

Southgate Elementary School Model Programs and Practices

School Information

CDS (County District School) Code: 01611926001176

County: Alameda

District (Local Educational Agency): Hayward Unified

School: Southgate Elementary School

Demographics

Enrollment: 689 students

Location Description: Urban

Title I Funded: No

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

Overview

Southgate Elementary School is dedicated to the continued pursuit of uplifting our community, building confidence in our students and developing a culture of success on campus – living by our Mission Statement, “In a caring culture of success, the Southgate community motivates, inspires, develops skills and builds confidence to awaken the highest potential in every member.”

The implementation of Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) and Guided Reading upholds our schools mission statement. Hayward is rated the #3 most diverse city in the United States. Southgate’s community reflects this report. Knowing the demographics of our city, the Hayward Unified School District has contracted with authorities in the fields of SDAIE (Specifically Designed Academic Instruction for English) strategies and Culturally & Linguistically Responsive Teaching Practices to provide essential professional development for teachers.

Southgate Elementary School has worked to develop a tradition of being one of the top schools within the Hayward Unified School District. Southgate currently ranks as the

highest performing school in the district in both English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics. Southgate's academic acumen has continued to ascend in the era of Common Core standards, boasting some of the highest levels of growth over a three-year span in the state. Since the onset of the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP), Southgate Elementary School has grown 21% in ELA (38% to 59%) and 17% in Math (35% to 52%). This growth span correlates to when our students, most supported by the implementation of Guided Reading and LLI, entered the Southgate standardized assessment testing group.

Southgate's academic success can be attributed to its singular focus on fostering a welcoming environment for all stakeholders – while establishing instructional norms to improve student achievement. It is important for Southgate staff and learning community to maximize instructional time and minimize the amount of time that students spend out of class due to discipline.

Therefore, Southgate uses the Restorative Justice process in conjunction with social-emotional learning skills acquired through the application and use of programs and curricula such as Heart, Head, & Hands, 8 Great Traits, and Soul Shoppe Inc. to support the on-going development of a safe and nurturing school climate and culture. Southgate stakeholders credit much of Southgate's students' academic success to the development of a learning culture that is conducive to a climate of risk-taking and ongoing learning amongst staff towards the improvement of their instructional best practices using consistent student academic assessment measures. Guided Reading & Leveled Literacy Intervention has upheld the school's mission statement of building a culture of confidence and success.

Model Program and Practices

Name of Model Program/Practice: Leveled Literacy Intervention & Guided Reading

Length of Model Program/Practice: 2–4 years

Target Area(s): Education Supports

Target Population(s): Black or African American, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, English Learners, Students with Disabilities

Strategies Used: Small Learning Communities, Professional Development

Description

Southgate's Model Practice is the adoption of LLI & Guided Reading as our main ELA supplemental and intervention programs. Both Guided Reading & LLI are small group, intensive reading support programs. Guided Reading is appropriate for all students (high, medium and low) and is implemented within the classroom setting. LLI has smaller group settings and places more of an emphasis on developing fundamental

skills. The intensive nature of the LLI makes it more appropriate as a pull-out or after-school class.

In 2013, Southgate teachers felt the core curriculum did not support the needs of a large number of students. As we moved to Common Core, it became more evident that many of our students were entering 3rd grade unable to “read to learn.” The students needed more specialized instructional practices and learning materials, leading to the implementation of LLI. The infusion of LLI was like an injection of adrenaline. Teachers and students began to see almost immediate results. The level of excitement for LLI led to the incorporation of Guided Reading in ‘14–’15.

To prepare for full implementation of LLI & Guided Reading Southgate staff participated in several professional development opportunities such as: PLC/Cycle of Inquiry training, Guided Reading & LLI Materials Orientation, and Running Records training. To implement LLI & Guided Reading, Southgate had to purchase F&P assessments & instructional kits. We also established leveled libraries for our reading room & classrooms.

For teachers, Guided Reading provides a vehicle in which to gauge student progress more frequently and with more detail. The use of running records provided the teachers with the data and common language they used during their PLC work. The Guided Reading program also added CAFÉ strategies (comprehension, accuracy, fluency, and expand vocabulary) that provided unique support for target populations (i.e. - English learners and students with learning disabilities).

LLI & Guided Reading have a home-school connection. Students have practice books they take home to read aloud with their parents. During Guided Reading, students not working directly with the teacher work in centers. One of those centers focuses on the educational website Reading A to Z, which students are encouraged to also work on with their parents at home. Reading A to Z produces results for parents and teachers to monitor student progress. Parents are also provided progress reports every 2–3 weeks.

