

Commodore Sloat School Model Programs and Practices

School Information

CDS (County District School) Code: 38684786040851

County: San Francisco

District (Local Educational Agency): San Francisco Unified

School: Commodore Sloat School

Demographics

Enrollment: 393 students

Location Description: Urban

Title I Funded: No

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

Overview

Commodore Sloat School was founded in 1865 and is located in the Ingleside Terrace neighborhood of San Francisco. Comprised of 393 culturally, linguistically, and socio-economic diverse student population, Sloat is an inclusive community that provides special education services, an English language program, arts, music, and theatre, gardening, student support programs and access to before and after school care.

An unique feature for an urban school is the significant amount of outdoor space that allows for specialized programming and community enhancement. Sloat has a separate kindergarten play area (with age appropriate play structure and fairy garden), two larger play structures for older children, basketball and kickball courts, blacktop for running, green spaces for exploring and gardening, an outdoor amphitheater, and a labyrinth. Sloat is one of the few public elementary schools in California to receive a distinguished GreatSchools.org rating of 9 out of 10 and was also named one of the top 10 SF Public Schools by Business Insider in 2016.

Veteran staff know how to support students to reach higher levels of academic performance. Beyond academics, staff are re-tooling practices to deliver instruction that teaches students how to discern the difference between right and wrong, how to form evidence-based conclusions, and how to become contributing citizens in a rapidly-changing and complex world. Teachers supplement curriculum with a variety of programs available in San Francisco; including field trips to museums, theaters, concert halls, the Presidio, the bay and the ocean. through resources in San Francisco, including field trips to museums, plays, and concerts. In addition to the core curriculum, students are provided the opportunity to boost their health and fitness through a dedicated PE teacher, explore their creative side through art specialists, and integrate science and gardening under the guidance of an outdoor education instructor. Joyful learners are what you can expect to find at Sloat. The school offers leadership opportunities to children in upper grades, including a crossing guard program, recess peer coaches, morning community circle leadership, and student council.

Academic and social-emotional support are available through the Student Assistance Program (SAP) team, which includes the principal, social worker, psychologist, speech therapist, and special education teachers. English Learners receive daily English support from the English Language Development (ELD) instructor. Interpretation and translation are offered to non English speaking families at meetings and school events.

Sloat's mission is to develop and nurture creative, 21st Century critical thinkers who can face the challenges that the world will present. They will care for themselves and others, navigate change with grace, and recognize the value of community service.

Model Program and Practices

Name of Model Program/Practice: Parent Club Organization (PCO)

Length of Model Program/Practice: 8+ years

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

Target Population(s): 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, Small Learning Communities, Parent Engagement, Data-Driven Decision Making, Social/Emotional/Behavioral Support

Description

The Parent Club Organization (PCO) aligns with the state's LCAP priority 3: Parent involvement. This includes efforts to seek parent input in decision making, promotion of parent participation in programs for unduplicated pupils and special need subgroups. The PCO, which is guided by a 16 board members, is distinguished because it includes

all parents at Commodore Sloat. The 16 board members seek to align the PCO's work with the District's Family Engagement standards (which include Facilitating Two-Way Communication, Speaking Up for Every Student, and Sharing Power and Decision-Making). The strong network of partnership amongst the parents allows for increased parent engagement, which boosts supports for classroom teachers and students. Parents go beyond being a parent for their individual child and participate with the intention of supporting the whole school. The PCO works in tandem with the school staff to support the school's mission of developing and nurturing creative, 21st Century critical thinkers who will be up for the challenges that the world will present, care for themselves and others, navigate change with grace, and recognize the value of service to their communities.

