

Jefferson Elementary School Model Programs and Practices

School Information

CDS (County District School) Code: 19645926013973

County: Los Angeles

District (Local Educational Agency): Hawthorne

School: Jefferson Elementary School

Demographics

Enrollment: 553 students

Location Description: Urban

Title I Funded: Yes

Type of Program: School-wide

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

Overview

The Jefferson School community is a collaborative environment committed to providing each student with optimal learning experiences that support mastery of the state content standards. We aim to prepare students to be creative critical thinkers who possess the skills necessary to succeed in the 21st Century. To achieve this goal, we promote positive behavior, academic success, and a well-rounded educational experience.

Jefferson School serves approximately 553 students in transitional kindergarten through fifth grade. It is situated on three acres of property in Hawthorne, California, just four miles from the Los Angeles International Airport. As a Title I schoolwide program, most of the students at Jefferson School come from low socioeconomic households. Approximately 88% of them participate in the Free or Reduced Lunch Program. The student body reflects a diverse population, with 75% of the students being Hispanic, 14% African-American, 4% White, 3% Asian, and 2% Pacific Islander. English language learners comprise approximately 45% of the student population.

The school climate at Jefferson has been transformed by the Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) Program. This program incorporates the “Eagle Expectations,” which are reinforced with students by all staff, including classroom teachers, the dean, the counselor, yard supervisors, and the principal. These expectations focus on Respect, Responsibility, Effort, and Safety. Incentives are in place to motivate students to self-monitor and demonstrate appropriate behavior.

Students are supported with high-quality instruction and strategic interventions. Our innovative approach to professional collaboration and data analysis is used to improve teaching practices and student achievement. Results from assessments drive the intervention program for students throughout the day and after school. Academic achievements are celebrated consistently and students are recognized for their accomplishments.

As a means of providing a broad course of study for students, the arts are heavily-integrated into the core English-language arts curriculum. Instructional activities are aligned to unit themes and are centered on both the Common Core Standards and the California Art Standards. In addition to this strategic integration, students are also encouraged to participate in a variety of art, music, theater, and dance classes held after school.

Model Program and Practices

Name of Model Program/Practice: Data-Driven Multi-Tiered Support Model

Length of Model Program/Practice: 2–4 years

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

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: Data-Driven Decision Making, Professional Development

Description

The foundation for Jefferson School’s Data-Driven Multi-Tiered Support Model for students and staff is grounded in the Hawthorne School District’s provision of personnel, protocols, and resources, but is tailored to meet the individual needs of the school community. Through this model, instructional coaches and other support staff maintain an environment that allows for consistent collaboration, professional development, data analysis, and individualized support. Intervention teachers are also utilized to deliver targeted academic assistance for at-risk students. When combined, these resources provide a comprehensive system of support for both students and staff.

Jefferson's literacy and mathematics coaches are out-of-classroom content experts who provide colleagues with research-based instructional assistance. Their daily activities consist of classroom observations, teacher feedback, demonstration lessons, collaboration and data analysis facilitation, and professional development.

The full-time English learner (EL) special projects teacher provides professional development for staff, as well as specialized small group instruction and extended learning opportunities for students.

The intervention teachers are out-of-classroom, credentialed employees who make data-informed decisions to address the specific needs of at-risk student populations. They utilize both the push-in and pull-out models to support students in mastering content standards.

The resource specialist program (RSP) teacher differentiates instruction to provide students with disabilities with maximum access to the core curriculum.

Jefferson's teacher-focused collaboration model is grade level and content standard specific. This inclusive model is driven by regular collaboration meetings, which support the instructional planning of each unit of study in English-language arts and mathematics.

Classroom teachers also participate in regular data analysis meetings outside of the regular school day. In these meetings, they analyze student outcomes associated with district benchmarks and other assessments. Through this analysis, they make informed decisions regarding appropriate instructional strategies to be utilized to increase conceptual knowledge.

Extended learning opportunities are provided for students on an ongoing basis. Classroom teachers and support staff use these classes to provide intervention and enrichment opportunities to meet the needs of identified students.

Research-based, data-driven professional development is provided to ensure that instructional practices are effective and contributing to high levels of student understanding and achievement.

