

## **Deerfield Elementary School Model Programs and Practices**

### **School Information**

CDS (County District School) Code: 30736506096184

County: Orange

District (Local Educational Agency): Irvine Unified

School: Deerfield Elementary School

### **Demographics**

Enrollment: 670 students

Location Description: Suburban

Title I Funded: Yes

Type of Program: School-wide

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

### **Overview**

Deerfield Elementary is a TK–6 neighborhood school in the heart of Irvine, California serving students since 1976 when Irvine was still steeped in its agricultural past. Deerfield has evolved into a unique educational experience that successfully achieves a top-quality education while addressing the challenges and benefits of teaching a substantial number of recent-immigrant students. Our mission is that Deerfield students will attain high levels of achievement within a safe school environment that is staffed by highly-qualified individuals. Our vision is to foster success through meeting the academic needs of students with regard to individual learning styles and instructional levels. All students engage in a thinking, student-centered curriculum that is challenging, engaging, and meaningful for students. We focus on the Common Core Standards and enrich curriculum through depth, complexity, and differentiation to ensure each student reaches his or her full potential.

Deerfield's mission focus is not confined to traditional "academic" subjects. One particularly impressive example of Deerfield's breadth is the fine arts program in which classroom teachers and highly trained specialists in music and art provide students with the foundations for lifelong enjoyment, involvement, and leadership. Student artwork adorns the corridor walls, and the vibrant, high-circulation library and computer labs are nestled in the center of the school, incorporating the rich traditions of the past while fostering a vision of the future. Additionally, the use of technology as an instructional tool permeates every aspect of the school. All students, TK–6, enjoy our two computer labs where, on a weekly basis, our media technician and classroom teachers work collaboratively to teach word processing, research, technology presentation, and problem solving skills. Technology is also used to deepen the curriculum and access information utilizing our 11 classroom Chromebook carts.

While 40% of the student population comes from families where English is not the home language, Deerfield continues to produce standardized test scores above the state, county and district averages. The school's Alternative Program for Academically Advanced Students (APAAS) currently includes formerly identified as Title 1 and English Learners. A well-rounded education encompassing academics, physical education, art lessons, vocal and instrumental music education, civic duties and service learning allows each student to find his or her strengths in a "safe to try" environment. Programs available to assist individual needs include our differentiated reading PRIDE intervention program, Title 1, Gifted and Talented Education (GATE), Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support (PBIS) school-wide behavioral support system, a Speech/Language Program, and a Specialized Academic Instruction Program (SAI).

## **Model Program and Practices**

Name of Model Program/Practice: The Falcon-5/Flock Together; PBIS

Length of Model Program/Practice: 5–8 years

Target Area(s): Chronic Absenteeism and Dropout Prevention, Civic Education Awareness, Closing the Achievement Gap, Education Supports, Parent, Family, and Community Involvement, Professional Development

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

Strategies Used: School Climate, Parent Engagement, Data-Driven Decision Making, Social/Emotional/Behavioral Support, Professional Development

## **Description**

With a goal to develop positive school culture through building unity and pride at Deerfield, our unique PBIS model clearly defines expectations and positive

reinforcement for all students. PBIS enables staff to explicitly promote, teach and reinforce appropriate behavior on campus. Deerfield has earned a “Silver Award” from California’s PBIS Coalition for the past two years.

Our program is differentiated from the district in several ways. In the first week of school, staff conduct a “kick-off” for PBIS by walking students through each area of campus reviewing expectations, demonstrating appropriate behavior, and role-playing positive choices. Students complete activities to demonstrate they have learned the Falcon Five (Respectful, Responsible, Focused, Kind, Safe) expectations. To build positive school culture Deerfield hosts a weekly Falcon Flock assembly where we build school spirit, present awards for students, teachers and parents, and conduct our raffle for achieving benchmarks for positive behavior. Students who achieve each of our six benchmark levels also earn a feather to display in the common area of our campus.

Two years ago we developed Flock Together to help students grow a “habit of heart” and facilitate service opportunities within our school and community. Research shows students who are civically engaged at a young age are likely to remain actively engaged in giving back to their communities as adults. We saw the need to further develop Falcon Five character traits within our upper grade students and allow them to have a voice in making a positive impact within our school, community and world. We developed an inclusive program for students to lead and serve in one of four areas: Service Team, Spirit Team, Media Team, and Green Team. In our inaugural year of implementation, approximately 100 students voluntarily committed to serving in Flock Together, growing to 120 students in year two and representing over 60% of our upper grade student population.

All students benefit from our Flock Together Team! The Green Team leads our recycling efforts and maintains our gardens and aquaponics lab. Our Spirit Team leads school-wide monthly spirit days and competitions for all grade levels. Our Service Team leads three philanthropies per year that all grade levels support. Our Media Team is developing our innovation lab and library. These student leaders read to primary students and have also started making mini-lessons and projects for the innovation lab. Each of our Flock Together students strive to give a minimum of 20 hours of service to our school.

