Newland Elementary
Model Programs and Practices

School Information

CDS (County District School) Code: 30664986027999

County: Orange

District (Local Educational Agency): Fountain Valley Elementary

School: Newland Elementary

Demographics

Enrollment: 496 students

Location Description: Suburban

Title I Funded: No

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

Overview

William T. Newland Elementary is one of seven elementary schools in the Fountain Valley School District, located in Orange County, CA. Currently, the school serves the needs of 496 students, ranging from our Transitional Kindergarten to fifth grade. The student demographics of the school are: 61% Caucasian, 17% Hispanic, 13% Asian and 9% encompassing a number of ethnic and racial groups. Additionally, 12% of Newland's students are receiving specialized academic services and 18% of our students are low-income.

The mission of Newland Elementary School is to provide an educational environment in which academic excellence is expected and all children are encouraged to develop their maximum potential through a positive attitude toward self and others, a love of learning, an appreciation for diversity in others, and the cultivation of the ability to be a productive, useful member of society. The focus is on the unique needs of elementary school students as they transition through elementary and on to middle school.

Newland Elementary has continued to thrive through innovative advancements in curriculum and instruction. Examples include: small group instruction, Cognitively Guided Instruction, and reading intervention promoting academic achievements at all levels. Newland has always been a school where creative funding and volunteerism have helped to maintain a culture and climate that positively impact our entire student population, staff, and community.

Newland's focus on academic achievement requires us to continually adapt to the ever-changing needs of our students. The successes of our efforts are reflected in yearly increases in our proficiency rates on the Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium (SBAC) testing. Proudly, Newland continues to have our students demonstrate proficiency at a high level with students averaging 84% proficiency in ELA and 84% proficiency in Mathematics for the 2016–2017 school year.

Newland also provides students with an enriched curriculum program. We are very fortunate to be able to offer choir, orchestra, and band programs, along with several music-focused assemblies throughout the year. In addition, we also have a wide-ranging art program implemented throughout the school. Newland is focused on educating the whole child and fostering a sense of belonging to the school community. It is our mission to propel our Newland Dolphins to their greatest learning and social growth potential.

Model Program and Practices

Name of Model Program/Practice: Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI)

Length of Model Program/Practice: 5–8 years

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

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

Strategies Used: Small Learning Communities, Data-Driven Decision Making

Description

William T. Newland Elementary is committed to implementing a rigorous mathematics program with an emphasis on collaboration, communication, critical thinking and problem solving. To reach this goal, we have adopted Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI) as our school's model program.

CGI is a differentiated student-centered approach to teaching math. Students use their innate knowledge of numbers and mathematical strategies to develop high level mathematical thinking. They develop skills to solve, communicate and defend their solutions to rigorous problems.

Our journey with CGI began with a grant from the Cotsen Foundation, years before our district adopted CGI as a signature practice. This grant allowed teachers to be trained and gather the essential resources needed in order to implement the program in their classrooms. Initial resources included: student manipulatives, teacher literature, conference attendance, on and off site visitations, and PLC time.

After our district adopted CGI as a signature practice, teachers were offered further training presented by Teri Malpas and 100% of the staff was able to attend this voluntary PD. Also, our primary staff joined a district level CGI focused PLC funded by an additional Cotsen grant to expand their knowledge and facilitate the implementation of CGI. As a result of this professional development, we have been able to proliferate outstanding CGI teaching throughout the district. Newland teachers often model lessons for district colleagues because of our early adoption and extensive training.

At its core, CGI is a differentiated math philosophy that allows students multiple entry points and the ability to reach the students' fullest potential. Unique student populations benefit from the learning communities that teachers develop in which students feel free to share their ideas and build their understanding of mathematics through peer communication. Many children need additional help visualizing story problems, which can be facilitated through the use of manipulatives, drawings, and talking through the problem. Differentiation benefits all students by allowing them to choose the degree of difficulty of a given problem, as well as the methods and tools best suited to their learning style. CGI has impacted our students in positive ways as evidenced by their attitudes and confidence towards math. Students are willing to take risks and view errors as learning opportunities.

Our goal for adopting CGI was to increase our students' mathematical competency, deepen their understanding of number sense, help them better communicate their thought processes, and recognize that there are many paths to solving problems. The demands of a changing world require students to have proficient critical thinking and problem solving skills. It is our belief that CGI will assist students to succeed in today's challenging work force and positively impact their families and communities.

