

Cleveland Elementary School Model Programs and Practices

School Information

CDS (County District School) Code: 01612596001739

County: Alameda

District (Local Educational Agency): Oakland Unified

School: Cleveland Elementary School

Demographics

Enrollment: 413 students

Location Description: Urban

Title I Funded: Yes

Type of Program: School-wide

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

Overview

Cleveland Elementary School is a very diverse and close-knit community built around the shared values of inclusiveness and responsibility. Our Oakland public school serves students that represent a mix of 38% Asian students, 21% African American students, 11% Latino students, 13% white students, and 11% mixed race students. 50% of our students qualify for Title 1 support, and 53% qualify for LCFF support. Nearly 40% of our students speak a language other than English at home.

Our extraordinary students and very experienced staff work hard together to produce the impressive academic gains our students make every year. All students are offered a rigorous balanced approach to literacy and common core aligned curriculum in all subject areas. Our high expectations are supported with structured interventions and academic acceleration for all students, including language learners and students with special needs. To these ends, teachers co-develop curriculum and assessments in PLCs and examine student needs in regular data conferences. Our positive behavior

systems are specifically designed to facilitate social and emotional well being and maintain a very safe campus so that all students can access our curriculum. All students have weekly enrichment experiences including expert instruction in eco-literacy, art, music, and physical education, as well as access to our library and class sets of chromebooks. When an entire community comes together to support their children, a transformational education experience takes place, as demonstrated by our recognition by Innovate Public Schools for one of the smallest achievement gaps in Northern California, district wide recognition for our high reclassification rates, participation in the Oakland Promise program, and an in-depth study of our eco-literacy program by the Institute of Urban and Regional Development at UC Berkeley.

Model Program and Practices

Name of Model Program/Practice: The Cleveland Way— a positive behavior intervention system

Length of Model Program/Practice: 2–4 years

Target Area(s): Education Supports

Target Population(s): Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic, Two or More Races, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, English Learners

Strategies Used: School Climate, Data-Driven Decision Making, Social/Emotional/Behavioral Support

Description

Four years ago, Cleveland Elementary School was well regarded for academic results for students, but our California Healthy Kids data showed that students did not feel like they belonged as part of the school. Our suspension numbers and referral data reflected the disproportionality that negatively affected African American students district wide. Our entire community struggled with a lack of clear expectations at recess and in common areas. In short, it was the perfect time to build the school culture together.

The plan was clear, we would train a team on Positive Behavior Intervention Systems, and come together as a community, involving the ideas of staff members, parents, and students, to identify some shared community values. From there, our staff would develop clear expectations around these values, a system to celebrate them school wide, and training for staff and students about how we manifest these values. As we did not receive district funding or staffing for this initiative, we sought out a “culture coach” using our school funds who would manage the logistics and some of the training on our values, as well as supervise and teach games on the yard and at recess.

A key aspect of this plan was to develop tiered supports for students to meet our newly clarified expectations as well, providing school wide rewards and celebrations, multiple

leadership opportunities for students, and creating counseling and therapy opportunities for students in need of more intense intervention.

At the start of the first year of our implementation of the program, we began training students on our expectations, and shared the expectations for each area to all parents at back to school night. We even led an activity at the first PTA meeting to develop norms based on our school values. We shared our goals with parents as well—a decrease in suspensions and referrals, an increase in attendance and in students reporting that they felt like they belonged. All these goals matched up perfectly with our district's LCAP goals, and spoke to our community's desires.

In our first year implementing the program, we saw our suspensions drop to zero. We saw the number of students reporting a feeling of belonging increase, and referrals to the office and students being held out of recess decrease greatly as well. These changes benefitted all students, but especially the students previously affected by disproportionality.

Implementation and Monitoring

As we develop and refine our program, monitoring and input from all stakeholders is key. We asked parents to participate in creating our shared values, and led our PTA in creating norms based on our shared values of inclusiveness and responsibility. We regularly share our data with our PTA, SSC, and staff. Our school culture team regularly monitors our referral data as well as incidents and mediations needed on the yard, and shares that data with stakeholders as well. Additionally, our Coordination of Services Team discusses students in need of more support and assigns interventions and support as needed. Our school culture team also collects data around classroom fidelity to our shared values and school policies.

The collection of this data drives our professional development for all our staff members, as well as informing our future interventions and allocation of resources. We are currently developing a more robust plan of how to train our parent community in our values and supports as well as providing strategies to support their children at home.

We build in eight weeks of professional development on school and classroom culture at the start of the year, and revisit topics as needed every month at our regular staff meetings.

Results and Outcomes

For the past three years implementing our plan and focusing on our school values of inclusiveness and responsibility, we have been able to measure our success through quantitative and qualitative data. Most importantly, we went three years without a suspension, one of very few schools in the district with no suspensions.

We are collecting data on all aspects of our school culture and how our shared values are manifested in classrooms and common areas through out the school. This includes

teacher behaviors, the visibility of best practices in classrooms, the number of students receiving school wide rewards, the number of suspensions, the number of referrals, the amount of students on time out at recess, the number of situations that needed outside mediations, percentage of students participating in appropriate play at recess, the number of students referred for more intensive interventions, and the change in behaviors of those students. Additionally, we collect qualitative data through the California Healthy Kids survey showing how many students feel a sense of belonging at school, as well as parent and staff perceptions of our school.

This data is shared with stakeholders and staff decision making groups to inform our professional development, parent engagement, and resource allocation.

Our most recent data shows the success of our program. We have been able to decrease suspendable offenses at Cleveland. School wide, there has been a total of one student suspended for one day over the past four years, a 0.06% suspension rate. District wide, 3.3% of students are suspended over the course of any one year. In terms of students out of class, we went from 127 incidents referred to the office in 2014–15 steadily down to 94 in 2016–17, nearly decreasing referrals by a quarter. Referrals for student support to the Coordination of Services Team went from 0 at the start of the program four years ago, to a little more than 10% of our students receiving some sort of intervention on campus (not including special education). The results from our California Healthy Kids Surveys also show that our students feel more connected and a part of the school than the district average, but we continue to have growth to do in this area. As a result, we have continued to emphasize this connectedness in our schoolwide and classroom specific programs, as well as gather more specific data from a greater cross section of our school using other survey methods.

All together, we are quite proud of the progress we've made at Cleveland, but know we have a way to go to live up to our goal of inclusiveness. However, our data and our nomination for this award does show that we are on the right track and that we can continue to build on our strengths!