

Jerabek Elementary School Model Programs and Practices

School Information

CDS (County District School) Code: 37683386099071

County: San Diego

District (Local Educational Agency): San Diego Unified

School: Jerabek Elementary School

Demographics

Enrollment: 660 students

Location Description: Suburban

Title I Funded: No

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

Overview

Jerabek Elementary School was built and opened to residents in 1978. Built in the suburban community of Scripps Ranch, located within the City of San Diego, Jerabek is recognized as a high performing school as defined by California Department of Education standards. Our school is nestled in the rolling hills amongst the Eucalyptus trees planted by horticulturist Chauncey I. Jerabek for whom the school is named after. We believe that high achievement is sustained by a relentless focus on students, their needs, professional development for our teachers and ensuring a designed positive and kind school environment at all times.

The entire staff at Jerabek works in partnership with a very involved, supportive and generous parent community. Our dynamic parent partnership stems from a large school foundation that organizes and supports all aspects of our educational program. Jerabek is known for our high level of parent volunteerism and includes many different areas of support and involvement. Daily volunteerism includes; assistance in the classrooms, the library, the community garden, physical education, teaching art lessons, and assisting in our STEM & computer labs. Our foundation shares the value that an investment in the

professional development of our teachers ensures that students are the recipients of the best pedagogical practices. Parents plan “Kindness Week” three times a year to support our school culture.

Our entire staff has an exceptional work ethic and efficacy holding high level expectations for their responsibility to ensure the facilitation of a stellar educational experience for all students. Our teachers understand that as lifelong learners it is imperative be on the cutting edge of pedagogical practice. Our teachers have dedicated themselves to above and beyond participation in professional development opportunities that include in part; Google Classroom, STEM, and core area training such as writing, reading and mathematics. Teachers also engage the professional learning community model to collaborate and co plan, ensuring the delivery of a guaranteed and viable curriculum for all students.

Our students are encouraged to develop essential learning behaviors through a designed program of student recognition. This program incorporates the traditional “Character Counts” traits with the 21st Century Community Learning Center model. Students earn recognition for meeting behavioral expectations that lead them to academic achievement. Students at Jerabek are not rewarded for academic performance as it is the expectation we communicate to them as their responsibility. We teach, incorporate, foster and actively support the acquisition and utilization of the behaviors that lead them into and through their learning and achievement. These values include communication, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, citizenship, respect, caring, responsibility, resilience, and trustworthiness.

Model Program and Practices

Name of Model Program/Practice: Student-centered culture, focused on the development of the whole child, with a relentless insistence on a positive, kind school culture for ALL students.

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

Implementation of Academic Standards Basics (Teachers, Instructional Materials, Facilities)

Description

Student-centered culture with a relentless insistence on a positive, kind school environment. Four years ago, a new team formed with a change and stabilization of leadership. The staff identified the need to refocus attention from an adult-centered to a student-centered culture, along with the need for improved student outcomes. Staff recognized that continued progress in achievement happens with an intentional, strategic focus and not by chance. Our goal was the implementation of strategic practices and inspiring change amongst cultural constituents would lead us to success. This change necessitated intentional actions to advance improved outcomes for students. An essential student-centered practice implemented was a student recognition program whose practices support a safe and orderly environment (Dr. Marzano). The teaching of explicit behavioral skills would enhance student learning and address the social and emotional health. The foundational skills are a combination of 21st Century Community Learning theory and the Character Count's program. These values include communication, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, citizenship, respect, caring, responsibility, resilience, and trustworthiness. Concepts are incorporated in all aspects of student life at Jerabek. Opportunities for student voice, advocacy, leadership and community service were developed and implemented. An attendance recognition system was put in place to improve attendance. Students are given the freedom to develop their own civic contributions. A second practice is that ALL learners are EVERYONE'S responsibility thus those with disabilities became our focus. Special Education teachers engage in professional development to enhance strategies and service. We converted our service delivery model to provide push in support to ensure students would generalize skills in the regular education classroom. Schedules were changed to ensure students are in class for core instruction. Our school's foundation (Friends, Family & Faculty Foundation "FFO") contributes financial resources for Response to Intervention for our at-risk learners. Students with disabilities tested on CAASPP has doubled in three years. Because of changed practices, our students with disabilities have sustained a high level of proficiency over three years averaging 57% in ELA and 72.7% in Math. A third practice is the provision of professional development which improved pedagogical practices and student achievement. The FFO provides the financial resources to support professional development for staff. 85% of teachers have been trained in critical thinking and 95% of our staff have been trained at Columbia University's Teacher College in writing. PD in technology and its incorporation has elevated our instruction. Professional development opportunities have contributed to sustained student achievement and serves as an important equity lever for the provision of a guaranteed and viable curriculum