Implementation and Monitoring

Jefferson's Data-Driven Multi-Tiered Support Model is grounded in a process of continuous improvement of teaching and learning. The main drivers of this system are: structured and consistent teacher collaboration; focused data analysis meetings; responsive professional development; and extended learning opportunities. While the Hawthorne School District provides the human and fiscal resources necessary to operate the system, Jefferson School's Leadership Team designs, implements, monitors, and refines the model by utilizing those resources to meet student and staff needs.

Literacy and mathematics coaches facilitate grade level collaboration meetings on a regular basis during the school day. The focus of the meetings is determined by the nature of the content standards being taught, recent student outcomes, and teacher observations. Teachers and support staff work together to make instruction more effective for all students and student groups through the sharing of best practices and common agreements to implement key instructional strategies. Instruction is continually adjusted in response to anticipated or identified student needs.

The coaches also facilitate grade level specific data analysis meetings following each common benchmark assessment. Results are maintained in the SchoolNet data management system, which allows for easy disaggregation of data by student group or individual student and question by question item analysis. Grade level reports are generated to analyze overall student performance, student group performance, and common errors and misconceptions. Classroom teachers utilize data to guide small group instruction during English-language arts and mathematics reteaching and intervention blocks. This data is also used by the intervention teachers to create pull-out groups that are aligned with classroom instructional schedules in order to maximize exposure to the core curriculum. The EL special projects teacher uses CELDT results and data from benchmark assessments to create intervention groups and to monitor progress toward reclassification. In addition to the data already cited, the RSP teacher utilizes results from the STAR Reading assessments to monitor academic growth among students with disabilities.

Support staff members regularly design and facilitate professional development sessions that are focused on site needs. These sessions are also used to support teachers in utilizing the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) in order to inform instructional practice.

Extended learning opportunities are provided in both English-language arts and mathematics. Participating students are selected based upon the most recent assessment data. The groupings are flexible and the content covered is dependent upon student needs and teacher observations.

The instructional coaches and the administrator engage in regular walkthroughs to observe the effectiveness of instruction in the classrooms.

Results and Outcomes

The utilization of the Data-Driven Multi-Tiered Support Model at Jefferson School has resulted in students consistently showing growth on a variety of academic measures beyond the average growth that has been realized by students in the Hawthorne School District.

The Fall 2017 release of the California School Dashboard showed that the average Distance from Level 3 (DL3) in English-language arts went from -20.3 scale score points in 2015 to +2.4 scale score points in 2017. In mathematics, the DL3 shrank from -38.9 points to -10.8 points over the same period of time. These measures show that the

Jefferson School student body as a whole has continued to perform at a higher level each year on the state summative assessment in both content areas.

The growth in terms of DL3 was not limited to certain student groups at Jefferson, but rather was shared equally by all. An analysis of state assessment outcomes from the 2016 and 2017 test administrations provides evidence of this growth across multiple student groups. In English language arts, English learners, who comprise 45% of the school population, demonstrated the most significant increase by gaining 17 scale score points. Socioeconomically disadvantaged students, which includes 87.2% of the school population, grew by 12 scale score points. Students with disabilities improved by .7 scale score points. African American students increased by 9.8 scale score points. Finally, Hispanic students improved by 13.2 scale score points.

In mathematics, almost every student group showed a tremendous amount of growth. English learners increased significantly by 31 scale score points. Socioeconomically disadvantaged students improved by 18.5 scale score points. Students with disabilities increased by 17.7 scale score points. African American students maintained their overall achievement level, but experienced a small decline of 1.9 scale score points. Finally, Hispanic students improved by 26 scale score points.

In addition to academic growth, the Data-Driven Multi-Tiered Support Model has positively impacted overall school climate. As a result of improved student engagement and performance, Jefferson School has experienced a significant decrease in student suspension rates, as evidenced by the California School Dashboard Report. The overall suspension rate declined by 1.3%, with all reported student groups displaying the highest blue performance level.

The academic growth achieved can be directly correlated to the Data-Driven Multi-Tiered Support Model implemented at Jefferson School. A strong collaborative relationship between classroom teachers and support staff has allowed for targeted academic support and effective professional development.