

R.I. MEYERHOLZ ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PART III - SUMMARY 12CA19

Meyerholz is one of twenty elementary schools in the Cupertino Union School District, situated on the San Francisco Peninsula. Cupertino is a K-8 district with an ADA of 17,500 students and serves families in six local cities. The campus is located in a West San Jose neighborhood that represents a wide ethnic, language, and socio-economic spectrum. The school serves a total population of 745 students, including 86% Asian, 9% Caucasian, 3% Hispanic, .5% African American, and 1.5% multiple ethnicities. Many Meyerholz parents work in Silicon Valley's high-tech industry.

Meyerholz Elementary School's mission statement affirms the value of personal fulfillment and educational success for all children. The school's vision is to develop creative, lifelong learners and productive, caring citizens who respect themselves and others. As a "family unit," the school explores creative ways to promote integrity, sincere best effort, kindness, and empathy within every child.

Meyerholz houses three excellent programs: Neighborhood, Cupertino Language Immersion Program (CLIP), and Special Education. There are 370 students in the Neighborhood program and 387 students in Mandarin Immersion. Two Special Day classrooms serve children in grades K-2 and 3-5 respectively. A part-time resource teacher, speech/language therapist, nurse, and school psychologist support all programs. The site also utilizes staff for art, music, technology, physical education, and library.

Mandarin Immersion is thriving in its eighth year at Meyerholz. CLIP is one of the district's increasingly popular alternative programs. Students in kindergarten and first grade work in self-contained classrooms, receiving 70% of their instruction in Mandarin and 30% in English. Second and third grade students receive 60% of instruction in Mandarin and 40% in English, while fourth and fifth grade students are taught 50% in each language. Beginning in second grade, all classes in CLIP are team-taught. Mandarin immersion teachers are also Bilingual Cross-cultural, Language, and Academic Development (BCLAD) certified, an extension of California credentialing requirements.

Over the years, Meyerholz has been recognized for student academic excellence, social/community awareness, healthy living, outdoor educational experiences, and appreciation for the arts. The principal is a proactive leader who supports Meyerholz by openly addressing school and district matters of importance. Faculty plans collaboratively at and across grade levels, using formative and summative assessments to drive instruction. Special Education experts work closely with other colleagues, offering expertise to help every student. Teachers work side by side with parents supporting valued school traditions and creating new ones.

Meyerholz parents are involved in all aspects of school life. They invest time, talent, and professional skills in School Site Council, PTA, and CLIPCO, (the foundation that sustains CLIP), offering students access to updated technological equipment, school-wide assemblies, physical education, art, music, and homework/study skill support. Parents sponsor a major Autumn Walkathon fundraiser, while attending Back to School Night and parent/teacher conferences. They help direct traffic and assist pedestrians, supervise lunch recesses, organize an annual Chinese speech/ art exhibition, and advise the student-inspired yearbook. Our office and library staff members, all former Meyerholz parents, are dedicated to supporting teachers, parents, and students in these endeavors.

The Meyerholz Student Council brings grade level representatives together to promote civic awareness, encourage community service projects, and a school-wide lunchtime walking/running program. Upper grade students participate in co-educational flag football and soccer leagues. Students and alumni also take part in two major annual events, a school-based musical theater performance and the San Francisco Chinese Lunar New Year Parade. Children are now preparing for performances of *Beauty and the Beast* and marching in the nationally televised "Year of the Dragon" parade.

The Meyerholz staff adopted a character education program to enhance life skills and civility among all

students. Project Cornerstone guides students toward becoming successful, resilient teenagers and adults. Utilizing the ABC Reader model, parents visit classrooms each month to share thought-provoking books that include themes about building personal confidence, compassion, and responsibility.

The school celebrates two additional community events, an August picnic dinner and Spring Family Night. Parents and teachers organize a Family Math or Science Night every year. All Meyerholz students have the opportunity to attend various after-school classes, including Fun Math Club, Lion Dance, Spanish, Chinese percussion, Wushu, and Chinese brush painting.

