Daniel N. Buchanan Elementary School
Model Programs and Practices

School Information

CDS (County District School) Code: 33752006118558

County: Riverside

District (Local Educational Agency): Murrieta Valley Unified

School: Daniel N. Buchanan Elementary School

Demographics

Enrollment: 913 students

Location Description: Suburban

Title I Funded: Yes

Type of Program: Targeted Assistance

School Calendar: Modified

Charter: No

Overview

In the late 1800's, Daniel N. Buchanan settled in the Murrieta Valley. He built the first elementary school that served the children of the local ranchers and farmers. On opening day in 1885, that first school enrolled approximately twenty-five students. In 2001, 116 years later, Murrieta Valley Unified School District opened its eighth elementary school, Daniel N. Buchanan Elementary School (BES). On opening day, this third time nominated California Distinguished School, enrolled over 1000 students with a population of Kindergarten - Fifth grade. Our mascot, the Trail Blazers, represents our community's past and its vision for blazing new trails into the 21st Century.

With an enrollment of 913 students, BES is a Title 1 school serving a diverse population with varied and individual educational, social, and emotional needs. Buchanan is committed to and passionate about providing all students with instruction that promotes and fosters both inquiry and discovery and that challenges students to rise to their highest potential. Through the collaboration and support of teachers, parents, and the

community, students at BES build foundational skills that provide them with the building blocks of literacy, numeracy, technology, thinking skills, and social skills so that they may feel confident as learners and contributors, as we prepare them to be college and career ready in our ever changing society.

BES students receive an academically challenging and rewarding instructional day with standards-based curriculum that is centered on the core areas. Enrichment programs available to our students include: technology, visual/performing arts, choir, drama, and band. These programs provide our students with a variety of exciting opportunities to expand their educational experience, and they develop and encourage additional talents and interests. The programs we have in place and the stakeholders who lead them, uphold the values and commitments that have contributed to our accomplishments and successes.

As you enter our campus, you are greeted and welcomed by our friendly, caring, and knowledgeable support staff. The large presence of parents on our campus, volunteers in the classroom, PTA, and Watch D.O.G.S., speaks volumes to the commitment to our school climate that is both positive and supportive. In our classrooms, dedicated and professional teachers provide differentiated instruction to students who are actively participating, collaborating, and taking responsibility for their own learning. Our administrators lead by example and are at the heart of all that we do. You will find them walking through classrooms, providing feedback to staff, and interacting with students on the playground and in the halls. You hear our words sing out to these truths in our school song at our Friday Spirit Assembly, as we gather as one to celebrate student achievement, embrace our diversity, and nurture the school spirit that truly "Blazes the Trail" to greatness.

Model Program and Practices

Name of Model Program/Practice: Collaborative Data Talks and Universal Access

Length of Model Program/Practice: 5–8 years

Target Area(s): Closing the Achievement Gap

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: Data-Driven Decision Making

Description

In upholding the Murrieta Valley District's vision and grade level commitments, all teachers participate in collaborative data talks which drive our site's UA instructional model. Our model program began due to stagnate progress on standardized testing and

the need to meet each student's educational needs. In order to accomplish this vision, we utilize teachers, counselors, and support staff to effectively implement interventions that target specific student needs. Examples of ELA interventions include Second Step Counseling, iRead, Read180, System 44, and Imagine Learning. Math interventions include Math180, Do the Math, and specific standards-based instruction for upper grades. Reading Inventory (RI), Math Inventory (MI) and iRead data are consistently analyzed to determine which interventions and extensions are needed.

Because of the collaborative data talks, teachers take ownership of and accountability for their entire grade level's educational needs. We are able to correctly place students in appropriate groupings to further enhance academic foundations. Each stakeholder, student, teacher, and administrator, establishes academic goals which empower them to own their educational trajectory and achieve their objectives. These goals are communicated to parents and the community by way of our newsletter, School Site Council (SSC), ELAC meetings, Coffee & Conversations, Back-to-School Night, Title I Parent meetings, and conferences with students and families.

Our collaborative data talks and UA instruction have increased academic performance on standardized assessments and universal benchmark testing. District and administrator-established goals have been met or exceeded overall in RI, MI, and iRead. Students are appropriately placed for UA targeted instruction and every students' individual needs are being addressed. At BES, we have the following student populations: Special Education, English Learners, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged (SED), Homeless, Foster Youth, and Advanced Learners. As we look at the data of our significant student groups and implement differentiated instruction based on need, we've seen an overall positive growth in these groups' achievement.

Based on our district's vision to provide prevention, intervention, and acceleration to close the achievement gap, our data analysis allows us to provide appropriate intentional and prescriptive supports for all learners. Collaborative data talks and conversations with stakeholders also provide the opportunity to review attendance and behavior data. Through Second Step curriculum and collaboration with teachers, our part-time counselor is able to tailor lessons based on specific individual or classroom needs. SART and SARB, along with Student Success Team (SST) meetings address our expectations and increase our home and school communication resulting in positive student outcomes.

