

## **Clear Creek Elementary School District Model Programs and Practices**

### **District Information**

CD (County District) Code: 2910298

County: Nevada

District (Local Educational Agency): Clear Creek Elementary School District

### **Demographics**

Enrollment: 162

Location Description: Rural

### **Overview**

The Clear Creek Elementary School District is a single school district located in rural, western Nevada County (The Gold Country) near the communities of Grass Valley and Penn Valley. Clear Creek School, established in 1867, is the oldest, continuously operating school in the county. The school currently serves 162 students in transitional kindergarten through eighth grade. The student population is predominately White (84%) with no ESL students enrolled, one homeless family, and no foster students. 35% of our families fall under the category of socioeconomically disadvantaged. The mission of the district is to encourage students from all walks of life to reach their potential as productive citizens in a changing world. To fulfill our mission, the staff, parents, students and neighbors work together as a caring community to ensure that all students develop the knowledge, skills, and understanding necessary for creative, productive, thoughtful, and successful lives.

The school is on a country road that is pastoral in setting. The minute you set foot on the campus, you cannot miss the warm, embracing, and nurturing school climate that becomes the foundation for learning. Parent participation is so engaging that there is a complete flow between students, teachers, administration and families. Each of these entities take ownership of the school culture, resulting in consistent positive outcomes.

## **Model Program/Practice**

### **Name of Model Program/Practice**

Parent Involvement & Engagement

### **Summary**

Length of Model Program/Practice: 8+ years

### **Description**

Category I – Positive Culture & Climate: The Clear Creek School District Model Program/Practice is supported in the LCAP in Goal 1 which addresses State Priorities #1, 2, 4, and 7. Goal 1, emphasizes the need to maintain or improve ELA and Math proficiency scores, which, since the inception of Smarter Balance, have been some of the highest scores in Nevada County. The success rate is a combination of excellent teaching, and students who recognize the importance of this assessment and strive to do their best. This student attitude is now part of the culture of the school because the whole community rallies behind student achievement. Part of the implementation of the model program is to work with parents to understand the importance of having their children get a good night's rest, and eating a hearty breakfast before coming to school, ready to take several days of tests. Goal 3 addresses community stakeholder input regarding a strong desire to have before and after school enrichment opportunities for their children. Priorities #7 and 8 are met in this goal with offerings in Beginning Spanish, Performing Arts, Study Halls, and Martial Arts, are to name a few. In LCAP-Goal 4, which serves State Priorities #1, 3, 5, and 6, a prevalent Expected Annual Measurable Outcome addresses the implementation of yearly community surveys given to parents, students, and staff. We believe the strong parent involvement at school and an exemplary attendance rate (5 year ADA of 96.36%) has attributed to there being no expulsions in the District in more than 20 years and their annual suspension rate is consistently less than 1% per school year.

### **Implementation and Monitoring**

The Model/Practice is to fully incorporate parent involvement as a means for ultimate student success at school. The best way to describe the model is to use an analogy of a three legged stool. One leg is the school staff, teachers, para professionals, yard duty aides, administrators, and office staff. They must be there to expose students to caring about their education by providing an enriching curriculum which focuses both on academic success and strong character development. They must also be the hub of strong communication between home and school. The second leg belongs to the parents who must provide stability at home, encourage the values of what is being taught at school, and to be actively involved in their child's education by attending parent/teacher conferences, special events such as Science Night, and support school groups like our local PTC by either being active in their monthly meetings and/or attending fundraisers to enhance student learning opportunities. The third leg of the

stool is the student. He/she must find the self-discipline to understand the importance of taking advantage of their educational opportunities, and work diligently to be the best they can be. If the legs on the stool are not balanced, the stool will wobble. If a leg is missing, the stool will fall down.

Parents are engaged in the school's model in several ways:

- The Principal's door is always open for parents to express their ideas, concerns, and positive comments about their school.
- A community stakeholder group meets monthly for LCAP input
- Survey data is shared with the community and popular and feasible suggestions are implemented whenever possible.
- A monthly school newsletter, The Cougar News is sent electronically and is available in paper form to all student households. The bulletin includes information about school events, parenting tips, and facts about the importance of attending school, such as, "Poor attendance can influence whether children read proficiently by the end of third grade or be held back." (Source: [attendancesworks.org](http://attendancesworks.org))
- The Principal and all teachers are in the parking lot each day at dismissal time to meet and greet parents if necessary.
- A monthly Parents Teachers Club attended by approximately 15% of parents with children at school as well as some teachers and the Principal allows collaboration and planning time between staff members and the community.

The monitoring and assessment methods used to measure the effectiveness of this model program is done in two ways:

1. Maintaining or increasing satisfaction levels regarding academics, school safety, and parent involvement opportunities on annual surveys (data available upon request), and growth in our student body from inside and
2. outside our school boundaries (14.8% growth since 2016–17).

All certificated and classified employees that work in classrooms attend monthly staff meetings where community relations are discussed on a regular basis. Teachers have early dismissal days on Fridays where collaboration efforts often include focusing on positive school culture. A local assessment tool, STAR 360 (Renaissance Learning), is used three times a year to measure student growth in the areas of math and reading. Parent/teacher meetings are conducted once a year and upon the request of the teacher and/or parent.

## Results and Outcomes

Clear Creek Elementary School District monitors and assesses their model program in two ways; one by an annual parent survey, in which results are used to steer funding through their LCAP, and second by the Smarter Balance (CAASPP) scores and annual Dashboard results. The most recent survey results (2016/17) tell us: 95% of those returning surveys either strongly agree or agree that Clear Creek provides a safe, healthy learning environment. 95% also strongly agree or agree that the guidance and information given to parents by the school helps them to encourage student success. 97.5% feel that our facilities are in good repair, safe, and conducive for positive learning, and 84% strongly agree or agree that Clear Creek provides adequate enrichment and other extra-curricular activities to support a well-rounded education. As a result of this latter data, they now have targeted enrichment and extra-curricular classes including Culinary Arts (6th–8th grade), Beginning Spanish (4th–8th grade), Classroom Music (TK/K–5th grade), Performing Arts (all grades), Kuk Sool Won (all grades), and a variety of electives courses offered each trimester in grades 6–8. Clear Creek School District consistently has high Smarter Balance test result scores. In 2016, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding standards in ELA was 77% and 66% in Math (compared to all Nevada County schools 52%/38% and State averages 49%/37%). In 2017, Clear Creek maintained their high 77% in ELA while improving to 71% in Math (Nevada County averages- 51%/39% State averages- 49%/38%). The one measureable subgroup, which is the target group at Clear Creek is Socioeconomically Disadvantaged (35%) where there was an increase from 73% to 82% in ELA and from 49% to 58% in Math from 2015/16 to 2016/17, thus resulting in a Blue (highest performance) rating not only in ELA and Math, but Suspension Rate as well. This same high rating holds true for the entire school population. By continuing to incorporate the same practices that are working so successfully, and expanding our enrichment opportunities from year to year, Clear Creek has proven to maintain a success rate that has made them eligible for California Distinguished School recognition.