Implementation and Monitoring

Parents and the community are an integral part of the ongoing success of Newland Elementary. Teachers employ various methods of engaging our stakeholders, in particular parents, in the CGI program. Since CGI is vastly different from traditional mathematics, parents require direct explanation of the philosophy and methods behind the CGI model. Teachers communicate through Back to School Night, one-on-one conferencing, letters home, social media postings, student work, and communication with School Site Council and PTA. Many teachers have parent volunteers within the classroom who are actively engaged in facilitating and supporting instruction, including CGI. With our program beginning at TK, parents are exposed to the CGI model at the earliest level in their student's academic journey. As a result, parents' knowledge and awareness of CGI grows as their student's skills progress through the grade levels.

Since the CGI philosophy is highly valued by the Newland staff, we have chosen to tailor many of our professional learning activities to the furtherance of these practices. Our teachers engage in cross grade level collaboration in order to assure the smooth transition of our students to the next grade level. To meet this goal, grade levels have established essential vocabulary and strategies to create a continuum of learning. In addition, we have determined the core components that our teachers feel are critical to the effective application of CGI. Our staff believes that these components (120's board, vocabulary, and problem solving) are non-negotiable elements for the successful implementation of CGI. Each teacher has signed an agreement pledging to include these components in their daily instruction. Our teachers' strong belief in the effectiveness of CGI fosters an atmosphere of collaboration and connectedness.

The monitoring and assessment methods used to evaluate the effectiveness of CGI are distinguished by formal and informal assessment methods. In the primary grades teachers essentially rely on observation, anecdotal notes, checklists, rubrics, mathematical dialogue, and formal testing to monitor and assess student growth. Statewide testing is included as a form of assessment for the upper grades. The baseline data, which provides an understanding of the learner's thinking, allows teachers to tailor instruction to meet the specific needs of each student. Teachers continually self assess and adjust their teaching practices to maximize student achievement. Newland School is committed to continued assessment, monitoring, and analysis in order to maintain high student success.

Results and Outcomes

Ongoing progress monitoring is essential for ensuring continued high levels of student achievement and CGI program success. At the beginning of each school year, teachers are provided with the previous year's testing results. Through analysis, the staff is able to identify areas of focus. Overall needs of additional support or resources are identified and a plan is put into place to aid in their improvement of implementation of CGI. Furthermore, individual student scores are analyzed and this data is used to flexibly group students for instruction. Throughout the school year, monitoring and assessment is used to reevaluate differentiated groupings and students' needs. In addition, teacher collaboration and grade level team planning further support progress monitoring and program effectiveness. Principal walk-throughs and feedback assure that all teachers are working together to effectively implement CGI.

Newland staff and students have a history of educational excellence and have been honored with various awards over the past five years. Teachers hold high expectations for student achievement and are committed to meeting the needs of all students. Our school community was thrilled with the dramatic increase of our recent California Assessment of Students Performance and Progress (CAASPP) scores. On Newland's 2017 CAASPP scores, math proficiency for 3rd through 5th grade students averaged 84%. Furthermore, between 2015 and 2017, Newland's proficiency grew by 14% points. Also, Newland saw a 19% point gain in 3rd grade over that period of time. Newland's 2017 math proficiency scores were 14% points higher than our district average and 36% points higher than the County averages. We also experienced increases in our student

subgroups. Newland's low-income subgroup made impressive gains and grew by 20% points and our English Learner subgroup grew by 14% points. These gains validate Newland's success in the effective implementation of the CGI model and reflect our commitment to addressing the unique needs of each and every student on our campus.

Newland staff recognizes the correlation between CGI, differentiated instruction efforts, and the expectations for student performance that are delineated in the new California State Standards. By providing regular opportunities for our students to purposefully work together, we are promoting collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and problem solving, effectively preparing 21st Century Learners for college and career.

It is the strong belief of every teacher and staff member of Newland Elementary that each child is gifted with special and unique qualities. As we strive to evolve in our model practice, we anticipate the lasting effect that our efforts will have on our students. It is our vision that as they go forth into society, they will positively impact their communities, nation, and world. In so doing, they will build a solid foundation for future generations.