Foothill School
Model Programs and Practices

School Information

CDS (County District School) Code: 42691956045447

County: Santa Barbara

District (Local Educational Agency): Goleta Union Elementary

School: Foothill School

Demographics

Enrollment: 474 students

Location Description: Suburban

Title I Funded: No

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: No

Overview

Foothill School, Home of the Falcons, is one of the elementary schools within the Goleta Union School District. Our campus is unique in that it comprises two school communities on one school campus. You will find that the campus is a special place; a place that brings together children, families, and educators to create a community that values and depends upon each other to construct the finest educational experience for all. Foothill is a place where learning is evident in the daily engagement of children, families, and staff members. As part of the Goleta Union School District, our mission is to maximize academic, intellectual, and personal growth in order for each student to prosper in, and positively influence, a diverse and dynamic world. In fact, at Foothill/Goleta Family School (GFS) School, we envision maximizing student capacity through educating the whole child. Our school mission, then, is to create a safe learning environment that addresses the needs of the whole child. Each day we strive to exemplify our mission where parents, teachers and students work as a team to meet the academic, social, emotional and physical needs of each child through consistent communication, timely information, and shared knowledge. The MTSS process is the foundation through which we make our vision a reality.

Our commitment to SOAR, a Positive Behavior Support program, helps us to fulfill our mission. SOAR focuses on the concepts of being safe, open, accepting, respectful and responsible in our interactions with teachers, staff, parents, and fellow students. Our goal is to foster a positive culture of learners. Our district mission as well as our campus mission, provides the foundation for our educational environment- a strong academic program balanced with engaging activities and attitudes that foster school spirit, warmth, and friendliness. A productive relationship among parents, teachers, and staff creates the type of education we seek for all children. We encourage parents to become actively involved, and in fact, cannot accomplish all that we do without our cadre of volunteers. Foothill/GFS is fortunate to have a rich history of collaborative efforts between the home and school and that is evident in the daily engagement of children, families, and staff members.

Model Program and Practices

Name of Model Program/Practice: Multi-Tiered System of Supports

Length of Model Program/Practice: 2–4 years

Target Area(s): Closing the Achievement Gap, Education Supports, Professional Development

Target Population(s): Hispanic, White, Two or More Races, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, English Learners, Students with Disabilities

Strategies Used: Small Learning Communities, Data-Driven Decision Making, Social/Emotional/Behavioral Support, Professional Development

Description

Our model program of practice is our MTSS for all students. MTSS encompasses Response to Intervention. However, there is more depth to MTSS as defined currently in education. Through the lens of MTSS, our site looks at the needs of the whole child: academic, behavioral, and social-emotional. Each year, we reevaluate our system and make adjustments based on continual depth of our learning via professional development as well as feedback from stakeholders such as parents, colleagues, and our partnership with UCSB. In the past two years, we have partnered with UCSB in their research study "The Science and Practice of Assessment, Instruction, and Intervention." In collaborative teams, we analyze this data across the ten MTSS domains, which has helped strengthen our MTSS process. We take an engineer's view of MTSS, by continually making adjustments to support and build on our current model.

Our collaborative site teams (grade level, special education, curriculum, etc.) continually look at data to determine areas of greatest growth and greatest need within our structure. To determine our site goals, we analyze the CAASPP data grades 3–6, summative STAR 360 scores, and CELDT scores data to determine areas in need of improvement. These goals are identified and discussed in staff meetings and parent

groups such as the school site council, the English Language Advisory Council, and Parent Teacher Association. This feedback guides the direction and goals of our Single Plan for Student Achievement.

These grade level teams use data from classroom assessments and STAR 360 to discuss and analyze student results. Our grade level data teams meet every 6–8 weeks to share student progress, identify specific areas of need for both ELA and math, and share instructional strategies to support student growth. Teams also revise existing groups and begin a new cycle of intervention with identified areas of need.

Another essential component of our MTSS process is our student study team, created to address particular needs of a specific child. Our student study team consists of our intervention teacher, MTSS lead teacher, classroom teacher, the principal and parents. At these bi-monthly meetings, we discuss in depth our concerns regarding specific students. As part of the team, parents play a crucial role in the team's discussions and decision making, providing insight into the student from the family perspective. We collaboratively make recommendations regarding next steps to support their child's individual needs.

The goal of MTSS is to develop a robust system of tiered support for students in need of intervention or extension. Student learning is supported by research-based best practices, programs, and teaching methods fully aligned with current content standards. These programs support intervention and address academic and social emotional needs, including those of students who have been identified as gifted.