We not only see the value in student leadership, we also see how this makes a positive impact on the rest of our school. Our students are more motivated to learn and “go beyond” what is expected of them. Our Flock Together team is student-driven and we relish in seeing students come to us with creative and innovative ideas to make our school and the world a better place.

## **Implementation and Monitoring**

Deerfield’s PBIS team, composed of parent/teacher/administrative representation meets monthly to engage stakeholders in assessing SWIS, AERIES and annual schoolwide culture survey data from students, parents, and staff members and adjusts program components to match needs. Staff members complete a Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI)

to review what we have accomplished for the year. Finally, our teachers complete a risk-assessment on each student to identify potential social/emotional issues. Teachers review individual student data in their PLC meetings and follow our MTSS interventions to provide support for students. Our PBIS team, staff, and School Site Council review our TFI and survey data from multiple stakeholder perspectives to set goals for the following year and provide accountability for committing to continuous improvement. PBIS needs, goals and program components are regularly communicated to stakeholders through monthly PTA, staff and SSC meetings, our Parent Handbook, Flock Together Assemblies, and weekly Falcon Flyer staff/parent communications.

A concerted effort is made to involve parents in the development of our LCAP and SPSA. Parent surveys are collected at least three times each year to assess progress and identify needs. A consistent need identified by parents in our school climate and LCAP surveys has been supporting student mental health/wellness. Deerfield's customization of PBIS with the Falcon 5 and Flock Together focus addresses these needs. PTA has been an integral part of working with our upper grade Flock Together students and involving them in culture-building activities including planning/supporting Red Ribbon Week, spirit days and philanthropic endeavors.

When needs are identified through our systems of data analysis, professional and parenting skill development is provided to build capacity to support students. Staff members have participated in professional learning activities focusing on student engagement and active supervision and have voluntarily participated in peer observations to strengthen classroom instruction and management to meet the varying needs of our diverse learners. Additionally, we have provided parent workshops to teach parents how to engage students at home in active learning as well as partnering with the Irvine Police Department to provide workshops on managing social media focusing on safety and enhancing peer relationships.

We are excited to build upon what we have started here at Deerfield with our PBIS and Flock Together leadership program. Deerfield earned a \$5000 Innovation Grant from the Irvine Public Schools Foundation to support continued program development for the 2018–2019 school year. The grant will allow us to collaborate with our teachers, classified staff, students, and parents to assess the effectiveness of the program and to make recommendations for refinement with a goal of connecting more students to our school through leadership and character development.

## **Results and Outcomes**

Based on our analysis of multiple data sources, several outcomes have been realized at Deerfield. The PBIS team led the staff through the creation of school-wide and classroom matrices to define examples and non-examples of what types of behaviors we expect to see at our school. We also created a flowchart to define our system of how to deal with minor and major problem behaviors at the school. A parent brochure was developed to clearly communicate regarding behavioral expectations and desires for parent engagement at school. Tier II behavioral interventions were also implemented

including a check-in/check-out system, lunch bunch with our guidance counselor, 1:1 counseling and redesigning our Student Study Team referral process.

We have also utilized our Title I funding to target some of our under-represented groups of students (EL, WSD, FY and SED) for leadership engagement through our “Grubb’s Group” where one of our teachers meets with the students on a weekly basis to teach leadership/Falcon 5 skills and engage students in school-wide project based learning. Grubb’s Group has been responsible for building our aquaponics lab, maintaining our container gardens, composting, and designing a “grow globe” project with Home Depot and Laguna Tools. Our Flock Together students have also developed student-led programs to address identified needs of campus cleanliness and peer relations including our Green Team recycling/campus clean-up days and our student-monitored Buddy Bench. Qualitative data supports student involvement on campus has increased since the redesign of our Falcon 5 model and implementation of Flock Together.

Quantitative data supports that over 50% of our upper grade students are actively engaged in this voluntary program, giving over 2500 hours of annual service to our school. Student involvement in this program increased by 20% within 1 school year. Discipline has been reduced with the number of suspensions within the last 2 years at a “low” of .6%. English learner progress has also increased 6 points and is rated Very High (89.7%) on the Dashboard within the past year and performance in ELA and Math has maintained High for all student performance. Additionally, our Chronic Absenteeism Rate of 3.5% is below the county and state.

In an effort to continue to focus on closing the achievement gap and commit to our continuous improvement efforts our PBIS and MTSS teams has also spent the entire year redesigning our tiered intervention programs in the areas of behavior/mental health and wellness, language arts and math. Teams clearly defined Tier I, II and III support structures in each of these areas, recommending a restructuring of our system design and alignment of fiscal resources to directly impact our students who continue to struggle behaviorally, emotionally and academically.