

Alta Loma Elementary School Model Programs and Practices

School Information

CDS (County District School) Code: 36675956035216

County: San Bernardino

District (Local Educational Agency): Alta Loma Elementary

School: Alta Loma Elementary School

Demographics

Enrollment: 498 students

Location Description: Suburban

Title I Funded: Yes

Type of Program: Targeted Assistance

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

Overview

Alta Loma Elementary, a Title 1 Targeted Assistance school, is the first of ten schools in the district with 502 students in grades Transitional-K through sixth grade. Our diversity includes: 58% Hispanic, 29% Caucasian, 8% African American, 4% Asian and 54% of all students identified as Socioeconomically Disadvantaged. Additionally, 13% of students represent our English Learners. Currently, 58% of students participate in the Free/Reduced Lunch program.

Established in 1952, the campus is full of natural beauty and majestic trees, open grassy areas, natural light classes, and picturesque views. In 2004, Alta Loma Elementary first became a "California Distinguished School", then last year was awarded "2016 California Honor Roll School" by Ed Results Partnership/Campaign for Business and Education Excellence for high academic achievement over time, reducing the achievement gap.

Daily state adopted curricula and researched instructional practices are utilized in all content areas. Students also enjoy instruction/teacher mentoring in chorus, band, art, student council, noon-time sports, lunch-bunch social groups, and a walking club. In-school activities prevail such as Gifted and Talented field trips, Student Council, Theater, “Western Days”, “Buddies”, Business/Science Fairs, Talent Show, Field Days, Ancient Civilization Show, and Reflections Fine Arts Program. After school activities include tutoring, track, martial arts, chess, Girl Scouts, Hair Bow Club, an annual Festival of the Arts, Spelling Bees, Science Technology Engineering and Math. Enrichment opportunities abound!

Parents are cherished and included in daily volunteering, assemblies and awards ceremonies. Positive male role models are encouraged to join the “WatchDOGS” program (Dads of Great Students) to mentor students during recess. We host Positive Behavior Intervention and Support “Days of Service” as parents/community members get involved and learn to coach/mentor at school.

Additional enrichment opportunities occur through virtual tours and field trips bringing curriculum to life. We know children today are the adults of the future and we take great pride in the formation of literate and responsible citizens. Teachers offer technology rich instruction utilizing researched based interventions such as Khan Academy, LexiaCore5, FrontRowEd, Mystery Science, Quizziz and Kahoot.

Our school mission is demonstrated daily, “Our students will become respectful, responsible, and resourceful citizens while demonstrating a passion for doing their best in a caring manner and contributing positively to society.” Practicing and modeling the “Three R’s” is prevalent daily; Respectful, Responsible, and Resourceful. Knowing how important it is to make behavioral expectations innate, Student Council leaders share a daily thought provoking message (Project Wisdom) to emphasize positive character traits each day prior to the Pledge of Allegiance. This helps students reflect on what others say and do.

Model Program and Practices

Name of Model Program/Practice: Active Visible Learning

Length of Model Program/Practice: 2–4 years

Target Area(s): Chronic Absenteeism and Dropout Prevention, Closing the Achievement Gap, Education Supports, Parent, Family, and Community Involvement, Professional Development, 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, Implementation of Academic Standards Basics (Teachers, Instructional Materials, Facilities)

Description

Comprised of 19 classes, from transitional kindergarten through sixth grade, highly trained and dedicated educators create daily visible and active learning environments in the classroom. You will also find a learning and technology lab, library, language development lab, a special education classroom, and speech/language support.

From transitional kindergarteners learning to read blueprints and using blocks to build a community, to sixth grade students using playdough to learn how to multiply fractions, we place a heavy focus on student centered learning through hands-on practices. It is a priority to relate all lessons to real world interactions that are going to benefit each student's educational career as well as their life beyond schooling. This approach is an especially effective way for our English Language Learners to access the Common Core Curriculum.

Education in the 21st century is cutting edge and ever evolving. Learners are expected to not only memorize and recite facts, they are now expected to talk about and model their thinking as well as their emotions. Our students crave social emotional learning strategies and it is important for us to provide support not only through educational needs, but also intrinsically through basic care and empathy. We offer before and after school childcare services to encourage attendance and support working families. Currently, 58% of the student population participates in free and reduced lunch. We reach out to families in need by offering support through our Thanksgiving food baskets and holiday gift giving. These programs allow families, staff and local community members to donate in order to provide for students in need. Programs such as Pennies for Patients, Socktober, Kindness Week, and Breast Cancer Pink Out Month connect our students social emotionally with the community and globally through teaching them compassion and empathy for others.

Our Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports program encourages all students to be responsible, respectful, and resourceful in order to support the whole child. Attendance is encouraged through recognizing perfect attendance each month. Connectivity between parents, students, and teachers has also increased our overall school attendance. We have found our program to be successful in decreasing suspension/expulsion rates.

