

## **JUDSON & BROWN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

### **PART III - SUMMARY** 12CA31

Judson & Brown Elementary School is nestled among the orange groves of Redlands, California and boasts breathtaking panoramic views of the surrounding mountain ranges. Judson & Brown has established itself as a school focused on high academic achievement and excellence for each and every student making up its diverse population. California's Academic Performance Index (API) rates schools on a scale of 200 to 1000, with 800 being the target for all schools to achieve. Since opening in 2006, Judson & Brown has celebrated consistent and notable growth in academic achievement, increasing its API from a baseline of 821 in 2006 to 920 in 2011. Judson & Brown's drive for continual improvement earned the school a 2010 Title I Academic Achievement School designation.

Much of Judson & Brown's success can be attributed to the vision in which the school's highly qualified professional educators subscribe. This vision is built upon the foundation of collaboration, best practices, student achievement, and personal excellence. Dedication to the implementation of this vision is evidenced by 2010-11 school-wide proficiency rates of 75.8% in English Language Arts and 91.1% in math. These scores were achieved by a diverse population of 6% African American, 10% Asian, 30% White, and 49% Hispanic/Latino, as well as 10% English Learners (EL) representing eleven languages, and 45% Socioeconomically Disadvantaged.

Both the schoolwide mantra, "Kids Who Read Succeed," and the school's mission to provide curriculum aligned to state standards through challenging and meaningful learning opportunities have contributed to Judson & Brown's many accomplishments. In addition to following the District's Scope & Sequence pacing guide for English Language Arts and mathematics, grade level teams work collaboratively to integrate thoughtfully prepared Direct Instruction lessons. These lessons utilize deconstructed standards and high engagement strategies for the most challenging grade level standards and concepts with the goal of ensuring all students reach academic proficiency. Another prominent practice is the implementation of balanced literacy strategies, such as primary guided reading and blocked literacy instruction, as well as the use of Accelerated Reader to provide each student with an individualized reading plan appropriate for their reading ability. In the area of mathematics, students are engaged in many supplemental programs that enhance their access to the core curriculum. Some of these supplemental programs include Math Facts in a Flash, Multiplication Mondays, Mountain Math, and Excel Math.

The teachers at Judson & Brown are also committed to providing additional opportunities for struggling students to reach success through ELA and math interventions. These include 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade Alternative Core classes in English Language Arts, daily pull-out intervention groups for 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade, strategically planned classroom reteach lessons, and after-school and spring break interventions. Regular collaborative Data Teams meetings provide the staff with an opportunity to closely examine student performance and intervene quickly when students are in need of extra support. Data Teams continually focus on identifying and sharing effective strategies and best practices, as well as forming strategic intervention groups. Teachers use these meetings to set grade level SMART goals and utilize a forward planning model in order to anticipate student obstacles and prepare an action plan for student success.

All 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes participate in common assessments for English Language Arts every five to seven weeks and monthly math assessments. Assessment data is closely analyzed and used to develop action plans. Kindergarten teachers also utilize district semester assessments in math and quarterly assessments in English Language Arts, as well as running records and miscue analysis to monitor student progress.

In addition to the academic rigor that has led Judson & Brown students to exceptional scholastic achievement, the community of dedicated staff and parents go above and beyond to provide students with exemplary auxiliary experiences. Through PTA sponsored family nights, a myriad of fieldtrips across all grade levels, regular assemblies celebrating both academic excellence and students' peace building

efforts, perfect attendance awards, Accelerated Reader incentives and enriching programs such as afterschool GATE classes, a weekly Jogging Club, and upper grade Chorus and Band opportunities, students are immersed in an environment in which they feel safe, encouraged and involved.

Judson & Brown's unrelenting commitment to success for all students has been sustained by three different administrators throughout the school's six years of existence. The unique collaborative culture and drive for continual growth ensure that all students who attend come away from the school with solid academic readiness. Judson & Brown is an extraordinary school with an exceptional staff committed to cultivating challenging, meaningful experiences and high quality academic rigor for all students.

