

Elmer Wood Elementary School Model Programs and Practices

School Information

CDS (County District School) Code: 24656316025332

County: Merced

District (Local Educational Agency): Atwater Elementary

School: Elmer Wood Elementary School

Demographics

Enrollment: 535 students

Location Description: Suburban

Title I Funded: Yes

Type of Program: School-wide

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

Overview

Elmer Wood Elementary School is built upon the vision that “Every Child is a Masterpiece in the Making!” Our programs strive to meet the diverse needs of all students. These vision and mission statements are not only aligned with the era of the Common Core State Standards by highlighting both the necessary academic and social-behavioral skills needed for students to be college and career ready, but also incorporates the sense of belonging at Elmer Wood that extends to all students, staff, parents, and community. Immediately upon stepping foot on the campus, one can feel the positive school culture beginning with the smiles and welcoming greetings by our staff, visual displays of student created artwork, and posted inspirations for behavior, attendance, and academic performance. The student-centered environment and rich traditions are what make Elmer Wood School what it is today.

The campus was founded in 1958 by Elmer B. Wood and continues to serve the Wood family as the great-grandchildren of Mr. Wood continue to attend today. A testament to

the longevity that can be found at Elmer Wood, most people who come to Elmer Wood, stay!

Elmer Wood educators and support staff are a passionate and enthusiastic professional community dedicated to guiding our Woodchuck students not only towards mastery of the grade level standards, but also to the goal of becoming a person of strong character. Our classrooms are designed with intentionality and utilize proven educational practices to help every student rise to the high expectations set for them.

The campus serves students in transitional kindergarten to grade six with a total current enrollment of 540 students. Our student population presents with both academic prowess and strong character, as our students internalize the “3R’s” of the ‘The Elmer Wood Way’ to include Respect, Responsibility, and Readiness, despite many facing challenges including poverty (82% economically disadvantaged), challenge to master English while mastering the Common Core State Standards (24% English Language Learners), and/or achieving mastery while participating with a disability (10% students with disabilities).

Elmer Wood holds a reputation in the community as being a Distinguished School having first been named so in May 2008. Also, in April 2009, the Title I Academic Achievement Award was earned. Nonetheless, when the first CAASPP scores were received in Spring 2015, Elmer Wood staff and students were surprised to see performance at or below similar schools in the area with ELA proficiency rates ranging from the 32nd to 44th percentile and mathematics proficiency rates ranging from the 12th percentile to just below the 30th percentile. It was at this time that we committed to collaborate together to ensure a return to success for all students through both a common instructional vision and targeted intervention practices specifically designed for each student.

Model Program and Practices

Name of Model Program/Practice: Collaborative Data Driven Instruction and Targeted Intervention Model

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, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, Use of Technology, Visual and Performing A

Target Population(s): American Indian, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, 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

Driven to accelerate student success and to improve CAASPP results, staff implemented the following instructional practices:

Common language and actions associated with the three district-wide instructional practices to drive daily instruction collaboratively developed with WestEd (learning objectives, student engagement, depth of knowledge).

Site funds used to augment professional development for 3rd–6th grades to hone the three instructional practices via the WestEd POD model (plan, observe, debrief).

In addition to the focus on high quality instruction, implementation of a robust, targeted academic intervention program was put into place. Academic conferencing and grade level collaboration strategies were utilized. Tier 2 and 3 level intervention supports collaboratively designed to increase the number of students reaching proficiency with grade level standards in ELA and math include:

Provision of instructional assistants in TK and kindergarten for intentional small group intervention and enrichment of the core program. Trained Instructional assistants support Elmer Wood kindergarten students who are considered at-risk in terms of literacy skills.

“Power Hour” interventions for 1st–3rd grade students in which the grade level teams are joined by three instructional assistants and students rotate to various classrooms to benefit from small group, targeted instruction in ELA.

Teachers in both kindergarten and grade two provide additional data driven intervention cross classroom rotations within the school day.

A primary reading coach supports designated 1st grade students 5 days per week focusing on foundational and reading comprehension skills.

Read180 core replacement program supports 4th–6th grade students at-risk in ELA. Elmer Wood employs a part-time instructional assistant to provide further Tier 2 support to this population. Tier 3 level supports are utilized to enhance Read180 curriculum for grades 4–6 students identified as having a disability requiring special education supports.

After reviewing CAASPP two-year trends, it became apparent to staff that 3rd–4th grades were rapidly improving in math, while 5th–6th grades were gaining much more slowly. Math180 was implemented during the 2017–18 school year. Site funds were

utilized to add instructional assistant support to further differentiate instruction for this population.

