

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

### **School Information**

CDS (County District School) Code: 37683386039747

County: San Diego

District (Local Educational Agency): San Diego Unified

School: Holmes Elementary School

### **Demographics**

Enrollment: 588 students

Location Description: Urban

Title I Funded: No

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

### **Overview**

Holmes Elementary is a K–5 elementary school with approximately 588 students. This includes 23 classrooms, 2 Special Education Resource Teachers, and a Prep Time Physical Education teacher. Holmes was built in 1961 and has been a focal point for the Clairemont community ever since. We are a true “neighborhood” school, with 70% of our students residing within the school boundaries. Additionally, over half of the Holmes staff lives in the Clairemont neighborhood and has a vested interest in both the school and the community. Many of our current students have parents who also attended Holmes Elementary. Our goal is to create a fun and rigorous learning environment in each and every classroom. We value and strive to continually build relationships with families and community members to enhance our family atmosphere to support all students. This atmosphere has positively affected our high student achievement. We maintain and demand high expectations for all members of the Holmes community. We are in a continuous state of improvement throughout the organization. We continue to improve our Academic Performance on the SBAC assessment. Our 2017 SBAC results were our highest ever. 85% of students in grades 3–5 met or exceeded grade level standards in English Language Arts and 84% met or exceeded in Math. We are

committed to working as a community of learners and involving all parties that can make a difference in the academic success of our students. All of our teachers have received training and are certificated in Cross-cultural, Language and Academic Development (CLAD), or the equivalent level of expertise. All Holmes teachers in grades 3–5 have received additional training that is part of the Gifted and Talented Education program for high achieving students. GATE certification enables Holmes to provide an extensive accelerated program for GATE seminar and GATE cluster students. Our parents participate on site in many activities and enrichment opportunities, such as our annual holiday program, jog-a-thon, variety show, Halloween carnival, field trips and Spring Fling. Our PTA also funds our school wide art program, music teacher and computer lab. Many of our parents also participate in leadership roles through the School Site Council (SSC), Site Governance Team (SGT), Parent GATE Liaison, District Advisory Committee (DAC) and other special events and committees. Our administrator is easily accessible to families and the community. In addition to attending monthly PTA meetings and SSC/SGT meetings he also implemented “Family Friday,” which provides parents with strategies to support their children in literacy at home, as well as encourages volunteering in the classroom.

## **Model Program and Practices**

Name of Model Program/Practice: Parent and Community Involvement

Length of Model Program/Practice: 5–8 years

Target Area(s): Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

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

## **Description**

Our school provides diverse opportunities for parents and community members to directly contribute to our students' success. There are many volunteers who, under a teacher's supervision, work in classrooms with small groups of students, reinforcing grade level skills. These classroom volunteers work in all grade levels, and all content areas. Examples of the enrichment activities led by classroom volunteers include sheep heart dissection lessons for fifth grade science students, Robotics lessons for third grade classrooms, and the sharing of Native American artifacts for social studies. Parents have implemented the Arts Attack program into all classrooms at Holmes Elementary. Arts Attack is an award-winning DVD-based K–5 supplemental art curriculum that meets California's grade level content standards for the visual arts. Arts Attack entails parents working as “resident artists” and providing instruction to the