Implementation and Monitoring

Stakeholders and parents feel included in their child's academic success, and they are provided unique opportunities for engagement in data discussions. Throughout the year, we hold many meetings for this purpose, including SSC, SST's, ELAC, EL Coffee & Conversations, PTA, Back-to-School Night, parent conferences, Title I meetings, and Make-it-&-Take-it workshops. These provide an open forum to discuss and collaborate around the results of the data with parents.

Buchanan uses various methods to convey data to the community, including individual and specific student group meetings, school newsletter, SST meetings, staff meetings, collaborative meetings, report cards and progress reports, and educational behavior monitoring technology. The monitoring and assessment methods that are being utilized to evaluate our stakeholder engagement are parent-teacher conferences, SSC meetings, parent feedback via emails, phone calls, and/or personal interactions, and sign-in sheets to document attendance at various events.

Over the past several years, Buchanan has implemented an environment of life-long learning for teachers, administrators, and non-instructional staff. Site-wide professional development begins each school year with an in-service based upon our educational objective for the year. Weekly professional development meetings include individuals (both staff and itinerants) sharing their expertise on a variety of educational topics, such as mental health, Number Talks, Growth Mindset, and behavior management. Grade levels are given two collaboration days annually to develop units and assessments, review data, and create lesson plans. Peer coaching, observations, and lesson studies are used to address data-driven instruction in ELA and Math which improve educational performance. Vertical team discussions build staff understanding of grade level standards to drive instruction. Classified instructional assistants are provided district and site training to support students' individual needs and provide a better understanding of instructional practices. Staff and administrators have participated in conferences pertaining to PLCs and data-driven instruction. A district data talk lesson study cohort has been established for administrators and support staff to enhance their practice.

Buchanan continually reevaluates the effectiveness of our instructional activities with a special emphasis on under-served populations. Based on data analysis, UA groups and intervention programs are reexamined to meet students' needs, using both formative and summative assessment data. During our grade level collaboration meetings, student placement in the least restrictive environment is the objective of our data talks. For example, a transfer SDC student with behavior concerns was able to access the general education curriculum which resulted in a change of placement to a less restrictive environment. This speaks to the collaborative responsiveness of our system.

Results and Outcomes

Student outcomes are constantly changing, so programs and movement must be flexible. Analyzing CAASPP data from 2016–2017 in collaborative data talks led to the identification of effective instructional practices that resulted in a 15% increase in students meeting and exceeding math standards. While all three grade levels exceeded district expectations in math CAASPP results, we identified one grade level with significantly higher achievement in math using standards-based instruction, spiral review, small group instruction, and Number Talks. These instructional practices were shared at a multi-grade collaborative data talk and were subsequently adopted by those other grade levels.

Our 2017 CAASPP results in math for 3rd grade was 58% standards met/exceeded while the district average was 55%. Similarly, the 4th grade district average was 49%

standards met/exceeded and BES's was 64%, and the 5th grade district average was 44% and BES was 45%. Based on these results, Number Talks, small group instruction, and lesson studies have become school-wide areas of focus. For ELA on the 2017 CAASPP, all grade levels scored 60% or higher on standards met/exceeded and above the district average.

The district target for the MI for 2017 was 48% proficient/advanced by the end of the year. BES was overall above the district target with 3rd grade at 52%, 4th grade at 66%, and 5th grade at 62%. Although there are not district goals for our LCAP student groups, we collect and analyze the results for this population as well. Our 3rd grade LCAP student group was at 38% proficient/advanced, 4th grade at 54%, and 5th grade at 68%.

To continue building on our improvement in math, BES has started the iReady adaptive diagnostic and instructional software program for 3rd grade. The goal is to analyze the credibility of the data to determine its possible effectiveness for use in other grade levels.

In our primary grades, we analyze the data from our iRead digital foundational reading program. In 2017, the district goal for students completing Level A was 59%, and 78% of BES's Kindergartners finished Level A. The first grade district goal was 56%, and 75% of our 1st graders finished Level B. In 2nd grade, the district goal for program completion was 73%, and 77% of our 2nd graders completed iRead. At our multi-grade level data collaborative talks, teachers brainstormed how to move forward to better support student foundational skill acquisition. The following strategies were implemented during the UA block as a result of this collaboration: Title 1 strategic and fluid small group instruction, push-in aide time, specific designated time for pull-out, and an uninterrupted block of instructional ELA time where all students are present.

As BES moves forward, UA and collaborative data talks will continue to be a major focus and drive rigorous and relevant instruction to best meet the needs of every student.