



California Department of Education
 2016 California Gold Ribbon Schools Program
 Elementary School Application: Part A



51714646053391

County-District-School (CDS) Code – 14 digits

Sutter County

County Name

Yuba City Unified School District

District Name

King Avenue Elementary School

School Name (If your school is selected for honors, this school name will be engraved on the award plaque.)

630 King Avenue

Mailing Address

Yuba City

City

95991

Zip Code

530-822-5250

Area Code and Phone Number Ext.

203

530-822-5031

Area Code and Fax Number

slnowinski@ycusd.org

Principal's E-mail Address



I certify that I have reviewed the information contained in this application and, to the best of my knowledge, it is complete and accurate. I further certify that:

- The Office for Civil Rights does not have any outstanding findings of civil rights statute violations by the school or district that may affect the school;*
- There are no pending lawsuits by the Department of Justice against the district alleging that the school, or the district as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clauses; and*
- The school or district is addressing or has addressed any identified areas of noncompliance under federal or state laws and regulations.*

School Overview

Mission Possible. It is our mission to make anything possible for King Avenue Elementary School students. Our staff is welcomed back to the new school year with activities that empower them to make a difference in all of the lives they will touch. Our mantra for the year is "Mission Possible". King Avenue School is a neighborhood school. It was established in 1953 and has experienced massive change from a school surrounded by quaint houses in the 1950's and 60's to being a school in a niche of society plagued by poverty and crime. Our belief in "Mission Possible" motivates us to keep focused on the good in all and the possibility that everyone deserves a chance to become something great.

Our student population of 400 students is diverse demographically, however; one demographic they all have in common is that all are socioeconomically disadvantaged. 100% of our students qualify to receive free breakfast and lunch every day. Our special education population makes up 17% of our school. Additionally, 32% of our students are English Learners and over half of our school, 56%, are Hispanic. We have seen an influx of immigrant students in the past few years. King Avenue also has a highly transient population. There are no busses to bring our children to school. Most families walk to school every day, many children walk alone. Our students are curious and look to our staff to provide a safe learning environment. Many of our students do not come to school with the drive or skills that make learning a top priority. We have found that in order to make learning accessible to our students, we must help them overcome hurdles that impact their motivation. Our students' backgrounds in many ways bring negative assumptions about school to the table. Many of our families at King Avenue School see school solely as a legal obligation. We believe it is our mission to provide opportunities for students to learn what it feels like to be successful. We assume the best intent in all children and provide the best academic, social, and emotional programs so that their experience in elementary school motivates them to realize their dreams.

Like our students, King Avenue staff members are diverse yet have something in common and that is an unwavering commitment to make a difference in the lives they touch. The bond that ties the staff together keeps us strong and dedicated. We have 24 teachers. Of these 24, two are Special Day Class teachers and one is a Learning Center teacher. Our administrative staff includes one principal, one counselor and an instructional coach. Despite our history of program improvement, a common set of core values is shared by all staff. Our value system keeps us focused on the work that we do. It is imperative that we are all working in a common direction and that is making instructional decisions that are evidence based and committing long term to reach our goals. We also realize that in the finite time we have with our students each day, we put our effort and energy into things we have control over, which is teaching our students the academic and social skills that will give them the tools they need to find success in life.

The pursuit of strategies that engage students in their learning is a continual and ever evolving task. Frequent staff development and professional collaboration time are venues for our own learning and reflection. Our academic and social instruction is planned according to the needs of every individual student. Teaching young children to take ownership over their own learning is an art. All King Avenue staff members have created masterpieces on the many canvases of student lives they have touched. It is an endless mission but it is possible. It is possible to impact young lives. Many of our teachers will never even know they difference they have made, yet, they are tireless.

King Avenue Elementary School

Model Program/Practice Narrative

Model Program/Practice Name: A Customized Approach to Student Learning

1. Description of the Model

The *Customized Approach to Student Learning* model at King Avenue Elementary School has evolved to give all children the tools needed to be successful as not only students but also successful members of society. Using a common belief system, all staff realize that all students are not created equal and, therefore; need an individualized plan. Learning for all is a possibility and we believe in **Mission Possible**.

Years of data showed King Avenue students were significantly below grade level on both formative and summative assessments. The CELDT and STAR tests showed many areas of need. This need included subpopulations such as English Learners, Special Education and low socio-economic groups regularly achieving below the state and district average.

Table 1: King Ave CST Results for %Proficient or Advanced for ELA Table 2: King Ave CST Results for %Proficient or Advanced for math

Year	Schoolwide	English Learners	Low SES	Year	Schoolwide	English Learners	Low SES
2011	37%	32.9%	36.9%	2011	48.1%	43.5%	46.4%
2012	45%	42.5%	43.6%	2012	48.8%	48.3%	47.1%
2013	41%	44.6%	39.4%	2013	54.5%	56.8%	52.2%

A major contributing factor to our low percentages on the STAR was the low scores of our low-socioeconomic and English Learner populations. Data showed that in each year of the scores listed above, these two subpopulations scored significantly lower than the other groups in both English Language Arts and math.

