

## **FAIRHAVEN ELEMENETARY SCHOOL**

### **PART III - SUMMARY**

Fairhaven Elementary School is a Title I and Quality Education Investment Act (QEIA) Class Size Reduction Funding school in the large, urban city of Santa Ana, located in the suburban county of Orange in Southern California. Fairhaven is part of the Orange Unified School District that serves nearly 30,000 students. Fairhaven is an inclusive, neighborhood school; all children are admitted within the school's attendance boundaries regardless of status, ethnicity, or academic ability. Fairhaven school currently has 517 students from kindergarten through sixth grade. Fairhaven serves several large apartment complexes within the cities of Santa Ana and adjoining Orange, accounting for a large student mobility factor.

Despite this impact upon the school and students' development, Fairhaven's academic success has continued to climb. The current Annual Performance Index (API) is 768, and all subgroups have met annual growth targets for five consecutive years. Fairhaven was one of the four schools in Orange County, California to exit the Program Improvement category in 2010 as a result of an increase in state testing scores of over ninety points in the last two years. The students at Fairhaven are predominantly Latino/Hispanic (93%) with 70% categorized as English Language Learners and 86% receiving Free or Reduced Lunch. Just over half of the students at Fairhaven come from households with limited education completion (no high school diploma); yet family participation in the classroom continues to increase. Built in 1963, there are 24 classrooms and in addition, the school services 13 Kindergarten Special Day Class students and 16 students in a Special Day Combination Class of grades 1, 2, and 3.

Fairhaven Elementary boasts an increase in California's Statewide School Ranking within the last five years from a score of 1 to 3, and in a Similar Schools Ranking from 1 to 7. Fairhaven has been able to achieve these consistent gains by: 1) maintaining high expectations for all students, parents/guardians, and staff; 2) creating a collaborative culture of data-driven instruction and decision-making; 3) including students and parents/guardians in academic and achievement goal setting; and 4) adhering to research based instructional practices that engage learners and optimize retention. Staff members attend weekly professional development and collaboration meetings, where data analysis directly drives classroom practices. Fairhaven staff members have an unwavering belief that every student will meet or exceed his/her highest potential. The school's mission statement reads: "Students, Parents/Guardians and Educators work as partners to ensure that all students meet and/or exceed educational goals."

An essential part of Fairhaven's success is the involvement of students, families, and community members in determining student achievement targets. Fairhaven school is opened each morning by hanging a banner that reads, "*Nothing Less than 100% is Acceptable!*" This motto is applicable for staff, parents/guardians, and students alike. Every student and parent meets at a minimum of once per quarter with the classroom teacher for "test chats." Students and parents/guardians are shown results of a student's previous assessments, taught about comparative achievement data, and set a new goal to improve academic performance. Fairhaven employs a full-time community aide to assist with home-to-school communications for non-English speaking parents/guardians and encourages total participation with programs and students' schooling. Parents/guardians are provided assistance through guided activities for the home and added intervention programs as needed. Not only has this established Fairhaven parents/guardians as critical members of a student's success team, it has increased parent involvement and the role that the school plays within the wider community. The attitudes, behaviors, and commitment of the staff promote the school's vision that all students will be successful in school, go to college, and become lifelong learners. One of Fairhaven's goals includes creating a college-going culture. Classrooms are organized by university rather than room number and uniforms include the phrase, "*I'm going to college, and Fairhaven is my first step!*" The school now serves as a hub for organized athletics, neighborhood education, and outreach assistance for total family wellbeing.

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

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

Fairhaven students have performed impressively on assessments and have maintained annual gains in English/Language Arts and Mathematics, as reported in California's Accountability Progress Reporting (APR) System. The purpose of the APR is to annually measure the academic success of California's public schools and local educational agencies using the results of the standardized state assessments. APR complies with both the state and federal mandates of accountability outlined in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The three reports that comprise the APR are:

- The Academic Performance Index (API)

- Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

- Program Improvement Status (PI)

Academic Performance Index (API) is used to measure school-wide improvement and is calculated based upon the results of statewide standardized assessments, known as the Standards Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program, in specific grade-level skills. The Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) of a school is based upon the results of the same assessment, but more specifically the AYP focuses on the percentage of students in significant subgroups moving to levels of proficiency. The significant subgroups at Fairhaven are Latino, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, English Language Learners, and though not recognized numerically, Students with Disabilities. The STAR assessments are given to students in grades second through sixth at Fairhaven each spring. These scores are then used for calculating a school's API and AYP, figures associated with school success.