The work our K–2 students are doing in Guided Reading & LLI builds their confidence. Their increased confidence in their literacy feeds into our school’s overall goal of “building a culture of confidence.” The culture of confidence and success creates a tranquil environment - meeting the students’ socio-emotional needs. Indirectly, the program may also have an effect on attendance, since many of the students who suffer from chronic absenteeism are students who do not feel successful at school.

Implementation and Monitoring

Southgate teachers received running records training for LLI & Guided Reading. A running record is a tool that helps teachers to identify patterns in student reading behaviors. These patterns allow a teacher to observe the strategies students are using to make meaning of individual words and texts. Running records are individually conducted formative assessments. A running record provides a graphic representation of a student's oral reading. Our teachers use the data from the running record to identify

what CAFÉ (comprehension, accuracy, fluency, and expand vocabulary) strategies may be helpful to the students in the future and develop mini lessons using this strategy. Daily CAFÉ Explicit Goals and Scales outlines very specific strategies in each book, at each level, for each component of CAFÉ. For teachers, Guided Reading has provided a vehicle by which to gauge student progress more frequently and with more actionable detail. The use of running records provided the teachers with the data and common language for them to use during their PLC work. Teachers are able to assess where the students are and plan next steps as a team on a weekly basis. This work is discussed and measured for effectiveness in our PLC meetings. In our PLC groups we answer the following questions: What do our students need to know? How will we teach the concept? How do we know that the students grasped the concept? What are our plans to re-teach and scaffold?

There are several methods used to communicate with parents. Guided reading provides running records which set key talking points for teachers to use to exact bi-weekly progress reports. These progress reports share the students' growth, strategies they have mastered, and the strategies they are progressing towards with parents. Professional development training was provided to help teachers hone their running record skills, cultivating more fruitful dialogue and collaboration with parents.

Parents are invited to Student Success Team meetings to discuss their child's progress. We host progress report nights each trimester and parent-teacher conferences every December. Parents are also members of several decision-making committees on campus such as School Site Council, English Language Advisory Committee and Site Based Decision Making Team. All of these groups review school data and programs to measure effectiveness.

The Southgate community continues to benefit from the positive impact of the LLI & Guided Reading Programs. Successful students are happier, feel more accomplished and, therefore, exhibit less discipline behaviors while creating a calm, welcoming environment. The community has also received a boost in morale as Southgate was honored in 2017 by the publication Innovative Schools for its work with socioeconomically disadvantaged and African American students. Southgate has also received a designation of "blue school" in Mathematics (the highest level) on the State's Accountability Dashboard.

Results and Outcomes

There are several, key measures used across HUSD to gauge student progress in ELA. We use Fountas & Pinnell (F&P) district benchmark assessments, the Basic Phonics Skills Test, district-adopted Reading Passages, student work, and Guided Reading/Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) running records. On a yearly basis, our students and staff are judged by how we perform on the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP).

The implementation of Guided Reading & LLI at Southgate was based upon our moral imperative to support subgroups who typically under-perform on standardized

assessments and our growing concern that students were entering 3rd grade not prepared to “read to learn.” Our target groups were 1) Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Students, 2) English Learners, 3) African American Students, 4) Students with Learning Disabilities, and 5) 3rd grade students.

Based upon the CAASPP data, since the beginning of full implementation of Guided Reading & LLI, in 2014, each target sub group demonstrated over 20% growth in ELA. Socioeconomically Disadvantaged students grew 21% (32% to 53%). English Learners grew from 4% to 24%. Reclassified English Learners grew 21% (48% to 69%). African American students grew from 30% to 53%, and Students with Learning Disabilities increased by 20% (4% to 24%).

Our improvement in third grade literary competency was the most impressive. In 2015, 38% of our third grade students met or exceeded the standard in the ELA. In 2016, 49% met or exceeded the standard. But by 2017, with the benefit of three years of Guided Reading & LLI support, 62% of 3rd grade students met or exceeded the standard in ELA on the CAASPP.

We attribute a lot of the success of our reading intervention program on the dedicated Cycle of Inquiry work our K–2 teachers did to improve their abilities to observe a students reading behavior, take accurate detailed running records, analyze the data, develop follow-up lessons and share results with colleagues and parents. The Cycle of Inquiry method of constantly making adjustments and modifications to our practice accelerated the impact of Guided Reading and LLI on student learning.