

Cook (Hazel Goes) Elementary Model Programs and Practices

School Information

CDS (County District School) Code: 37680236037881

County: San Diego

District (Local Educational Agency): Chula Vista Elementary

School: Cook (Hazel Goes) Elementary

Demographics

Enrollment: 339 students

Location Description: Suburban

Title I Funded: Yes

Type of Program: School-wide

School Calendar: Year-Round

Charter: No

Overview

"Hazel Goes Cook School's mission is to empower students to become responsible global citizens and lifelong learners. We are committed to fostering students in becoming inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring participants of a diverse, multicultural, democratic society through rigor and high academic performance. Our students will be prepared with the knowledge and compassion to equip them with the skills to be globally active leaders of the 21st century."

This school mission was created by our staff as we started our journey in becoming an International Baccalaureate (IB) school four years ago. Our staff is committed to supporting every student in becoming an internationally minded citizen that has the necessary 21st century skills necessary to be successful learners and leaders.

Hazel Goes Cook is one of 46 schools in the Chula Vista Elementary School district, located in the southwestern area of Chula Vista. Cook has an enrollment of 339, with 16

teachers on site, grades K–6. We have a diverse community, which includes the current demographics:

- 45% English Learners (EL),
- 78% Low Income (LI),
- 80% Hispanic, and
- 12% Students with Disabilities(SWD).

Cook is proud of our diversity and embraces the teaching of a world language which is part of the IB Primary Year's Programme (PYP). Parents and community came together in 2016 to select Spanish as the world language that would be taught at Cook. This led us to create a language policy that states how Spanish is taught at our school site. This policy is posted on our website so that all community members and parents can understand our practice in teaching Spanish to our students. Students now have an opportunity to learn Art through Spanish, which for our Spanish speaking English Learners gives them pride in their home language and culture. For our English only students, and students from other cultures, this program exposes them to another world language and culture.

Inquiry based teaching has supported us in engaging every student in their instructional journey. This instructional practice drives teaching and learning by utilizing essential questions. Through the trans-disciplinary approach, students are able to use their skills to take risks and become global learners because they become part of their own learning. As a staff, we came together to reflect and create a school-wide assessment policy that included formative and summative assessments.

The goal was to measure student growth in all areas, not just English Language Arts (ELA) and Math. As a key component to IB, we measure their growth in their IB learner profiles, which are the attributes of being balanced, a risk-taker, an inquirer, caring, a thinker, knowledgeable, a communicator, open-minded, principled, and reflective. All of these attributes help students succeed in all core disciplines, which can be seen in their reflection journals, portfolios, and the growth they have made on their district and state assessments.

Model Program and Practices

Name of Model Program/Practice: Inquiry Program

Length of Model Program/Practice: 2–4 years

Target Area(s): Closing the Achievement Gap, Professional Development

Target Population(s): Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, English Learners

Strategies Used: Data-Driven Decision Making, Professional Development

Description

In 2014, our 1st year of program improvement, Cook Elementary formed a Brand Committee to research the root causes of low achievement and select an improvement strategy. This committee, formed by all stakeholders, was also tasked with creating a new image to address the decreasing population. As an overflow school, the staff was concerned with the mobility rate and the under performance of the LI and EL groups. Our mobility had increased 30 points since 2012. In 2013, the EL students had decreased 21 points in ELA and 27 points in Math in California Standards Test (CST). The LI group had decreased 11 points in ELA and 13 points in Math in their CST.

After looking at many programs, the Brand committee chose the IB Program. There are currently no elementary schools in South San Diego that are part of the IB PYP, which distinguishes us from other schools in our district. The inquiry program was selected as a way to deliver the new California standards. The hands on, project based learning would benefit all students, especially our EL population, because of the emphasis on collaboration and communication. To support the delivery of the inquiry units and ELD, the entire Cook staff participated in Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD) training.

The Brand Committee piloted an inquiry program before making an informed decision on adopting the IB program. IB Schools were visited in San Diego County. The improvement plan was shared with parents at English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) meetings, Coffee with the Principal, School Site Council (SSC) and an evening Parent Workshop. Two inquiry units, based on the TIDES training, would be implemented in the school year 2014–2015. In Spring 2015, the school officially became an IB candidate school, which led to official PYP training from the IBO.

By 2016–2017, all six units of the PYP were implemented into our curriculum. In Professional Learning Communities (PLC), teachers selected their inquiry units, engaged in backwards mapping standards to align formative and summative assessments. Through horizontal and vertical articulation, grade levels ensured that priority standards in ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies were taught. As a result, achievement in all core subjects has increased over the last three years.

