

## **Park Elementary School Model Programs and Practices**

### **School Information**

CDS (County District School) Code: 19757136011084

County: Los Angeles

District (Local Educational Agency): Alhambra Unified

School: Park Elementary School

### **Demographics**

Enrollment: 738 students

Location Description: Suburban

Title I Funded: Yes

Type of Program: School-wide

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

### **Overview**

Park Elementary School is one of 13, TK–8 schools within the Alhambra Unified School District, located in the suburban city of Alhambra, California. The district serves over 16,726 students, of which 738 currently attend Park School.

Park's School Community is culturally and ethnically diverse, comprised of about 55% Hispanic, 37 % Asian, 5% White, 2% African American and 1% other. 26% of the population is considered English Learners and 65% come from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds. The three major languages other than English spoken by students' families include Spanish, Chinese and Vietnamese. Park services students with disabilities, with about 10% of the students qualifying for services.

A focus has been placed on decreasing truancy rates and increasing student attendance with truancy rates decreasing from 19.95% to 15.45%. Such growth has occurred by recognizing students with monthly perfect attendance certificates, perfect

attendance class trophies, monitoring truancies daily, and holding consistent pre-SART and SART meetings.

Park School is proud of being a collaborative, student first school. It employs the District's Gateway to Success tenets in conjunction with supporting a positive approach to discipline. Great efforts are placed towards truly knowing each student, disciplining with dignity and modeling of expected behaviors. The use of Panther Paws, Student of the Month character traits and Most Improved Family Breakfasts all recognize those who exhibit desired behaviors. Lastly, the Associated Student Body has begun a Kindness Campaign to decrease overall bullying.

Collaboration exists within three essential school teams: Cadre, CAST and Safety Committee. These teams meet at least monthly with the administration. The Cadre's focus is on instructional practices and supports. Cadre analyzes data, conducts learning walks and identifies professional development topics. CAST's focus is to discuss grade level needs and adopt effective school wide procedures. Safety Committee's purpose is to enhance overall security so that students are able to learn in a safe and nurturing environment.

Park's families are an integral component to the overall success of the students. Thus, Park has established, P.E.P.: Park Empowering Parents where parents can learn a wide array of skills through 8 week courses in Technology, Language Arts, Math, Science, parenting skills, and Coffee with the Principal. Park School has collaborated with East Los Angeles College to provide parents with an English as a Second Language class. There are numerous community building events such as Literacy and Science Nights, Family Picnic Night, Latino Family Festival, Lunar New Year Festival and International Day. The "Panther Pride" students, staff and families have stems from the collaboration and persevering together to help students demonstrate social-emotional and academic success!

## **Model Program and Practices**

Name of Model Program/Practice: A.C.C.E.S.S.

Length of Model Program/Practice: 2–4 years

Target Area(s): Chronic Absenteeism and Dropout Prevention, Closing the Achievement Gap, Education Supports, Parent, Family, and Community Involvement, Professional Development, Use of Technology

Target Population(s): Hispanic, White, 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

A.C.C.E.S.S. (Academic Rigor, Collaboration, Community and Parent Involvement, Environment that is Safe and Supportive, Specialized Programs and Student Success) was developed in response to a thorough analysis of Park's benchmark SBAC data 3 years ago. Its foundation is continually solidified through an in depth process of determining program effectiveness through data analysis. A.C.C.E.S.S. is Park's unique, all-encompassing model program that captures the school's dedication to collaboration, academic stimulation, and community involvement.

Park's primary focus is effective, rigorous first instruction. Park uses Balanced Literacy as promoted by the District, however it is distinguished in that the workshop model has been implemented for Reading, Writing and Math. To effectively differentiate lessons for EL students, all Park teachers use GLAD strategies. Park is distinguished in that GLAD strategies are used not only for ELA, but also Math, Science and Social Studies. Thinking Maps are used to support GLAD and address the visual learners in our classrooms. Behavioral expectations from the book, *Teach like a Champion* by Doug Lemov have propelled teachers to use college and career readiness techniques such as No Opt Out, SLANT, 100%, and Circulate. Park proactively identifies struggling students via e-SSTs and holds traditional SSTs as needed. Our specialized programs to support struggling students include iRead, Imagine Learning, Acellus, and Leveled Literacy Intervention.

Depth and Complexity Icons and Menu Choices not only complement our workshop model of teaching but also increase student motivation and academic challenge while supporting student collaboration and communication. To further increase collaboration, teachers model and encourage the use of close reading strategies, academic conversations, and accountable talk.

Park is committed to promote student leaders within a safe and nurturing learning environment. Distinguished from the District, Park holds monthly student assemblies where perfect attendance is recognized, trophies are awarded to classrooms by grade level, a social emotional focus is reinforced, and ASB leaders discuss events for the month. Park is promoting a college-going atmosphere where every grade level will visit a college or university campus by the end of the school year. The hope is that students will be exposed to 9 different college campuses by the time they leave Park. Every first Friday of the month is college day where students are encouraged to wear a college t-shirt and have dedicated the month of December as College and Career Month.