Fairhaven's students have met AYP targets since 2008—2009 and have increased API from 654 to 768. The school was one of four schools to exit Program Improvement (PI) in the state in 2010. The gains are largely result of secured Quality Education Investment Act (QEIA) funding and the school's transformation of creating a data-based culture using *Strategic Schooling* Strategies and data management system, Data Director. The class sizes were reduced to an average of 20:1 and staff better identify students who need additional, immediate support or intervention.

Significant progress has been made in reducing the achievement gap. In 2007, eighty percent of students tested were scoring below proficiency in English/Language Arts. The STAR Assessments scores students in five categories: Far Below Basic, Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, and Advanced. Schools are measured by increasing student performance, ideally with more than 70% of students falling within the Proficient to Advanced range. The students are considered proficient when the score is above 350 on a scale of 800. By 2011, forty five percent of Fairhaven students were scoring proficient or advanced. In Mathematics, during the same testing window, students improved from scoring at forty-one percent below proficiency to sixty-one percent above or at proficient. Fifth grade students are also tested in Science. Fairhaven students moved from eighty-seven percent below proficiency levels in 2007 to twenty-nine scoring proficient or advanced in 2011 STAR Testing Series.

While the staff at Fairhaven is understandably proud of these accomplishments, there continues to be urgency for more students to reach proficiency levels. Our significant subgroups report inconsistent performance at times based upon a number of factors. These dynamics can range from an unstable home environment, difficult disability, or even increases in testing difficulty or duration. The staff at Fairhaven often look at other incremental assessment data to fine tune lessons to assist with student performance disparity and to provide additional support as needed. The staff is committed to Fairhaven's wider student support team, which includes parents/guardians as described above, for the discussion of individual performance trends during conferences and test chats, and often arriving at solutions together to address

achievement gaps or delays. Fairhaven strives to provide all students with the best research-based, standards-aligned, instructional strategies and materials available.

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

Fairhaven relies heavily upon assessment results to focus on improving student achievement and schoolwide performance. Administration and teachers use the student achievement data to refine program focus, instructional strategies, and student learning. The results are shared with parents/guardians, students, and

the wider learning community to reward academic successes and foster improved performance.

### **Assessments:**

#### Annual California Mandated Assessments

1. STAR Testing Series: California Standards Test (CST)/California Modified Assessment (CMA)/California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA): monitors student progress toward gradelevel standards
2. California English Language Development Test (CELDT): measures proficiency of English language acquisition by English learner students

#### District-Wide Assessments

1. Benchmark Paced Standards Assessment (PSA): district-created tests, given quarterly, to monitor student progress of grade-level standards in preparation for the CST
2. Avenues unit assessments: used to measure growth during English Language Development Instruction
3. Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)
4. Basic Phonics Skills Test (BPST)

#### Ongoing Curriculum-Based Progress-Monitoring Assessments

1. State-Adopted *Houghton Mifflin* (HM) Theme Skills Tests: designed to monitor mastery of state standards and to reinforce test-taking skills
2. State-Adopted *Scott Foresman/HM/Harcourt* math chapter tests
3. Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) and Reading Counts tests for reading comprehension
4. *Mind Research Institute: Spatial Temporal Math* Progress Monitoring