## **PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS** 12CA31

### **1. Assessment Results:**

The California Department of Education requires all public schools to participate in the Standardized Testing and Reporting program (STAR). The STAR program at the elementary level mandates that students in 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grades take the California Standards Test (CST) in English Language Arts and math and students in 5<sup>th</sup> grade are also tested in science. The STAR program also includes modified assessments for students with disabilities. The CSTs are criterion-referenced exams designed to assess student mastery of the California Academic Content Standards. Students are classified into five performance levels: Advanced, Proficient, Basic, Below Basic, and Far Below Basic. Students who score Proficient or Advanced are considered to have met an acceptable level of achievement.

The federal Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements define annual expectations for the percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced. In addition, California schools earn Schoolwide and Significant Subgroup Academic Performance Index (API) scores based on student performance levels. API scores range from 200 to 1000 with a target of 800 for all schools and significant subgroups. California schools are also compared to all schools across the state as well as to one hundred schools that are similar in demographics. Based on these comparisons, schools are given Statewide and Similar School rankings on a scale of one to ten.

In Judson & Brown's inaugural year, the school achieved a 790 API, a State-wide rank of 8, and a Similar Schools rank of 8 which means that Judson & Brown performed as well or better than 80% of Similar Schools in California. This led to a baseline API of 821 for the 2007-08 school year which set the bar high for future achievement. This initial success did not deter the staff and administration from pursuing continual improvement.

In 2010, Judson & Brown reached an API of 898, a State-wide rank of 9, and a Similar Schools rank of 10. The following year, a new goal was set by the school community to be among the very few Title I school sites in California to break the 900 API mark. Convinced that focus on data-driven collaboration, rigorous standards-based Direct Instruction, systematic interventions, and active community involvement was the right path, efforts were doubled. In 2011, as a result of focus and teamwork, Judson & Brown achieved an API of 920, the highest API of any Title I school in San Bernardino County.

The substantial growth over Judson & Brown's six year history is clear through AYP proficiency rates. In 2007, 53% of students were proficient in ELA and 59% were proficient in math. By 2011, proficiency rates in ELA had increased by 23 percent with 75.8% of students proficient and by 32 percent in math with 91.1% of our students scoring proficient. This success is notable across significant subgroups. In 2007, there was an achievement gap in mathematics of 4.3% between White (61.4% proficient) and Hispanic (57.1% proficient) subgroups. By 2011, that gap had been closed with White students scoring 88.2% proficient and Hispanic students scoring 89.4% proficient. This trend continued for SES students who scored 53.6% proficient in 2007 and by 2011 scored 88.5% proficient. In 2007, there was an achievement gap in English Language Arts of 12.9% between White (60.2% proficient) and Hispanic (47.3% proficient) subgroups. By 2011, the gap had been reduced by half to 6.4% with White students scoring 77.5% proficient and Hispanic students scoring 71.1% proficient. Achievement for SES students

increased by 21.9% from 46.4% proficient in 2007 to 68.3% proficient in 2011.

Judson & Brown's growth is directly attributable to a focus on collaboration, data, and intervention. Based on analysis of student achievement data in 2007, mathematics instruction and intervention became a focus. An intervention teacher was hired to work closely with teachers to identify target students and provide frontloading and review in small group settings. In 2008, highly structured after-school interventions were offered to small groups of students based on standards-based data from common assessments. As a direct result of these systematic interventions, the percent of students proficient on the CST in math jumped a whopping 20% in 2008 - from 59% to 79%. The intervention structure initiated in 2008 for math was replicated in ELA beginning in 2009 and has become a practice that has been continually refined each year, resulting in positive outcomes in student achievement.

In 2009, intensive teacher training in Direct Instruction was added to Judson & Brown's repertoire of strategies for growth. This boosted the effectiveness of initial instruction, minimizing the need for intervention. Data Teams have kept continual growth on track by reviewing student performance data, planning interventions, and anticipating needs in upcoming units of study.

How many examples of success are needed to prove that closing the achievement gap is *possible*? Just one. If one organization can do it, then it *can be done*. The accomplishments of Judson & Brown are evidence that a goal as audacious as eliminating the achievement gap *is possible*.

