

Lydiksen Elementary School Model Programs and Practices

School Information

CDS (County District School) Code: 01751016001416

County: Alameda

District (Local Educational Agency): Pleasanton Unified

School: Lydiksen Elementary School

Demographics

Enrollment: 670 students

Location Description: Suburban

Title I Funded: No

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

Overview

Lydiksen Elementary School is located in the northwest area of Pleasanton, California, and serves students in transitional kindergarten through fifth grade. During the 2017–18 school year, about 670 students were enrolled, including 11.7 who were identified as special education, 13.5 percent who were identified as English learners, and 6.4 percent who were identified as socioeconomically disadvantaged. About 44.3 percent of students were identified as Asian, 42.2 percent were identified as white, 8.4 percent were identified as Hispanic, 3.7 percent were identified as Filipino, 1.1 percent were identified as African-American, and 0.3 percent were identified as Pacific Islander.

Lydiksen was named a 2016 California Gold Ribbon School. Lydiksen was also named a California Distinguished School in 1995, 2004 and 2008, and the school was named a National School of Character in 2002 as well.

Lydiksen Elementary is a supportive and encouraging school that helps all students to develop as learners. Lydiksen is well known as a caring place for families. Parents are very involved in many aspects of our school, from membership in the Lydiksen Parent

Faculty Club, to volunteering in classrooms, to coordinating school-wide activities such as the family movie night, the annual fun run, and the gala fund raiser. We work to increase parents' knowledge and skills through our English Learners Advisory Committee and School Smarts parent academy, as well as through the School Site Council and the casual "meet with the principal" events held several times a year.

Our caring and skilled staff consists of 27 classroom teachers, multiple specialists (P.E., science, music), and several special education staff members, along with administrative support staff. We work together to equip students to become socially responsible citizens who can interact with all sources of information. A particular focus at Lydiksen is increasing students' skills to effectively utilize technology. Students participate in engaging lessons in all classrooms, researching, creating, and presenting their knowledge using a variety of formats, with an emphasis on the use of technology.

George C. Lydiksen was a visionary leader known for his hard work and generosity, and his values persist in the school that bears his name. Our students operate under the principles "be safe, be responsible, be respectful," and these three ideals are promoted and rewarded by all staff, helping students develop good citizenship as well as academic success.

Model Program and Practices

Name of Model Program/Practice: Technology Use at Lydiksen Elementary School

Length of Model Program/Practice: 5–8 years

Target Area(s): Use of Technology

Target Population(s): Asian, Black or African American, Filipino, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, White, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, English Learners, Students with Disabilities

Strategies Used: Social/Emotional/Behavioral Support, Professional Development, Implementation of Academic Standards Basics (Teachers, Instructional Materials, Facilities)

Description

Lydiksen was early to embrace a variety of innovative technologies to move our students forward in embracing tools that would help them with collaborative learning and developing 21st century skills. While prior practice at Lydiksen was trying technology as something "new" or "different," the current practice at Lydiksen has students utilizing technology as part of a daily learning process in an engaging way that allows them to collaborate with peers and others.

Lydiksen has been a model site for the use of technology. In 2016, Lydiksen was named a California Gold Ribbon School for its model practice of using technology.

Lydiksen was recognized for staff and students who are exceptionally comfortable in embracing innovative technologies and using them to work toward our goal of additional student and staff collaboration. Lydiksen began implementing professional development for staff several years before technology use became a priority for our district.

Now two years after the Gold Ribbon award, daily technology use is even more prevalent in Lydiksen classrooms. We have more than 300 Chromebooks on campus that are used regularly by students, which equates to about two Chromebooks per student at Lydiksen. The school repurposed available classroom space in 2016 as well, outfitting a second computer lab on campus with Chromebases and creating additional opportunities for students and staff to collaborate on technology projects. The number of Chromebooks and the Chromebase lab allows for technology to benefit all Lydiksen students at Lydiksen every day. This includes the large populations of English Learners and students with special needs in our SDC classes, who use technology in the same ways as their typical peers.

We have also utilized many staff collaboration sessions to focus on the use of technology in the classrooms during the past several years; staff have had several opportunities to attend trainings and workshops outside of the school day as well. Topics have included using video as a learning tool; utilizing technology and programs to meet the needs of students with special needs; creating a writer's workshop environment online; and staff use of hyperdocs as a strategy to collaborate.

Another intended outcome is increased communication with our parent community. Parents are more informed through the use of a revamped website, regular text messages from the school, workshops about online issues, and frequent e-mail newsletters.