In 2011, Meyerholz School achieved an API score of 969, an eleven- point gain from the previous year. Collectively, students have been making steady academic progress, with an increased total of forty-one points since 2005. A dedicated school community is the foundation of learning and personal accomplishment. When young people are empowered through education, their contributions to society will be significant.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS 12CA19

1. Assessment Results:

A. The California Standards Tests (CSTs) are the standardized assessments designed for the state of California. The CST is a criterion referenced test and was developed to measure student progress on the California State Standards. Scoring results are based on how an individual student performs on tasks related to the state content standards, and not based on how they perform compared to other students. The test is administered in early May to students in grades two through five at Meyerholz School. Students are assessed in the areas of English-Language arts and mathematics. In addition, fourth grade students are assessed in writing applications and fifth grade students are assessed in science. Students' assessments are graded and results are reported in one of five performance levels: Advanced, Proficient, Basic, Below Basic, and Far Below Basic. At Meyerholz Elementary, students who perform in the Proficient or Advanced range are considered to be meeting district and state standards. Alternative assessments are available for students with special needs who qualify through the IEP process.

B. Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) results over the last 5 years in grades 3- 5, show a steady increase in proficient and advanced students in both language arts and mathematics. At the same time, basic, below basic, and far below basic scores have shown a steady decline in both language arts and mathematics. In language arts, proficient and advanced scores increased from 86% in 2007, 85% in 2008, to 90% in 2009, 90% in 2010, and 92% in 2011. Basic, below basic, and far below basic scores in mathematics decreased from 15% in 2008, to 10% in 2009, 10% in 2010, and 9% in 2011. In mathematics, proficient and advanced scores increased from 89% in 2007, 91% in 2008, to 92% in 2009, 93% in 2010, and 94% in 2011. Basic, below basic, and far below basic scores have decreased from 9% in 2008, to 8% in 2009, 7% in 2010, and 6% in 2011. The consistent increase in the percentage of students performing at or above proficient over the past four years has met the targeted outcome of the data-driven intervention process. The percentage of students that are still considered at-risk in math, based on STAR data, has dropped from 9% to 6% since 2008. In language arts, there has been a drop in the percentage of students performing below proficient from 15% to 9% since 2008.

Within the student population, the statistically significant subgroups are Asian and English Language Learners. Statistically significant subgroups are identified and defined by the state of California as, "at least 50 students who make up 15 percent or more of the school's total population with valid test scores, or at least 100 students with valid test scores." These groups score within the range of 10% of the test scores of all students and the test scores of the sub-groups.

Although Meyerholz overall is a high performing school, there continue to be students who perform below proficient and are considered academically at-risk. The systems and services that have been developed at Meyerholz target the students performing in the Basic, Below Basic, and Far Below Basic categories on the CST. The leadership team has recognized the need for targeted, research-based

interventions in order to support students' needs. The school is not given specific Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) goals for other sub-groups of student such as Students with Disabilities, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, and Hispanic subgroups, but at the school site data for individual students and underperforming sub groups are further analyzed. Targeted interventions are implemented at the classroom and site level. Differentiated instruction, based on CST performance, benchmark assessments and ongoing classroom data collection, is administered in the classroom and through parent and community volunteers. For fourth and fifth grade students scoring in the Basic category or below, an after school homework center is available. Homework center provides re-teaching opportunities and academic and organizational support for at-risk students.

2. Using Assessment Results:

The practice of data-driven intervention at Meyerholz has three key components. First, Meyerholz leadership team designed staff training sessions focused on research-based, data-driven practices. Second, the Student Success Process (SSP) is a formalized process that uses guided protocols and student progress monitoring to make the most of special education and staff resources. The process supports teachers and students to design targeted interventions. Finally, the after school Homework Center has provided extended learning opportunities for students who need additional support.

Staff development in 2006-2007 focused on data-driven intervention. This included instruction on data collection and using data to intervene and monitor progress. In 2009-2010, Meyerholz teachers were equipped with tools and training to support students through 21st Century learning strategies. This provided teachers a wide variety of tools to access student assessment data. Finally, in the 2010-2011 school year, professional development focused on formative assessment, allowing teachers to develop more proactive strategies to design and differentiate instruction. The data program, Partners4Results, was also introduced in the 2010-2011 school year. Teachers were trained in the program, which provides individual student and whole class data in order to drive instruction.