## **2. Using Assessment Results:**

Judson & Brown is proud to be known as a "data-driven community." Results from the California Standards Test (CST) in math, English Language Arts, and science are studied in depth by the staff as soon as they are released each August to identify overall trends, successes, and areas of concern. The first weeks of each school year are spent setting year-long achievement targets for each grade level based on the CST data. These targets are used as a measuring stick to track growth over the course of the year using common progress monitoring tools. Before the school year begins, collaboration days and meeting schedules are planned around the common assessment calendar. At least every six weeks, grade level teams meet to analyze student data. Before each meeting, teachers study their assessment results and come prepared to focus on solutions. Teachers openly share data and are able to discuss how scores were achieved and how instruction can continue to improve.

Data Team meeting protocol has been developed to help structure data analysis. This tool has been refined over the years to maximize the use of meeting time for the greatest student benefit. Student trends are examined item-by-item to identify the root issues of student errors. Then, this analysis is used to craft solutions in various forms: grade-level interventions in small groups taught by an intervention teacher, whole group reteaching lessons led by classroom teachers, or individual student growth goals as needed. The result of each meeting is a written plan of action in response to student needs. Action plans are kept in a teacher data binder and referred to regularly for planning. Meetings also focus on forward planning with data from prior years. Teachers identify known trouble areas before they are taught and collaboratively plan Direct Instruction lessons that maximize initial instruction and minimize the need for reteaching.

Timely and accurate data is so critical that additional assessment tools have been sought out to supplement gaps in existing ones. District assessments in math occur every 11 weeks. Wanting more frequent progress monitoring and data collaboration, the staff began using the publisher's Monthly Practice Tests in math. In English Language Arts, Judson & Brown created and piloted six-week unit assessments that align in both rigor and emphasis of the California Standards Tests. These assessments were refined into tools that are now administered as district-wide common assessments.

Parent and community involvement in the academic success of Judson & Brown students is paramount. The school website is frequently updated and visited thousands of times per month. One of

the most visited links is a portal that allows parents to check the progress of students' reading goals for the Accelerated Reader program.

In addition, the Principal and Teacher-on-Assignment meet with every student each year to review their individual CST scores from the previous year and help them set personal goals for the current year. Students who reach their personal goal are honored by being presented with a coveted medal at an annual assembly.

Finally, teachers share common assessment data with students and honestly talk about proficiency levels and how individual students can improve. They share with students how their common assessment results can guide their progress toward improving their academic achievement and meeting their personal goals. Assessment reports, along with copies of assessments, are shared with families regularly. These reports reveal specific areas of strength and weakness in math and English Language Arts. Teachers share materials, websites, and tools for parents to help support academic growth at home.

### **3. Sharing Lessons Learned:**

The Judson & Brown staff embraces the concept of collegiality and generously shares effective practices with others. Since opening in 2006, many visitors have come to observe the work of classroom teachers and discuss these highly effective classroom practices. Visitors that are welcomed regularly include: Board Members, district office personnel, teacher leaders and administrators from other schools within Redlands Unified School District, as well as student teachers from several local colleges and universities. Visitors have been especially interested in observing lesson design and implementation of Direct Instruction, the K-5 use of Thinking Maps, processes and structures for the use of student data in lesson design, and the planning and implementation of ongoing intervention opportunities that occur during class and after school.

Judson & Brown has also shared successful strategies with other teachers through the Redlands Teacher Support Program. This program provides intensive, in-depth training to struggling teachers within the District through the use of Master Teachers. One of Judson & Brown's teachers was chosen as a district Master Teacher. This was a highly competitive process and only exceptionally talented teachers were chosen. Through this program, she provides training and support, both within her classroom and outside the school day, to teachers participating in the program. She models lessons using the Direct Instruction model that is used in all K-5 classrooms and demonstrates how Thinking Maps can improve student learning. In addition, she is able to help them understand how to analyze data to support effective lesson design and improve student learning.

Successful strategies are also shared through the District's Teacher-on-Assignment Program. In this program, highly trained teachers have been released from their classroom assignments in order to work with multiple schools providing staff development, assisting with data analysis and lesson design, and mentoring individual teachers. The Teacher-on-Assignment assigned to Judson & Brown regularly shares the school's effective strategies, programs, and interventions with other school sites.

