

Pacific Rim Elementary School Model Programs and Practices

School Information

CDS (County District School) Code: 37735516116578

County: San Diego

District (Local Educational Agency): Carlsbad Unified

School: Pacific Rim Elementary School

Demographics

Enrollment: 851 students

Location Description: Suburban

Title I Funded: No

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

Overview

Pacific Rim Elementary is a kindergarten through fifth-grade school that has served students in the Carlsbad Unified School District for the past eighteen years. It is the largest of nine elementary schools in the district and regarded as one of the most outstanding schools in the county and state. While attending Pacific Rim, students receive instruction of the highest quality and learn how to interact responsibly and respectfully with the world around them. Our teachers, support staff, administrator, and parents contribute to students' success through effective collaboration and ongoing dedication to excellence.

Pacific Rim currently serves 851 students with diverse backgrounds and needs. Our population is 66% Caucasian, 9% Asian, 13% Hispanic or Latino, 1% Black or African American, 1% American Indian or Alaskan Native, 1% Pacific Islander, 1% Filipino, and 8% are of two or more races. In addition, 10% of our students have special needs, 8% are socioeconomically disadvantaged, and 4% are English language learners.

The mission of Pacific Rim Elementary is to embrace technology and academic excellence while developing intrinsically motivated, lifelong learners who are responsible, productive citizens who follow the Golden Rule. The mission provides the foundation for our school culture, which we embrace each day as a school community. At Pacific Rim, we focus on high expectations, strong accountability, and excellent effort on behalf of all students. The enthusiasm for learning and the drive to achieve are contagious among staff and students. Teachers utilize a comprehensive curriculum with differentiation strategies. Promoting school spirit and involving the community are vital to student achievement. Visitors often comment on the positive attitude and teamwork evident on campus. Our students, known as Waveriders, demonstrate kindness to each other and always strive to do their best.

Parent participation and community support are invaluable assets to our school success. The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is dedicated to supporting the overall wellness, academic

life, and enrichment needs of our students. Over 30 parents serve on the PTO board. One key event held at the beginning of each school year is our school-wide Jog-A-Thon. Family and corporate sponsors fund many of our enrichment programs and activities. Numerous volunteers dedicate thousands of hours each year in the classrooms, in the office, and on field trips. Partnering with the parents and the community allows Pacific Rim to offer a variety of educationally balanced programs.

In summary, Pacific Rim develops citizens who achieve academic excellence and become lifelong learners. Through the combined efforts of our dedicated staff, supportive community, and highly motivated students, Pacific Rim continues to be an exemplary school in the Carlsbad Unified School District.

Model Program and Practices

Name of Model Program/Practice: Waveriders C.A.N.

Length of Model Program/Practice: 8+ years

Target Area(s): Closing the Achievement Gap, Education Supports, Parent, Family, and Community Involvement, Professional Development, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, Use of Technology, Visual and Performing Arts

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

Pacific Rim Elementary implemented Waveriders C.A.N. to focus on Community involvement, Academic rigor, and Necessary interventions. The program was adopted to ensure optimal student performance in an engaging environment to maintain high test scores and school morale.

Community involvement is essential to Pacific Rim's overall success. Volunteers provide a monthly average of over 2,000 hours. Extension programs such as drama, art, and science lab are funded by our PTO. Carlsbad businesses support annual events such Science Day and Biz Town to support our Students' academic growth and love of learning.

Academic rigor is another important component of the Waveriders C.A.N. program. Pacific Rim's core curriculum offers robust opportunities for students to engage in the learning standards and acquire foundational skills for life. High expectations and accountability are important elements that are communicated to the students and supported by the principal and staff. To enhance our district-adopted language arts and math programs, our highly qualified teachers provide engaging and relevant differentiated activities. Students engage in novel studies and Depth and Complexity Icons for a deeper connection with literature. Our staff has worked diligently to implement the new California Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Grades 2–5 spend 45 minutes weekly with a credentialed science teacher doing hands-on investigations and experiments. Engineering challenges have been incorporated in all grade levels to promote critical thinking and collaboration.

Necessary interventions are a valuable component of our program. Through multiple measures of assessment, our staff identifies at-risk students who are performing below grade level. Intervention for fluency and reading comprehension begins in first and second grade with The Reading Club. English language learners are included for vocabulary development and language acquisition. The credentialed coordinator and trained tutors from the community work one-on-one with students using leveled readers which serves approximately 30 students per year. Math Club is an intervention for students in grades 4 and 5 struggling with math facts. The principal meets with approximately 80 identified students to improve math fact fluency. With this foundational support in place, our students' success with higher-level math skills is increased. Principal's Academic Club (PAC) is a lunchtime intervention serving students in grades 2–5 who are underperforming in language arts or math. Students meet weekly for motivation, academic review, and problem-solving strategies.