Teachers at Fairhaven use achievement binders to focus on student performance measures. Included in the achievement binders are the quarterly test chat forms, scaled score ranges by performance level and subject, individual student success charts, STAR goals, an oral reading fluency graph, *Strategic Schooling* Strategies, STAR released questions, academic language by grade-level, state testing blueprint tracking by grade-level, and the DataWorks vocabulary list. Test chats are invaluable to teachers at Fairhaven, as the tool records each student's individual achievement data and future goals. This allows teachers, students, and parents/guardians to monitor whether students are maintaining high achievement, and moving towards proficiency and mastery. With this information, staff can modify, reteach, or focus instruction to improve student learning and therefore, achievement. The test chats allow teachers to involve students and parents/guardians in the process, making all three parties responsible for the desired outcome. The test chat includes CST results from the previous year and goals for the current year, CELDT scores from the previous year with goals for the current year, PSA results by test with the goal for the following test, Avenues scores from the beginning and end of the year, Language Arts scores in Oral Reading Fluency, Scholastic Reading Inventory, BPST, and quarterly writing scores. All scores and goals are signed by parents/guardians, teachers, and students serve as a compelling bond to contribute to student achievement. Fairhaven actively uses Data Director as a data management system. Data Director is an online data and assessment program that allows staff to disaggregate student data to focus on needs, in order to improve instruction and student learning. This tool enables staff to view student progress and allows for immediate intervention by subject or specific standard. This tool facilitates teachers to provide intervention, create new assessments, or even create 'nemesis standard' campaigns for whole class instruction on problem areas. Data Director is an important tool used by all staff at Fairhaven to systematically improve instruction and increase student learning.

Classroom Paced Standards Assessment (PSA) results, obtained from Data Director, are displayed as information on data doors. Each classroom posts results by achievement bands to make achievement transparent to all on campus. This allows parents/guardians, staff, and the students the opportunity to recognize proficiency and mastery. Data doors and Achievement Binders inform parents/guardians, students, and the community of the current academic achievement within a class.

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

The Fairhaven staff embraces a strong philosophy that great teaching comes from the collaboration of

many great minds. As already shared, the staff participates in weekly professional development and grade-level teaming. Fairhaven's Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are cherished. The staff is likewise indebted to all of those that have helped influence the school's success and in return, feel that it is now the responsibility of the team to share this insight with others. The staff at Fairhaven has fervently used all opportunities to share knowledge with visitors from within the district, outside the district, teachers, parents/guardians, district employees, CTA Members, OUSD Board Members and even state dignitaries like the Assistant to the Secretary of Education.

Aside from the obvious impact of reduced class sizes secured from QEIA funding, another success employed at Fairhaven is *Strategic Schooling*. Fairhaven has been specifically recognized for the way teachers embed the *Strategic Schooling* Strategies into every part of their daily lessons. Grade levels from several schools have come to observe the way students are taught to be metacognitive in their learning and fully responsible for the academic language of education. Ocean View School District sent a panel of over 25 teachers, principals, and district employees to observe the way teachers at Fairhaven address the released questions with passion, excitement, and vitality. In addition, Fairhaven staff also created Achievement Binders, which served as a grade-level and school-wide collaborative tool. Fairhaven offers the Achievement Binders on the website for public use.

Fairhaven also has the distinct honor of having staff on site who are trainers in other recognized programs such as *Step Up to Writing*, Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD), Smart Board and Notebook software, Data Director, and Aeries Gradebook. In addition, staff members have shared successful strategies with others at national conferences, such as the Computer-Using Educators (CUE) Conference, and at several Orange County Department of Education trainings. Fairhaven is passionate about sharing with others because the staff believes that any child's success is a victory for all.

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

Fairhaven's success is a result of solid partnerships between staff, parents/guardians, and the larger learning community. The Fairhaven Bilingual Home/School Compact, designed with input from parents/guardians, students and staff, is signed by all parties during conferences, establishing a pledge to achieve Fairhaven's vision of working together to ensure academic success for all students.

Communication is achieved through the Fairhaven website, school marquee, bilingual ConnectEd phone call-out/email notification program, and a bilingual monthly newsletter containing upcoming events and articles of interest regarding learning environment, bullying, and attendance. Fairhaven employs a bilingual/bi-literate Community Aide to provide full access to all school communications.

