

Ben Hulse Elementary School Model Programs and Practices

School Information

CDS (County District School) Code: 13631646008551

County: Imperial

District (Local Educational Agency): Imperial Unified

School: Ben Hulse Elementary School

Demographics

Enrollment: 1,015 students

Location Description: Rural

Title I Funded: Yes

Type of Program: School-wide

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

Overview

“Passion is one great force that unleashes creativity, because if you’re passionate about something, then you’re more willing to take risks.” -Yo-Yo Ma.

Ben Hulse Elementary School, a 1998 and 2014 California Distinguished School, is a large elementary school. Some teachers and staff members attended Ben Hulse and still reside in Imperial. We're proud of our school and all that we've accomplished. We are hardworking, innovative, and dedicated to our students' success. We are passionate about our school, and are eager to meet new challenges of an ever-changing society.

Ben Hulse Elementary School is located in the city of Imperial, California, the heart of Imperial County. Imperial County has a population of approximately 130,000. The city of Imperial has a growing population of 17,203 (2016 data) with a median household income level of \$41,079. The city proudly provides large city amenities while keeping a small town culture. The school is located in a large agricultural community, just 20 miles from the Mexican border and 117 miles east of San Diego. We are part of the Imperial

Unified School District, the oldest district in the Imperial Valley. Imperial Valley is a desert community. We are home to agriculture businesses, two state prisons, the Department of Homeland Security, a geothermal plant, and various solar and wind projects.

Ben Hulse School was once a neighborhood school where everyone knew one another. Over the years, we've experienced an influx of new people to the city and Ben Hulse. Even with the growth and changing demographics, Ben Hulse has maintained the feel of a neighborhood school. Parents can be found helping with the many educational activities that the school offers. We have a strong Parent Teacher Organization that provides educational field trips and assemblies. They also organize worthwhile events such as Red Ribbon Week and Holiday Food Drives for disadvantaged families, and promote school spirit. Students are also involved in the school in numerous ways. For example, we offer after school programs such as band, tutoring, and a "Chess Club". Fifth graders have the opportunity to serve on the Safety Patrol and work as crossing guards to help students and parents enter and exit the school safely.

At Ben Hulse, we expect all of our students to meet or exceed rigorous grade-level standards. Our teachers stay on top of educational changes and application of research based strategies by attending technology conferences and professional development offered by our district and the Imperial County Office of Education. After implementing Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and Smarter Balanced Assessments, teachers have become more proficient with instructional strategies to meet the needs of our students. We know our students will meet the desired expectations and be ready for the future. Ben Hulse staff is dedicated to creating an atmosphere where all students can grow, flourish, and succeed.

Model Program and Practices

Name of Model Program/Practice: The Ben Hulse Way

Length of Model Program/Practice: 2–4 years

Target Area(s): Closing the Achievement Gap, Parent, Family, and Community Involvement, Professional Development, Use of Technology

Target Population(s): Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, English Learners

Strategies Used: Data-Driven Decision Making, Professional Development, Implementation of Academic Standards Basics (Teachers, Instructional Materials, Facilities)

Description

Model Program Practice Description

Ben Hulse Elementary School has been able to close the achievement gap for socio-economically disadvantaged students (SED) in Mathematics. Ben Hulse Elementary School Dashboard Data indicates growth from yellow (Spring 2017) to green (Fall 2017) in the SED subgroup showing a 10.5 increase in the average distance from level 3.

This improvement has been made due to six essential elements:

1. Consistent Implementation of Standards-Based Curriculum
2. Systematic and Collaborative Monitoring of Student Progress
3. Cohesive System of Support- Response to Intervention (RtI)
4. Use of Technology and Online Resources
5. Strategic Use of Tutoring and Summer School
6. Consistent implementation of the Student Study Team

Implementation of the academic content and performance standards adopted by the state board was achieved by adopting State approved mathematics. Ben Hulse has used Go Math since 2015 integrating California CCSS. Educators work collaboratively to create pacing guides that will ensure academic content and performance standards are being met in a timely and efficient manner.

All teachers use quarterly assessments as well as frequent curriculum based assessments. Kindergarten through Second grade completes assessments quarterly, focusing on foundational mathematics skills. Third–Fifth grades, access Interim Assessments through SBAC and curriculum-based assessments. Furthermore, we monitor student progress through the use of Think Central’s data analysis by CA CCSS. The data is used to focus and guide classroom instruction.

