

George S. Patton Elementary Model Programs and Practices

School Information

CDS (County District School) Code: 30665226028427

County: Orange

District (Local Educational Agency): Garden Grove Unified

School: George S. Patton Elementary

Demographics

Enrollment: 987 students

Location Description: Urban

Title I Funded: No

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

Overview

George S. Patton Elementary is the largest of 47 K–6 schools within the Garden Grove Unified School District, with a student population of 987 students. Nestled in a multi-generational neighborhood in West Garden Grove, Patton has a diverse ethnic population which includes the following: 34.6% Asian American, 31.5% White, 22.9% Hispanic students and 11% Other. There are 26 general education classrooms, nine Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) classrooms, two Mild/Moderate Special Education classrooms, and two Resource classrooms. Additionally, Patton has an array of over 50 specially-trained support personnel to meet the ongoing needs of the students. Despite the large staff and student population, this web of support gives Patton an intimate feeling of school-connectedness.

Teachers collaborate weekly to plan and deliver rigorous, standards-based lessons. In order to support teacher growth and collaboration, professional development is ongoing, with teachers participating in district-level institutes and strategy academies. Over the past three years, all subgroups have shown growth on state assessments and nearly 80% of students are currently meeting/exceeding standards in both Math and English

Language Arts. This demonstrates our school-wide focus on students' academic growth and achievement and socio-emotional development.

There is a strong sense of belonging at Patton, where our focus is on the whole child. Together, teachers, administrators, and parents have a strong collaborative spirit, which helps to provide many unique experiences for our students within and beyond the classroom. Enrichment opportunities such as Book Club, Running Club, Art Club, Coding/Robotics and Math Clubs, as well as musical theater productions, and instrumental/choral music programs all involve a large number of our students. Expansion of our curriculum through activities such as Egypt Day, Greek Games, Pioneer Day, Colonial Day, Rancho Day, and Snow Day, provide hands-on learning opportunities in an engaging context. Many of these activities would not be possible without the support of over 150 parent volunteers who dedicate more than 15,000 hours of time to our school annually. Our PTA has a strong rapport with our staff and is very receptive to the shared needs of our community, providing teachers with resources to support all students, such as motivational assemblies and family events.

With a large part of our academic program focusing on developing scholarly habits and positive character traits in our students, we have fostered a strong school community where students feel safe, accepted and are accepting of others. Mainstreaming of our Special Education students on a daily basis has been successful as a result of acceptance and support from teachers and peers alike. A positive school-community relationship has played an integral part in the success of all students.

Model Program and Practices

Name of Model Program/Practice: Instructional Leadership Team (ILT)

Length of Model Program/Practice: 2–4 years

Target Area(s): Closing the Achievement Gap, Education Supports, Parent, Family, and Community Involvement, Professional Development

Target Population(s): Asian, 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

As a common initiative, our district worked with all elementary sites to adopt a structured collaboration leadership model called Instructional Leadership Team (ILT). ILT provides protected time dedicated to building teacher capacity, continuous instructional growth, meeting student needs, and fostering a positive school climate.

Patton teachers are deeply invested in student success, and their insistence on placing high value on students' education leads to instructional improvement and high student achievement.

Our site ILT is comprised of one representative from each grade, administration, and a Teacher On Special Assignment (TOSA). The K–6 Department of Instruction provides professional development for administrators and TOSAs to support us in leading out site ILT. The Patton ILT meets monthly to reflect upon the ILT process, cross-grade level trends, and vertical alignment.

Using a distributive leadership model, the ILT leads facilitate weekly grade level collaborations to Plan, Do, Analyze, and Reflect (PDAR) upon lessons designed to meet targeted student needs. Grade levels determine which content area and standard to focus on based on the students' needs as determined by analysis of data and trends. In the "Plan" phase, the team studies the focus standard and plans a lesson that addresses that standard, identifying anticipated student responses that help gauge understanding. During the "Do" phase, team members teach the commonly planned lesson in their own classrooms. In the "Analyze" phase, the team uses lesson data as evidence to engage in conversation about the effectiveness of the lesson. The "Reflect" phase allows teachers to generate findings from previous phases, including their new understanding of the standard, where students are in relation to the standard, success indicators, and what needs further development.

This cyclical process is repeated throughout the year. Since teachers utilize similar learned strategies from ILT site meetings with our special populations (including GATE and Mild/Moderate Special Education students) every student benefits. Patton's site model is distinguished from others by including all of our General Education, Special Education, Resource and GATE Teachers in this weekly collaboration process. All students are taken into account when developing the lesson plans, embedding supports for all student levels, learning strategies, and student engagement.

