

Avalon Elementary Model Programs and Practices

School Information

CDS (County District School) Code: 33752420109124

County: Riverside

District (Local Educational Agency): Val Verde Unified

School: Avalon Elementary

Demographics

Enrollment: 681 students

Location Description: Suburban

Title I Funded: Yes

Type of Program: School-wide

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

Overview

Welcome to Avalon Elementary School, home of the Falcons! At Avalon we create foundations of excellence and commit ourselves to high standards of teaching and learning. Our greatest commitment is to prepare our students for career and college readiness through STEAM, project based learning, technology, PBIS, the 4 C's, and 21st Century Learning.

Avalon is a California Distinguished School and a designated school-wide Title 1 School. We are a professional learning community where staff, students, parents, and the community embrace the idea that together we can make a difference. Our staff consists of highly qualified teachers comprised of 22 K–5 teachers, one 4/5 combo teacher, two Learning Center Special Education teachers, and three Instructional Aides. Avalon has one part time speech and language pathologist and one school psychologist, and one Instructional Coach.

Avalon Elementary is located in the eastern portion of the city of Perris located within the Avalon Villages community. Our well-maintained school houses children actively engaged in learning and nurtured by an enthusiastic staff. Our office and Multipurpose Room display student's work and art; and the school playground includes a sizable jungle gym, athletic equipment and is a hub of student activity.

During the 2016–2017 school year Avalon Elementary School served 694 students in grades K–5. The ethnicity distribution of the student population at Avalon is 70.89% Hispanic, 13.69% African American, 8.36% White, 2.02% Asian, 1.01% Filipino, and 4.03% other. Attendance through 2016–2017 academic year averaged a daily attendance rate of 96.45%. Of the 694 students, 76.3% receive free/ reduced lunch, 35 students are English Learners, and 59 are identified gifted and talented of whom participate in the GATE program.

Avalon uses a variety of instructional strategies to meet the needs of our students. We have combined project-based learning, technology, foundational skills, and flipped classrooms together to teach the common core state standards. The GATE program has incorporated a self-guided learning model with full collaboration using televisions and Chromebooks. Our school-wide STEAM program focuses on gardens in K–2 and Robotics grades 3–5. 3–5 grade students are involved in campus Peace Patrol and ASB. Through PBIS and our behavior program SOAR (Strive for Excellence, Own Your Choices, Attitude is Everything, Respect Yourself School and Others) students are taught how to create a safe and effective learning environment. School staff support the environment that teachers students, through the daily curriculum and Wednesday Morning Meetings (skills used to resolve conflicts and take responsibility for their decisions). This school-wide program focuses on the positive approach to managing disruptive behavior.

Model Program and Practices

Name of Model Program/Practice: SOAR (Strive for Excellence, Own Your Choices, Attitude is Everything, Respect Yourself

Length of Model Program/Practice: 5–8 years

Target Area(s): Chronic Absenteeism and Dropout Prevention, Civic Education Awareness, Closing the Achievement Gap, Parent, Family, and Community Involvement, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, Use of Technology

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, Small Learning Communities, Parent Engagement, Data-Driven Decision Making, Social/Emotional/Behavioral Support, Professional Development

Description

Description of the Model: This program consists of three components. First, motivation will be increased through the use of a school-wide token system called SOAR Proud Passes. Students receive SOAR Proud Passes as recognition for exemplary behavior. The second component consists of organized events. All students who have met behavior expectancies are invited to participate in these events. Third, school wide expected standards of behavior are defined. These standards help establish student behavior expectations that will be reinforced using weekly social skills lessons from Boy's Town Press. The program extends throughout the campus and there are expected standards of behavior for each area of the school. During recess and lunch, supervision aides monitor each classes' behavior and take note of the classes that display the attributes of our SOAR program. These "Star" classes are announced the following morning by our ASB members and are given positive praise for their behavior. A tally is kept, and the winning "Star" classes receive a reward. Two years ago we added a Peace Patrol team to the program. Students go through an application and interview process and if selected, are then trained for Peace Patrol. Peace Patrol officers aid in recess and lunch activities.