The goal of Waveriders C.A.N. is to increase academic performance and school pride for all stakeholders. Essential resources include a standards-based curriculum, highly trained staff, and dedicated community. The program is aligned with our district's LCAP goals to provide engaging, comprehensive curriculum and appropriate intervention.

Implementation and Monitoring

Parent participation and support are extremely important at Pacific Rim. The staff encourages parents involvement and accountability for their child's education and to uphold our high academic and behavioral expectations at home. Classroom volunteers can be seen daily working with students, preparing materials, and organizing events. Parents log an impressive monthly average of over 2,000 hours. Pacific Rim's PTO raises funds for physical education, art, drama, technology, instructional assistants, and science lab. They fund special programs such as Playground Pals, Art Masters, and many enrichment activities, including Lego Robotics and Odyssey of the Mind. Our PTO also organizes community-building events, such as the Pacific Rim Fall Carnival, Mother-Son Bowling, a Father-Daughter Dance, movie nights, school campouts, and kindergarten playgroups.

Pacific Rim strives for excellent communication to promote our home-school connection. We are active on many social media platforms to highlight the engaging activities our students participate in daily. Our teachers have up-to-date websites with information and resources for parents. Teachers also communicate with parents via Remind, Class Dojo, Shutterfly, or email. Our PTO sends a biweekly email blast with information about upcoming events on campus and volunteer opportunities.

Each month, we have two school-wide assemblies. At these assemblies, students and faculty perform songs and skits, and students are recognized for academics and citizenship. Parents of students who are receiving an award or performing are personally invited to the assemblies by their child's teacher. A parent responding to our 2016 survey sums it up best, "The teaching staff, principal, students, and parents collaborate effectively to create a warm and nurturing environment for learning that is unlike anything I have ever seen at another school."

Pacific Rim Waveriders interact with the Carlsbad community and have developed amazing partnerships over time. During our annual Science Day, many local businesses, such as Thermo Fisher Scientific and the Agua Hedionda Lagoon Foundation donate their time and expertise. The students of Pacific Rim reach out to local organizations promoting service learning and giving back to their community through our Waveriders Care program.

Several teachers have participated in optional teaching conferences, such as the San Diego Computer Using Educators (SDCUE), The Good Teaching Conference, and EdTech Summit. Those who attended these conferences shared information about many new strategies to support and enrich student learning objectives.

Professional development is further explored on our site within weekly grade-level professional learning communities. Through these meetings, grade-level teams collaborate to analyze the curriculum, plan together, and share best practices. Our administrator often participates in the meetings to offer clarification and guidance in decision making.

Results and Outcomes

Results from the 2017 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress reporting system indicate the statewide average for proficient and advanced students was 48% in ELA and 37% in math. Pacific Rim achieved 93% in ELA and 94% in math because of targeted interventions. For the past decade, our test scores have only increased. Each year, our students receive appropriate and effective interventions to meet their needs and to increase their academic performance.

Based on assessment results, students performing below grade level may require intervention. We offer early reading intervention through The Reading Club. Students in grades 1 and 2 receive one-on-one, systematic, phonics-based reading support from a certificated teacher and trained volunteers. Other interventions include Principal's Academic Club held weekly and Math Club held daily to provide motivation and academic support for struggling students in grades 2–5. A team of credentialed teachers is funded by our PTO to provide academic support in each kindergarten and first-grade classes for 3 hours weekly. Classroom teachers may also initiate a Student Study Team meeting if a student demonstrates academic or emotional needs. Parents, administrators, and other staff members contribute ideas and develop a plan. Response to Intervention may include small group work with the classroom teacher, collaboration with resource teachers in the learning center and engaging parents in the instructional strategies for support at home.

Assessment results provide valuable information teachers use to differentiate lessons and assignments. When identified, high performing students benefit from instructional enrichment. Teachers use a variety of strategies and motivating activities to ensure that the students continue to perform at a high level. Homogeneous grouping allows advanced learners to be challenged. Small groups read books at their appropriate text level during literature circles. Icons for Depth and Complexity develop high-level thinking skills at all ages. In the upper grades, math classes rotate so that students receive targeted instruction based on assessment results. Adopted programs provide curriculum that challenges students. Smarty Ants provides grades K–1 with digital stories at their instructional levels. Achieve3000 provides nonfiction articles and comprehension questions aligned to the student's Lexile level to support or challenge each reader. Go Math! has an online component that features an adaptive workflow to reinforce concepts for students at level and challenge students once the concept is mastered. Google Apps for Education offers an inspiring platform for students to demonstrate understanding as a 21st century learner. As a result of our supportive and enriching practices, there have been significant gains reflected in our testing results since 2005. Pacific Rim ranked 12th in California out of 5,650 schools and 3rd among San Diego County schools.