Monthly principal meetings provide another opportunity to share effective school-wide practices with other site administrators. Judson & Brown's drive to develop meaningful assessment tools for frequent monitoring of student progress paved the way for the development of district-wide common assessments in English Language Arts. Site data analysis practices have served as a model for other schools to replicate and were foundational in initiating training in data-driven instruction across the District.

### **4. Engaging Families and Communities:**

The professional educators at Judson & Brown believe in the motto, "Parents as Partners." The dedication and effort that the staff has put forth have established positive relationships and an active partnership with parents and community members. Judson & Brown focuses on collaborative communication. It has an open door policy that creates a unique, family-centered environment that includes all staff, students, parents, and community members. The principal and teachers are always highly visible and available to

parents to answer questions and offer face-to-face communication. The principal also welcomes impromptu visits from parents. Teachers are flexible and more than willing to meet with parents both before and after school when the need arises.

Parents and community members are also kept apprised of happenings at school through a monthly principal's newsletter in which Accelerated Reader goals are communicated, monthly award nominees are celebrated, and overall school activities are shared. This information, in addition to individual classroom information, is kept up-to-date on the school's website. Parents are also kept informed of their child's academic program and progress at Back-to-School Night, parent conferences, and kindergarten orientation. Weekly progress reports, positive notes home, phone calls, and emails are also used to share test data and communicate student progress.

The family environment established at Judson & Brown is actively supported by an energetic Parent Teacher Association (PTA). The PTA has been instrumental in fostering a family-style atmosphere through an array of school events. These PTA sponsored events include Family Fun Nights on topics such as math, reading, science, children's author visits, martial arts, physical education and music, as well as a Father/Daughter Dance and Mother/Son Dance. In addition to these PTA events, families are eagerly encouraged to be involved during the school day with bi-monthly awards assemblies, the Dr. Seuss Reading Picnic, and daily classroom volunteers.

Collaborative communication, in direct response to student academic performance based on data analysis, takes place during Individual Student Study Team meetings. In these meetings, teams discuss strategic help and design support plans for struggling students. Conversations about student achievement and intervention also take place during monthly English Language Advisory Council and School Site Council meetings.

## **PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION** 12CA31

### **1. Curriculum:**

Judson & Brown provides its students with a rigorous, standards-driven curriculum in English Language Arts, math, social studies, and science which is guided by the Redlands Unified School District's Scope and Sequences. In a constant effort to focus curriculum and instruction, teachers have worked collaboratively to deconstruct the English Language Arts and math standards. The deconstruction process helped staff focus their instruction by breaking complex standards into more meaningful and attainable learning objectives. The deconstructed standards are used schoolwide to plan and implement focus lessons. The Direct Instruction model and Thinking Maps strategy have been fully implemented schoolwide. These highly effective, research-based tools provide a two-pronged approach that promotes interactive learning opportunities leading to the mastery of standards and development of critical thinking skills.

The English Language Arts program at Judson & Brown incorporates Houghton Mifflin as the stateadopted core curriculum. Corrective Reading/REACH is also implemented in 3rd – 5th grade as an Alternative Core curriculum for students performing below expected levels. Accelerated Reader (AR) is an additional component that positively impacts the English Language Arts program. Teachers subscribe to the belief that “Kids Who Read Succeed,” making reading a top priority. Students are provided a myriad of opportunities to access individualized reading materials through the AR program. Students can access the program throughout the school day and at home. All students participate in the AR program and work toward individualized reading goals with the support of teachers and parents. Reading comprehension is reinforced through the use of Thinking Maps and online programs, such as Study Island.

Houghton Mifflin is used as the core curriculum for mathematics. Excel Math, Mountain Math, and standards-based online programs such as Study Island and Math Facts in a Flash are used as supplements. Knowing that mastery of basic math facts is a critical foundation to standards mastery, Math Fact

Mondays have been implemented as a weekly after-school opportunity for students to get additional support with these skills. The wide variety of math programs and opportunities at Judson & Brown has significantly contributed to success in math.