These three components work together to lower student behavior incidents, build self-esteem and social skills, and help them to succeed academically. Component one allows teachers, office staff, supervision aides, and custodial staff a chance to interact with our students and reward them for exceptional behavior. Students use SOAR Passes to purchase school supplies from our mobile student store. Component two allows Avalon students to participate in events on a monthly basis to increase school spirit and as a motivational tool. These events include field days, movies, and assemblies. Cross age mentoring/tutoring is also used as a tool to increase self-esteem, responsibility, and reinforce social and academic skills. Component three requires teachers to provide instruction on school-wide expected standards of behavior during the first two weeks of school. Standards are taught on lining up, walking in line on campus, recess and lunch expectancies, organized game station rules, bathroom etiquette, AVID organizational skills, end of day procedures, and dress code. Following the first two weeks of instruction, each Wednesday is our school wide designated "Morning Meeting" time. During this time, teachers and students work together to discuss the weekly social skill or character trait through active role-playing, class open forums, and team building activities. We all work together in order to achieve our goal of providing a strong sense of community, school pride, and motivation for students to achieve both socially and academically.

Implementation and Monitoring

There was a great need at Avalon to motivate students who may not be working to their full potential. Students for whom motivation is not inherent need both long term and

immediate motivation. Students of all levels would benefit from a school-wide incentive program. Because many students at Avalon come from homes with little parental support or family unity, they benefited from an environment with a strong sense of community and pride. Besides being motivated, students must be made aware of behavior expectations. Students must understand that some behaviors are encouraged while others are not acceptable. A common understanding of appropriate and inappropriate behavior must be established so that there is never any confusion about what is right and wrong as well as what is expected. The purpose of this program was to motivate all students, create a sense of community and belonging on campus, and define and reinforce appropriate behaviors so that our students could succeed academically.

The Avalon teachers, students, staff, and parents are provided with information on the program and what it would involve. Avalon's parents are shown the program and it is discussed at Back to School Nights, school site council, and ELAC meetings and resulted in a great success. Binders are made for all of the staff to review. Each binder contains justification and components of the program, as well as the first two weeks of lessons for the teachers. The next binder sections cover discipline lessons, social/emotional lessons, self-reflection, power points, forms, posters and data. Staff development is provided to all staff on how the program would work and look. Tokens were designed and given out to the staff. An Avalon SOAR team was created to monitor the program and help plan the organized events for the student incentives; PTO has also assisted in providing the school with materials for the student token store. Avalon's Falcon Honor Matrix was created to display the school expectations for our sites five goals and covers all areas on campus. Avalon's five goals are as follows: Be respectful, Be responsible, Be Kind, Be Safe, and Be ready. Banner flags were made for the five goals and surround our King's Court area. The Falcon Honor Matrix was made into posters and banners and was posted in all classrooms as well as around the campus. The teachers receive a schedule of lessons that need to be presented every trimester. During staff development the lessons are modeled for the teachers and the Instructional Coach is available to assist any teachers that need assistance. We will be implementing the intervention piece starting every Wednesday after Morning Meetings. This will include Tier II and Tier III classrooms that will have mentor teachers who will teach Boy's Town lessons and do check in and check out with our students who are strategic and intensive. The other students who do not need social skills will be participating in coding, STEAM and PBL.

Results and Outcomes

The program is monitored through citations, office referrals, interventions and suspensions. Data in all of these areas are compared from year to year as well as a five-year comparison. Our total count of student incidents decreased from 110 in 2011 to 55 in 2016. Our suspensions reduced from 50 in 2011 to 6 in 2016. This data shows that there has been a decrease in suspensions and incidents from year to year for the past 5 years. As our ability to track incidents has improved, it makes the process easier to see the real picture concerning behavior and motivation. We look at the data for our PBIS team to picture concerning behavior and motivation. We also look at the data for

our PBIS team to see where we need to focus and target our Tier II and Tier III interventions. Our Wednesday morning meetings help us to locate other areas of need. Two years ago, we created a Peace Patrol team of students that monitor recess and lunchtime and we have seen a large drop in referrals to the office, citations, and students being hurt during these times. Our Peace Patrol students are recommended by teachers, apply, and go through an interview process. These students are then selected and trained by our Peace Patrol facilitators. These students patrol at recess and during lunch. This year, our intervention piece of the program has started with peer mentoring with the high school and we are looking into teacher mentoring in the classrooms. We are looking to incorporate three sections; Tier II, Tier III, and our challenge classrooms that will focus on social skills lessons using Boy's Town Press. Our challenge classrooms will be doing STEAM, PBIS, and coding lessons.

Avalon school demographics have changed over the last 5 years. To help our students become more successful, especially our African American population, we needed to come up with a plan to decrease our incidents of inappropriate behavior and raise student motivation. This program was created to address these needs. And SOAR has achieved those goals, we have seen a decrease in office referrals and over all suspensions. Students are motivated and focused on learning and inappropriate behavior in the classroom has decreased overall.

We continue to monitor the program and make changes as needed to see continued improvement. Our campus is calmer and students seem more motivated to learn.