Tustin Memorial Academy
Model Programs and Practices

School Information

CDS (County District School) Code: 30736436030696

County: Orange

District (Local Educational Agency): Tustin Unified

School: Tustin Memorial Academy

Demographics

Enrollment: 600 students

Location Description: Suburban

Title I Funded: No

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

Overview

"Reaching for the stars and beyond!" The students and staff "Stars" at Tustin Memorial Academy (TMA)see no limits. Their growth and innovative mindsets have proven to be the foundation for success. Passion, grit, and the desire to think outside of the box continues to create new learning and success school wide. TMA encourages students to build on their strengths and honor the different ways of thinking when approaching challenges. Understanding the WHY, thinking beyond, and developing perseverance are valued and fostered as part of the learning process. TMA is an engaging, intentional, and unique place to be!

Tustin Memorial Academy is a diverse public K–5 GATE magnet school comprised of GATE and non-identified students in self-contained classrooms. TMA was established in 1995 as the first elementary magnet school in the Tustin Unified School District. The school is located in North Tustin (Santa Ana), California and was recently the recipient of the National Blue Ribbon award in 2016. The 600 students enrolled includes 39% Asian, 14% Hispanic, 36% White and 11% other. The student population includes subgroups of 9% Socioeconomically Disadvantaged and 4% English Language

Learners. TMA is a high performing school that blends rich tradition with innovative and forward thinking.

ALL students are provided with rich, meaningful experiences that focus on 21st century learning, technology, and school wide GATE strategies. Opportunities that promote critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and communication are at the center of the learning for all TMA scholars through Balanced Literacy and CGI (Cognitively Guided Instruction) practices. Through regular and ongoing Professional Learning Communities, teachers collaborate regularly to develop effective practices and instruction driven by data and Common Core State Standards to support a range of learners, which includes Gifted and Talented, English Learners, and Socioeconomically Disadvantaged students.

STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics), Visual and Performing Arts, Balanced Literacy, CGI Math, and hands-on social studies continue to drive the instruction, along with the school wide focus on "Growth Mindset" (Carol Dweck), "Innovative Mindset" (George Couros), and "Start with WHY" (Simon Sinek). TMA's new student-led iTeam Headquarters Innovation Lab opened in 2016–17, and it now serves as an engaging place for all students to collaborate and make connections in STEAM. The TMA Garden provides a unique outdoor learning lab opportunity for all students to experience math, science, and nutrition throughout the year within a living, growing outdoor classroom.

Tustin Memorial Academy encourages strong parental involvement with a collaborative, communal relationship between staff and parents. High parent volunteerism combined with the wide range of opportunities that TMA offers, creates a unique and dynamic educational experience for all TMA Stars.

Model Program and Practices

Name of Model Program/Practice: CGI (Cognitively Guided Instruction) Mathematical Practices Integrated Through the Use of Technology

Length of Model Program/Practice: 5–8 years

Target Area(s): Closing the Achievement Gap, Education Supports, Nutrition and Physical Activity/Education, Parent, Family, and Community Involvement, Professional Development, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, Use of Technology

Target Population(s): American Indian, Asian, Black or African American, Filipino, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, Whit, Two or More Races, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, English Learners, Students with Disabilities

Strategies Used: School Climate, Small Learning Communities, Parent Engagement, Data-Driven Decision Making, Health Support,

Social/Emotional/Behavioral Support, Professional Development, Implementation of Academic Standards Basics (Teachers, Instructional Materials, Facilities

Description

Tustin Memorial Academy is committed to high quality instruction and student achievement for all learners. In 2012, the district began the work of introducing CGI mathematics, which presented an engaging way of approaching mathematical thinking and understanding for all students. At TMA, we have continued to build on and strengthen these practices through ongoing professional development, coaching models, PLC's, opportunities to observe other teachers, and vertical teaming.

As a GATE Magnet school, what sets TMA apart is that enrollment includes students from all sections of the district, thus building a sense of community and school wide depth & complexity of thinking are high priorities. At TMA, there is a strong belief to support students' sense of belonging and community so that this can positively impact their confidence to succeed. One way that this is achieved is through school wide STEAM Challenges that not only infuse GATE strategies, technology, and the Engineering Design Process, but they also build community and connect the elements of mathematical thinking with a growth mindset. TMA teachers are unique in their strong capacity to lead each other. Our "STEAM Team" of 5 teachers developed the STEAM Challenges connected to literacy. A "CGI Team" of 5 teachers attended the CGI Conference in Seattle, and they continue to drive forward the practice and implementation at our school. Also, 87% of our teachers have completed full a GATE Certification program where they have learned how to use critical thinking prompts and strategies to help students explore at deeper levels.

Technology has played a major role in expanding CGI practices at TMA, which also sets us apart. Each week, teachers use PLC time provided through our PE program, to create innovative opportunities for students to use technology as a way of supporting mathematical thinking. The school wide theme this year is "Imagine, Create, In-novate!", and the opening of the iTeam Headquarters Innovation Lab has provided a space to explore and make cross-content area connections.

