

## **Skyline School Model Programs and Practices**

### **School Information**

CDS (County District School) Code: 37683876040455

County: San Diego

District (Local Educational Agency): Solana Beach Elementary

School: Skyline School

### **Demographics**

Enrollment: 492 students

Location Description: Suburban

Title I Funded: No

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

### **Overview**

Since 1955, Skyline has served as an integral part of the Solana Beach community. As a central landmark to Solana Beach, Skyline School strives to neutralize the economically and culturally diverse gap existing within the north coastal San Diego population that it serves. In efforts to achieve this, Skyline School has been diligent in cultivating meaningful home to school relationships with culturally diverse student populations, such as La Colonia de Eden Gardens, a multigenerational Latino community that was founded in Solana Beach in 1910. Due to diversified partnerships with community members, Skyline School ensures that the educational and social needs of every learner are met. Skyline School recognizes the importance of uniting families, cultures, and best educational practices for the benefit of its unique student population.

Skyline student body consists of 492 students in grades K–6, and represents a variety of ethnic heritages with 87% white, 22% Hispanic or Latino, and the rest African-American and Asian. Twenty-one percent of our students participate in the free and/or reduced lunch program, and 10% are English Learners.

Skyline School, one of seven schools within the high performing Solana Beach School District, is proud to offer two unique educational programs, our Intermediate Education program (grades 4–6), and Global Education (grades K–6). Our Intermediate Education student population matriculates from our sister school, Solana Vista (K–3). Our Global Education program offers a parent-choice program to all district students in grades K–6. Students in Global Education are placed in multi-age classrooms, and receive standards-based instruction in English Language Arts and Mathematics, and a standards-based Science and Social Studies curricula that is presented over a three-year cycle.

Skyline provides a Special Education program that offers a Learning Center model with opportunities for co-teaching and small group instruction to serve students with special needs. In addition, all our credentialed classroom teachers support instruction in the core curricula for students participating in this program.

All Skyline students participate in a wide variety of enrichment programs that develop the whole child. Credentialed enrichment teachers deliver our music and STREAM programs, and we have support staff who provide art, computer technology, and physical education.

Skyline has created an exemplary educational experience for our students. We have an abundant availability of standards-based instructional materials, cutting-edge technology that is integrated into the curriculum, continuous academic achievement, a safe and nurturing environment to support students, and strong parent/teacher partnerships with many opportunities for parent involvement at the school.

## **Model Program and Practices**

Name of Model Program/Practice: Empowering and Educating All Parents to Increase Student Achievement and Social Competence

Length of Model Program/Practice: 2–4 years

Target Area(s): Closing the Achievement Gap, Education Supports, Parent, Family, and Community Involvement, Professional Development

Target Population(s): Hispanic, White, English Learners

Strategies Used: School Climate, Parent Engagement, Social/Emotional/Behavioral Support, Professional Development, Implementation of Academic Standards Basics (Teachers, Instructional Materials, Facilities)

## **Description**

Within Solana Beach School District's Local Control Accountability Plan, there is an emphasis on families and educators working together as partners. Skyline's practice is distinguished from the district's model. We focus on empowering and educating all

families on the importance of engaging in their children's education to increase academic performance and social competence.

There was a time when our Hispanic parents attended events/meetings at Skyline, but were passive participants, rarely taking on leadership roles. We believe all students can reach the same high academic standards, and parent involvement is key to achieve this goal. Our practice was adopted to empower and educate our Hispanic families on the critical role they play in their children's education to increase student achievement, student attendance and social/emotional growth.

Essential resources were needed to support our practice. Funds were allocated to hire a full-time School-Community Liaison, Reading Specialist, English Language Development teacher, and guidance counselor. Funds were used for intervention and homework support programs, and for parent education. Skyline partnered with Casa de Amistad, a non-profit organization, to offer an afterschool mentoring program.

Although our goal was to engage parents in student learning, we supported this work through professional learning related to equitable instructional practices. We also shifted our priority of providing our English learner students with separate services to an integrated model where teachers collaborated and instructional support occurred within the general education setting.

Our goals to support increased student academic achievement and social/emotional growth included a social/emotional learning program, high expectations for academic achievement, and intervention and homework support programs. Our goals to support parent engagement included creating a culture of trust and respect, increased parent communication, training parent leaders, providing parent workshops, recruiting parent volunteers and partnerships with local community organizations.

Our practice benefits our Hispanic families, empowering them so they have the tools needed to support their children's learning at home. Many of our Hispanic students face a number of difficult situations such as moving to a new country, coming to a new school, learning a new language, and undergoing stress as their parents sometimes face legal situations such as the threat of deportation. Empowered parents can lead to more confident children. Teachers working to engage families will build stronger interpersonal relationships with kids/families.

