

Tom Matsumoto Elementary School Model Programs and Practices

School Information

CDS (County District School) Code: 43694356115851

County: Santa Clara

District (Local Educational Agency): Evergreen Elementary

School: Tom Matsumoto Elementary School

Demographics

Enrollment: 725 students

Location Description: Suburban

Title I Funded: No

School Calendar: Traditional

Charter: Yes

Overview

Tom Matsumoto Elementary School, established in 1998, is a vibrant and well-loved neighborhood school in Evergreen Elementary School District (EESD). Matsumoto Elementary School is located in the southeast quadrant of EESD. The school provides a family-oriented, nurturing, and safe place for students to learn and grow. Teachers, staff, and administrators continue to act on the principle: students come first.

Matsumoto is a 2004 'No Child Left Behind' Blue Ribbon School as well as a 2002, 2006, 2010 and a 2014 California Distinguished School. Our staff is dedicated to providing the best educational program for our motivated students. In the 2017–2018 school year, the school serves 725 Transitional Kindergarten through Sixth Grade on a traditional calendar schedule. We are known for our rigorous academic program, which results in high achievement for all students. Our 2015–2016 CAASPP baseline scores are as follows: 87% of our students met or exceeded standards in English Language Arts/Literacy and math; and in 2016–2017, CAASPP baseline scores are: 89% of our students met or exceeded standards in English Language Arts/Literacy and 88% met or

exceed standards in Mathematics. Our students continue to amaze us with their academic talent.

We offer a challenging curriculum that is differentiated for our students. Our children learn from a staff that is dedicated to providing not only a strong academic program, and one that helps our students understand their responsibility as citizens. They are given opportunities to assume responsibility so that they may become contributing members of our society. As our children develop a positive sense of self, they will be equally as successful outside of school as in school. Our students are respectful of themselves and of others, seeing themselves as members of a community. We value each child, parent, and staff member and model good behavior. We strive to create an environment of trust and caring that allows all of our wonderful children to soar. Our families work closely with us as we reflect their learning goals.

This year we 1) re-invigorated our student council so students have a greater voice in the school as well as to provide service learning opportunities, and we 2) introduced a mindfulness program, MindUp, to balance our academic and SEL endeavors. These additions were thoughtfully based upon our Project Cornerstone Developmental Asset Survey, where Assets #7, Community Values Children and #9, Service to Others have been historically the lowest scoring Assets at 27% and 29%. We seek to remedy this fact, and empower our students.

Our mission: Tom Matsumoto Elementary provides all students with 21st Century learning tools to grow academically, socially, and emotionally in a safe and nurturing environment. We value the use of collaboration among student, teacher, and parents that will enable each child to grow to their full academic potential while becoming a mindful contributor to society.

Model Program and Practices

Name of Model Program/Practice: Coaching Model Supported by Professional Learning Communities

Length of Model Program/Practice: 8+ years

Target Area(s): Closing the Achievement Gap, Parent, Family, and Community Involvement, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

Target Population(s): Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, English Learners, Students with Disabilities

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

Description

The Matsumoto community share a driving purpose: expectations for every student are high; we strive to meet or exceed California State Standards (CSS) in all areas. We mirror the Evergreen School District's LCAP, with well-defined goals. Goal #2 of the EESD LCAP states the importance of giving students what they require: "Equity at its core is giving each student what he or she needs to meet academic standards and to be socially/emotionally ready for learning."

The action points in the EESD LCAP Summary display where our work is most aligned: "Our Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and other professional learning opportunities have helped in the identification of best practices." Our work is also aligned in the action points in the EESD LCAP goal #2:

- 1: Recommend and provide appropriate student interventions
- 2: Additional support in academic expectations for students through increased parent/school communications and programs
- 5: English learners will receive differentiated instruction on Common Core curriculum, integrated and designated ELD

At Matsumoto, we embrace EESD's LCAP Goal #2: to provide equitable education, resources and facilities." We deepen this work with equity for all students with our Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and Teacher Collaboration/Coaching Model. The PLC's serve to provide rich data for the coaching model. Our school LCAP goals state: "all Tom Matsumoto students who are Hispanic, Students with Disabilities, and English Learners will demonstrate growth annually until reaching scores that are comparable to those of Matsumoto's general education population. Currently, 87% of our general education population have met or exceeded standards on the ELA CAASPP."

In line with State, County and District trends, these groups have under-performed compared to our other significant subgroups. In 2016–2017, 57% of Hispanic, 54% of SWD's, and 48% Socioeconomically Disadvantaged met or exceeded proficiency, compared to 84% average of other student groups. Our EL's, as a subgroup, performed at 84%.

Teacher embrace collaboration using research-based strategies. It is our belief that in order for students to succeed, we must work together as a team and not in isolation. At Matsumoto, grade level collaboration occurs at least twice monthly in two separate venues:

1. Professional Learning Communities: Grade level teams meet at the beginning of the year to create inquiry questions in a PLC setting. Teams engage in inquiry into best practices in both teaching and learning. This data-driven work focuses

on one aspect of the curriculum - which gives us meaningful data to target students in need for our coaching model.

