



Adams Elementary School



Adams Elementary School is a K-5 school located in Santa Ana, California.

Adams began its work with SMP in 2004 when the school partnered with SMP to apply for a federal Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) Grant.

Adams was successful in securing the three-year CSR Grant and immediately brought SMP aboard as their CSR provider to help them identify areas in which they could improve. With a new principal as their guide, the instructional leadership team quickly went to work on implementing an action plan that addressed the needs of their school community.

Adams first sent administrators, teachers from various grade levels, and coaches to each SMP institute – CFG New Coaches, Bridges to Understanding, Classroom Walk-Throughs, and Data – to begin building a portfolio of strategies to tackle each component of their action plan. Attendance at SMP institutes continued throughout the three years of the grant. With these new strategies, Adams began to make significant changes within their school community that have impacted student achievement results.

The school began to implement monthly CFG faculty meetings. Adams faculty distributed the hours from one of their “buy-back” days and reserved that time for these meetings. In addition to using CFG protocols to examine student work and discuss educational dilemmas, CFG-type processes were developed by teachers and administrators to focus these faculty meetings on specific areas of need, such as reading comprehension.

Adams then instituted school-wide classroom walk-throughs. During Years 2 and 3 of the CSR grant, these walk-throughs were held three times a year and focused on evidence of student fluency and reading comprehension. The walk-throughs were so successful that Adams decided to schedule them bi-monthly during the 2007-2008 academic year. Parents, also, were included in the walk-throughs, which opened classroom doors and gave parents the opportunity to become more involved in their child’s learning.

Adams also began innovative work in using data. Time has been scheduled for teachers to individually conference with ALL students three times during this school year. Teachers will review data with each student and will support every student in setting goals. The commitment for students to become involved in this process also will impact how parent conferences are conducted. During the CSR grant years, grade level and faculty times were established to review a variety of data (state, district benchmark assessments, CWT data, student work). The administrative team met individually with teachers a few times during the year to discuss the use of data to guide instruction, and to establish areas of need. The analysis of a variety of data has enabled teachers to more effectively design instructional plans to meet student academic needs.

Adams also renewed their focus on interventions in the classroom. All after-school intervention programs were evaluated and re-organized. Criteria for student participation, parent involvement, communication systems between classroom teachers, the after-school intervention program, and tutoring teachers, were developed and regular assessments implemented to monitor results with students.

Parent involvement and partnerships steadily increased. In addition to leadership opportunities through the School Site Council, English Language Advisory Committee, parent committees, and volunteer activities, parents participated in ESL classes, Family Read Nights, and Family Literacy Project classes that enabled them to learn skills to support their child's learning. At a recent workshop, parents experienced interactive strategies (which teachers had learned in the "Bridges to Understanding" Institute) that promote dialogue and collaborative sharing of ideas. Adams' supportive partnership with parents and high expectations for students have been exemplified by the annual fieldtrips for all students, kindergarten through fifth grade, and parent volunteers to local college and university campuses.

With a great deal of hard work, collaboration, and resolve, the Adams instructional leadership team and faculty have made significant, pervasive changes at their school site and renewed their focus on student academic achievement. SMP is delighted to have been a part of that journey.