

## **Tincher Preparatory School Model Programs and Practices**

### **School Information**

CDS (County District School) Code: 19647256015648

County: Los Angeles

District (Local Educational Agency): Long Beach Unified

School: Tincher Preparatory School

### **Demographics**

Enrollment: 720 students

Location Description: Suburban

Title I Funded: No

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

### **Overview**

Tincher Preparatory is an award winning school located in suburban eastern Long Beach. We are in LBUSD, a large urban school district servicing approximately 74,000 students, that has been earned several awards including the Broad Prize for Urban Education.

Tincher was originally an elementary school. At the request of parents, Tincher became a K–8 school. We serve over 700 students in Transitional Kindergarten through eighth grade and also house a pre-school program, a Child Development Center, and an afterschool program. Students come from throughout the city and our population includes Gifted and Talented, Special Education, English Learners, as well as students from all socioeconomic levels. Tincher has been recognized as a California Distinguished School, a Title 1 High Achieving School, a Lighthouse School for the Gear Up program, and was most recently re-designated as a School To Watch by The National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform.

Our faculty includes teachers with their National Board Certification and every grade level Kinder through 6th has a minimum of one teacher who has completed a 2-year fellowship through the Cotsen Art of Teaching program. All teachers are highly qualified, credentialed in their field of instruction, and have received training in differentiation in order to best meet their students' needs. Teamwork and the flexible grouping of students for instruction allow teachers to focus on students' strengths. Our middle school has a 7-period instructional day that includes the core subjects of language arts, science, math, social studies and a variety of electives including Band, Orchestra, Chorus, Robotics, Marine Biology and Art. Additionally, many middle school teachers sponsor clubs to support the interests of students. All students are enrolled in accelerated core classes with a reduced class size. Those who struggle have an additional period of English Language Arts or Math Development to assure their success in these classes. Students now have the option to participate in both instrumental music and a self-selected elective.

Tincher has motivated parents that support the instructional program through PTA, serving on the School Site Council and as Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS). Teachers employ a variety of tools to encourage parent engagement including SchoolLoop, Parent Vue, a daily planner in grades 3–8, email, and classroom applications such as Bloomz, Remind, and Classroom Dojo. To support our parents, we have offered parent education on a variety of pertinent topics such as Teen Anxiety, Bullying, and Cyber Safety.

It is our ongoing commitment to excellence for all students that underscores our focus on programmatic equity. It drives our instruction, our professional development, and our ongoing successes. Each year we have more students apply to Tincher than we can accept – ongoing proof that the academic program we have built is successful.

## **Model Program and Practices**

Name of Model Program/Practice: Programmatic Equity

Length of Model Program/Practice: 2–4 years

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

Target Population(s): 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, Professional Development

## **Description**

In order to achieve programmatic equity, Tincher has focused on self-assessment and an ongoing improvement cycle. This practice has imbued in our teachers the need for

ongoing assessment and developing skills in using data to drive instruction. The primary focus is on achievement, with a special emphasis on closing the achievement gap for our identified sub-groups.

Although Tincher had high attendance rates, selected students were targeted for individual attention and a monitor/reward system was implemented. A full-time bilingual attendance clerk was added to the staff and is charged with individual follow up phone calls and working with parents to ensure students are in school.

In order to support academics and attendance, we focused on assisting students with developing a Growth Mindset to assist them in seeing themselves as scholars ready to participate in rigorous, accelerated classes. This was addressed in faculty meetings and teachers designed mini-lessons for their classrooms. Developing ongoing supportive relationships with students and their families became a hallmark of Tincher teachers. Teachers greet students individually and welcome them back to class when returning from an absence. Survey data showed growth in this area.

In the elementary grades, teachers employ differentiation techniques and the Total School Cluster Model has been implemented to assure programmatic equity. Using district, site and PTA funds allowed us to purchase Chromebooks and achieve a 1:1 student ratio ensuring all students have access to technology. These instructional techniques along with ready access to technology allow teachers to support students at all levels. In addition to district provided ST Math, Tincher provides Reading A–Z, an individualized reading program to further support instruction.

Most unique was the creation of a 7-period day for Middle School allowing teachers to accelerate Math, Science, History and ELA. LBUSD's accelerated program compacts the 6, 7, and 8th grade courses into two years and teaches Algebra (a 9th grade course per Common Core) into eighth grade. We provide as many students as possible the opportunity to participate in this accelerated pathway. Using SBAC scores, every student who attains Nearly Met or higher (approximately 75% of students) is placed into accelerated math. Additional support is provided through a Math Development elective and this allows 99% of students to continue in the accelerated pathway the following year. Math scores rose 8% overall, with a 10% growth in students who Met/Exceeded standards. All subgroups showed gains and our African American experienced 17% growth.