We embrace our community and encourage their active participation. Distinguished from the District is our unique set of P.E.P. classes. We are hoping to "empower" our parents to be educational partners with the school. Parent suggestions are actively taken and incorporated with the goal of increasing community engagement and communication.

## Implementation and Monitoring

ACCESS' Implementation began with the data analysis from various school groups three years ago. Since then, our teacher leader teams, Cadre and CAST as well as our parent team School Site Council (SSC) and English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC) have served as a checks and balances to ensure effective implementation guided through data analysis. The Cadre's purpose is to monitor program effectiveness and consider feedback received from SSC and ELAC. This is accomplished through ongoing quantitative data analysis from formative and summative assessments, intervention programs, SBAC and CELDT. This year, Cadre has begun using Data Wise for this. Distinguished from the District, Park has adopted Learning Walks as a means to gather qualitative data. Parents from SSC and ELAC are also invited to participate in the Learning Walks. By encouraging peers to visit classrooms, instructional needs are determined. During our monthly CAST meetings, members discuss their particular grades' concerns, level of program implementation, and further supports so school wide success is seen with the agreed upon instructional practices. These suggestions are then brought back to Cadre, whose members make informed decisions to revise Park's Professional Development Plan.

Goal achievement and ACCESS success is communicated to all members of the school community. Data outcomes are presented to staff members after Cadre and SSC have conducted thorough analysis of the ongoing data collection. At these staff meetings, program adjustments are presented with the aligned data justifying the reason for changes. Opportunities for staff members to present their reflections and suggestions are also provided and taken for consideration at Cadre meetings. Parents are also informed of both successes and needs for adjustments at School Site Council Meetings, ELAC and other relevant parent training. Parents are provided with a synopsis of data findings, teacher reflections and Cadre decisions for direction and instructional guidance. For Learning Walks, Cadre develops Implementation Indicators. These indicators provide us feedback as to the type of professional development support grade levels or individual teachers may need. It allows us to provide truly differentiated PD to the staff. Both the quantitative and qualitative data gathered have become our focal point for synthesizing our analysis and providing all Park stakeholders key findings regarding ACCESS' success in meeting our goal of closing the achievement gap with our Hispanic, EL, SED, and EO populations and demonstrating overall growth in ELA and Math for all of our students.

## Results and Outcomes

After 3 years of implementing ACCESS, the percentage of EL students making progress towards English proficiency at Park School in ELA is 82.4% as compared to the District's 75.2%. In the last three years, Park has increased the number of overall students meeting proficiency in ELA by 7.6 points whereby the District increased by 3.2 points. In Math, all students working towards proficiency increased by 8.2 points as compared to the District's increase of 4.6 points.

When looking at our special populations, by using GLAD strategies and workshop model teaching styles, Park increased ELA scores by 7.2 points for Students who are Economically Disadvantaged (SED) while the District increased by 1.6 points for this same population. In Math, SED students increased by 10.4 points at Park while the District increased by 2.5 points. Our Hispanic students had a 7.2 point growth in ELA and 2 points in Math, surpassing the District in both subjects. When we first started with ACCESS, we realized our White students needed to grow as a drop had been seen. Recent data indicates a 23 point growth in Math for White students at Park. That is nearly a positive 12 point difference that the District's increase.

Currently, we have a total of 190 e-SSTs: a system we created at Park to monitor electronically any student receiving intervention and identified as not making adequate progress based on report cards, SBAC, and benchmark assessments. Our number of traditional SSTs have increased from 28 last year to 49 thus far. Of these 49, 2 have exited, 3 require monitoring, 6 were provided behavioral support, 21 have had more than 1 follow up and 8 have been referred for a special education evaluation.

Before beginning P.E.P. there were a total of 90 parents that participated in meetings throughout the year. At the conclusion of last school year, Park had a total of 186 parents who participated in meetings and training throughout the year. Currently, we have had 112 parents participate, with still one more trimester left in the school year. The number does not include the 30–40 parents that attend ESL classes 3x per week and 20–30 parents that attend Coffee with the Principal every other month.

These findings allow us to validate our efforts while our continuous data analysis allows us to reflect upon our practice and improve as needed with the purpose of making strategic, targeted, sound instructional decisions. Parent participation has increased from three years ago. Feedback received from the community indicates parents feel welcome and able to collaborate with the school to offer children a more comprehensive and safe learning environment. Our data is the guiding principle that led us to create our program model 3 years ago, a model we envisioned to encompass academic and social emotional development, community outreach and teacher capacity building to promote continuous growth in our school. Thus far, we have been providing ACCESS for all!