The K-5 social science and history curriculum is taught using the Pearson, Scott Foresman History Social-Science for California series. Students are also engaged in the study of history through individual classroom projects such as student-created topographic salt maps and “state floats” spotlighted in an annual parade. There is also an intentional focus on historical figures through celebrations such as Black History Month, Cesar Chavez Day, and Women’s History Month.

McMillian/McGraw-Hill California Science is the adopted science curriculum. Students are challenged, through the science curriculum to investigate, discover, formulate questions, and engage in classroom discourse centering around scientific principles. Teachers promote curious, investigative learning in science through online programs such as Zingy and United Streaming videos. Students foster their investigative inquiries by participating in extended learning opportunities such as field trips to science camp, planetariums, the Living Desert, and the Orange County Marine Institute.

Visual and Performing Arts are a regular part of Judson & Brown's curriculum. Specialized art and music teachers provide weekly instruction to all students. Intermediate students also have an opportunity to participate in an instrumental music program. In addition, third through fifth graders are invited to participate in chorus. Instrumental music and chorus students regularly perform within the community. Judson & Brown feels a responsibility to foster life-long habits of regular physical activity in all students. The school promotes health and well being through regular lessons in Physical Education provided by both classroom teachers and physical education enrichment teachers. A weekly Joggers Club offers students an opportunity to earn “jaguar paws” for each mile they run.

## **2. Reading/English:**

Judson & Brown’s philosophy is “Kids Who Read Succeed.” There is a schoolwide resolve and expectation that every student will read at a proficient level and develop a love of reading. In order to accomplish this, all K-5 teachers fully implement the California State adopted Houghton Mifflin Reading Series as the basis of their instruction. In addition, an alternative core ELA program is used to support students in 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grades who are working below expected levels. Along with the State adopted core curriculum materials, the Accelerated Reader Program is fully implemented in all K-5 classrooms. At the beginning of each school year, classroom teachers, support personnel, and the principal meet to analyze the available data for each student at Judson & Brown. This data includes the results of the California Standards Test, district ELA common assessments, and Accelerated Reader STAR Reading Test. At that time, the staff determines which students are performing below expected levels and pinpoints the areas of reading in which they are struggling. Judson & Brown employs two Intervention teachers who work closely with the classroom teachers and principal to develop an intervention plan for those students. These interventions occur in the general education classroom as well as in special intervention classes that take place during the school day, after school, and during Spring Break.

Much of Judson & Brown’s success with students is the result of highly trained classroom teachers, intervention teachers, and consistent ongoing analysis of student data. All K-5 students are given the District’s ELA Common Core Reading Assessments frequently throughout the school year. The results of these assessments are available to teachers promptly following the test through the Data Director Program. Within days of administering the assessments, teachers meet in Data Teams to review individual, class, grade level, and schoolwide results. After a thorough analysis is completed, teachers discuss instructional strategies and develop reteach plans and interventions for all students who performed below expected levels.

The final component of Judson & Brown’s reading program is a teacher-parent partnership through the full implementation of Accelerated Reader. Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers ensure that all parents

understand the program and are excited about reading with their children at home. During this school year alone, students have read over 117,000,000 words to date. This is an average of over 40 minutes per day of engaged reading time per student.

### **3. Mathematics:**

Judson & Brown teachers fully implement the state-adopted math curriculum through the use of the Houghton Mifflin Math program. Teachers also use support materials such as Excel Math, Math Facts in a Flash, Study Island, and Daily Warm-Ups to provide students with adequate guided and independent practice. All of these materials are used to help low-achieving students improve their progress, and to allow high-achieving students to explore concepts in more depth and move forward at a quicker pace. In an effort to ensure that students succeed with California's very challenging math standards, Judson & Brown uses a variety of online programs to support student learning and provide extensive practice. Students struggling with math facts attend the Math Fact Mondays after-school intervention program. In this intervention, students report to the computer lab for math instruction and practice using Math Facts in a Flash in order to gain proficiency. Study Island Math is also regularly used as both intervention and enrichment. These math programs are available to families through Judson & Brown's website, and parents regularly utilize them to work with their children at home.