Inquiry units are driven by the IB PYP essential elements, which leads to students becoming 21st century learners. The essential elements address key concepts, trans-disciplinary skills, plus the attitudes we want our students to exemplify as they become global learners. The key concepts are the subjects taught with an international perspective which gives our students a window to the world. The approaches to learning skills are trans-disciplinary because they teach students the skills of thinking, researching, social, communication, and self-management. These skills become evident in each inquiry unit as students become engaged in a cycle of action that is purposeful.

Implementation and Monitoring

Our staff has participated in training to support our different student populations. The San Diego Area Writing Project (SDAWP), GLAD, and poverty have been some of our topics. Our professional development also included PYP training to support our development of a rigorous POI, Programme of Inquiry, as the main component of our curriculum instruction. To support number sense, fluency and communication in Math, the staff also took professional development in Number Talks and Three Reads, two inquiry approaches in conceptual Math.

To deepen our instruction, we began training on Visible Learning with our cohort and through the San Diego County Office of Education. Our focal point was on teacher clarity, to ensure all learning intentions and success criteria were clear to all students. We held training on teacher clarity with all staff, making math the first area where we would apply this practice. Our data demonstrated that math was an area of need, so this practice supported our instructional focus in making the teaching intentional and purposeful for all students. This was accomplished through backwards mapping, which helped lead us to a 13 point gain in our SBAC Math results.

In the past three years, Cook has implemented numerous monitoring and assessment procedures to support the effectiveness of instructional learning activities. We analyze our Achieve lexile growth on a monthly basis in grades third through sixth. Teachers in grades kinder and first grade track reading progress through Reading Foundational Skills Assessment (RFSA) Inventory. From 2014–2017 our school used Amplify Quick Checks to monitor reading comprehension growth in Reading in grades second through sixth grade. Grade level and individual goal setting and Response to Intervention (RTI) practices ensure success for all subgroups, but most specifically our LI and EL students. Grade level SMART Goals are created quarterly as part of the RTI process. During PLCs, teachers analyze data to evaluate the effectiveness of math, reading, and writing instruction. In addition, teachers analyze writing benchmarks which are connected to units of study with an EL rubric, the English Language Development Progress Indicator (ELDPI) to address specific language needs of EL students. In the school year 2017–2018 we implemented assessments from Benchmark Publishing and we are currently monitoring how they will correlate to CAASPP.

In 2016–2017, teachers began tracking all math scores by subgroups, into an online math notebook. This accountability for all students, in all math standards, supported us in monitoring the effectiveness of math instructional activities. Our school then began implementing peer walkthroughs on GLAD strategies, Number Talks and Visible Learning practices. Our Cook staff continues to be engaged in ongoing cycles of professional learning to evaluate and improve our current practices.

Results and Outcomes

Inquiry based learning and visible learning practices have been the key to Cook's academic success. Through the triangulation of data, peer observations, differentiated instruction based on data analysis, and teacher clarity, our students have made

powerful gains in both ELA and Math, closing the achievement gap in reading and math for our LI and EL populations.

In a three year span, Cook CAASPP data for ALL students in ELA showed a growth of nine points, thirteen points for ELs and nine points for LI students. In CAASPP Math ALL students increased thirteen points, ELs eight and LI eight points in the same three year span. In addition, Cook's students have grown in the district's Local Measure Reading Assessments. On the 2017 CVESD District Local Measures, 81% of Cook students, in kindergarten and first grade, met or exceeded reading standards compared to 63% in 2014. For grades Second through Sixth, the district local measure is based on the Achieve 3000 Level Set test, which measures students' reading Lexile level. In 2017, 51% of our students were on or above grade level in Lexile, compared to 38% in 2014.

The culture of student driven inquiry and visible learning practices encourages students to become life-long learners through an international mindedness, ensuring high standards and equitable outcomes for all students. One third grader says, "As an inquirer, I am able to ask questions and do research to find my answers. This makes me feel powerful and knowledgeable about my learning." Through these approaches to learning, our principal, faculty, and students, are working together in this educational process and continue to promote engagement and accountability for their learning.

The transformational work at Cook has come about as a result of collaborative and reflective data analysis, goal setting, purposeful planning and assessment practices. Besides the numerical data, there is anecdotal evidence of student learning from our first Sixth grade Exhibition in 2017. All sixth grade students worked collaboratively on creating a central idea and researched lines of inquiry to drive their inquiry projects. What distinguishes this work from other sixth grade culminating events around our district is that our students follow a mini praxis approach similar to academic expectations in post graduate programs. Our school is committed to the philosophy of developing students who will contribute in the community by reflecting on their learning and participating in actions that show how they are taking responsibility in their new learning.