Prior to the start of school, Fairhaven staff visits nearby apartment complexes to reconnect, provide information about the upcoming school year, assist with establishing learning environments within the community, and provide necessary materials to ensure a successful school year. Kinder Camp and Orientation is offered to incoming kindergarten students and parents/guardians prior to the start of school in an effort to acclimate all to the school environment. Fairhaven staff introduces parents/guardians to kindergarten standards through games and activities. Incoming kindergarteners are introduced to reading and math concepts, daily routines, and expectations. In addition, parents/guardians are taken on a guided tour, and are strongly encouraged to volunteer in the classroom and other areas. This encouragement has led to an increase in parent participation.

Fairhaven has established a culture of shared responsibility for learning and parents/guardians are eager to learn strategies for use at home. To facilitate this, each grade level presents workshops (one in reading, one in math) teaching parents/guardians strategies to assist students at home. Parents/guardians are given knowledge of how to apply these strategies, along with resources such as books and manipulatives. To further promote a culture of literacy, Fairhaven hosts Pajama Night, where all are invited to come to school in pajamas and share in a reading experience. Fairhaven also hosts each grade level on separate, extended Back-to-School nights for parents to have uninterrupted time with each teacher. At Science Night, parents/guardians and students are invited to take part in hands-on science activities facilitated by staff. Science Night promotes science and technology, while serving to strengthen community partnerships.

Fairhaven hosts formal participation opportunities, such as: Parent Teacher Association, School Site Council, and English Learner Advisory Committee. These committees review and establish school-wide goals, provide input for school improvement, inform parents/guardians about important questions to ask during conferences, and assist in interpreting assessment scores (CELDT, CST, etc.). These committees also provide workshops in areas such as: nutrition, substance abuse, and technology.

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

### **1. Curriculum:**

Maintaining student achievement requires constant examination, data analysis, and progress monitoring. It also involves the use of a strong, structured core curriculum with best instructional practices and sound student engagement strategies delivered in a safe and supportive learning environment. Research-based supplementary materials and intervention programs are chosen according to student achievement data to maintain Fairhaven's mission of all students meeting and/or exceeding educational goals.

Different grade levels group students in various configurations based upon ongoing student performance and proficiency levels. These groups are fluid and change regularly depending upon continued progress monitoring using a variety of assessments. All adopted curriculum within Orange Unified School District has previously been recommended by the state and is condoned as a result of covering the California State Content Standards in each respective subject area. Primary grades (K-3) use the State-Adopted Medallion Edition of *Houghton Mifflin Reading*. Classes are grouped heterogeneously for a portion of the Language Arts time block. For the remainder of the time block, students are grouped homogeneously for small group instruction of specific skills based on individual needs. Fourth and fifth grades use the Medallion Edition of *Houghton Mifflin*, but are grouped homogeneously for the entire Language Arts time block. Sixth grade uses State-Adopted *Prentice Hall Literature*. Again, students are grouped homogeneously. School-wide supplemental materials used to support Language Arts and other content areas include *Step Up to Writing* and *Thinking Maps*. *Step Up to Writing* is a multisensory approach to prewriting and composition using folds, color, word lists, and informal outlines to help make the process of writing more understandable. *Thinking Maps* use visual teaching tools to plan, analyze, and deconstruct information. Both of these supplements support the diverse learning styles of Fairhaven's students, and allow each grade level to build depth in learning based upon prior knowledge.

Fairhaven hosts a high percentage of English Language Learners. *Hampton Brown's Avenues* is an instructional program designed to accelerate English Language Development. The program's emphasis is on developing students' cognitive skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Sixth grade students also use *Vocabulary Basics* and *Hands-On English* to further literacy skills. Students across all grade levels are grouped homogeneously based upon individual performance levels on the California English Language Development Test (CELDT).

Fairhaven's math curriculum has been changing and evolving in the last few years. Fairhaven is in the process of transitioning from *Houghton Mifflin's California Math* series to *Scott Foresman's EnVision Math*. Kindergarten through second grades started using *EnVision Math* this school year and beginning in the 2012—2013 school year, all grades will implement this program. Sixth grade currently uses *Harcourt Brace*. These programs are based on visual relationships, manipulatives, and hands-on activities. Another welcome change is the addition of the computer technology program to grades Kindergarten through fifth: *The Mind Research Institute's Spatial Temporal (ST) Math*.