Intervention support for students is provided through the Student Success Process (SSP). The SSP is initiated by the teacher, based on student performance data. Students considered at-risk are identified through STAR testing, benchmark assessments, and classroom performance. At the beginning of the year, STAR data from the previous year is collected and analyzed. Third, fourth and fifth graders who scored in the Basic, Below Basic, and Far Below Basic categories are identified. These students, as well as all students in kindergarten through second grade, are assessed using formalized, criterion-referenced testing, including running records and classroom assessments to determine their basic reading and writing skill levels. This data is used to develop a Student Success Plan. The classroom teacher meets with the parents of at-risk students to set goals and identify classroom and home interventions that will support the student in meeting these goals. Through benchmark assessments in reading, and by using classroom performance data, student progress is monitored, interventions are documented, and the student's performance is continually updated. If the student does not make progress towards meeting the benchmark goals, a more formalized protocol for information gathering is introduced. This protocol leads the teachers through a data collection procedure that includes background information, report card data, test results, and health information. Previous teachers are also consulted in order to identify strategies that have been tried and the results of those interventions. This process includes ongoing documentation and data collection for classroom interventions that are being implemented. For students that are still not meeting benchmark achievement goals, the next step is collaboration with the special education team through the Intervention Strategy Team.

The collaboration between special education and general education is a key part of the intervention process at Meyerholz. This collaboration capitalizes on the experience of the special education staff in gathering and analyzing data, and access to intervention resources and strategies that the special education team can provide. Intervention Strategy Team (IST) is the most formalized part of the general education/special education collaboration. In this meeting, general education teachers meet with the special education staff to discuss students' progress, analyze data, and plan and implement. Strategies and

supports are developed to help the teacher target the student's needs and differentiate instruction. Through reversed mainstreaming, the special day class staff can support students in the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade. Accommodations and modifications are designed by the special education staff to be used, as appropriate, by all students.

Student history is collected through the Student Study Team process. This meeting includes parents, teachers, and other staff members, and facilitates communication with the student's family in order to plan interventions and monitor student progress. At each step of the Student Success Process, data is collected and information is filed in the students' cumulative folders. This data helps track the students across the grade levels and gives new teachers information on the intervention history of each child in order to facilitate early intervention and consistency.

Through follow-up parent meetings, Student Study Team meetings and Intervention Team meetings, student progress is monitored. Adjustments to interventions are made and monitored. If progress is not shown through the process, a referral for special education assessment can be made.

Finally, in order to further support students outside of the school day, Meyerholz has developed the After School Homework Center. Homework Center is offered for target students in 4th and 5th grades. Special education and general education teachers work with students three times a week for an hour to provide continued support and additional instruction in math and reading based on student's classroom assignments. Teachers refer at-risk students to Homework Center based on STAR data and student classroom performance.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Meyerholz Elementary proactively communicates with neighboring schools, colleagues, and professional organizations to promote the sharing of successful instructional and teacher development strategies. Meyerholz has actively participated in the Common Core Standards professional development collaboration with the Santa Clara County Office of Education. Teacher representatives from Meyerholz have regularly attended on-going trainings hosted by the County Office of Education to help equip teachers with the tools needed for transitioning to the new Common Core Standards. The trainings have produced teacher leaders who have been able to bring the trainings back to the entire school site. Meyerholz Elementary has a lead teacher representative for each subject area. The subject leaders represent the school within the district by attending monthly meetings with the subject leaders from the other 20 elementary schools in the district in order to stay abreast of research and instructional strategies for their subject area. Subject leaders then return to Meyerholz and share the information with colleagues for professional development.

Additionally, new teachers at Meyerholz Elementary participate in Cupertino Union School District's New Teacher Induction program. New teachers are given a site mentor and have the opportunity to meet with other colleagues throughout the district in professional learning communities on a monthly basis for support and professional development. The new teacher induction program also provides an opportunity for new teachers to shadow veteran teachers at various school campuses in the school district and to observe best practices.

The Mandarin Immersion program is an alternative program in the Cupertino Union School District housed at Meyerholz Elementary. The program is currently in its 14th year and is one of the first public Mandarin Immersion programs in the country. All teachers who teach Mandarin in the program are members of the Chinese Language Teacher's Association of California (CLTAC). Mandarin Immersion teachers have been regular presenters sharing curriculum and best teaching practices at conferences hosted by CLTAC and the California Association of Bilingual Educators. The Mandarin Immersion program regularly welcomes visitors from other districts/ states who are contemplating beginning their own Mandarin Immersion programs or are in the beginning stages of their programs. In the spring of 2011, the Mandarin Immersion program hosted a school visit for participants in the National Chinese

Language Conference. Networking in these ways has allowed for the sharing of information and building a collaborative network of support among immersion schools.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

Meyerholz's success is directly tied to strong parent participation. Walking around the campus, there are parents in classrooms helping with centers, wearing florescent vests to assist in helping students get out of the car, working in the hallway preparing homework packets or stuffing Thursday folders, in the staff room photocopying for classroom teachers, or reading a character education book to a class.