RTI fourth and fifth grade students are offered support in mathematics using small-group instruction to target basic skills. Third through fifth grade levels offer after-school tutoring in mathematics where key math concepts are reinforced and practiced. Ben Hulse also provides support staff during instructional time to benefit academically at-risk students.

Through the use of online technologies, students access Think Central for mathematics. Students use the Personal Math Trainer, Interactive Student Edition, instructional videos, and step-by-step instructional support offered via daily homework and practice. Reflex Math and Khan Academy are offered as additional online resources as well. Reflex math is a supplemental program that strengthens basic math facts and computation, while Khan Academy provides instructional how-to videos that support current standards in mathematics.

Summer school is offered to English Learners, Special Education, and GATE students at all levels. Basic foundational skills are practiced and reinforced. GATE summer school students are offered enrichment activities and higher level thinking skills in mathematics.

Student Study Teams meet twice weekly to discuss interventions and modifications within the classroom that are designed to meet the needs of our struggling and disadvantaged students. This includes administration, teachers, parents, and students.

Implementation and Monitoring

As a staff we asked ourselves, “What moves the needle?” We found that dedicated and quality instructional time was key to student growth and success. Tasked with finding strategies that would continue to meet the needs of high performing students, we addressed the achievement gaps of our subgroup (SED). After much brainstorming, we realized that we had everything we needed (High Qualified Teachers, standards-based curriculum, and various research-based intervention programs).

Standards Based Curriculum

The Ben Hulse staff analyzed school wide, grade level, and individual teacher data using the School City program. After identifying our specific needs and integrating the focus of the new Dashboard requirements, we targeted mathematics and technology. Specifically we looked at applying mathematical concepts and procedures, problem solving and modeling/data analysis, and communicating reasoning. Additionally, we considered the needs of our subgroups based on the data. Using the Go Math curriculum, teachers analyzed materials and assessments to implement the program effectively.

Response to Intervention

Student data is analyzed to determine which students would be most successful using this as an intervention. Students are assessed quarterly to determine their progress and continued need for intervention.

Technology and Online Assessment

The teachers were given time to learn and practice using technology in the classroom to specifically support mathematics. Think Central representatives, administrators, staff, and other teachers provided multiple training inservices and coaching. Teachers were also given plenty of time to collaborate and practice program usage. Students learned to use technology on a daily/weekly basis in the classroom. Teachers implemented Think Central and Reflex Math for instruction, reinforcement, and assessment purposes. Students complete assignments and assessments on Think Central and Reflex Math in the classroom and at home. Students also use links to Khan Academy to support their learning. Currently, teachers are offering Parent Nights to educate parents and caregivers on the use of a variety of technology resources provided by our school. On these nights, parents are introduced and trained by teachers, with students side-by-side, in the use of these technologies and supports.

Tutoring and Summer School

During tutoring and summer school, educators use technologies, such as Reflex Math, Think Central, and hands-on learning manipulatives to encourage mathematical discussions and understanding.

Student Study Team

During Student Study team specific modifications, accommodations, and interventions are discussed. Parents are guided on using technologies and strategies at home to improve their child's learning experience. To ensure student success, the team may meet multiple times during the year to review and monitor student progress

Results and Outcomes

Model Program/Practice Results and Outcomes

After four years of integrating the Go Math program within our classrooms and applying Common Core strategies, we have found that our instruction has become refined and more effective. CA CCSS drive instructional practices, strategies, and techniques. Students demonstrate greater understanding of mathematics using collaboration, models, and academic language. Students apply their knowledge of mathematics in real-world situations, making their mathematical understanding more universal and pertinent to their daily lives. Students are becoming more comfortable with taking risks and persevering through new strategies associated with the learning process.

Ben Hulse has always had respectable scores as compared to other schools in our region and the state of California. Previously, the challenge of meeting the requirements of high stakes assessments and standards-based curriculum led to reformed school practices. Our prior goal was to close the gap for our subgroups including Socio-economic disadvantaged. Currently, we are meeting or exceeding state CAASPP results in Mathematics and English Language Arts.

2016–17 CAASPP Results for All Students

Percent of Students Meeting or Exceeding the State Standards

	School 15–16	School 16–17	District 15–16	District 16–17	State 15–16	State 16–17
ELA	46	50	54	55	48	48
Math	39	44	38	39	36	37

The high expectations at Ben Hulse have created a culture that all students, regardless of socio-economic status are expected to succeed. The staff understands that the six

essential elements when used together provide the opportunity for high achievement. We are all passionate about our students, our school, and our craft.

“You can do anything as long as you have the passion, the drive, the focus, and the support.” - Sabrina Brya