

Encinal Elementary School Model Programs and Practices

School Information

CDS (County District School) Code: 41689656044135

County: San Mateo

District (Local Educational Agency): Menlo Park City Elementary

School: Encinal Elementary School

Demographics

Enrollment: 631 students

Location Description: Suburban

Title I Funded: Yes

Type of Program: Targeted Assistance

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

Overview

Encinal Elementary School, located in Atherton, California is a public elementary school serving a diverse group of approximately 640 students from grades K to 5 composed of 55% White, 17% Hispanic/Latino, 12.5% Asian, 11.4% Two or More Races, 3.3% Other, 11.9% ELL, 8.4% Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Students who attend from Atherton, Menlo Park and East Palo Alto communities. Approximately 24% of our K–5 student body participate in our K–5 Spanish Immersion choice program and learn core content in Spanish. Encinal boasts two full inclusion Learning Centers that provide services and unique curriculum to students with significant learning needs.

Encinal teaches social emotional learning (S.E.L) to all students. Each year we focus on three themes of learning through lessons in each classroom with our counselor, school wide assemblies, and messaging on ENTV. Teachers conduct weekly classroom community circles with their students in alignment with our work in Restorative Practices.

In addition to teaching all core subjects in innovative ways such as reading and writing workshop, math talks, and word study, all students attend enrichment classes in world language music, art, library, PE, and are offered a wide selection of after school activities. Students demonstrate their learning several times a year through music performances including the Winter Sing, Fall Musical, and Encinal's Talent Show and all students participate in many community field trips funded by our Parent Teacher Organization (PTO).

In alignment with Next Generation Science Standards, we recently redesigned our science lab, branding it the Encinal ENspired Lab! This STEAM lab includes a makerspace with integrated learning activities and new technology that include science, technology, engineering, math and art learning experiences.

Encinal is commitment to closing our student achievement gap. Last year we launched a Triple E extended day homework club with much success. This was one of two extended day learning opportunities offered for students in grades 3–5. This year we are expanding this work under the Encinal Educators for Equity initiative.

Recognizing the need to enhance our partnership and communication with all parents, we are implementing new technology tools this year to reach parents in a new and streamlined way. Our tools serve to engage parents in their home language and foster a deeper understanding of what is happening in their child's education and classroom. This year we launched LivingTree, a secure and safe school-home communication network that is Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) compliant, as our parent communication tool.

Encinal Elementary School received a California Gold Ribbon Award in the spring of 2016 for its "All Eagles Soar RTI" academic and social emotional initiatives which has resulted in improved student outcomes and thus will also serve as the basis for this California Distinguished School Application.

Model Program and Practices

Name of Model Program/Practice: ALL EAGLES SOAR RTI

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): Black or African American, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, Students with Disabilities

Strategies Used: School Climate, Small Learning Communities, Parent Engagement, Data-Driven Decision Making, Social/Emotional/Behavioral Support, Professional Development, Implementation of Academic Standards Basics (Teachers, Instructional Materials, Facilities)

Description

Encinal's model program is a site specific, comprehensive, multi-tiered model program that meets ALL students' diverse academic and social emotional needs. Our system, informed by data, ensures all students are supported in a strategic manner through the innovative design of our master schedule, multi-tiered systems of academic support, deployment of social emotional researched based Tier 1 and 2 programs, and meaningful parent engagement opportunities.

Our model program was designed to address the achievement gap using research based intervention curriculum, prior inefficiencies in the delivery of specialized support, and to address the emotional well being of all students, especially targeting our students with social-emotional and behavioral needs.

Essential resources to support our model program include a Federal Grant for certification in Reading Recovery™, a San Mateo Office of Education homework club grant, a local grant for extended day math support, PTO funding for our Tier 2 SEL program, site directed funds for teacher professional development, and the time and energy of our staff to coordinate all aspects of our RTI model.

To support student academic growth, our school launched an extended day Math Club with a goal to provide individualized support to help accelerate mathematical learning and understanding, bringing students to grade level and beyond. Our ELA RTI model program's goal is to provide both differentiated instruction at a student's development level in word study, and through short term leveled literacy intervention to further develop students' independent reading and writing skills. Our literacy specialists participated in 5 days of Leveled Literacy Intervention professional development to support our model.

In an effort to promote wellness for all students, administrators and teachers engage in 'Restorative Practices' work and professional development that aims to foster healthy relationships and positive discipline in schools. After reviewing school suspension data, classroom and playground behavioral referrals, we developed 'Fly'. Prior to this initiative, higher numbers of students of color, students from a lower socioeconomic status, and students with disabilities, were receiving behavior referrals than their peers. 'Fly' is a site specific, strategic Tier 2 intervention that creates a strong bond between designated support staff and a group of selected students and their parents.