At Lydiksen, we foster 21st century skills through the extensive use of technology, allowing the staff and students to create, collaborate and communicate. Our school embraces technology as a means of not only enhancing and practicing these skills, but as a way to extend our learning. The technology is not the objective so much as understanding it's tool to help turn our classrooms into 21st century learning environments. Lydiksen School is a role model and has led by example.

Implementation and Monitoring

Lydiksen's technology implementation began more than five years ago with a significant investment in hardware and programs for staff and students using district and site funds. An emphasis was placed on professional development and training for staff in the use of the technology in the classroom. These remain priorities for Lydiksen and its students and staff.

In 2018, students and staff are expanding ways in which technology can be used in the classroom. In addition to utilizing technology to communicate the "news" via a weekly video, students are now creating videos and entering them in the annual Pleasanton schools film festival. While students were previously encouraged to try out computer

coding, the school has had lunchtime and after-school coding clubs that include robotics. After students became proficient collaborating with Google Apps, they began connecting and collaborating with classrooms in other states using videoconferencing.

Here are other examples. In 2016, Lydiksen was the first site in our district to take part in Google Expeditions, virtual field trips using 360-degree technology. Last month, Lydiksen was the first Pleasanton elementary school to participate in the Google AR Expeditions program, a technology that brings science and history to life using augmented reality. Many classrooms participate in Project Lead the Way program units, such as collaborating on robotics projects. Two Lydiksen teachers received extensive training in PLTW and then trained the whole staff. In December 2016, Lydiksen was the first in our district to bring in YouTube educators to teach students how to code software or make videos. In the past three years, classrooms have been equipped with ceiling-mounted projectors that allow teachers to share information easily with engaged students. Students with special needs use programs that help with fluency and math practice. Students who speak little to no English use Rosetta Stone regularly to help learn beginning English.

Site administration and the site technology specialist continually monitor the implementation of the technology on site to ensure that student needs are being met in each classroom. Administration and instructional coaches - including an instructional technology coach - visit classrooms to observe inclusion of instructional technology. This observational data helps decode next steps in our goal of improving our practices around educational technology. The site principal is also a member of the district technology committee, which helps the school stay apprised and ahead of technology practices in our district.

The Lydiksen Parent Faculty Club is part of the decision-making process around which technology would best serve students and staff. The PFC president and administration meet monthly to review funding school needs. The PFC and the parents in general fund technology through donations and work with administration to monitor the implementation and effect of the projects.

Results and Outcomes

A few years into our implementation of technology at Lydiksen, staff realized that the students' skills were often surpassing those of the staff members themselves. This trend has continued and now the students are teaching others with technology. Students had an opportunity to teach their parents during the first-ever Family Code Night at Lydiksen. More than 100 families attended the evening event, and after the students were provided a laptop, they participated in online coding activities, working to teach their parents the basics of computer programming online.

Another result after the implementation of technology at Lydiksen has been a marked increase during each of the past three years in the overall results of the CAASPP, the online state tests. For example, overall math results of all students in grades 3–5 meeting/exceeding standards improved from 69 percent in 2016 to 77 percent in 2017.

In addition to the impact of a talented and hard-working instructional staff, this huge increase may be reflective of the students' comfort in taking assessments online, as most language arts and math assessments can be completed through the school district's online assessment system.

An additional example of positive results at Lydiksen is the ability to communicate behavioral expectations and character education messaging. Students attend six character education assemblies a year, during which students receive information via projected videos created at the school around the school rules and other Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) messaging. Other videos with messages are developed and broadcast into all classrooms every week with reminder about these same expectations. The assembly videos and the weekly videos, which are created through staff and student collaboration, help spread and communicate a consistent message to the entire school. The number of major behavioral incidents at the school have gone down each year since the school began sharing messages through the videos.

Finally, as a result of the multiple training opportunities for staff, Lydiksen teachers have become very adept at using technologies. More than 25 teachers have participated in or attended: Computer Using Educator (CUE) Rock Star camp; Google Apps for Education summits; Leading Edge Certification program; International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) national conference; Fall CUE, Spring Cue, and Silicon Valley CUE conferences; and Google Certified Educator programs. Three Lydiksen staff members are graduates the Making Education Relevant and Interactive through Technology (MERIT) summer institute. One Lydiksen teacher is a member of the prestigious Google Certified Innovator collaborative, a group of educators trained at Google headquarters after being selected from a competitive application process. These teachers have become educational technology leaders at our site and in our district and often lead professional development of their peers.