The science program is based upon hands-on activities and journal writing. *Scott Foresman California Science* books and *Hands-On Foss/STC Science* kits bring California Science Standards to life, allowing all students to connect with content and success. Students develop problem solving and inquiry skills which support all academic areas. Teachers use Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD) strategies to help make *Harcourt* and *Glencoe Social Studies* concepts accessible to all.

As part of preparing students to be responsible, productive adults, all students participate in the *Too Good for Drugs Program*. This is an age appropriate, drug, alcohol, and tobacco prevention program designed to give students knowledge, skills, and practice in making positive choices. It includes games, role playing, and team building activities. Students are motivated to set goals for themselves and work to meet them.

Fairhaven's fine arts programs are grade level specific, involving singing and chanting incorporated daily across multiple subjects. In addition, Fairhaven participates in Art Masters, a program that provides a chance for students to learn about famous artists and create an art piece applying the concepts studied. Technology is widely embraced school-wide. Smart Boards have been installed and are in use in all classrooms and learning areas. This technology allows students and teachers to make learning interactive. All students use computers in the lab or from the laptop carts several times a week.

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

Fairhaven has successfully implemented reading curriculum and instructional programs that are differentiated to target the needs of the multiethnic and varied socio-economic populations. Curriculum materials, instructional strategies, and additional school-wide components reach, teach, and support different levels of English Language Learners who comprise over two-thirds of Fairhaven's student population, as well as meets the needs of the "English Only" learners.

*Houghton Mifflin* is the core reading program and was chosen for its comprehensive and broad scope. It was approved for adherence to California State Standards and research-based content. *Houghton Mifflin* includes suggested scaffolding measures to meet the needs of all learners and systematically develops reading, writing and thinking skills across all grade levels. It includes specific, scripted lessons which assist teachers in delivering explicit, direct instruction and helps students acquire foundational reading skills such as phonemic awareness, phonics, sight words, and comprehension.

The reading intervention program used in grades four through six is Scholastic's System 44/READ 180, a comprehensive, research-based intervention program used with considerable success, to support those students who are reading several grade levels below peers. Multiple measures are used to qualify students for the READ 180 program, including reading fluency and comprehension scores based on the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) and STAR scores. The program provides struggling readers with high interest, relevant nonfiction and academic vocabulary to become more successful with reading and across content areas. Students work at individual levels and speed to master reading, writing, spelling, and vocabulary skills. READ 180 uses adaptive technology to individualize instruction for students and gives teachers powerful data to help differentiate to ensure learning.

Fairhaven staff employs guidelines from the district pacing guides, which enable teachers to align and improve grade-level teaming. Students take quarterly common benchmark assessments based upon the pacing guide and state standards, and data analysis is shared district wide. Fairhaven also incorporates *Strategic Schooling* Strategies that give students the targeted reading skills to read and comprehend test materials. GLAD strategies give language learners highly engaging, interactive support in accessing the curriculum.

Throughout the year, teachers and staff sponsor Family Reading Nights to involve and assist parents/guardians in helping students develop interest in reading. Finally, as part of the school-wide plan, Fairhaven sponsors a Reading at Home program which involves parents/guardians and offers book incentives for reading at home to build home library collections.

At Fairhaven, students are leveled daily for specific time blocks to establish early intervention and differentiated instruction. Before and during leveling, students are assessed using multiple measures and teachers maintain, share, and utilize data to collaborate and determine student needs and placement in

flexible groups. These groups allow teachers to give intense support to students below grade level, focusing on the skills needed, while also giving advanced students opportunities for challenge. Teachers use *Houghton Mifflin* leveled readers, language support, and challenge handbooks, working with students in small group and one-on-one instruction, utilizing cross-age tutors, and parent volunteers.

### **3. Mathematics:**

Students at Fairhaven have shown consistent growth and progress in the acquisition of California Standards for Mathematics and application skills. *Houghton Mifflin Mathematics* and *EnVision Math* both facilitate a wide variety of effective instructional strategies to help teachers meet the diverse learning styles of all students. Lessons provide concept development through use of manipulatives, a Problem of the Day, targeted math skill review, challenge activities, animated lessons which are linkable to Smart Boards and academic language. Skills are spiraled through and between grade levels. The goals for all students are to become proficient in basic computational and procedural skills, to develop conceptual understanding and to become adept at problem solving.

