

Emmett S. Finley Elementary School Model Programs and Practices

School Information

CDS (County District School) Code: 13631496008510

County: Imperial

District (Local Educational Agency): Holtville Unified

School: Emmett S. Finley Elementary School

Demographics

Enrollment: 548 students

Location Description: Rural

Title I Funded: Yes

Type of Program: School-wide

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

Overview

Emmett S. Finley Elementary School is located in the rural, agricultural community of Holtville, California, which is 120 miles east of San Diego, 225 miles southeast of Los Angeles, and 10 miles northeast of Mexicali, Baja California, Mexico. Finley Elementary School is one of six schools within the Holtville Unified School District. Finley School is a Transitional Kindergarten through grade 5 school and serves approximately 550 students. There are 27 full time, credentialed teachers on site with additional certificated and classified staff to provide support. Finley has been categorized as a Title I school with 70.2% of students identified as socioeconomically disadvantaged. Students with Disabilities comprise 7.5% of the student population. There are approximately 64% English Learners attending Finley Elementary School. Finley School is composed of 92.7% Hispanic or Latino, 6.2% White, .4% Black, 2% Asian and .4% two or more races. Finley School is unique in the Imperial County due to its offering of a 50/50 Dual Immersion strand with half of the student population participating in the Dual Immersion program.

The mission of Finley Elementary School is to help each child reach his or her full potential emotionally, socially, and academically in order to become productive citizens and lifetime readers and learners. It is our goal to provide a safe, nurturing environment that will enable each child to gain self-esteem, respect diversity, develop academic and social skills and become an independent problem solver.

The vision of Finley School promotes an environment that fosters the academic, social and emotional needs of every student; fosters individual attention and success to all. Students are encouraged to be respectful, responsible students that reach the highest level of academic achievement as determined by state and national standards.

Curriculum at Finley School is rigorous and deliberate with teachers, staff, parents and students having high expectations. Eureka Math curriculum was adopted in the Fall of 2015 and Benchmark Advance and Benchmark Adelante curriculum were adopted in the Fall of 2017. Approximately one-third of the professional staff has been AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) trained and the AVID Elementary program is being implemented school wide from kindergarten through fifth grade. Intervention is provided on an as needed basis by teachers and paraprofessionals using research-based practices. Enrichment programs consist of a G.A.T.E./Honors program, Beginning Band is offered to fifth grade students and the ASES (After School Safety Education) program offers S.T.E.A.M., gardening, arts & crafts, dance, sports, cooking & baking, American Sign Language, sewing and homework center.

Model Program and Practices

Name of Model Program/Practice: V.I.K.E.S. (Vigorous Implementation for Kindling Educational Success)

Length of Model Program/Practice: 2–4 years

Target Area(s): Closing the Achievement Gap, Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

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

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

Description

The Finley School V.I.K.E.S. program began with the implementation of the California Common Core State Standards. With a focus on closing the achievement gap for ALL students at Finley School, teachers began amplifying student expectations and seeing

the results of their efforts. The Finley School staff, students and parents have truly embraced ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act) by providing and supporting students with rigorous curriculum and instruction while promoting critical thinking for lifelong learning.

The staff, students, parents and community are all a part of what is now the Finley School V.I.K.E.S. program. Our staff provides students with research-based, standards-aligned curriculum. The students understand the importance of their education and accept the challenge. Finley School parents acknowledge the challenging obstacles that their children face and are willing to support and be a part of their children's educational success. Parent Math Nights are held quarterly to inform parents of the concepts and strategies associated with standards at the various grade levels. Resources are also provided to parents throughout the school year. The Finley School family also takes great pride in ensuring that students are prepared for college and career by incorporating programs such as Dual Immersion and AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination). Ongoing support is provided by all Finley staff to ensure student success.

The comprehensive curriculum of Eureka Math is diligently utilized by the teachers. The curriculum is rigorous, standards-aligned and provides students with the concept-knowledge needed for long-term understanding. Exit tickets, mid-module, module assessments and quarterly assessments guide instruction and allow teachers to monitor progress. The Eureka Math program also provides teachers with various methods of teaching concepts through the use of interactive hands-on activities and manipulatives. Teachers also incorporate close reading strategies when teaching word problems to provide students with additional practice in reading.

There is an intentional focus on building academic language and critical thinking skills by promoting and encouraging parents to have their children learn two languages. The Dual Language program at Finley School has proven to be both beneficial and effective. While developing a second language, students' critical thinking skills and the expectation for them to utilize their skills in the global future are anticipated.