Teachers as leaders is a growing strength at TMA. One teacher certified as a Seesaw Ambassador, holds a series of ongoing trainings for teachers to learn innovative ways to capture students' thinking in math, thus building communication between home and school. Tech Lead Teachers facilitated Tech Team students to train peers in areas such as Green Screen video apps connected to content. Teachers continually learn and grow from each other, sharing their ideas daily and within their PLC's. Vertical teaming opportunities also provide a powerful perspective throughout the year to keep the learning aligned.

This year TMA began a 2-year cycle of deepening CGI with consultant Nick Johnson, from Orange County Department of Education. Nick provides data-driven coaching and

hands-on support for teachers to learn with each other 3x per year through co-teaching lessons, debriefing, and refining for next steps.

Implementation and Monitoring

TMA's school wide focus on Growth Mindset, Innovative Mindset, and Start with WHY have provided a clear and explicit focus in how to support TMA scholars in the implementation and monitoring of the Model Program.

Professional Learning Communities are at the heart of all success and work. What sets TMA apart from other schools in the district is our skilled certificated PE teacher who provides meaningful instruction 100 minutes per week for grades 1–5. This allows teachers to meet in PLC's to review math data, design lessons, and visit other teachers or sites to observe. In PLC's teachers analyze CAASPP data, Interim IAB assessments, benchmark assessments, classroom rubrics, and informal observations to refine instructional practice. Grade level teams analyze CGI problem work samples and discuss different ways students are solving problems and their next steps during these valuable PLC's.

TMA is immersed in rich professional development to deepen CGI practices and intertwine it with new modes of technology. TMA is unique in that there is a powerful balance of teachers training teachers, along with our instructional coach, district math TOSA, district trainings, summer institute, and consultant work.

Consultant Nick Johnson is currently providing a 2-year cycle 3 times per year, where release time is provided for teachers one grade level at a time. After conferring together with the grade level to determining focus areas, standards, strengths and needs, he co-teaches into the classrooms, modeling questioning strategies and CGI lesson delivery with students and teacher teams. After the classroom coaching, the team collaborates and debriefs, agreeing upon next steps and goals toward improvement. The final step is where he meets with the entire staff afterschool for professional development 3 times per year, to engage in school wide conversations and alignment. Number talks, journaling, choral counting, and counting collections are some of the areas that every grade level in K–5 is aligning, with additional exploration and integration of technology to further strengthen engagement, instruction, and achievement for students.

TMA teachers have proven that they are a community of learners. Building capacity is the foundation for success and growth. There are many examples of teachers as leaders that sets TMA apart. Teachers are empowered to find new strengths and then share them with others.

One teacher who is a certified OSMO Ambassador, trained the staff on using the OSMO game to explore with numbers and take math risks. She shared how Tangrams and coding can be used to support mathematical thinking. Students at TMA regularly visit the iTeam Headquarters Innovation Lab to use the OSMOS and other equipment. Another teacher leader shared how to use Ozobots within the school wide STEAM

challenge. Teachers are connecting content with technology in the iTeam Lab, through Breakout EDU, Bee Bots, Dash & Dots, Vex Robots, and makerspace materials.

Results and Outcomes

Within our Model Program CGI (Cognitively Guided Instruction) Mathematical Practices Integrated Through the use of Technology, TMA, scholars are thriving. Growth and innovative mindsets prevail throughout the campus, and student engagement continues to be strong through these practices.

Results and outcomes are measured through multiple criteria, including math CAASPP (California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress), District Benchmark Math Expression assessments, Interim IAB assessments, performance tasks, common assessments, and daily informal anecdotal data. Teachers analyze student work samples in PLC meetings in order to understand baseline data and to set targets for students. This information then helps teachers to determine student preparedness as well as monitoring progress throughout the interval of instruction. Often they will categorize student work by overall degree of the objectives that were met, partially met, or not met. Upon sorting the student work, they will select work to discuss and review in terms of specific areas of confusion, mastery, and next steps. Within our current training cycles with consultant Nick Johnson, teachers are furthering their ability to ask questions and locate and guide misconceptions among their students' thinking.

Teachers design a plan for growth by meeting with the Principal two times per year to identify SMART goals as they relate to CGI school wide expectations. During these meetings, all students, including EL, socioeconomically disadvantaged, special populations, and GATE are monitored and discussed to determine what academic and behavioral next steps are needed in order to ensure progress and achievement.

At TMA, we believe in developing and fostering parent support and communication. K and 1st grade Cotsen Fellows received a parent involvement grant to educate parents in CGI practices. Teachers created training videos for parents and implemented a take-home counting collection program for students and parents to practice CGI thinking at home. Students, Parents, and Teachers in all grades are assessing through the use of technology in various ways such as through Front Row, Flip Grid, Seesaw, Google Classroom, Powerschool Learning, Think Central, and Edu Creations.

Through these practices, TMA continues to show success through the implementation of CGI and technology with a growth mindset. During the 2016–17 school year, 85% of all students met or exceeded standards in math, and in 2015–16, 83% of all students met or exceeded in math.

Rigorous goals and targeted instruction are determined each year and are key elements contributing to TMA's success. Students and staff continue to foster and develop a growth and innovative mindset, while deepening instructional practices, strengthening communication, and building community around us. TMA scholars are determined, and they are on the road to success!