

Eugene Field Elementary Model Programs and Practices

School Information

CDS (County District School) Code: 19648816021570

County: Los Angeles

District (Local Educational Agency): Pasadena Unified

School: Eugene Field Elementary

Demographics

Enrollment: 497 students

Location Description: Urban

Title I Funded: No

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

Overview

PUSD is a medium sized socio-economically, racially diverse urban district 10 miles northeast of Los Angeles. Located in the residential community of Hastings Ranch, is Eugene Field Elementary School. Housed in the original 1939 structure, the front lawn features a verdant Farm to School garden, a citrus orchard offset by large trees with a view of the San Gabriel mountains. It is a lush campus that is a source of pride and a gathering place for the entire community. Today, Field is comprised of 24 classrooms, housing Pre-K through grade 5, and contains a music/dance room, library, technology lab, and a cafeteria/multi-purpose room.

Field has 497 students in pre-K through grade 5. Student demographics are as follows; 7% African American, 37% Asian, 19% Hispanic/Latino, 13% White, 17% multi-racial and 7% all others. Also, 24.4% of the students are classified as socioeconomically disadvantaged, while 5% are ELs and 4.6% receive special education services. 34% of 3rd–5th grade students qualify for the GATE program and 33% of incoming K students speak Mandarin with an additional 9 languages represented among the school population. This vibrant diversity is representative of the broader Pasadena community

and also reflects an important shift that occurred with the introduction of the signature Mandarin Dual Language Immersion Program (MDLIP) in 2011.

75% of students are residents of Pasadena with another 25% traveling from area communities. Since the MDLIP is developing through 12th grade, most 5th graders continue their secondary studies at Sierra Madre Middle School with 8th graders continuing on to Pasadena High School. Field has 26 fully credentialed teachers and two instructional coaches. Most have bilingual certifications and some with Master's degree level or higher education. A constructive evaluation process promotes quality instruction, and faculty build teaching skills through participation in professional development throughout the year. Staff assist students in their academic, creative, physical, social-emotional development. Staff are trained to recognize at-risk behaviors in students, and support staff is dedicated to providing the services needed to reach desired goals.

Parents and community are integral partners at Field. Parents not only participate in the PTA, Annual Fund (AF), GATE PAC, Dual Language PAC, African American PAC, EL PAC, and SSC; but they also serve as room parents, math and science coaches and volunteer in classrooms, tutoring and presenting lessons in their areas of expertise. The Field PTA and AF are two primary fundraising bodies for the school. Both and strive to support excellent academic instruction and a positive educational experience for students. Donations support bilingual instructional aides, a librarian, field trips, technology, PE, instructional resources, community building events and arts integration partnerships and programs.

Model Program and Practices

Name of Model Program/Practice: Mandarin Dual Language Immersion Program

Length of Model Program/Practice: 5–8 years

Target Area(s): Civic Education Awareness, Closing the Achievement Gap, Education Supports, Parent, Family, and Community Involvement, Professional Development, Use of Technology, Visual and Performing Arts

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

Strategies Used: School Climate, Small Learning Communities, Parent Engagement, Data-Driven Decision Making, Social/Emotional/Behavioral Support, Professional Development, Implementation of Academic Standards Basics (Teachers, Instructional Materials, Facilities)

Description

The MDLIP enables mastery of subjects in both English and Mandarin through a 2-way, 90:10 immersion model. This means that K classrooms are composed of native speakers of both languages with curriculum taught 90% in Mandarin and 10% in English. At each subsequent grade, instruction in English is increased by 10% so that by grade 4 there is a 50:50 split between the languages. The MDLIP is an aggressive approach towards building literacy and 21st century skills. The program goals include bilingualism and biliteracy as students develop thinking, listening, speaking, reading, and writing proficiency in two globally significant languages. With an added goal of academic excellence, students are meeting and exceeding district and state standards in all core subjects. Finally the aim of multicultural understanding ensures students develop positive attitudes and appreciation toward world languages and cultures, thereby promoting active involvement and impact in a global society.

Following are 6 features that are critical to the success of Field's MDLIP. First, language separation guarantees that instructional periods are scheduled so that there is no translation or language mixing by teachers. Secondly, students are integrated for the majority of the day since social interaction from both linguistic groups provides optimal 2nd language development. Parent collaboration is the third feature and is a hallmark of the MDLIP. In addition to a myriad of community engagement activities, DLIP PACs meet monthly at the school site and district to ensure parent input into MDLIP development. Next, K–12 student participation is a vital feature since continuous participation through at least grade 6 is necessary for students to exhibit the cognitive, academic, and linguistic benefits of bilingualism. The fifth attribute is balanced representation of language minority/majority students as interaction between both group facilitates high levels of 2nd language proficiency. Lastly, additive bilingual approaches are created for students and families to ensure that oral/written skills are maintained and developed in the 1st language while they are simultaneously acquired in the 2nd.

