

Evans Elementary Model Programs and Practices

School Information

CDS (County District School) Code: 30665226028377

County: Orange

District (Local Educational Agency): Garden Grove Unified

School: Evans Elementary

Demographics

Enrollment: 509 students

Location Description: Urban

Title I Funded: Yes

Type of Program: School-wide

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

Overview

Evans Elementary School is a professional, educational, and mentoring community committed to partnership and academic success for all students. What Evans provides makes a difference in the lives of our students, our families, our community, and society as a whole. This diverse community has one common goal: that all children will receive the education they deserve, that academic gaps will be closed, and that all students will meet or exceed California's rigorous Common Core grade level standards. The school is located in Garden Grove, California and is one of 70 schools in the Garden Grove Unified.

School District. Garden Grove Unified School District is the second largest school district among the 28 public school districts in Orange County. Evans school has a diverse population of 509 students, or as we call them scholars rich in diversity and culture. At Evans 59% of the students are Hispanic, 35% are Asian, 2% are White, and the other 4% are Pacific Islander, Filipino, or African American. Seventy-one percent of

the students at Evans are socioeconomically disadvantaged. 44% are English Learners and 8% are students with disabilities.

School leadership represents a partnership between the principal, teachers, and classified staff, students, families and parent organizations. The principal is a professional educator of 18 years. There are seven teachers who represent each grade level as grade level representatives, 21 certificated teachers, educational coaches for training, supportive classified staff, an active student council, and parents that form a PTA with over 75 volunteers. Our site-based plan includes lesson studies, research-based strategies, and on-site coaching. There exists a one-to-one ratio of technology and students to boost the scholars' 21st century skills. English Learners receive instruction that teaches the forms and functions of English through daily instructional time. The collaborative learning environment created is focused on academic skills, personal skills, and lifelong success.

Evans School is a community with a strong spirit of collaboration and friendship. Many of the staff members have worked together for decades and celebrate not only professional and academic successes, but also the ones that happen in day-to-day life. There exists a kinship among the staff that

promotes positive staff interaction, a sense of teamwork, a willingness to share, and a professional environment. Both staff and parents have family members who have attended here. There exists a collaborative community with a strong Parent Teacher Association (PTA), School Site Council (SSC), English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC) and principal/parent meetings.

The mascot at Evans is an eagle that represents the soaring spirit of the staff, students and families that are committed to ongoing scholastic transformation, high expectations for students and staff, and that each child shall have an exemplary elementary education.

Model Program and Practices

Name of Model Program/Practice: Teacher Leadership Creates Student Achievement

Length of Model Program/Practice: 2–4 years

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

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

Strategies Used: 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

Evans Elementary School "Teacher Leadership Creates Student Achievement" model is a multifaceted approach that builds teacher leaders with the goal to improve instruction, support student personal skills and prepare students for lifelong success. In 2013 the Garden Grove Unified District (GGUSD) coordinated a process of stakeholder engagement around the development of a Strategic Plan, which is aligned with the district LCAP. Evans Elementary goal of creating teacher leaders is in direct alignment to GGUSD Strategic Plan and LCAP. Evans has had teachers take on many roles to support the school.

The roles were usually informal. There was a need to address the achievement of second-language students, students with social-emotional needs, students with behavior issues and chronic absences along with rising suspensions. After school data analysis and much faculty discussion, it was determined improving student achievement could be accomplished by creating more formal instructional practices. As a result, teacher leaders were selected to participate in demonstration teacher strategy academies, build strong instructional leadership teams, and ensure targeted grade level collaborations that would create visionary, supportive and powerful teacher leaders.

Demonstration teacher strategy academy is a volunteer, district-wide program dedicated to training teachers in a specific instructional practice, while being released from the classroom. Teachers are thoroughly trained at the district level by being guided through an in-depth analysis of standards and curriculum with the intention of leading their peers through the same process. Instructional leadership teams (ILT) is composed of a teacher representative from each grade level, district level Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) and the principal that collaborate using a Plan-Do-Analyze-Reflect (PDAR) process. A focus California State Standard is selected in grade-level meetings and the teachers collaboratively plan a lesson. Grade-level collaboration meetings happen weekly to discuss lesson planning, refining teaching practices, and student progress.

These practices/programs are now a permanent part of Evans professional development culture. Not only have these practices created strong teacher leaders, but have also fostered a climate of support, tolerance, and rich learning for our students, parents, and administration.

