

Jefferson Elementary School Model Programs and Practices

School Information

CDS (County District School) Code: 10621176005870

County: Fresno

District (Local Educational Agency): Clovis Unified

School: Jefferson Elementary School

Demographics

Enrollment: 683 students

Location Description: Urban

Title I Funded: Yes

Type of Program: School-wide

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

Overview

From its humble beginnings as a one-room school house established in 1884, Jefferson Elementary School (JES) has come a long way! With the opening of the 2017–18 school year, Jefferson celebrated its 133rd first day of school with the traditional Bell Ringing Ceremony. This simple one-day ceremony encapsulates the extreme pride that Jefferson students, staff, and the community have in this special school. JES is a school that has stood the test of time by continuing to meet the needs of its diverse population by delivering a quality education and producing students with a high level of character and achievement levels. JES continues to carry on the traditions of excellence set by our founding father of the Clovis Unified School District (CUSD), Dr. Floyd B. Buchanan, who started his career at JES and became the district's first superintendent in 1960.

JES is one of 34 elementary schools in CUSD. We have a school population of 680 students in transitional kindergarten through grade six. We continue to be a community

and district flagship school due to the successes of our students and staff. For example, we have been recognized as a State Distinguished School (1987, 1995) and as a National Blue Ribbon School (1997, 2010). We have earned the Clovis Accountability System for Sustained Improvement Award consistently, which encompasses academic, co-curricular and school management. Our commitment to every student's academic growth was rewarded with the California Title I Academic Achievement Award (2009, 2010) and multiple recipient of the California Business Excellence in Education Award (CBEE).

The demographics of JES have dramatically changed over the last two decades from 8% Students of Economically Disadvantaged (SED) in 1998 to 68% in 2017. Our students, staff, and community have adopted our state common core standards and have embraced them to reflect the school's vision of preparing students to be productive citizens and lifelong learners. From the first bell in which our student body president leads the whole school in the Pledge of Allegiance, to after school programs and co-curricular activities, the Jefferson Blue Jays radiate positive energy. Our students and staff have established a prominent presence in our community as a source of pride, enthusiasm, and achievement. Our teachers and staff work tirelessly and collaboratively with our students, parents and members of the Jefferson Community to adapt to our ever changing student needs.

Our educational team works diligently to ensure that each and every one of our students is given the best possible opportunity to attain success. We have a committed teaching staff that is clearly focused on student learning that encompasses the collection of assessment and related reflection on disaggregated evidence of academic achievement. We recognize that we must work especially hard and adapt our methods to meet the needs of our diverse, at-risk, and disenfranchised students.

Model Program and Practices

Name of Model Program/Practice: Strategic Outreach for At Risk students (Project SOAR)

Length of Model Program/Practice: 2–4 years

Target Area(s): Closing the Achievement Gap, Education Supports

Target Population(s): Hispanic, White, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, English Learners, Students with Disabilities

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

Description

The JES model program, Strategic Outreach for At Risk Students (SOAR) is a customized intervention program designed to meet the academic and social-emotional needs of all students. As a component of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, or MTSS,

JES's SOAR program is designed to adapt and respond to students' needs utilizing data driven decision making for at-risk groups. The two-part SOAR design is to provide academic intervention through a co-teaching model and social-emotional intervention through a comprehensive school counseling program. Through collaborative staff decision making, it is the adaptability and flexibility of the SOAR program that makes it unique in meeting students' academic and emotional needs.

The academic progress of all students is monitored by classroom teachers. In Professional Learning Communities, or PLCs, classroom teachers identify students that are at-risk for not meeting the grade level standard and/or are part of an identified target group. This includes significant subgroups that parallel district's LCAP targets that include: English Learners, Hispanic, Socio-Economically Disadvantaged, and Students with Disabilities. To meet the academic needs of targeted students, the SOAR co-teaching model is employed to provide extra time, teaching, and support. SOAR co-teaching includes Push-In Intervention Teachers, Learning Lab, Lunch Lab, and a SOAR Academy. Credentialed teachers, termed SOAR Push-In Teachers, come into the regular education classroom for at least one hour per school day to co-teach with the regular education teacher. During that hour, students work individually, in small groups, or on rotations with the Push-In teacher targeting their most intensive areas of need. Students requiring more intense support visit SOAR's Learning Lab where he or she works with a Push-In teacher along with the Resource Specialist Program, or RSP teacher on foundational skills. The SOAR Lunch Lab offers at-risk students time and teacher support with regular classwork during their lunch time. The SOAR academy is an intense support group for students to work on academic skills such as goal setting, organization, inquiry, and progress monitoring.

