

Warm Springs Elementary School Model Programs and Practices

School Information

CDS (County District School) Code: 01611766000848

County: Alameda

District (Local Educational Agency): Fremont Unified

School: Warm Springs Elementary School

Demographics

Enrollment: 1,076 students

Location Description: Suburban

Title I Funded: No

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

Overview

Warm Springs Elementary School is a unique third through sixth grade school, nestled at the foot of the San Francisco East Bay hills. Its historical significance and beautiful architecture offer a sense of great pride to the residents of the community, many of whom are highly educated, value excellent schools, and hold high educational expectations for their children. At the core of our mission is the student as an individual. We are committed to the academic, physical, and emotional well-being of every young person in our care. Our school operates within a cohesive and integrated network of academic programs, co-curricular activities, and support services. It is further supported by our Eight Great Traits - Character Education Program, which is integrated into our English Language Arts curriculum, and is designed to ensure that no child at our school feels alienated or bullied, and that every child makes a meaningful connection with peers and adults on campus. Academic programs are rich, challenging, and aligned with the California State Standards.

The essence and strength of Warm Springs is our diversity. Though our student population is primarily Asian, our students come to us with diverse cultural and ethnic

backgrounds who speak over 20 languages or dialects. 8.36% of our students are English language learners (ELL) being served by a staff trained in Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD), supported by a number of bilingual teachers representing eight different languages. In addition to the diverse cultural and language backgrounds, students come to us from the local homeless shelter as well as the expensive homes on the hill, with performance ranging from non-communicative students in our moderate to severe Special Day Class (SDC) to the gifted, main-streamed child. Together we strive for excellence, as measured against California State Standards and our own individual potential. There is something at Warm Springs to inspire an interest or passion for learning in every student.

Every student is given the support necessary to achieve excellence. We are especially pleased with our: In Day Intervention Classes, our English Language Development (ELD) Support Program, friendship groups, and the one-on-one interaction offered by our contracted counselor. Regular, in-depth self-evaluation and revision of our programs and practices are essential to our school's success. To ensure that the momentum of our commitment to meeting the needs of our students is carried throughout the year, our teachers participate in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) which provide opportunities for our staff to observe and mentor one another using data driven best practices. We celebrate our successes and maintain a sharp focus on areas where we can improve learning for each student by authentically looking at and using student data.

Model Program and Practices

Name of Model Program/Practice: ELD Support Program

Length of Model Program/Practice: 5–8 years

Target Area(s): Education Supports

Target Population(s): English Learners

Strategies Used: Parent Engagement, Data-Driven Decision Making, Professional Development, Implementation of Academic Standards Basics (Teachers, Instructional Materials, Facilities)

Description

Warm Springs has an on-site English Language Support program where students are pulled out of class to receive small group instruction from a fully credentialed, CLAD (Cross-cultural, Language, and Academic Development) certified teacher. Due to the low number of English Language Learners (ELL) in our school, we thought a pullout support program would best support teachers whom only had one or two ELLs per year, in addition to helping students feel more comfortable in a less restrictive environment. We sign up for District provided PD (Professional Development) as needed each year, to further understand the new ELD Standards. Teachers are provided PD in August to

go over strategies and to learn best practices before the school year starts. Our ELD Specialist and Teachers, always make themselves available to parents. Our Specialist often attends parent conferences to provide further support and insight for parents to support their child at home. In the past, we've offered an ELD Parent Info night to provide further support and information for parents.

Our English Language Support program has allowed us to provide services that go above and beyond the thirty-minute requirement for our EL students who are at a Level One. In fact, we have seen a huge amount of Level One students really embrace the ELD Support Program and they really enjoy being a part of it. ELLs who may have behavior issues in the classroom, often are focused and on task in the lab due to the purposeful small group environment and the safe social emotional environment that our program consistently provides. Over the past few years our suspension rate has gone down and we believe this program, our school wide Character Education program and staff PD on Character Education, have made all the difference. We constantly practice a high character behavior model that focuses on preventing behavior concerns rather than constantly punishing them.

Below are keys to our ongoing success:

- ELD instruction: students work in a small group environment to strengthen their skills in listening, speaking, writing, reading and social skills.
- Use of different materials, including lessons from Lexia Reading (online reading program that identifies and targets students' gaps in literacy skills and works them through different activities to get them on grade level). We also use Santillana's EL Program.
- Teaching vocabulary using physical movement and drawings, demonstrating personal interest and caring for students, provide auditory materials of different stories, using read aloud predictable and patterned books, and having students label and manipulate pictures and objects.
- ELD Specialist uses is GLAD, Guided Language Acquisition Design, which is also used by our classroom teachers to ensure ELD students and non-EL students are supported in their regular classroom with the current curriculum.
- For all other EL students, our goal is for them to gain one level of proficiency each year.