Two distinct features of Field's MDLIP are character development and parent involvement. The 10 traits of responsibility, self-control, resilience, citizenship, honesty, service, kindness, empathy, respect and courage are explicitly taught in grades K–5 in both languages. Also, the volunteer program has a direct impact on addressing the achievement gap and producing a student population that performs well above state averages. The multiple talents and resources provided through vigorous parent engagement, enables multiple talents and resources to be provided to students allowing for extra attention, social-emotional support, STEM coaching, art enrichment and diversity in methods of instruction. These two descriptive features of MDLIP set Field apart from the district's model.

Implementation and Monitoring

Success of the MDLIP model is demonstrated by student progress toward meeting program goals. Teachers use content standards and Mandarin proficiency domains to define learning expectations. A system of summative and formative assessments are applied in both languages to measure student growth, improve planning, target

instruction, and increase effectiveness. This cycle of ongoing assessment, intentional planning, strategic implementation, and evidence-based reflection drives purposeful instruction and leads to maximum growth of learning goals for MDLIP students.

Following a balanced literacy framework for Mandarin and English language arts instruction, teachers implement word study and reading and writing workshop. Informal Reading Inventories (IRIs) are administered in both languages to determine students' reading performance, form guided reading groups, differentiate instruction, and monitor progress. The Scope and Sequence has been translated into Mandarin and is used along with Better Immersion (K–2), MeiZhou Chinese (3–5) and i-Chinese Reader to implement MLA curriculum tailored to the distinct needs of students and teachers. Implementation of Level Chinese Mastery Track, a data driven Chinese literacy system designed for 2nd language learners, ensures parity for both ELA and MLA progress monitoring. 2017–18 IRI data indicates that on average, students have improved between 0.6–1.5 reading levels in Chinese and between 0.8–1.8 levels in English, with slightly more progress noted in grades 2, 3 and 5.

Math instruction follows a similar workshop methodology and units are planned using the Scope & Sequence, EnVision Math (Mandarin) and Ready Mathematics (English). These programs address the emphasis on conceptual understanding through reasoning, modeling, and discussion that explore the structure of mathematics while also developing students' procedural fluency. Also, the i-Ready Diagnostic system is used by all teachers to track performance, monitor growth and differentiate instruction in Math. The Smarter Balanced IABs are also administered in grades 3–5 to further support teaching and learning in Math and ELA throughout the year.

The use of the Scope & Sequence coupled with Mandarin-specific curricular resources allow teachers to align instruction with state standards while addressing the access needs of MDLIP students. Since language proficiency is also a learning objective, certain content is taught in Mandarin, focusing not only on mastery but also on language acquisition. These unique implementation and monitoring features are what distinguish Field's signature MDLIP from the district's model.

Results and Outcomes

Without a doubt, Field's model MDLIP is demonstrating amazing results for children. Overall the majority of students are achieving at or above state standards for ELA and Math, with outcomes across all demographics and targeted subgroups showing gains. Spring 2017 CAASPP reporting indicates that in ELA, 73% of Field students met or exceeded state standards as compared to 43% in PUSD and 48.56% statewide. In Math, 69% of students met or exceeded standards as compared to 43% in PUSD and 37.56% across CA. Student performance in ELA and Math are the highest among all schools in PUSD and students exhibited double-digit growth in both disciplines compared to 2016 data. With a one year gain of +13% in Math and +11% in ELA, Field students are continuing a 3-year upward trend and, most importantly they are proving that the model MDLIP is working.

Outcomes for targeted populations show positive gains as well. 2017 ELA performance indicators show significant increases for the following subgroups and demographics; ELs +35.8 points, Students with Disabilities +51, African American students +17.6 points, Asian students +18.7 and White students +37.7 points. ELA performance for Socioeconomically Disadvantaged students increased by 12.5 points, Hispanic students by 6 and students of two or more races improved by 3.9 points. Also, the recent reclassification rate for ELs was the highest in PUSD at 52%. Overall Math performance indicators for all students reflect significant gains as well, including Socioeconomically Disadvantaged and Hispanic students improving by 23 and 11.2 points respectively.

The ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL) is the Mandarin performance-based test for grades 3–5. AAPPL scores range from Novice Low to the beginning end of the Advanced range. The district has set proficiency level targets for grades 3–5 with a range between Novice High to mid-Intermediate to measure interpersonal communication, interpretive reading and listening as well as presentational writing. An analysis of 2017 AAPPL Measure results indicate that 77% of grade 3–5 students met or exceeded proficiency targets by scoring between the Novice High and Advanced levels.

These summative assessment results combined with a suspension rate at a 3 year low of 0.6%, and an attendance rate at 97%, demonstrate results and outcomes for students that are unmatched across PUSD. It is clear that Field's implementation of the Mandarin Dual Language Immersion Program is a distinguished signature program that shows proven results across the district and region. Parents are engaged, teachers and staff are effective in their practice and, most importantly, students are succeeding!