Implementation and Monitoring

It took a concerted, intentional effort, to implement a student-centered culture at Jerabek. Strategic practices provided a new way to cooperate and collaborate. It was a difficult, long road to help the adults within our learning community understand that

children were now at the heart of our focus and the foundation by which we would ground all decisions. Jerabek partners with a very active parent community. Parents are engaged in targeted practices through opportunities to volunteer and serve in leadership. More than twenty-five parents daily volunteer in many capacities working in: classrooms with students, material preparations, in our community garden, in our library, teaching art lessons, and assisting in physical education lessons. Parents are also engaged in opportunities to lead and serve on our School's Site Counsel and School's Governance Team. There are several methods of communication by which we use to actively engage our community members. We use our school's data system which sends out emails, our FFO sends out weekly reminders about events and opportunities to engage in school activity. The FFO also sponsors room parents who operate a third form of communication – a social media page for each classroom. Administration and FFO leadership use parent surveys on occasion to assess parent perceptions and outcomes of practices and programs. The information of these surveys informs discussions and possible action steps to gain momentum towards positive outcomes for students. Professional development and the building of capacity for both staff and parents are essential practices. Teachers engage in professional learning community groups to assess and plan instruction based on student needs. Our FFO contributions enable the facilitation and planning of collaboration activities. PD opportunities are provided for in several ways: the district, at the school and opportunities provided for by other educational entities. PD included core areas and Google Classroom. Teachers report back on outcomes and resulting needs for future instructional activities. Teachers are monitored in accordance to their union contract, through collaboration with site administration, classroom visits, and discussions. Because children are at the heart of our student-centered culture, student engagement is a clear way we assess the success of our practices. Students freely voice opinions about concerns they have regarding their educational experiences. Teachers facilitate discussions via classroom meetings and engage students in the writing process to express themselves about an issue. Recent examples of student generated concerns include assembly behavior, lunch lines, educational fieldtrips, fifth grade promotion activities, school service and chocolate milk. Discussion and student surveys serve as a valuable tool as to the effectiveness of services we provide to our students. Student engagement in solutions is the outcome by which we gauge our growth.

Results and Outcomes

At Jerabek Elementary our change from an adult-centered to a student-centered culture has resulted in exceptional, sustained student achievement. The practices employed included student recognition and engagement, professional development and collaboration based on the needs of our students and a collective understanding that the success of ALL students are the responsibility of everyone at Jerabek. We believe that an intentional focus on our at-risk and special education students has resulted in exceptional achievement for the past three years in CAASPP scores. Intentional actions and practices around our combined commitment to support our most needy students included strategic work in Response To Intervention, a change in our service delivery model for our special education students and an increased student civic engagement. Also, professional development for staff serving students with disabilities.

In the past three years the number of students we test on CAASPP has doubled. Despite the dramatic increase, CAASPP data shows that students receiving special education services have sustained average proficiencies of 57.6 % in ELA and 72.6% in Math. We believe the combination of practices employed to improve student attendance resulted in sustained exceptional student attendance. Our findings are that the implementation of strategic practices for improved school attendance at Jerabek resulted in extraordinary results averaging over 97% attendance monthly. One practice included the implementation of student recognition by which students earn attendance certificates monthly for "Perfect Attendance" and "Awesome Attendance". Our measure of success is the level of engagement of our most precious resource, our children, in their education. Students developed voice, agency and vested students in their education resulting in fewer behavioral referrals and decreased our suspensions. A student-centered culture ensured our PLC work centered on student results. Teachers use monitoring and assessment data to plan strategic outcomes for instruction. It also enabled us to plan for professional development. Based on student results, we identified the area of writing as a need for our students. PD resulted in a prolific incorporation of technology in the classroom and improved pedagogical practices. In partnership with the FFO teachers were sent to Columbia University's Teachers College for training in writing. The sustained achievement for all our students has encouraged us to continue our relentless insistence that we will remain a student-centered culture. Our findings about targeted (special education students) and non-targeted students, on the California School Dash Board, indicate sustained exceptional achievement for both groups. These results drive our continued path of service to our students. We will continue to glean from student results in planning next steps on our path of continual improvement in service to Jerabek students.