Teachers at Judson & Brown are committed to providing students with in-depth and intensive math instruction. Kindergarten teachers provide 45 minutes of daily math instruction, while 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers devote 90 minutes per day to math instruction and practice. To monitor the effectiveness of daily instruction, regular math assessments are administered. The results of all assessments are available to staff within one day of completion, and teachers immediately access them through their use of Data Director, the District's online data analysis program. The staff analyzes these results and immediately meets in Data Teams to discuss individual and grade level student progress. After this thorough analysis, lesson plans are developed to address areas of need and interventions are planned for students who scored below expected levels. These interventions are provided to students in the general education classroom as well as special intervention classes during the school day, after school, and during Spring Break. Our commitment to this process reflects the spirit of No Child Left Behind. The entire staff believes that all students can succeed in mathematics, and feels a responsibility to guarantee that each child receives the necessary support to meet that expectation.

### **4. Additional Curriculum Area:**

Judson & Brown teachers provide meaningful learning opportunities through exploratory experiences that require students to think critically, question, hypothesize, and wonder. As reflected in the mission statement, the staff at Judson & Brown is dedicated to instilling a passion and commitment to lifelong learning in all students. Instruction in the area of science is an excellent example of how students are challenged to employ the life skills of investigation, exploration, and active hypothesizing. The love of scientific learning begins early at Judson & Brown. Throughout the grades, students' scientific knowledge and skills are built upon a variety of classroom and hands-on learning experiences. Classroom lessons promote curious, investigative learning. For example, a kindergarten garden is used for growing plants, observing the life cycle of butterflies, and raising vegetables. Weekly cooking projects add to the foundation of science-based learning. Digital tools, such as United Streaming and Zingy Learning, provide contexts for essential learning in a visually stimulating, interactive modality. Regular field trips include excursions to the planetarium, the Living Desert, Orange County Marine Institute, Riley's Ranch, and an annual 5<sup>th</sup> grade science camp. GATE classes provide science enrichment in areas such as GIS mapping, rocketry, geology, and yearly visits to Astro Camp. Students in the special day class are regularly mainstreamed for science instruction for the benefit of both special education and regular education students.

The school library has been consciously stocked with a large, and growing, collection of science books. These are among the most frequently checked-out books in the collection. Accelerated Reader results reveal a growing number of science-based, non-fiction books are read and understood by our kids.

Judson & Brown students do science-based research projects in each grade level: butterfly books in kindergarten, animal reports in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades, planet reports in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, exploration of geology and physical sciences in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades. Interactive workbooks are heavily used in all grade levels to record observations, make and confirm predictions, and rehearse curricular content. Practice assessments for California Standards Tests in grade 5, the only grade tested by California in the area of science, provide data for teachers to craft additional lessons and activities to fine-tune student mastery of essential standards.

### **5. Instructional Methods:**

It is impossible to “leave no child behind” without differentiating instruction. A hallmark of differentiated instruction is developing and implementing lessons and structures that allow all students within a classroom to effectively master essential content regardless of initial differences in knowledge or ability. In order to make this a reality at Judson & Brown, the staff has focused on Direct Instruction (DI) to effectively engage all learners. Following the phases of Direct Instruction (Orientation, Presentation, Highly Structured Practice, Guided Practice, and Independent Practice) provides a framework in which essential learnings are rehearsed and refined in multiple contexts. Particularly during the Highly-Structured Practice Phase, struggling learners solidify content while more advanced students refine and extend their level of understanding. Teachers incorporate a multitude of strategies such as pair sharing, response cards, white boards, Thinking Maps, echo and choral reading, and “repeat after me” in order to target 100% participation and, therefore, active, engaged learning. Grade level teams have worked collaboratively with the Teacher-on-Assignment (TOA) to write, carry-out, and refine their instructional practices using the DI model.

Differentiated instruction is also provided on a regular basis in all classrooms through individual and small group instruction, individualized tests, primary small group guided reading, the incorporation of multiple intelligence activities, and the regular use of visuals and manipulatives.

Instruction is also supported at Judson & Brown through the use of technology both in the classroom and in the computer lab. In the classroom, teachers utilize technology such as LCD projectors and document cameras. In the computer lab, all students engage in individualized programs on weekly basis such as English in a Flash, Starfall, Study Island, Math Facts in a Flash, Multiplication.com, Hoodamath.com, and Zingy.com for science.