Mathematics instruction is supported and supplemented by the online, research-based, standards-aligned program: The *Mind Research Institute's ST Math*. This program engages each student independently through the development of spatial-temporal reasoning for an in-depth understanding of mathematics. Regular exposure helps students develop both mathematical reasoning and conceptual understanding. It offers teachers data to help identify students who are having difficulty with a particular skill or concept. Fairhaven teachers have participated in professional development focusing on instructional practices and effective strategies. Sessions occur across all grade levels where students are guided in deconstruction of released test questions to understand the nuances of academic vocabulary. The ultimate goal is for the students to create their own questions based upon covered standards to critically analyze actual academic learning. Progress toward mastery of all standards is closely monitored by teacher and student. Assessments are made throughout the year and scrutinized by teacher and student, and ultimately shared with parents/guardians for goal setting purposes.

Interventions begin in the classroom through core curriculum and tiered support. Based on classroom tests, monthly assessments and teacher observation, students are placed into small groups for direct, targeted instruction as an intervention. This additional intervention is completed 20-30 minutes daily while other students are working on challenge activities, games or additional practice. If a struggling student needs additional instruction or practice in a specific skill, he/she may be recommended for after school tutoring, Saturday School targeted assistance, or assigned to meet with a teacher during lunch to practice skills. The dedication of the Fairhaven teachers to support all students in their mastery of math standards reflects their commitment to the success of each student.

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

Fairhaven is a place where students learn to be responsible, respectful and thoughtful citizens. All grade levels experience the joy of learning science concepts through hands-on discoveries and lessons through the use of *Hands-On Inquiry-Centered Foss/STC Science* kits. Fairhaven has started a learning garden, where students actually experience state standards in social science and science under teacher and docent guidance. Additionally, third through fifth graders travel into the diverse ecosystems that abound in coastal California. Through the Laguna Wilderness Park and Foundation, third and fourth grade students observe, study, inquire, and learn about the interactions within the diverse ecosystems. With the aid of trained teachers and docents, students learn through in-depth and hands-on activities about how the Native Americans existed within these ecosystems. Students learn the value of preserving these unique places and all the creatures and components within them. Fourth and fifth grade classes also attend the Orange County Water Festival to experience day-long activities reinforcing the concepts of reuse, renew, and recycle. Upper grade students learn the importance of water and the role it has played in the development of the state of California. Lastly, fifth graders experience "Inside the Outdoors" as a rite of passage experience to appreciate and explore the California wilderness. Students who are unable to pay for this trip receive scholarships through various community organizations who understand the

importance of hands-on learning for all students. Through all of these activities, science and social science standards are the foundation and reinforce what has been covered in the classroom.

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

Fairhaven teachers are highly trained in best practices, differentiated instruction, GLAD and *Strategic Schooling* Strategies. Each student is given an Achievement Binder to monitor progress throughout the year. These binders include a test chat form which identifies where the student scored on the California Standards Test (CST), their oral reading fluency score, their comprehension score based on the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI), quarterly writing scores and quarterly district Paced Standards Assessment (PSA) results. These scores and levels are reviewed throughout the year with student, parent/guardian, and teacher. Based upon this information, students make long- and short-term goals and track progress toward these goals. Successes are celebrated both in the classroom and at school recognition assemblies. Another protocol from *Strategic Schooling* includes student engagement. At grade-level collaboration time and through professional development, teachers choose specific monthly engagement strategies to keep students motivated, attuned, focused, and actively involved in the lessons.

With a large population of English Language Learners at Fairhaven, teachers are well-trained in Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) strategies to differentiate instruction and ensure academic success for all students. Students are grouped homogeneously for 30-45 minutes daily for English Language Development instruction. During these classes, students are learning academic language in the content areas, practicing grammar, getting prior knowledge for upcoming units of study and using chants, songs and stories to learn English. Teachers use differentiated questioning strategies for students at different levels of English development throughout the day to build confidence and maintain focus. All students participate.