Our model program includes several parent engagement opportunities through our site's evening parent SEL education series, our unique Kinder Welcome program and a new site specific parent communication tool that allows parents of ELLs to communicate in their home language with their child's teacher and administrators. These programs and tools aim to promote a sense of belonging at the school, a forum for parents and staff to problem solve and learn together, and to reduce home language communication roadblocks for our ELL families.

Implementation and Monitoring

Strategic work on our master schedule begins at the end of one school year in preparation for the following school year. Our RTI, special education and admin staff work together each spring to cluster student learning needs in classrooms and to prioritize Tier 3 and 2 academic program needs in the master schedule for the following year.

Each trimester our RTI team reviews site level benchmark data in collaboration with grade level teams and makes any adjustments to Tier 2 support services for individual students. Between trimesters, our “Kid by Kid” process supports teachers with problem solving individual student needs. This site specific, monthly support system, allows teachers to share student academic or behavior concerns with our counselor and literacy specialist and to develop strategies for targeted support in the classroom.

Our literacy specialists and our counselor communicate deeply and work in partnership with our parent community. Literacy specialists partner with classroom teachers and jointly host parent teacher conferences in the fall. Before any student enters our Tier 2 “Fly” social-emotional support program, a parent meeting is held and daily goals of the program are determined in partnership with the support team and the child’s parents.

Each year, Encinal solicits feedback from it’s parent community through our annual school site survey. Parents on our School Site Council (SSC) team provide input into the survey questions that are aligned to our LCAP and site goals. Parent input is solicited on school wide academics, support services, and school climate. Our SSC reviews survey results and makes recommendations for the upcoming Single Plan for Student Achievement.

Teachers engage in professional learning related to school goals in numerous ways. Professional development throughout the year is aligned to school wide goals. For example, our most recent SBAC data indicated a large ELL achievement gap in ELA. Heinemann staff developer, Dr. Lindsey Moses, was contracted and provided a one day workshop for our teachers on “Supporting ELLs in Reading and Writing Workshop” this fall with time built in for teachers to collaborate in grade level teams about their upcoming units of study with a lens of scaffolding support for our ELLs.

Our school specifically and strategically designs release time each week that does not cost the site additional funds and provides students with more learning time with our specialists. During this release time, classroom teachers work in grade level teams on any of the following: analyzing student work, calibrating student writing on a rubric, working with one of our ELA/math/science Teachers On Special Assignment (TOSAs), and/or analyzing student data for FLEX time related learning with our literacy specialists. This creative use of our master schedule provides the time for teachers and administrators to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of our instructional learning models.

Results and Outcomes

Since the implementation of our model program, Encinal has increased the efficacy of the delivery of support services to all students. There has been a positive shift in student connectedness, a reduction in behavior referrals and more parent participation of underrepresented populations at school events. Our model program has resulted in developing students that are more engaged in their learning, performing to their ability, and feeling safe, supported, and included.

Based on the most recent California School Dashboard data, Encinal School has shown continuous improvement on Academic Indicator from 2015 to 2017 specifically in the area of successfully increased Math scores for Hispanic, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, and Students with Disabilities.

Since 2014–2015, average math scores of our Hispanic/Latino students have improved from being 9.8 points below to 24.7 points above a level three by 2016–2017. Our collective math scores for our entire student body reached a “Very High” on the CA Dashboard and has maintained that status for the past two years.

Socioeconomically disadvantaged students scores “Increased Significantly” this past year and earned a Medium Status on the CA Dashboard in mathematics after a 37.6 point increase this past year.

Students with Disabilities earned a “High” status in mathematics after a 3.2 point increase in performance.

67% of our 4th and 5th grade students who attended our extended day math acceleration club made more than one year’s growth on their smarter balanced math assessment.

Our annual school site survey indicates that 90% of our parents reported a positive school climate, a 1% increase from a year ago. 73% of our parents responded favorably when asked, “How effectively does this school meet the needs of your child if and when they struggle socially/emotionally?” although we recognize that N/A was not offered as a choice response.

Our evening parent education series averages 25 parents per event. 95% of our parents participate in our Kinder Welcome Session that allows the site to meet students and their families in a 1:1 setting prior to the start of kindergarten.

Over time, our students who participate in ‘Fly’ improve their connectedness with their peers and become more engaged with school, reduce absenteeism, and start to increase their overall time engaged in academic learning.

Earlier this year, the San Mateo County Office of Education’s Center of Learning Analytics invited Encinal School to be part of the “Achievement in Motion” project. This study is charged with identifying instructional practices in local schools that are resulting in impressive student achievement, especially for traditionally underserved students.

Encinal Principal Sharon Burns will be a guest panelist at the March 12, 2018 annual Zap the Gap conference at SMCOE making reference to our unique multi-tiered systems of support that may have contributed to increased student outcomes in the area of mathematics.