Implementation and Monitoring

Parent involvement is a key ingredient to the success of Commodore Sloat. The Parent Club Organization (PCO) is the organizing body for this parent support and is fueled and sustained by parents. All Commodore Sloat parents are members of the PCO, which distinguishes the program/practice from the district's model. Parents are not required to pay fees or dues to be members of the PCO, nor are they required to "sign up". Their inclusion in the PCO is automatic upon enrollment of their child in Sloat. Through the efforts of the PCO, the parents of the school collectively support teachers, students, and school events. The governing body of the PCO is the PCO Executive Board, comprised of 16 elected board members (2 for each position), 2 teachers and the principal, who meet monthly to coordinate PCO efforts and ensure that various school needs are addressed. The board members include the following positions and responsibilities:

- Co-President-Sets agenda and presides over Board meetings, calls special meetings, sets calendar for upcoming year with the Principal, and other presidential duties.
- Co-Secretary-Keeps accurate records of all Board meetings, posts notification of meetings, prepares meeting minutes.
- Co-Treasurer-Deposits all PCO funds, pays bills, keeps account records and provides monthly reports, sets-up the annual budget to be approved by the Board.
- Co-VP of Ongoing Programs-Manages enrichment programs in concert with the Principal (i.e. P.E., gardening, artist in residence, etc.).
- Co-VP of Special Events-Oversees special events throughout the year and supports the Chairpersons of those events, for example Sloat Stride, Book Fair, Pumpkin Patch, Silent Auction, Holiday Sing Along, etc.
- Co-VP of Volunteers-Recruits room parents, recruits chairpersons of standing committees, coordinate volunteers for special events as needed, etc.

- Co-VP of Communications-Sends out communications via the Wednesday Bulletins and emails. Sets-up Opt-Out email programs each school year, and coordinates with Commodoresloat.com webmaster to update school information.
- Co-VP of Afterschool Programs-Acts as a liaison with the Afterschool Director to ensure this program's needs are met.

By diversifying the roles and responsibilities of the board members, the parents are able to expand their bandwidth and provide comprehensive support for the school.

Results and Outcomes

The Parent Club Organization (PCO) works in tandem with the school staff to support the school's mission. The diversification of roles within the PCO allows for strong parent input at the school. The roles below highlight the results and outcomes of the school's PCO.

The PCO Co-Presidents work alongside the principal to ensure that teachers' and students' needs are met. Annually, the PCO co-presidents and principal co-create the school's calendar of events. This includes agreements on important dates for the school events. This partnership between the co-presidents and principal allows for continuous and seamless collaboration.

The PCO Co-VPs of Volunteers play an active role of recruiting parent volunteers. At the beginning of the year, the Co-VPs of Volunteers create a bulletin board to post all of the volunteer opportunities for the school year. These opportunities include room parents, chairpersons of standing committees, coordination of volunteers for special events as needed, etc. All classrooms have at least one room parent who helps the classroom teacher with day to day support or special projects. Online volunteer opportunities on SignUpGenius are also posted regularly so parents can instantaneously know about volunteer opportunities and volunteer gaps. Also, this outreach allows parents with special skills to contribute their skills as needed.

The Co-VPs of Communications ensure that parents of the 393 students get valuable information in the form of a newsletter. This newsletter goes home weekly in a hard document or electronically, depending on parent' preference. The newsletter highlights information about the school and keeps families abreast of upcoming events. Since the school has an inclusive philosophy, parents can also get the newsletter in Chinese and Spanish. In addition to managing the newsletter, the Co-VPs of Communications also create a group email for each classroom so teachers can easily send out communications to students' parents. Furthermore, the co-VPs of Communications manage the school's website -commodoresloat.com. As a result of the rich communication through the newsletter, email groups, and website, school events are highly attended by parents. Often, the school averages 100–150 parents attending school events.

The co-VPs of Afterschool Programs ensures the afterschool program aligns with the school day and parents' goals for their children. The afterschool program consists of students from different economic backgrounds. Some students pay for the full program and some get subsidized support through an ExCEL grant. Despite the different economic backgrounds, the students get equitable access to quality academic and enrichment opportunities. Monthly, the co-VPs of Afterschool Programs meet with the afterschool program director to address concerns.

As a result of the efforts of the PCO, staff are able to focus on curriculum and instruction and provide a safe and supportive environment for students.