Having both an alternative program (Cupertino Language Immersion Program) and a neighborhood program, parents dedicate their time to help Meyerholz School, regardless of what program their child is enrolled in. The Meyerholz PTA supports all students at the school. Through a direct give drive and a successful annual walk-a-thon, the PTA supports art instruction for all students K-5, primary physical education, and primary music. Without parent support, students would not have the opportunity to have a visual and performing arts curriculum. The PTA also supports family science nights and community building events.

The Meyerholz School Site Council (SSC) has a vested interest in making sure all students succeed. In the past, the city of San Jose funded an after school Homework Center. Due to budget cuts, the program was cut in the 2010-2011 school year. School Site Council members voted to reinstate the program during the 2011-2012 school year. Members felt it was important to provide students with extended learning time. A credentialed teacher runs homework club three times a week after school.

The Meyerholz community develops well rounded students who are successful both academically, physically, and emotionally. The school adopted a character education program called Project Cornerstone. The program is designed to build developmental assets in our students. A large component of Project Cornerstone is the Asset Building Champion parent reading program. Each classroom has a parent volunteer who attends a training and schedules time to read a character education book, and lead an activity or discussion around the book on a monthly basis.

Meyerholz parents and community members work together to create an enriching after school program. Each year, about eight classes are offered for students, including claymation, art, lion dance, and Chinese Dance. Upper grade students also have an opportunity to participate in a school musical directed by the primary music teacher. Parents also run the yearbook club. The strong parent community at Meyerholz creates a positive school climate focusing on academic, artistic, social, and emotional student needs.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION 12CA19

1. Curriculum:

Aligned with the California State Standards, Meyerholz Elementary's core curriculum is designed to provide students with a well-rounded education. Meyerholz Staff and Community are currently focused on the transition from state curricular standards to Common Core Standards in an effort to strengthen students' overall achievement in all aspects of the curriculum.

The English language arts adoption used by Meyerholz is Houghton Mifflin Reading. This program closely follows the guidelines set by the California State Standards. The Meyerholz staff also supplements this program by using literature circles, small group instruction, the Step Up to Writing program, phonics, running records, reader's/writer's workshop, and reading comprehension strategies.

Meyerholz Elementary uses the Houghton Mifflin math adoption to align with state standards. Students solve problems, think analytically, work with variables and equations, and practice skills to work through new math concepts.

The science program used by Meyerholz is Foss by Lawrence Hall of Science. The content and

curriculum in this adoption is aligned with the California State Standards. The curriculum is delivered to students in a variety of methods. The Foss experiment kits allow students to investigate, apply, and observe science concepts in action. Field trips that relate to standards like science camp also give students differentiated learning opportunities.

Meyerholz adopted the Scott Foresman Social Studies California edition curriculum by Pearson. This social studies program focuses on chronological and spatial thinking, research, evidence, point of view, and historical interpretation. In addition to the Scott Foresman adoption, hands-on learning and activities help to enhance student learning. Simulation type field trips and activities like Age of Sail, Missions, Ohlone, Deer Hollow Farm, and Colonial Kids Day are a few examples of how students are able to learn the standards in an interactive manner.

An important part of Meyerholz has long been its visual and performing arts program. This program has been established over the years to encompass all of the Visual and Performing arts standards set by the state. By having a credentialed teacher for music, Meyerholz is able to provide students with a standards based music program. Parents and community support have resulted in a strong after-school musical program for students to participate in. Parent support and volunteers have allowed for an art program that addresses the standards through various projects and activities. All of this has allowed the Meyerholz visual and performing arts program to focus on artistic perception, creative expression, historical and cultural context, aesthetic valuing, connections, relationships, and applications.