All grade levels have the ability to create targeted Extended Day and Intervention Camps based on data analyzed through the academic conferencing process. The focus of these after or before school interventions is the movement of students in the basic range to the proficient range in ELA and/or math.

Elmer Wood also provides a Homework Club 5 days per week after school for one hour. This intervention is open to students who are foster youth, English learners, and/or at-risk per teacher referral. Site funds are utilized to add one instructional assistant to support grade 4 math.

Implementation and Monitoring

Model program implementation and monitoring includes both the academic conferencing and grade level collaboration components. Academic Conferencing, as per the Strategic Schooling model, is conducted three times per school year in order to analyze the performance of each student and design interventions based on the data collected. Data analyzed is summative in nature and based on district-wide benchmarks, ESGI tasks in the primary grade levels, as well as the Reading Inventory, Math Inventory, and several CAASPP IABs for grades three and above. These data points provide a uniform way to monitor progress with consistency. Data is maintained by grade level in a shared Google document and includes student performance indicators and prescribed interventions. Additional monitoring is conducted through grade level collaboration time that is provided weekly (75 minutes per week). Teams are charged with determining what information has been mastered, must be retaught at the whole class or small group levels. Further implementation and monitoring practices supporting the collaborative data driven instruction and targeted intervention model include:

Early Start for all TK and kindergarten students which allows for a 'jump start' into school and academic readiness. Students attend school for three days on a modified schedule prior to the start of school with a focus on classroom and school based routines and procedures necessary for academic success.

Student Data Chats are conducted by classroom teachers prior to major assessments at each trimester. Students are required to reflect on how they are performing currently, how they want to do in the future, and what they are going to do to get there.

Test Chats are conducted one time per year prior to the CAASPP administration. These test chats are preceded by a CAASPP rally when the Elmer Wood theme of the testing season is revealed! This rally is a celebration that primes students to do their best on the test! Recent CAASPP themes have included CAASPP Superheros and CAASPP Jedi Students who "used the force to succeed!" Community based test chats follow the morning after the CAASPP rally in which each student grades three through six participates in a formal data chat with a community member to include local educators

and administrators from junior high and high schools, firefighters, police officers, coaches, and city officials. Students discuss their performance on benchmarks to date, set a goal for their CAASPP performance, and review test taking tips. This experience is incredibly rewarding not only for the students, but for the community members who look forward to participating with us each year.

EL student preparation not only includes test chats and a preparation rally specific formerly to the CELDT and currently to the ELPAC, as described above, but also incorporates both within school supports and after school intervention based on student performance data.

Results and Outcomes

Quantitative data from our collaborative and data driven focus on instruction and targeted intervention at Elmer Wood clearly demonstrates that this model program practice is driving student success. In the 2017–18 school year, Elmer Wood was reported in the local newspaper for being one of only five schools in Merced County to beat the statewide average performance on the CAASPP in ELA and math. Growth from the first CAASPP administration to the current results is significant and a testimony to the effectiveness of our model. Grade three data from Spring 2015 CAASPP administration compared to 2017 administration revealed growth in both ELA and math with math improving to 33% more students meeting or exceeding the standard. Grade four results found a 28% increase in students meeting or exceeding in the standard in ELA and a 29% increase in students meeting or exceeding the math standard. For grade five, students meeting or exceeding the ELA standard increased by 12% and in math by 7%. Grade six students increased significantly by 25% in ELA and 23% increase in math with students meeting or exceeding standards.

More students test in the proficient range at the start of each year in Reading Inventory data, as we continue to meet or exceed our school goal of increasing the number of students reading in the proficient range by 10% or greater throughout the school year. In 2016–17, 29% of students tested in the proficient range per the Reading Inventory. By the second trimester, 40% of students were proficient with a year end proficiency rate of 46%. In 2017–18, 34% of students tested as initially proficient with 45% of all students demonstrating proficiency in reading by the second trimester.

The model program practices, including the collaboratively designed PBIS practices, have resulted in a continual decline in discipline incidents including suspension (declined in 2016–17 by 70% and an additional 20% in 2017–18), as well as a continual improvement in daily attendance rate (increased by .74%).

Performance levels for all students per the state indicators of Suspension Rate, English Language Learners, ELA, and Math, as measured by the California School Dashboard placed within the 'Green' rating range (level four of five levels). Elmer Wood Elementary School was the only school in the Atwater Elementary School District to receive such ratings.

Conducted annually, 2016–17 parent survey results overwhelmingly demonstrated that Woodchuck families feel that our school promotes academic success for all students, motivates students to learn, is a safe place for students to learn, and has adults who really care about students!

Results from the model program practices were showcased at this year's Association of California School Administrators conference with Principal Kelli Parreira, together with three district representatives in partnership with Wested. We presented on the instructional impact of the model program practices on site.