Implementation and Monitoring

The V.I.K.E.S. program consists of various components. The success of Finley students is dependent on all staff members, from the time they register for school until they are promoted to sixth grade. Upon registration, parents are encouraged to have their children participate in the 50/50 Dual Language program that provides students with the opportunity to learn English and Spanish simultaneously. The Dual program provides English learners with an opportunity to accelerate progress in grade-level instruction while maintaining their native language while English-speaking students in the program exceed the achievement of their monolingually educated peers by developing creativity and analytical thinking. Students in the Dual classroom receive, accelerated instruction that is purposeful and promotes the V.I.K.E.S. program. Classroom data, school site data and state assessment data have proven the effectiveness of the Dual program and shown a direct correlation to the development of critical thinking skills.

Teachers at Finley School were deliberate in their adoption of the Eureka Math curriculum. Eureka Math has provided the rigor and concept knowledge needed for students to close the achievement gap. Implementation of the curriculum requires teachers to provide students with various strategies for resolving a problem while focusing on the process instead of the answers. Eureka Math promotes student engagement and focuses on mastery. According to an Ed Weekly Reports article published in 2015, Eureka Math is the only curriculum that was found to be aligned to the Common Core standards. This alignment has shown great results at Finley School, according to CAASPP results, local measures, and classroom assessments. The V.I.K.E.S. program includes the implementation of daily informal assessments as well as formal assessments included in the Eureka curriculum. Student data is reviewed and disaggregated quarterly to provide intervention or enrichment. Intervention is a school wide endeavor that requires all staff to provide students with one-on-one tutoring, after school homework assistance and/or parent conferences to discuss student expectations.

Parent involvement at Finley School is a major factor in the success of all students. Parents are informed of the various programs and services that Finley School has to offer as a Title I school. Parents are encouraged to attend Back to School Night and learn about classroom curriculum and academic expectations for the school year. Each quarter a Parent Math Night is held to provide parents with information about upcoming math standards and allows staff to support and encourage parents to learn the concepts needed for providing homework assistance. Parents are given manipulatives, taught strategies and provided a list of resources to help them assist their children at home. The school website also provides parents with links to videotaped lessons and tips on how to help their child be successful.

Results and Outcomes

Implementation of curriculum and programs at Finley School is dependent on results and outcomes. The V.I.K.E.S. program was developed after careful review of student assessment data from the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, quarterly benchmark assessments, Eureka Math Module and Mid-Module assessments, CELDT data, and Interim assessment results. Annual and quarterly data is reviewed by the administration and staff to develop annual and quarterly goals for each teacher and student.

Instruction at Finley School is data-driven and focuses on the educational success of all students. As students are given formative and summative assessments, teachers adjust instruction and provide or assign the necessary interventions needed. This method of implementation has proven effective according to the 2017 Fall & 2017 Spring CAASPP data, as well as standards-aligned quarterly benchmark assessments.

The 2017 Fall CAASPP data shows increases in English Language Arts and Mathematics scores, as well as increases in specific subgroups. CAASPP data shows the number of students meeting or exceeding the standards in English Language Arts in grade 3 at 54.65%, in grade 4 at 48.96% and in grade 5 at 48.35%. In the area of

Mathematics, 54.44% of students in third grade are meeting or exceeding grade level standards, 43.75% of students in fourth grade are meeting or exceeding grade level standards and 34.07% of students in fifth grade are meeting or exceeding grade level standards. Implementation of rigorous curriculum from kindergarten through fifth grade at Finley School has proven effective.

All students at Finley School are provided necessary interventions to ensure students are successful. This is especially true for those students identified as Social Economically Disadvantaged. Staff at Finley School are most proud of this subgroup because it validates the notion that ALL students can learn. Assessment data provided by CAASPP results reveal the successes of students identified as Social Economically Disadvantaged with 46.06% of third graders, 42.67% in fourth grade and 42.42% in fifth grade meeting or exceeding the standard in English Language Arts. Additionally, 49.26% of third grade students, 40% of fourth grade students and 27.27% of fifth grade students met or exceeded grade level standards in Mathematics.

Teachers at Emmett S. Finley School believe that the success of their students is a direct result of the implementation of rigorous, standard-aligned curriculum along with the analyzing of data to inform instruction and practices. Finley teachers are intrigued by the student's ability to solve problems using various strategies. Our students' success can be attributed to the critical thinking skills that are infused in the Eureka Math curriculum as well as the Dual Language program. Vigorous Implementation for Kindling Student Success has truly ignited the successful spirit of staff, students, and parents of Finley School.