Implementation and Monitoring

Stakeholder feedback determined areas of strength and challenge within our school.

Parents provided much of this feedback as part of the LCAP and site input via surveys. Once the structure was in place, we shared MTSS implementation across many parent groups. We shared our model with school site council, ELAC, Gifted Enriched Student (GES) parent group, and the PTA. We shared MTSS with a wide range of parent groups with a variety of interests and needs. With our ELAC group, we focused on our English Language Development materials within our language adopted materials (Wonders). We shared integrated and designated ELD materials, and shared the new ELD standards and strategies.

With our gifted students, we hosted informational meetings to share teaching strategies and examples of student work connected to the depth and complexity icons that would extend their learning. Our school site council is important as they help us analyze year end data and then determine goals for the current school year. Another avenue for sharing information is our monthly PTA meeting. At these meetings, teachers have an opportunity to discuss implementation of specific programs like Dreambox and Second Step social emotional curriculum. Teachers share how these programs directly impact the students in their classrooms. We also provide a year-end survey to collect feedback that helps us identify areas of strength as well as areas we need to further improve

upon. Monthly principal steering committee meetings with grade level representatives guide our direction in successful implementation of MTSS throughout the year and into future years.

Data is used to evaluate our programs as well. For example, our student information system (EADMS) tracks student growth. This data warehouse shows a student profile with individual scores that includes state summative scores (CAASPP), STAR 360 benchmarks, curricular unit assessments, and progress monitoring tools. We then determine the effectiveness of various programs and instructional strategies. For example, data from student and parent surveys, as well as discipline reports and teacher feedback highlighted the need for social-emotional support for our students. We purchased Second Step K–6 curriculum as a systematic response. We also created a character program (SOAR) to define school-wide expectations. We took a more proactive school-wide approach by adding a more formalized social-emotional component to our tiers of support. We continue our work in this area by sending school leaders and the principal to Restorative Practices workshops. The hope is to incorporate Restorative Practices within our Second Step curriculum. Our classified staff is continually trained in problem solving skills to support social emotional development. We have monthly playground yard duty supervisor meetings to discuss problem-solving strategies of mediation.

Results and Outcomes

When analyzing the 2016–17 CAASPP results, as well as looking at our trimester three benchmark data on the STAR 360, our school has made great gains. We attribute these student gains to our ongoing focus on MTSS. The California Dashboard shows increases for all students, students who are socio-economically disadvantaged, and students identified as belonging to two or more races in both ELA and Math. In ELA, 82% of our 3rd–6th graders met or exceeded the standards as measured on the CAASPP. In Math, 78% of our students met or exceeded grade level standards in math on the CAASPP. When looking at the STAR 360 data, 80% of our students met grade level proficiency and met student growth targets. 88% of our students 2nd–6th grade met grade level proficiency on the STAR 360 for math.

Another focal point in our collaborative team discussions is student growth percentiles as measured by student results on STAR 360, which highlights the importance of progress monitoring. We look at the student growth percentiles to make sure that all students are making a full year's growth. This includes our gifted learners as well. On the CAASPP, our gifted students consistently scored in either the Level 3 or 4 for both ELA and math. On the STAR 360, this subgroup scores in the At/Above. This gives teachers information as to which students may need an extended curriculum. We also evaluate the success of the academic interventions by looking at their progress monitoring scores within the research-based programs.

We are seeing growth with our English Language Learners. 28% of our English Language Learners moved up one band growth on the CELDT, 26 % remained at their proficiency level and 31% took the initial baseline test for the first time. These scores

validate our efforts in structuring and providing a more systematic, sequential intervention system. This data was the evidence used to show success within our SPSA goals for 2016–17.

Another data point is evaluating the number of students who are brought up for discussion in our student study teams, and the supports that these students receive as a result of being identified during data teams. In this way, we analyze effectiveness not only in terms of student assessment results, but evaluating the effectiveness of the SST process. Conversations continue to move toward a focus on effective instruction and researched-based interventions for each cycle of intervention. Receiving external supports is no longer the first request made by teachers. Our process is successful in determining when to begin more formalized testing in a more deliberate manner.

Since our core value embraces the iterative process of continuous learning and inquiry, our work is ongoing as we continue to find ways to strengthen our MTSS program. Through authentic dialogue and reflection we continue to improve our practices to best meet the needs of each child.