Judson & Brown teachers are committed to employing strategies and techniques that work for all students and to adjusting and refining their instructional practices based on data. Teachers meet in Data Teams every six weeks to monitor all students’ progress, paying close attention to their subgroup data. Strategic during-the-school-day interventions, as well as in class re-teach lessons, are designed during Data Team meetings in order to ensure the success of all students.

### **6. Professional Development:**

The professional development program at Judson & Brown is the cornerstone of student success and has directly impacted achievement rates. As stated in the Mission Statement, the staff is expected to provide all students with challenging and meaningful learning opportunities so they may achieve academic success and become lifelong learners. It is a schoolwide belief that the concept of “lifelong learner” applies to the *entire* community of learners which includes staff members as well as students.

Judson & Brown has received in-depth training in several research-based programs. Intensive training has been provided in the use of Thinking Maps, Direct Instruction, Write From the Beginning, Student Engagement Strategies, and Data Teams. Also, all 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers have received GATE training and certification which enables them to meet the needs of high-achieving students.

The implementation model for staff development has been particularly effective for the Judson & Brown staff members. Professional development is provided at the school site during release days. Following training, the Teacher-on-Assignment (TOA) begins working intensively with teachers, both in grade level groups and individually, to ensure training is fully implemented schoolwide. The TOA demonstrates



lessons for teachers, coaches them in their own classrooms during their instruction, and assists them in writing effective lessons that incorporate the methods and strategies learned during professional development. The TOA provides ongoing and regular constructive feedback to staff members regarding their progress in implementation. This model makes it possible for teachers to take risks with new strategies and also ensures that training isn't lost in the typical day-to-day classroom routine. Teachers are not fearful of implementing new strategies garnered from trainings because they know that their endeavors will be fully supported by the TOA, the principal, and their colleagues. There are opportunities to discuss their challenges and successes with implementation during grade level meetings and staff meetings held during professional development days.

In addition to staff development in curriculum and instructional strategies, training teachers in the area of data analysis has been critical and has directly impacted student achievement. Through this training, all teachers thoroughly understand how to access student data and how to conduct a thorough analysis of that data. Teachers were taught how to write SMART goals based on this data and develop lesson plans to address areas of need. As teachers review their SMART goals, student achievement is noted immediately and areas to intervene are acted on promptly.

### **7. School Leadership:**

The sharing of school leadership at Judson & Brown is a significant factor in its success with students. Throughout the inaugural year, the principal and teachers received training in the Professional Learning Communities (PLC) model. This early training established the concept of shared leadership which continues today and allows the principal, staff, and parents to participate in the decisionmaking. Shared leadership at Judson & Brown has promoted and established a sense of ownership and pride among all groups.

Leadership at Judson & Brown begins with the Leadership Team made up of representatives from each grade level, special education teachers, support personnel, and the principal. The Leadership Team meets monthly to discuss a wide variety of issues including but not limited to student achievement, curriculum, interventions, organization, and budget. The Leadership Team is charged with decision-making and providing their grade level partners with information. They also solicit feedback from their colleagues before final decisions are made at the leadership level. Grade Level Teams also meet on a regular basis to discuss curriculum, interventions, and resources needed to support student learning. When appropriate, decisions are made at this level or brought to Leadership Team and/or School Site Council for further consideration.

Parents have the opportunity to become involved in Judson & Brown's leadership through the School Site Council (SSC), English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC) and PTA. SSC members are elected by the general parent population to represent them with regard to important program, academic, and budgetary matters during regularly scheduled meetings that include teacher representatives and the principal. ELAC meetings and PTA meetings are open to all parents and include the principal and teacher representatives. These two organizations provide an avenue for parent input regarding important school decisions related to improving student achievement, the school climate, and student safety.

The role of the principal is unique at Judson & Brown. The school has had three principals over the past six years, yet student achievement has continued to flourish. Staff and parents are truly a community of learners as they have been able to continue their Professional Learning Community practice and maintain a positive school culture throughout these changes. The strength of Judson & Brown's PLC has allowed new principals to clearly see what matters most – the students.