Implementation and Monitoring

At the beginning of the year, our ELD specialist sends home a letter informing parents of when students will be pulled out of class, why and what the program is going to be addressing. In the letter, the ELD teacher announces how parents can contact her and also access her web page that has information on the state requirements for EL students, the California English Language Development Test (CELDT), proficiency level descriptions and educational websites that they can use at home. This web page can be

translated into different languages so parents can gain access and understand what is being communicated.

Our ELD specialist is also in constant communication with classroom teachers to monitor the classroom progress of students and to be there to support them by providing relevant leveled materials to be used in the classroom. Our ELD Specialist constantly reviews Lexia data and bases instructional modifications based on these results. This also helps to pin point areas that need strengthening and can be used as strong collaboration opportunities. Teachers also have access to Lexia and can check student progress. PD is also provided by our District and County, if needed, to teach different strategies to support our ELLs. Our ELD Specialist provided PD for all grade levels last August to share best practices when working with their ELLs and to make sure teachers were aware of the minutes of ELD instruction we are required to provide.

There is ongoing collaboration based on student needs and teachers are in close contact with our Specialist when growth is not moving at an appropriate pace. Just last year we had a Staff Development so all teachers could understand the new ELD Standards and the new English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) that will replace the CELDT test. We will be administering the ELPAC for the first time, this month. We are very excited to figure out how we can use this new data to further develop and improve our ELD program. Providing this PD allowed teachers to understand the upcoming changes and expectations for our ELL population. We are ready for these new challenges and embrace the higher levels of student learning and rigor the ELPAC will require.

Other ways in which we progress monitor the program are looking at the success of students in their classroom, their performance on the CELDT test, and their end of year performance on the state adopted standardized tests. Using all these measures, we have evidence of students that get reclassified every year. When students are reclassified, they become a Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (R-FEP). We make sure to continue to monitor these students' progress and provide remedial ELD support where and if needed. Over the years, most of our R-FEP students no longer need the differentiation of a pullout program or small group instruction unless the teacher feels it is necessary for their continued success.

Results and Outcomes

We have a very successful program where many of our EL students are reclassified each year. In the 2014/2015 school year 46% of our students were reclassified, in the 2015/2016 school year, 47% of our students were reclassified and in the 2016–2017 school year 43% of our students were reclassified (2016–2017 school year we opened a new building and received an additional 280 3rd grade students). Students are monitored for two years after they are reclassified to ensure they are succeeding. Students are also assessed using report cards aligned to their EL level so that students at a beginning EL level have a separate report card that focuses on the progress they have made in their English language development.

Our ELL population did a great job on last year's (2016/2017) Smarter Balanced Assessment (CAASPP). This was the third year taking the test, our ELLs did well and we continue to learn specific targets of the test, which allows us to better align some of our practices to hit these targets and standards. In English Language Arts 48% of our ELLs met or exceeded standards and in Math 65% met or exceeded standards. We were recognized at a School Board meeting for this growth regarding ELLs in Mathematics as we made a 26% increase from last year. For the students that did not meet standards on this assessment, we are not only making sure they receive continued support in our ELD Support Program, but teachers and our Specialist are focusing on different instructional strategies to reach these students based on patterns with their Lexia data and in class performance. When students struggle with ELD concepts, the classroom teacher and ELD Specialist can print specific Lexia lessons and give them targeted, direct instruction. Lexia is very powerful as students also have the opportunity to receive instruction in the following languages: Mandarin, Haitian-Creole, Arabic, and Portuguese in addition to Spanish.

Our ELD Support Program not only impacts targeted ELLs, but we use a similar model and practice for our intervention program, which focuses on non-targeted ELLs that need more support. Given that we have seen this system work with ELLs, we are also starting to see success with our newer pull-out intervention program and are excited to continue to learn and develop this program which should impact our State Testing data as well as our new District Benchmark data.

The key to our ELD Support Program's success is the individualized instruction students are receiving in our ELD lab and the front-loading of material to help them in their regular classroom setting. The high level of collaboration that takes place between parents, our ELD Specialist and regular classroom teachers, points to the fact that we continue to reflect on best data driven practices and ways to improve the program. We consistently implement adjustments to improve our program, which can be evidenced by our continued growth in our high reclassification rate.