Skyline addresses chronic absenteeism by working with families to develop a plan to support increased attendance. Skyline uses restorative justice practices to resolve conflicts and build school community. We believe students should be in school and not suspended unless there is a safety risk.

### **Implementation and Monitoring**

Our program is distinguished because our Hispanic families are taking on leadership roles, attending leadership workshops, participating on district and site committees, and leading our ELAC meetings educating other parents. Families attended the Parent

Institute for Quality Education (PIQE) workshops, empowering families to take an active role in their children's education. Families attended nutrition classes and trainings centered on math and literacy in relation to the Common Core Standards. Families participated in PTA-sponsored events making 1,800 homemade tamales, and raising \$2,500 for Skyline School. They played a lead role in helping organize the PTA International Festival. We have had an increase in the number of Hispanic parents volunteering at school.

Skyline used a variety of methods to communicate our practice to our Hispanic families. Parents had support to create email accounts, signing up for the weekly email communication. They received automated calls of upcoming school events/meetings, and found information about school activities/events on the school's website. Parents were individually contacted, inviting them to participate in PIQE workshops. They had access to Seesaw and -----Class Dojo, teacher and student digital portfolios, and received class newsletters and teacher emails.

The monitoring and assessment methods used to evaluate the effectiveness of parent engagement included a yearly Parent Involvement Survey that provided parent perspective and input on whether Skyline empowered families with information to support their children's learning at home, provided communication between home and school, offered opportunities for families to participate in school planning, leadership and volunteering opportunities, connected families to school and community resources; set high expectations for students and met students' individual needs; and provided a welcoming school environment.

Skyline teachers and the administrator participated in professional learning opportunities on the California State Common Core Standards, Next Generation Science Standards, English language development, the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California, technology integration, social/emotional learning programs (Minds Up, Second Step), and training on how to involve and include Hispanic parents at school. Non-instructional staff participated in workshops such as Love and Logic, Skills for Counseling, literacy, mathematics, and strategies for English learners.

The monitoring and assessment methods used to evaluate the effectiveness of learning activities included classroom observations, focused on student engagement and collaboration, teachers modelling cognitive strategies, teachers differentiating instruction and using social/emotional learning programs. Grade level teams analyzed district and state assessment results, and reviewed student surveys to gather perceptions on school climate, safety, and student engagement.

## **Results and Outcomes**

Review of district/state assessment data, classroom observations, teacher collaboration, attendance at professional learning, and parent participation at workshops/school activities was used to determine if increased parent participation resulted in increased student performance and social/emotional growth.

Qualitative data was collected over two years, including parent and student surveys, parent attendance at workshops/school events, student attendance at school, student referrals for counseling, and school attendance. Quantitative data included district and state assessment results. The data demonstrated positive results for student outcomes.

Hispanic families completed a parent survey in the Fall of 2017, reporting their children had access to homework support/intervention programs, the school regularly communicated with them in Spanish, they felt comfortable coming to the school, had opportunities to participate/volunteer in school activities and were satisfied with the school program. Sixty parents attended PIQE workshops, parents regularly attended ELAC meetings, and 30 students were enrolled in the Casa de Amistad mentoring program.

Student survey results indicated 70% of students felt connected to school, 68% were motivated academically, 75% felt their teacher cared about them, and 87% felt safe at school. The results indicated that our social learning programs, including support from staff, had a positive effect on our students' social/emotional well-being. We have seen a decrease in behavioral issues and positive student attendance at school.

In 2015, 31% of Hispanic students and 61% of White students met/exceeded the English language arts (ELA) standards on the CAASPP and in 2017, 52% of Hispanic students and 80% of White students met/exceeded the ELA standards on the CAASPP. In 2015, 28% of Hispanic students and 74% of White students met/exceeded the mathematics standards on the CAASPP, and in 2017, 42% of Hispanic students and 79% of White students met/exceeded the mathematics standards. In ELA, our Hispanic subgroup grew 21% and our White subgroup grew 19% over two years on the CAASPP. In mathematics, our Hispanic subgroup grew 14% and our White subgroup grew 5% over two years on the CAASPP.

We believe that Skyline's practice is distinguished from the district model as educating and empowering our Hispanic families had a direct correlation with an increase in student achievement and social/emotional growth within both our targeted student group (Hispanic students) and our non-targeted group (White students). We continue to focus on increasing academic growth for all students, and increasing opportunities for parent education and parent involvement. We have seen firsthand the positive impact of family engagement on student success and school improvement. Only through partnerships can we keep improving and ensure student success.