The social-emotional goal of the SOAR program is to remove obstacles and provide skills-based coaching through a comprehensive counseling program based on need. The Behavioral, Emotional and Social Training (BEST) facet of SOAR includes a certified school counselor that is funded by JES LCAP funds. All students receive guidance lessons by grade level on social skills and emotional health. Through a referral system, students receive individual counseling, positive behavior plans, or check-in check-out adult mentoring based on need. A SOAR Student Voice group encompasses a diverse group of students that advises and promotes climate and cultural initiatives. Teachers are SOAR trained on social-emotional well being to best respond to the affective and mental health needs of students.

Implementation and Monitoring

The SOAR program is directed through site-based collaborative decision making. The SOAR Leadership Team includes a grade level leader from each grade K–6, a school funded counselor, an RSP teacher, a Student Study Team (SST) coordinator, Principal, and a Guidance Instructional Specialist (GIS). This team seeks out and identifies at-risk students to provide timely and strategic intervention. Additionally, six Push-In teachers, a Student Relations Liaison (SRL), a lunch lab teacher, and kindergarten aides are funded for academic support.

For academic intervention, at-risk students are identified through grade level PLC meetings. Teachers are given weekly release time to engage in collective inquiry pertaining to student learning. Teachers use common formative assessments to identify students under-performing on identified essential state standards. Teachers design learning goals and instructional tasks based on need. The instruction takes place in the classroom during the Push-In hour under the direction of the classroom teacher. Students requiring a higher level of intervention are referred to the SOAR Learning Lab to engage in lessons designed by the PLC team and RSP teacher. If students need more time or support for completion of classwork, they are referred to the SOAR Lunch Lab daily.

PLC teams monitor academic progress. Following a duration and type of intervention, the results are reviewed in the PLC to look for growth and plan next steps. Every student's data is tracked on a Teacher Grade Level Expectations, or TGLE, form. The TGLE form is reviewed with the SOAR team throughout the school year to track student growth. Push-In teacher lesson plans are reviewed by the GIS monthly. Adaptations to individual student plans occur based on SOAR team collaboration.

The SOAR Behavioral, Emotional, and Social Training interventions or (BEST) are led by the school counselor who holds a Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) Credential in School Counseling with a focus on behavior analysis. Students are identified based on a diversified referral system using qualitative data. Referrals come from teachers, parents, Student Study Team, administrators, support staff, and can come from the students themselves. Students may self-refer through their teacher or a confidential drop box. Based on the referral, students receive custom services that range in duration, type, and intensity. Additionally, scheduled guidance lessons for groups and whole school Positive Behavior Intervention, and Supports (PBIS) are part of the counselor's duties.

SOAR students receiving BEST support are tracked in a system using shared Google Forms. While monitoring a student's progress, this system informs the teachers, parents and administrators of intervention type, duration, and effectiveness. Students, teachers, and parents are surveyed on effectiveness. Student's competence in BEST components and availability for learning are measured using calibrated rating scales.

Results and Outcomes

The results of our SOAR project have created a school academic and social climate that targets our diverse high risk population. An increase in student achievement and social-emotional well-being is well documented based on the State of California's Dash Board results. Data drives our decision making and instruction throughout the school. Our results with our most fragile students show the success not only of the academic component of the SOAR program at JES but the BEST component of the project that nurtures the affective well-being of each student. We can boast that 100% of our students referred to our counselor for BEST are seen regardless of the origin of the referral. This approach has led to more seat time as well as a supportive and positive school climate. This has been effective in fulfilling our goal to decrease discipline and

lost seat time. JES State of California Dashboard results for 2017 show that our suspension rates have declined significantly.

JES embraces the California State Adopted Standards and have utilized the SOAR system to ensure that all stakeholders are informed of students' academic progress and mastery of the standards regardless of the subgroup a student may be identified. Our at risk students have been especially successful due to our SOAR program. JES commitment to our students has resulted in data showing growth in all significant at risk subgroups (populations comprising 5% or more of our school). This is demonstrated in multiple measures comparing year to year growth that include but are not limited to the California School Dashboard Report, CELDT and the Educational Results Partnership data that compares schools with like demographics throughout the state. JES performed well above the state average of schools with similar demographics, not only as a school, but in every significant subgroup as well. Overall as a school, we performed above the state average of schools like ours 13% and 16% in math and language arts respectively. Our targeted at risk subgroups performed above the average in schools like ours as follows: Students with Disabilities; 10% mathematics, 13% language arts; SED 22% mathematics, 22% language arts; Hispanic 17% language arts, 17% mathematics; English Learners 27% mathematics 39% language. JES is extremely proud of the California School Dashboard results of our English Learner Progress and Students with Disabilities which increased significantly. All significant subgroups rated maintained or above in every category.

The SOAR program at JES leaves nothing to chance when it comes to meeting our students' needs. Scheduled data analysis, and intervention based off results, drive decisions toward the goal of academic and social-emotional success of our students. Always honing our chosen craft, the results of our SOAR program, by any measure, validate our mantra: "We make decisions based on what is right for kids."