ILT teacher leads are released from the classroom to participate in the ILT process for half-day sessions four times per year. Substitute teachers are provided and paid for using LCFF Funds under the Single School Plan, Goal 1A. ILT meeting agendas are driven by the needs of the students as determined by the teachers. As a result, our Patton scholars benefit from these grade level conversations through experiencing rigorous lessons that truly capture the essence of the standard and as a result leads to high student achievement.

Implementation and Monitoring

GGUSD utilizes the ILT process to provide a focus for instruction and a forum through which to analyze and discuss student achievement. At Patton Elementary, our teachers have embraced this process, which has led to significant and consistent positive practices during collaboration. ILT has also been a vehicle to build leadership capacity within our entire teaching staff as well as giving the students opportunities for student growth. Teachers participate in a variety of professional development opportunities

offered by the Department of K–6 Instruction, and each teacher incorporates and builds upon their learning during ILT.

ILT has provided structures that lead to better common understanding and analysis of standards at a deeper level, anticipation of student needs, and developing more engaging and rigorous lessons as a team. In order to meet the demands of state standards and new curriculum, Patton started implementation of ILT in 2014–15. Teachers realized the positive impact ILT had on their quality of instruction and effectiveness of collaboration as they analyzed the standards, built a stronger culture, and reflected and refined their teaching practices. Students benefit from the intentionally focused standards-based lessons that teachers have collectively designed with specific and frequent opportunities for student engagement and checks for understanding.

The ILT process has evolved over the course of many years. Patton teachers have ownership of the ILT process which distinguishes them from the formal GGUSD ILT process. We began with a shared focus on analyzing the new state standards in the area of reading to better understand the rigor and expectations of the standards, and provide a look at vertical alignment. Similarly, we applied the same areas of focus around the math standards the following year, including familiarizing and incorporating our new adopted math text and strategies (Pearson enVision and the Irvine Math Project). In our third year of ILT, the emphasis was on the planning of ELA Implementation with new curriculum (McGraw-Hill Wonders).

This current year, Patton has expanded on the ILT process by allowing grade levels to differentiate and choose the area of focus to better meet the needs of their students based on individual student data. A distinguishing practice at Patton is that the grade levels have been given the freedom to choose various subject areas for collaboration such as reading, writing, and science. All grade level teams benefit from the opportunity to choose different subject areas through discussions on cross-curricular immersion and vertical articulation.

Over the last three years the students' test scores have improved, which we attribute to teachers having dedicated time to thoughtfully plan, deliver, analyze, and reflect upon lessons. Teachers monitor their instructional effectiveness by analyzing the lesson to adapt, refine, and reflect on best practices and standards.

Results and Outcomes

The outcomes of the ILT process are evident in our overall student achievement and teachers' command of academic content and instructional delivery. Within the PDAR (Plan, Do, Analyze, Reflect) process of ILT, we see results through the Analyze and Reflect portions. Patton teachers determine the strengths and needs that become clear through looking at student work, observations about lesson delivery and student responses, and indicators that students have mastered concepts. Our teachers also identify needs based on how the lesson went and how they contributed instructionally to their success.

Since Patton began ILT in 2014–2015, our district assessments and SBAC scores have increased, and our students have scored higher than the district average during this time. In 2015, 72% of the students were meeting and/or exceeding the ELA standards based on the SBAC scores. In 2017, 79% of students were meeting and/or exceeding the ELA standards. The students also showed growth in their math scores from 2014 to 2017, increasing from 67% to 77% meeting and/or exceeding standards. We have also seen growth with each subgroup over the last three years. The Asian American subgroup increased 7% in ELA and 6% in math, the White subgroup increased 4% in ELA and 9% in math, and the Hispanic subgroup increased 6% in ELA and 15% in math.

The benefits of ILT at Patton extend beyond what is achieved in a single year. Through alignment of practices, commitment to improvement, drive, and ownership of the process, this strategic collaboration has led to student academic success. Each successive year brings a deeper understanding of standards, increased rigor, a positive school climate, and improved instructional practices that support our Patton scholars. Parents are also supportive of our collaborative process. As our parents are volunteering in the classrooms, they witness first-hand the rich learning opportunities teachers provide as a result of their professional investment in ILT and personal investment in our students. In addition, we have developed parent education classes based on the analysis of student work within the PDAR process. Our Patton PTA and School Site Council also see the strengths of ILT through the improvement of student test scores and the pride students take in their learning and achievement.

Over the past three years engaging in the process of ILT has created a learning culture for all stakeholders that includes significant emphasis on academic achievement and students' socio-emotional well being. Not only have grade level teams built a strong foundation with each other, but they have extended their collaborative efforts to all grade levels. Patton teachers are comfortable being both leaders and learners when engaging with their grade level teams in collaborative planning. This is extremely impactful for teachers as they further develop their professional practice and for students as they progress through the grade levels.