjusted behavioral supports to ensure that our disciplinary practices are conducive to healthy emotional growth while maintaining safe learning environments for all students.

A fall administration of the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) allowed us to review data and respond to student needs. School connectedness was very high, with 98% of elementary school students and 89% of 11th graders indicating that they felt that staff members were caring. These and other data points indicate the success of PBIS in building relationships and reducing unproductive behavior. It also highlights the value of expanding PBIS at the secondary level to reduce student suspensions. In response to the CHKS data, school leaders and teachers have collaborated to examine district and site practices and supports. Site teams engaged in collaboration sessions at which school sites developed plans for behavioral supports. Elementary schools adjusted the timing for behavioral lessons for optimal impact. The outcome of our implementation of MTSS has been an increased ability to identify needs, collaborate with our partners and ensure that we are providing the best support for the healthy development of ALL CVUSD students.