The physical education/health/nutrition curriculum is taught by a credentialed physical education teacher in 4th and 5th grade. In K-3, teachers support the physical education program. The P.E. program is aligned with the five core standards that have been outlined by state standards. The school and district have also implemented wellness programs to support students. Some of the programs include: Project Cornerstone, Fit for Life, Too Good for Drugs, Here's looking at You, and the National Dairy Council's Healthy Choices, Healthy Me program.

A 21st century focus on instruction has been an ongoing focus at Meyerholz. Professional development through national, state, district, and site resources have built strong communities that encourage and support 21st century learning. Meyerholz has continually been updating hardware to keep students at the forefront of technology. In the past year Meyerholz has purchased a mobile laptop cart, set of ipads, and ipods for use in classrooms. Meyerholz also uses a comprehensive instructional technology plan to fully integrate technology across all curricular areas.

2. Reading/English:

Reading/Language Arts at Meyerholz School serves as the core of a creative, integrated curriculum, complimented both by all other subject areas and applications of technology.

Reading is viewed as an essential instructional vehicle that guides student acquisition of new facts and inspires their imaginations. The school community creates an environment that values and models reading experiences, providing motivation for developing reading skills.

Likewise, Meyerholz classrooms, rich in literacy, display student writing and applaud self-expression. There are clear instructional strategies, beginning in kindergarten, to develop confidence in committing ideas to written form.

At Meyerholz, all grade levels employ developed instructional guidelines for Reading/English (Mandarin and English in the Cupertino Language Immersion Program) that revolve around use of the Houghton-Mifflin textbook series. This curriculum was selected by the the Cupertino Schools in a clearly defined process, involving a formal committee of teachers, parents, and administrators, gathering input from pilot programs throughout the district. Houghton Mifflin was chosen in preference to several well-regarded publishers, based on criteria that identified well-chosen literature and effective instructional strategies,

including analyses of stories, topical writing opportunities, complimentary grammar activities, and wellplanned spelling lists. Houghton-Mifflin also offered clear guidelines, both for implementing and differentiating classroom instruction and evaluating student progress.

Another essential component of Meyerholz School's language arts program includes extensions of the writing program. Cupertino's choice, following further evaluations of material, was a K-5 series, The Write Source, and additional instructional approaches provided in Step Up To Writing. All new teachers are trained in using Step Up teaching strategies. They are also provided binders to facilitate classroom use of curriculum maps that allow students to organize their ideas, as they address topics in literary response, creative writing, reflection on experiences beyond the classroom in their own lives, and other content areas like Social Studies or Science.

Spelling is also addressed as an immersion process in literature-rich classrooms. Children in grades K-3 use accountability word wall displays that evolve throughout the school year, as classes explore new concepts and develop vocabulary in incremental English studies. Students in grades 4-5 use a combination of basic word lists and curriculum-related vocabulary. All grade levels also reference spelling lists in their respective Houghton-Mifflin reading texts.

Meyerholz teachers collaborate at and between grade levels at staff meetings or on specified professional learning days to assure measurable growth in all language arts skills, as students continue through school. They also participate with faculty from other school sites, beyond initial curriculum selection, to assure consistent teaching techniques that reciprocate California State Standards.

Meaningful reading for all grade levels is further supplemented with class sets of novels, made available from a resource room in the school's library. These collections include Project Cornerstone books, used in a school-wide community-building program. Funding, made available both from the district and school site contributions, replaces volumes in upper grade literature sets as needed and provides leveled reading collections to primary grades.

Teachers, parents, the school librarian, and principal confer regularly in finding additional books for classroom use and the extensive central collection in Meyerholz's Guided Learning Center, which houses the library, theatrical stage, computer lab, art and music rooms. This is just one of many reasons why the welcoming library space is often considered the heart of Meyerholz School.

3. Mathematics:

Meyerholz Elementary uses the Houghton Mifflin math program to guide the instruction of students. This curricular program enables students to analytically explore, learn, and master new mathematical concepts. The program has been essential in providing students with a variety of learning opportunities. The Houghton Mifflin Math textbook and its many resources provides students with opportunities to solve problems by practicing skills and applying them to real world-relevant problems. Meyerholz has made many efforts to improve the mathematical skills of all students. By utilizing assessment data, instruction is differentiated to meet the needs of students. An important source of data collection to help guide instruction are the Math CST STAR (Standardized Testing And Reporting) Scores. These scores help to identify students who are at risk and above grade level. Students' needs are supported by focusing on their different learning abilities and styles. To help students reach the high standards set by the Meyerholz Community and Staff, many programs have been established to help students. Students who are performing below grade level are able to receive additional support through small group instruction. This instruction is usually done within the self-contained classroom or small pull-out groups in the GLC (Guided Learning Center). Often this is led by staff or through our network of community volunteers.