Implementation and Monitoring

The three practices of Demonstration Teacher Strategy Academy, ILT, and collaboration were needed to effectively implement the Teacher Leadership Model. Instruction was strengthened because each teacher participated in at least one part of the practices. Every grade level had a teacher that participated in the Demonstration Teacher Strategy Academy. This equated to seven teacher coaches that had focused training on instructional strategies and who could lend professional support to their colleagues as teacher leaders. This phenomenon of having each grade level represented is rare. To monitor the Demonstration Teacher Strategy Academy the

TOSA, demo teacher, and teacher observers would debrief after the lesson was taught. Discussion was centered on the detailed successes and challenges of the lesson so that the teachers could confidently implement the strategy in their classrooms.

The ILT process is a distributive-leadership model that cycles through meetings at the district, site, and grade level. The district ILT meeting is composed of district personnel, other site administrators and TOSAs. The site ILT meeting is comprised of teachers, the principal, and TOSA to facilitate the PDAR process. District and site meetings focus on topics such as essential Common Core standards and research-based instructional strategies. The teacher leaders take what was introduced at the site meeting to the grade level meeting. In these meetings, teachers create standard focused lessons, monitor work samples, reflect on student work, and evaluate the overall lesson effectiveness. Based on data and teacher discussion, each grade level has the freedom to select standards and lessons. This, in turn, is brought back to the next site meeting to be shared, refined, and used to improve teacher practices.

The teachers at Evans participate in weekly Grade Level Collaboration Meetings led by a Grade Level Chair (GLC) to discuss standards and teaching practices. They share and examine instructional standards and methods in an open-minded environment. Grade-level teams also meet vertically to ensure that our student expectations are aligned and progressive. These meetings work to build strong teachers and college-career ready students.

Evans is unique as 75% teachers assume a leadership role at each grade level as a demonstration teacher, ILT facilitator or GLC lead. The organization, professionalism, and positive relationships among the teacher leaders are the catalyst for change that has occurred in student achievement.

The faculty felt it was important to build an effective partnership to communicate to parents the academic practices/programs implemented in the classroom. These practices are shared and discussed with parents during parent conferences, School Site Council, ELAC, and parent principal meetings.

Results and Outcomes

The outcomes of the Demonstration Teacher Strategy Academy are monitored through classroom observations as newly introduced strategies are implemented, analyzed, and adjusted after reflection. Assessments used to gauge learning effectiveness are student work and student discussions, as well as feedback from principal and grade-level teams. For ILT the outcomes are also measured by analysis of student work, archived lessons, and notes taken during teacher discussions. During grade-level collaboration there is a focused agenda that guides the meeting time and notes from the meeting are shared with the team and principal. The monitoring results from all three practices are used to differentiate instruction, improve teaching practices, enhance communication, and ultimately improve student outcomes.

Student outcomes are best illustrated in the following state data from the 2015–2017 SBAC. The data also reveals school-wide advances as well as improvement for Asian, Latino and white subgroup learners. In 2015, 43% of students school-wide were meeting standards for English Language Arts (ELA). In 2016, 54% of students school-wide were meeting standards for ELA. In 2017, 66% of students school-wide were meeting standards for ELA. The Asian subgroup over three years increased 20% going from 58% proficiency to 78% proficiency. The Latino subgroup increased 25% going from 33% proficiency to 58% proficiency. This overall increase for Evans in ELA is 23% in three years and was the greatest increase seen in GGUSD.

In 2015, 34% of students school-wide were meeting standards for math. In 2016, 50% of students school-wide were meeting standards for math. In 2017, 53% of students school-wide were meeting standards for math. The Asian subgroup over three years increased 19% and the Latino subgroup increased 14%. This overall increase for Evans in math is 19% in three years and was the greatest increase seen in GGUSD.

On the 2017 GGUSD Strategic Plan Survey, 90% of parents agreed that most of the teachers believe their child can be successful in their class. Ninety-two percent of parents are proud of their child's school. Eighty-nine percent of parents stated that the school is a supportive and an inviting place for students to learn.

The growth in student scores was so compelling that it motivates Evans' teachers to continue to implement the "Teacher Leadership Creates Student Achievement Model." This continued purposeful model will expose Evans teachers to effective practices, which will improve student outcomes. These outcomes will launch students into lifelong success in the classroom and beyond. The future challenge is to refine additional strategies while maintaining the current practices. The goal is to continue using and enhancing the "Teacher Leadership Creates Student Achievement Model" as it closes the achievement gap for students and improves teacher effectiveness.