Teachers use a variety of instructional strategies, supplemental materials and interventions which support most struggling and “at-risk” students. Teachers target specific students who may need additional help, re-teaching, or just a buddy, to help them master content standards and basic skills. These “target students” are focused upon throughout the day and a comprehensive list of strategies is documented to support learning and retention. Additional tiered intervention, alongside after-school tutoring, is assigned to these students and all progress is reported to the student, parents/guardians, and other staff members.

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

Staff at Fairhaven participate in a modified Wednesday schedule, setting aside weekly time to collaborate and develop as professionals. This time is highly protected, and staff appreciates the opportunity to work with others to improve practice. The purpose of professional development at Fairhaven is to educate teachers in the latest research and technologies in the field of education to help ensure that all students have access to good first instruction. The goal of our highly trained teachers is for all students to become proficient or advanced. To support this goal, the school-wide focus is on literacy. The selection of professional development begins with the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) who meets monthly to analyze data, discuss resources, review trends, and generate priorities. Fairhaven staff insists on using data judiciously and professional development is repeated, intensive, and institutionalized.

The largest segment of professional development over the last five years has been with *Strategic Schooling* and using classroom instructional strategies. All teachers have been trained on:

- teaching test-taking skills
- incorporating test released questions
- analyzing data
- identifying state standards to ensure 100% coverage
- using test chats and goal setting
- integrating achievement binders
- celebrating achievements
- choosing and monitoring target students



*Strategic Schooling* Strategies changed the way Fairhaven teachers design their lessons. The direction of teaching has become more data driven, with a laser-like focus on monitoring standards and making sure each student has mastered every standard. Additional research-based professional development has been provided in GLAD, *Thinking Maps*, Academic Vocabulary Development, Data Director Data Management System, and many others. These multiple strategies and trainings provided information on graphic organizers, sentence patterning charts, chants, songs, self-made dictionaries, drawings, and team building to bring core content alive to all learners.

With information from data, conferences, and parents/guardians, teachers can begin interventions for struggling students in the classroom. This process supports the Response to Intervention and Instruction (RtI<sup>2</sup>) model which promotes early identification and intervention for potential “at-risk” students.

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

Five years ago, the district and administration realized the opportunity to apply for and receive funding from the QEIA. This act provides extra money for schools performing at the lowest level in California. The funding requires lowered class size, highly trained teachers, forty hours or more of professional development yearly, and facilities for these schools. Students are provided with more individualized attention and instruction. Teachers are able to provide more immediate feedback with the lowered student ratios, facilitate the cycle of effective instruction, monitor progress, and plan intervention with this additional funding. The cultural results of QEIA were critical to the low morale that had previously crippled Fairhaven. Teachers began more meaningful collaboration, students received more individualized attention and monitoring, and student test scores began to rise.

With the next principal at the helm, the successes continued to grow. Teachers were trained in *Strategic Schooling* Strategies and the focus toward standards based instruction was honed and fine tuned. Data was analyzed and used to focus on each student’s strengths and weaknesses. Teachers were sharing effective lessons/strategies, and building a stronger partnership with parents/guardians, the community, and each other. Test scores were rising and students and teachers were able to celebrate the success.

The new leadership continues to bring all partners in a student’s education together. The principal recognizes the unique talents and strengths of teachers, parents/guardians, and support staff, and fosters an atmosphere of trust among all stakeholders.

True leadership in education is much more a shared responsibility than a single individual. Decisions need to come from the stakeholders involved and those who know the students best. At Fairhaven, many leadership teams work together to create a safe, trusting, open environment where students and teachers are supported to achieve. The principal ensures that the voices of all stakeholders are heard and shared in the decision-making process. Some of the stakeholders at Fairhaven include:

- Instructional Leadership Team (ILT)
- School Site Council (SSC)
- English Learner Advisory Council (ELAC)
- Student Success Team (SST)
- Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
- Response to Intervention Team and Instruction (RtI<sup>2</sup>)

The principal is the primary advocate for each and every student and teacher at Fairhaven and is the driving force that encourages students and teachers to do their best and achieve beyond their comfort zones.