students. At the end of each year, each student receives a portfolio of the year's art projects. To celebrate our accomplishments, a collection of art works, representing all students from all grade levels, is also displayed at Holmes' annual Spring Fling. In addition, The PTA funds a credentialed music teacher to provide a Vocal Music Program for students in grades K–4. Instruction involves singing, rhythm instrument playing, movement, listening, and music reading skills. We also have an instrumental music program for 5th grade students. Every spring, our students participate in a Jog-a-thon, sponsored by our PTA. This fundraiser raises \$30,000 annually to support our PTA sponsored enrichment programs. Former student athletes and cheerleaders from our cluster high schools return to cheer on the students, teachers, parents, grandparents and community members participating in the event. Parents has also purchased physical fitness equipment, such as a rock climbing wall for the primary playground and an obstacle fitness course for the upper grade playground. To further contribute to good health and fitness among our students, parents, teachers and students have the opportunity to participate in the Mileage Club, which meets twice a week. For a half hour before school on these days, members walk or jog around the playground, accumulating "miles" to track progress. Safety is of the utmost importance at Holmes. As such, our parents have organized a committee to ensure the safe drop-off and pick-up of students. Parents patrol the adjacent street and parking lot both before and after school each day. Footsteps indicating the correct path for students to use when entering the school grounds have been painted on the sidewalk. Additionally, disaster kits, providing food and water, were purchased for each student using PTA funds, as were table umbrellas providing UV protection for students during lunch.

### **Implementation and Monitoring**

Holmes parents and community have been critical in making our vision for a physical, social and academic environment worthy of our students a reality. Our PTA membership has increased by nearly 100 members over the last 5 years and our fundraising efforts have increased by \$20,000 over the last 5 years.

In alignment with our goal to increase parent and community involvement, we have also increased the number of before and after school enrichment opportunities from seven to thirteen.

The key to our success is good communication between the administration, teachers and parents. Holmes stakeholders, especially parents, are kept informed about areas of focus in variety of ways throughout the year.

Important school Information is sent home with the students every Thursday informing parents of upcoming events. In the interest of "going green," our PTA now communicates through our bi-monthly Hawkeye newsletter, Konstella, and an updated website. On the website, parents can find calendar information, as well as necessary forms, documents and flyers. Each Sunday evening, the principal connects with parents through a phone call notifying them of the week's calendar of events. We have won awards from the Ninth District PTA which represents San Diego and Imperial County for our outstanding website and Hawkeye Newsletter. Additionally, we hold SSC/SGT

meetings, PTA Board and Association meetings, G.A.T.E parent meetings, Back to School Night, Open House, and Family Science Night.

Progress monitoring towards creating our vision for the environment and instruction also includes walkthroughs by the site administrator, area superintendent, and district resource teachers.

## **Results and Outcomes**

The partnership between parents, students, staff and community is a critical relationship that lays the foundation for the success, stability and well-being of each child at Holmes Elementary. Our PTA, parents and community members contribute their time and talents to enhance the education of our students, in addition to providing financial support for our many programs.

The dedication of our staff, parents and community members has laid the foundation for the improved academic achievement of Holmes' students. By providing support for tutoring students in need of extra support, or providing enrichment opportunities for students performing above grade level standards, each student at Holmes is allowed the opportunity to achieve his or her true potential.

Illuminate is a useful monitoring tool that is provided through district support. It allows school site principals and individual teachers to monitor and assess, school wide, grade level and individual students' progress over time. Illuminate provides real time data on benchmark exams and provides direction for purposeful instruction. We use this data along with classroom observations to provide evidence to implement interventions, enrichment, and modify or add programs.

We believe that the work being done through our signature practice at Holmes Elementary-Parent and Community Involvement--has contributed to our continuous improvement. We are currently the top performing elementary school in our area cluster based on 2017 SBAC results with 85% of our students meeting or exceeding grade level expectations in English Language Arts and 84% meeting or exceeding in Math. Furthermore, Our Holmes CST/SBAC data comparison shows that there is very little difference in results between the two summative assessments. Our 2013 CST data showed 82% of our students meeting or exceeding grade levels standards in both English Language Arts and Math is actually lower than our current SBAC results despite the much more challenging test. Our enrollment data shows an increase of 80 students over the last 5 years during the same time our district is losing enrollment. All this despite eliminating 6th grade in 2013. Our cumulative student attendance rate of 96.75% is the best in our area cluster and 18th out of 117 SDUSD schools. Additionally, PTA reports that over 10,000 volunteer hours have supported Holmes students during the 2016–2017 school year. Our strong family and community engagement has resulted increased fundraising revenue to support our instructional and enrichment programs.