La Rosa School
Model Programs and Practices

School Information

CDS (County District School) Code: 19650526022941

County: Los Angeles

District (Local Educational Agency): Temple City Unified

School: La Rosa School

Demographics

Enrollment: 635 students

Location Description: Suburban

Title I Funded: Yes

Type of Program: School-wide

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

Overview

La Rosa School is home to amazing students who are supported and nurtured by a professional and caring certificated and classified staff. Along with the families, we strive each day to help each of our students grow academically, socially and emotionally.

Our purpose is to prepare students to be successful in a changing and culturally diverse society. The La Rosa mission is to provide students optimal learning opportunities through academic rigor, acceptance of self and others, and inspiration to become caring and contributing members of a global society.

We are located in Temple City, a small suburban community located in the San Gabriel Valley. The school is a school-wide Title I program school and operates on a traditional school calendar. La Rosa School serves students in kindergarten through third grade. In addition, we offer a special-day preschool class, five special-day classes, two full-day transitional kindergarten classes and we are home to the only full-day kindergarten classes in the district.

La Rosa's diverse student population consists of 635 students, of which 60% are Asian, 28% are Hispanic, 7% Caucasian and the remaining 5% are from various ethnicities. Within this student population, 45% of our students are socioeconomically disadvantaged, 30% are English Language Learners and 18% are students with disabilities.

The La Rosa teaching staff consists of 28 general education teachers, six Special Education teachers and one Specialized Academic Instruction teacher. Our teachers follow an instructional program which reflects the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). In addition, our staff implements teaching strategies such as Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI), GLAD techniques, coding and Google Classroom.

In addition to our regular academic program, La Rosa is proud to be the first K–3 Computer Immersion School in the country. As a result of our 1:1, student to device ratio, we implement coding on a daily basis in grades K–3. In addition to coding, La Rosa also utilizes an adaptive computer program to serve as a means of intervention, as well as extension, for our students.

The Six Pillars of Character is the primary character education initiative used at La Rosa. Also, for the past four years, we've implemented Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) on a school-wide level. To support these programs, La Rosa participates in the Great Kindness Challenge, the Calm School Initiative, Bucket Filling and Morning Meetings.

Parents and stakeholders have many opportunities to be involved and participate in the decision making process through regularly scheduled School Site Council (SSC) meetings, Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, as well as the English Learner Advisory Council (ELAC). La Rosa, in partnership with the PTA, hosts numerous events throughout the year such as Family Fun Nights, Breakfast with Santa, Spirit Days, Movie Nights, and a STEAM night and day for the students.

Model Program and Practices

Name of Model Program/Practice: Computer Science - Coding

Length of Model Program/Practice: Less than 2 years

Target Area(s): Closing the Achievement Gap, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, Use of Technology

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, Professional Development, Implementation of Academic Standards Basics (Teachers, Instructional Materials, Facilities)

Description

La Rosa's model program deals with computer science, specifically coding. La Rosa's staff and parents, in conjunction with District personnel, believed we needed to offer students more opportunities to grow in technological fields. As a result, during the 2016–2017 school year, La Rosa partnered with Code to the Future (CTTF) to implement a coding curriculum for all grades K–3.

Students work on coding, or coding prerequisite skills daily. These daily skills work towards the completion of three "epic builds", one per trimester. The lessons during the first trimester cover the Scratch programming language (Scratch Jr. in kindergarten). The second trimester covers robotics in grades 2 & 3 through the use of Lego WeDo kits. Kindergarten and 1st grade discuss the concepts of community while utilizing coding concepts in conjunction with Legos. The third trimester focuses on Minecraft in 2nd and 3rd grade while Kindergarten and 1st grade focus on pixel art. Most of the activity occurs within the classrooms. However, a classroom has been dedicated as a lab for teachers to bring their class to work on special projects.

Each instructional cycle is roughly 12 weeks. At the end of each instructional cycle, La Rosa holds a coding showcase. The campus is opened up, during the school day, to parents and community members. A group of students present a keynote address to all visitors. Stakeholders then visit the classrooms where all the students share their projects and new found knowledge.

The program is designed to be an introduction to the world of computer science. All stakeholders believe it is important to introduce computer science concepts at an early age as a way of introducing possible college and career paths for our students and their future.

Implementation and Monitoring

The implementation of the program is taking place in three different areas: professional development, weekly coaching and direct instruction.

In the area of professional development (PD), La Rosa has implemented PD in two different ways. During the first year of implementation, we set aside early release afternoons built in to the school calendar as a time for Code to the Future (CTTF) trainers to meet with staff. During the second year of implementation, we have designated three school days as pull-out days for full-day trainings. During those three days, teachers were assigned a full-day substitute to allow the staff to meet with the CTTF trainers and collaborate on the learning.

The partnership between La Rosa and CTTF included teacher coaching days. Administration believed it was important to build more coaching days into the first year of implementation. During the first year, each teacher met with a coach weekly. The teacher had the option of watching the coach lead the lesson or lead the lesson with the coach observing. During the second year, each teacher met with a coach every other week and led the lesson with the coach observing. In addition, La Rosa administration meets monthly with a CTTF supervisor to discuss concerns, next steps, etc.

As a result of the PD and coaching, teachers lead daily activities with the students. Each lesson is 30 minutes in length. The lessons are digital or analog, depending on the grade level and the concept. Each student has a Chromebook in class to work on the coding concepts discussed in the daily activity.

In regards to monitoring, teachers are asked at the beginning of the school year to submit a daily schedule outlining the times coding would take place in the classroom. La Rosa administration uses those schedules to visit the classrooms and evaluate/monitor delivery and efficacy. Regularly scheduled staff meetings are used to give and receive feedback regarding the implementation of the program. Parental feedback is gathered during informal discussions before and after school and during public showcases.

Results and Outcomes

The goal of the program is for students to gain introductory knowledge and skills in the area of coding and computer science, as well as infusing computer science vocabulary into the students' natural speech patterns. Students are introduced to concepts like looping, overlapping, stacking, sequencing, input and output. The students then apply these skills in the other content areas. For example, students apply sequencing skills in ELA, input & output in math.

School climate has improved. Students report they "love" using the computers and are "thankful we have coding at our school". Students report they "want to be a computer programmer" when they get older. Parents have shared with administration and staff how happy, excited and thankful computer science is part of their student's day. Teachers have shared with administration they see the skills being taught through the computer science lessons used in the other disciplines. In addition, teachers have reported a higher level of creativity in the students' responses during classroom discussions as well as in their classwork.

Parent interest and attendance has been high during all the showcases. Parent attendance has averaged 70%, which is to be commended since the events take place in the middle of the workday.

Student test scores have also been positively affected since the implementation of the program. State test scores in ELA rose 4.1%, English Learner Progress increased 7.7% and Math scores increased 9.9%. Student discipline has also been impacted since the beginning of the program. School suspensions remained very low at 0.2%.