ELA employs both homogeneous and heterogeneous grouping with a gradual release of instruction model. ELA and Social Studies are taught using a 'core' model providing greater flexibility and more opportunities for cross-curricular instruction. African American students achieved a 9% increase.

## **Implementation and Monitoring**

The success of all students is dependent not only on the design of our program but on adequate implementation as well as ongoing monitoring to ensure students are on track to meet their goals. To do this and to ensure equity, teachers spend time at the

beginning of the year in grade level groups to determine the most effective way to address the differing needs of our students. Once identified, teachers do regular checks on student progress. Anecdotal data as well as data from formal assessments is used to evaluate progress and formal reporting is provided to the principal throughout the year. Standard measures (reading benchmarks and math facts proficiency) are considered along with data from unit tests in ELA and Math.

Several measures have been put into place to support student achievement. These include the use of Reading A–Z in elementary grades and College and Career Readiness (CCR) classes in Middle school to support reading instruction. Additionally, the 7-period day in middle school allows for smaller class sizes in core subjects which affords time for more focused assistance. Flexible teaming and grouping occurs in the primary grades.

Monitoring achievement is supported with the wealth of data provided by the district research department. Teachers obtain immediate feedback through the use of formative assessments, exit slips, active participation, and the use of technology-based assessments. The use free web-based programs (TenMarks, ScootPad, Prodigy) provide targeted enrichment or remediation to students in math and NewsEla and ReadWorks support reading. These programs, as well as ST Math, highlight student progress and identify areas requiring attention. Teachers use this information to drive instruction, select students for small group intervention, and ameliorate any deficits.

Students can tailor their own learning when provided with extension menus and teachers often pre-test students to support curriculum compacting. These strategies support student engagement and allow opportunities for self-selected learning. Accountability is built into self-selected instruction and students have agreed upon goals/checkpoints during the process.

Students have equal access to opportunities; this is a hallmark of our instructional program. In elementary grades this is accomplished by using the Total School Cluster Model to create classes and in middle school the accelerated schedule is available to all students. Our new special education classes are included and teachers collaborate to provide as much interaction as possible. This is accomplished through our Best Friends Club, the use of peer tutors, and including them in social activities such as field trips, assemblies, and community performances.

## **Results and Outcomes**

Data analysis indicates that our efforts towards programmatic equity have been successful. All strategic areas and sub-groups reflect positive results.

Sixty percent of all students met/exceeded standards in ELA which exceeds both the district average and the average of all other K–8 schools in Long Beach. Tincher students showed notable year over year growth for our African American students (9%), Cambodian students (8%), and Other students (11%). Third and fourth grade students achieved a 10% increase over last year's scores and 60% or more of students in grades

3, 6, 7, and 8 met or exceeded standards. Our GATE/EXCEL, EL and low SES students also outperformed their counterparts across the district and at other K–8 schools.

In Mathematics, the results are even more impressive. Our focus on Number Talks and use of cognitively guided instructional strategies in elementary, combined with the smaller class sizes in middle school mathematics are important factors in achieving this growth. All sub-groups showed growth and the average of 62% of students meeting/exceeding standards is 23 and 18 percentage points higher than district and other K–8 schools respectively. Every sub-group and special population outperformed their counterparts. Eighty percent of algebra students showed proficiency (C or better) over the last 3 years.

Tincher emphasizes the importance of being in school in order to learn and has created a college going culture throughout the school. As a result, our average attendance for last year was 97.3%. This was the highest of all Long Beach K–8 schools, exceeded the elementary school average, and tied with one traditional middle school. This led to us being recognized by the district for our efforts. In addition to our focus on attendance, we have implemented several interventions to limit suspensions with an eventual goal of eliminating them entirely. Several staff members attended a Safe and Civil training over the summer and the CHAMPS strategy has been implemented in the majority of classrooms.

Along with attendance, Tincher has worked hard to minimize suspensions using a variety of strategies. Our small size lends to the development of positive relationships and the work we have done to become a Kindness Certified School has contributed to our low suspension rate. Analysis of the data shows that suspensions have decreased year to year. Starting the year with behavior assemblies and teaching the Guidelines For Success (a Safe and Civil strategy) both contributed to this decrease. There is a strict No Bullying policy; students are taught how to recognize bullying and how to address it if it arises.

Tincher recently received our third redesignation as a Schools To Watch and has been recognized as a California Distinguished School and a Lighthouse School for the GEAR-UP program.