The site's after school Homework Center has also been an important asset for students. Here, students who are performing below grade level can have access to credentialed teachers who provide additional support for students in the form of re-teaching and practicing concepts. Students who are performing

above grade level also have many alternative ways in which they may extend their learning. The Math Olympiad program focuses on learning new concepts by developing flexibility, and promote creative problem solving. Another program used at Meyerholz and the district is the MARS assessment which provides another assessment opportunity to gather data on how students solve problems. Students are asked problem solve, think critically, and to explain their thinking in writing. This data is in turn used to help direct instruction. By use of all of the resources available, Meyerholz Elementary is able to provide a variety of instructional methods to support student achievement.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

The Cupertino Union School District has adopted the FOSS (Full Option Science System) science curriculum. FOSS is a research-based science curriculum for grades K-8 developed at the Lawrence Hall of Science based out of the University of California at Berkeley. The FOSS program provides standardsbased kits complete with hands-on exploration materials for each unit of focus (life, earth and physical science) at every grade level.

The school's mission states that Meyerholz values the personal fulfillment and educational success of all children. The vision of the school is to develop creative, lifelong learners and productive, caring citizens of the world, who respect themselves and others. The school environment encourages realization of individual potential for all.

The science curriculum at Meyerholz Elementary fully embodies the essence of the school's mission statement. The science curriculum develops creative, lifelong learners through engaging students in relevant science instruction that gives students opportunities to participate in the scientific process. Throughout their elementary career, students build on their foundation each year through a progression of science concepts presented and taught through hands-on experiences.

Science instructional time at Meyerholz provides mainstreaming opportunities for students from the special education program in grades kindergarten through fifth grade. Support staff from special education classes are able to follow mainstreamed students into the classroom for additional support.

Each year, fifth graders from Meyerholz school participate in a week-long environmental science school residential program where they live and learn outdoors through standards based, hands-on science learning focused in life sciences and sustainable living. Students grow in their leadership and social skills as they interact with students from other schools and with students from different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds.

The California Standardized Testing (CST) data for Meyerholz Elementary tracks overall growth in student achievement in science. The CST's for Science takes place in grade 5. In 2009, out of 129 students tested, 95% tested advanced or proficient and 5% tested basic or below. In 2010, out of 120 students tested, 90% tested advanced or proficient and 10% tested basic or below. In 2011, out of 126 students tested, 97% tested advanced or proficient and 3% tested basic or below. The CST's show that the large majority of students have an advanced or proficient understanding of science concepts taught. All components of the science curriculum at Meyerholz Elementary work together to build students up for educational success and to develop them into lifelong learners.

5. Instructional Methods:

Collaboration is a key part to the intervention process at Meyerholz Elementary School. The entire Meyerholz community works together to provide differentiated instruction to students, and to target students' individual needs based on assessment data and student progress. This happens through well designed classroom instruction, small group intervention and accommodations in the classroom, small group and individual support by creatively using existing staff members and community volunteers, and extended learning opportunities.

Within the classroom, teachers use leveled readers, re-teach and challenge students through opportunities provided in the adopted curriculum, and techniques to engage every learner and give them access to the curriculum. At the classroom level, students' needs are assessed by using strand analysis of standardized testing, benchmark assessments, and student work samples. Teachers can target academic needs and differentiate for students learning differences. Small group instruction is an essential part to providing differentiation in the classroom.

Teachers have many resources available in order to address individual students who need further differentiation and interventions. Technologies like iPods, and iPads are available. These tools have shown great promise, especially in the areas of basic skills practice, and have proven to be very motivating to students. Also, parent and community volunteers provide small group and one to one interventions. These groups facilitate more intensive reading interventions, direct phonics instruction, and basic skills practice.