Inviting parents to informational nights has increased over the last few years in an effort to better support family needs. Offering Information nights such technology, helping with math homework, and early readers workshop have been greatly appreciated by parents and guardians in support of our student's success at school.

Our model of Active Visual Learning encompasses and far surpasses our Local Control Accountability Plan goals by reaching beyond the core as well as ensuring 21st century education that is rigorous and engaging.

Implementation and Monitoring

Alta Loma Elementary values our highly motivated parents and volunteers who are the perfect fit in our puzzle of creating the whole child. Parent Teacher Association works together to create an enriched and positive learning community. Our high rate of membership and the many fundraisers run throughout the year allow for support of many integral activities such as Family Fun Nights, Read Across America, Red Ribbon Week and engaging assemblies such as Hoop-it-Up and a Prismatic Light Show. They also help fund fine art programs at our school such as “Meet the Masters” and “Chorus.”

Keeping open communication lines between parents and staff is imperative! Programs such as Day of Service, WatchDOGS, and monthly Chieftain Pride Assemblies welcome parents to get involved to make a difference in our school community. In order to reach out to our parents of English Language Learners, we host an English Language Acquisition Committee where parents are informed of the academic requirements and the support students receive in the classroom. In addition, adult English acquisition classes for parents who speak another language and Parent University are offered where parents are given an opportunity to learn strategies to better support their student at home.

Input from our parents and community are a fundamental component in decision making on our campus. Results from surveys, School Site Council, and Parent Teacher Association, have shown that 92% of our parents believe their students are receiving a quality education and 89% are satisfied with instruction. We are excited to be partnered with the local community such as Dan’s Mobil, donating a portion of earnings to our Science Program, the Lion’s Club, and many generous neighbors.

Alta Loma School District emphasizes professional development and our teachers and staff are infused with teacher leaders who vertically and collaboratively share best practices throughout the district. One thing that establishes distinguished practices from other schools is that we provide the same training to our aides and teachers alike because we know the importance of a deep understanding of the curriculum in order to provide the best support for our students. Our teachers meet weekly to plan and collaborate with peers and we frequently have “snap-chats” about updates in technology. Teachers at Alta Loma Elementary are always on the lookout for opportunities to build instructional capacity!

Alta Loma Elementary School is “result driven” and teachers focus on data to drive instruction, in a continuous improvement loop process. Through a variety of formative and summative assessments, we measure the success of our programs and practices. Daily principal walkthroughs allow ongoing assessments of strengths and learning opportunities in the classroom real time. Formal observations and evaluations of teachers and collaborative conversations improve diversified teaching styles.

Results and Outcomes

Overall, in 2016–17 52% of all students in grades three through six met or exceeded the English-Language Arts/Literacy standards. This reveals an increase of 4% over 2015–16. In Mathematics, 42% of all students in grades three through six met or exceeded the mathematics standards, showing an increase of 5% from 2015–16. With these steady increases, our students continue to grow and continuously exceed beyond state achievement levels.

At Alta Loma Elementary, teachers understand the importance of utilizing assessments to identify student strengths and areas of need. At the beginning of each year our teachers and administrators gather to collaboratively analyze data. This data provides key information regarding what educational practices were effective and what can be improved upon. Teachers review data from formative assessments to remediate lessons and provide extension opportunities. Smart goals are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and help guide instruction. The teachers work in grade level teams to analyze data and set goals. Vertical articulation is utilized between grade levels so teachers are able to see what is required at the next grade level. A variety of assessments drive instruction throughout the year. One such method is standardized testing in reading and math. These tests give key information such as scaled score analysis and instructional levels. Frequent/multiple data is used to show growth or lack thereof. Teachers are able to adjust teaching strategies and differentiate instruction with this information. This aids teachers in screening students for interventions and whether or not they may need to be referred for psycho-educational assessment.

Assessment results are also used to determine participation in Title 1 intervention for Language Arts and Math. Targeting the most at-risk students in grades K–6 during Language Arts intervention, results in students receiving small group instruction and research based practices. An initial test combined with ongoing assessment and monitoring throughout the year helps students practice reading fluency, comprehension, and key reading skills. Math intervention students utilize small group instruction and are supported with blended learning opportunities to develop key skills/concepts for student mastery.

School interventions focus on the most at risk students who are identified through multiple measures and teacher referrals. Currently 101 students receive Title 1 interventions and 40 students attend after-school tutoring. Teachers use qualitative data to inform instruction. Methods utilized are portfolios, student meetings, informal observations, and small group instruction. They notate what they have observed and use the information to tailor lessons for all students including those most at risk such as low income, Homeless Foster Youth, English Learners and Special Education Students.