2. Collaboration/Coaching Model: Across grade levels, students in need of additional support are noted and discussed throughout the year. The issues can be academic or social-emotional, or both. Teachers meet almost monthly to discuss observations and offer ideas.

Implementation and Monitoring

The EESD LCAP describes the importance of addressing student needs in goal #2, calling for differentiation in instruction. At Matsumoto, we embrace the District philosophy and take it a step further. We differentiate with a two-prong approach of PLC's and our Coaching Model to ensure that we closely monitor students in monthly, structured grade-level discussion.

Step one: PLC's. We formulate data-driven grade-level inquiry questions yearly. Our 2016–2017 focus:

- K - Will we improve the ability of kindergarteners to demonstrate active and engaged listening skills through the use of varied strategies as evidenced by student collaboration, teacher observation and formal/informal assessments?
- 1st & 2nd - Will we improve our 1st graders' ability to cite text evidence through the use of close reading strategies (citing text evidence in a teacher selected passage) as evidenced by 75% of student correctly?
- 3rd - Will we improve students' close reading skills to comprehend a range of complex literary & informational texts through the use of teacher modeling & instruction, class discussions, text dependent questions, and technology as evidenced by weekly reading comprehension assessments?
- 4th - Will we improve our students' ability to independently comprehend nonfiction and fictional text through the use of scaffolding on how to identify/interpret significant details from the text to respond to a question as evidenced by their elaboration of how the evidence supports their answers on assessments?
- 5th - Will we improve students' ability to solve fraction problems through the use of Fog Stone Isle as evidenced by monitoring student progress via teacher dashboard?
- 6th - Will we develop eloquent speakers and active listeners who articulate their learning and their thoughts as well as the thoughts of others both orally and in writing through the use of discussion guidelines, roles, and structured talk tasks?

Step Two: Coaching Model. We provide consistent support and scaffolding for students with our Coaching Model combined with our PLC work. Teachers identify an area for

growth for each student based on data, develop an inquiry question, vet their question, develop an action plan and subsequent lessons, teach lessons, gather data, and discuss findings with their team. This data highlights student needs, and where to target student discussion for Coaching. Student intervention data is then passed on yearly.

Coaching provides a 360-degree consideration of the student, including social-emotional factors and behavior as well as academic progress, levels of achievement, and any other relevant information. One teacher noted: "I support our Matsumoto Coaching simply because not all problems are solved in one year, with one teacher. Without the ongoing monthly meetings and accumulation of data year after year about this child, his 6th grade teacher would not have been able to support him and his family to this degree."

Results and Outcomes

Through our focus on PLC and Coaching, our systematic discussion of students has resulted in many positive outcomes. Teachers are the main drivers for students, yet we underline that supporting students is a community endeavor, embracing students, parents, administrators and support personnel as well. This process underlines capacity for robust conversations that challenge status quo thinking.

Michael Fullan writes about capacity building, as evidenced in the systematic discussions at Matsumoto, as "being one of the four most important drivers for leading change in an educational institution. Three other drivers are instructional strategies, collaboration, and systems thinking." All present at Matsumoto. Fullan explains that "capacity building is about encouraging and supporting teachers in their desire to be excellent at their craft." The result of our work is a "deeper motivation on the part of teachers to continue their growth unencumbered." ("Choosing the Wrong Drivers for Whole System Reform," April 2011, Centre for Strategic Education.)

The more we collaborate, the more successful we are in seeing positive outcomes. Student engagement is one result. In our Youth Truth Survey results for 2015 and 2016 students rated themselves at 2.77/3.00 and in 2017, at 2.78, higher than the District average.

We support students to thrive academically, and to feel safe and competent socially and emotionally. Only then can divergent thinking soar, grounded in a supportive school climate. Teachers and parents view themselves as partners in education. Teachers "envision their role as educators to be one of acting in solidarity with parents to overcome obstacles to learning." (Karen Chenoweth, "Getting It Done: Leading Academic Success in Unexpected Schools, 2011.)

The Spring of 2017 found us monitoring 70 students, Kindergarten through Sixth Grade, slightly less than 10 percent of our population. Out of those 70 students, 55 have been brought up to the Coaching time for discussion, and from that 16 were suggested for SST's. This shows that with systematic discussions we can meet the needs of our

students, and explore many options before referring a student to an SST or special education.

We also monitor our 4th – 6th graders with CAASPP results. There are 24 such students on the monitor list. Six scored below basic in ELA and Math; 8 scored Basic in those areas; the other students scored Proficient or Advanced. They qualified for our Coaching because of additional SEL factors.

Our PLC and Coaching model do not aim for a “success story” that is shown purely with data. A student’s drive, confidence, resilience and persistence in learning truly make the difference. Our goal is to instill these traits. At Tom Matsumoto School, our model of PLC and Coaching supports all students to be the best learners that they can be and encourages teachers grow through collegial discussion. We endeavor to support healthy students. We are ‘creating the future.’