Being creative with the staff and resources at the site has been imperative to adjusting to student needs. In the upper grades, special education staff work in general education classrooms when mainstreaming Special Day Class students. The collaboration between the general education and special education programs allows for shared resources. By working together, accommodations and modifications created by the specialist teachers can be accessed and utilized by the general education teachers for any students who may benefit. The Teacher on Special Assignment position, provided through the Cupertino Language Immersion Program foundation, is an essential part of providing intervention and differentiated instruction to the students who are learning Mandarin. Finally, extended learning opportunities through after school homework center are provided through Site Improvement Program (SIP) funding. This program is offered to all 4th and 5th grade students who have performed below proficient on the state standardized assessments, as well as other students based on teacher recommendation. A credentialed teacher facilitates homework center. Students are provided homework help and re-teaching opportunities three times a week.

6. Professional Development:

Cupertino is a high achieving school district where teachers are leaders and strong professional development is a focus. Every Tuesday is an early release day for students, which gives the staff time for professional development and collaboration. In addition, there are four full day staff learning days throughout the school year.

During the past two years, the Meyerholz staff has focused on using formative assessment to drive instruction. Teachers start off the school year by looking at individual STAR results and the grade level strand analysis. As a school, the staff creates a database of all students scoring basic or below in English Language Arts and Math. Teachers develop an intervention plan for students not meeting benchmarks. Meyerholz School established "Examining Student Work" meetings last year. Each grade level chooses either a formative or summative assessment in preparation for the meeting. Teachers bring examples of student work and the grade level has discussions around the learning needs of the students who are not showing proficiency. Teachers also talk about grade level trends and next steps for instruction. Another district focus is transitioning from the CA state curricular standards to the Common Core State Standards. Cupertino has a partnership with the Santa Clara County Office. The county resource teachers work with Cupertino's Instruction department to create on-going professional development. Topics have included building background knowledge, focusing on non-fiction reading and expository writing, and exploring the math "habits on mind." Meyerholz has three teacher leaders who attend these trainings. Following the trainings, these teachers meet with the principal and leadership team to brainstorm the most effective way to present the information to the staff.

Each school in the district has a leadership team. The Meyerholz leadership team has five effective primary and upper grade teachers who meet on a monthly basis. The leadership team's role is to develop a strong professional development plan. The team plans agendas for Tuesday staff development meetings

and learning days. In a time when the California State Budget has faced uncertain financial times, leadership team members are experts amongst themselves. Leadership capacity is built at the school site through Meyerholz teachers planning and presenting the school-wide staff development.

7. School Leadership:

Meyerholz Elementary and the Cupertino district's philosophy is building shared leadership. The idea is for teacher leaders to foster strong professional development and sustainable teams to move the school forward even if there is a change of leadership. While the role of the principal as the instructional leader is important, teacher leaders are also essential to support the professional development of the entire school. This ensures that the school's systems are in place even if some staff turnover occurs.

The leadership team at Meyerholz includes the principal and four to five teacher leaders representing the Neighborhood, Mandarin Immersion, and Special Education Programs. The team meets on a monthly basis to plan the focus and agendas for the Tuesday staff developments and four full-day Learning Days. In addition to the leadership team, teacher leaders also serve on smaller sub-committees. This year, Meyerholz has a Common Core Standards committee and a Project Cornerstone (Meyerholz's character education program) committee. Members of the sub-committee report to the leadership team. The staff learning days are almost completely teacher led. They are planned through a collaboration with the leadership team and sub-committees. Between both the leadership team and the sub-committees, over 1/3 of the teachers participate in a leader role. They are professional and committed to using data and formative assessments to drive their instruction. Meyerholz teachers recognize that the staff has many talented teachers. They rely on the collective expertise to develop a strong professional development program at Meyerholz. For example, there are three to four teachers who run technology professional development sessions such as building a classroom website or using ipod touches in the classroom. These teachers are not a part of the leadership team or the sub-committees, however, they willingly lead and support their colleagues. The principal's role is to be an active member of the leadership team and check in regularly with the sub-committees. The principal lends her leadership by making sure decisions are data-driven and ensure that all students are performing at the proficient and advanced level on the California Standards Tests. Furthermore, the district instruction department is instrumental in providing student data and assessment results. They support the Partners4Results website to disaggregate data. In the Fall, teachers looked at STAR data and examined the strand analysis. The weakest strand in English language arts and math became the topic for the two "Examining Student Work" meetings.