Our students come to us lacking the skills needed to access the rigorous expectations that the California Standards set forth. Another significant roadblock to teach social and emotional skills is a lack of positive parent role models. Approximately 70% of our parents have not completed post-secondary education. For this reason, the King Avenue staff has taken on the mission of a *Customized Approach to Student Learning* by truly meeting individual students' needs: academically, social-emotionally, and behaviorally.

Our *Customized Approach to Student Learning* model involves many important players and parts. It is an ever-changing and evolving plan for every student at our school. The decisions made behind each customized plan are based on information gathered through various sources. This *Customized Approach to Student Learning* is a specific data collection format that is used to document and track the interventions that students receive over the years. There is a commitment school-wide to believe in the individual student's ability to access their education if given the right tools and skills and includes offering support to families. King Avenue School's Core Values determine the basis for our model practice:

The staff at King Avenue School has an explicit common set of core values which define our success and guide our future.

Mission Possible Non-negotiables:

Energy prioritization – Energy is invested only in those things within our control and proven to advance the goals.

Purposeful and factual instructional program decision making – A clear link exists between teacher behaviors and student achievement.

Long term commitment and focus on established priorities – To give students the opportunities they deserve, there is a commitment school wide to consistently focus on our goals.

In creating a plan to meet the various needs of all students, our *Customized Approach to Student Learning* model had to include all facets of the school experience. Our teachers needed to be armed with the absolute best practices and support to engage all students in their learning. In order to make this happen, four elements must be included in our model. Each of these elements includes a specific plan for how it will directly contribute to the success of our students. These four elements are: 1) implementation of curriculum, 2) professional development, 3) data-based decision making, and 4) a targeted intervention program.

2. Implementation and Monitoring of the Model

1) Implementation of Curriculum

As a starting point of our *Customized Approach to Student Learning*, all teachers must implement adopted curriculum as intended so that every student at our school has an equal opportunity to access materials and information. This requires regular support from administration and instructional coaches. In the form of walkthrough visits, feedback and professional collaboration, teachers are supported in their implementation of curriculum. Professional collaboration sessions are designed to give teachers the opportunity to share ideas and analyze student progress. The results of these sessions are instructional plans that have proven to advance student achievement.

2) Professional Development

Our professional development for this model is our notable strength. Professional development for King Avenue teachers includes district and site level sessions. These sessions focus on curriculum, instructional practices, implementation of state standards, and intervention plans for increased student achievement. Our teachers, school counselor, and instructional aides all regularly participate in sessions tailored to their positions. The Social Emotional Learning curriculum adopted by our school, facilitates learning for all students. Our counselor has been trained to implement this curriculum and has been trained in *Nurtured Heart* so she can provide staff development to our school team and work with parents to attend *Nurtured Heart* parenting classes. Teachers meet twice monthly for whole staff, cross grade level, and grade level collaboration. Additionally, with the implementation of district wide elementary prep periods, all teachers have the flexibility to meet weekly regarding the progress of their students. They also participate in day long professional collaboration meetings, called Academic Conferences, at least 3 times per year with their grade level teams. These meetings drive our instructional plans and focus for the year, and are where goals for teachers and students are set. After the Academic Conferences, teachers continue to collaborate multiple times per month. Working as a team with administration, instructional coach and grade level leaders, instructional strategies and plans are created.

The success of our *Customized Approach to Student Learning* requires continuity amongst the staff and administration. A hyper-focus on common instructional strategies as a staff is necessary to ensure implementation of research-based instructional strategies. The first instructional strategy that King Avenue School teaching staff focused on was student engagement strategies. Observations by administration during walkthroughs showed a lack of consistent student engagement. In tandem with this focus on engagement strategies, administration brought messages of urgency to the staff. It was very clear that in classrooms where students were engaged regularly throughout the lesson, there was an increase in good behavior and student achievement namely higher test scores on both formative and summative assessments. Engagement strategies such as covert and overt active participation were shared during staff meetings and peer classroom observations were scheduled for professional learning. All teachers visited another classroom at least once during this first

year. As teachers implemented regular engagement strategies, certain strategies such as student whiteboards became the norm in all classrooms. Intermittent closure, namely closure throughout the lesson, was the next focus strategy. The process by which this instructional skill was implemented followed the same plan as engagement strategies.

At staff meetings during the year, administration and the instructional coach regularly reviewed the strategies studied. Currently, with the transition to California Standards, an urgency message was brought back to the staff regarding the need for learning objectives that include content, behavior and level of cognition. Beginning with our back to school meetings, teachers have been studying Webb's Depth of Knowledge levels. Recently, the staff participated in a professional development session lead by administration during which they wrote objectives with these three key parts. The principal followed up by scheduling classroom visits for all teachers during the two weeks following the professional development session to observe the forming and teaching to this objective. Feedback is brought back to the whole staff after the walkthrough visits and goals are set for all teaching staff based on the walkthrough data.

3) Data-Based Decision Making

The instructional study for teaching staff continues to be an intense focus. In conjunction with this professional learning, all teachers participate in developing individualized plans for students in their classrooms who are struggling. This *Customized Approach to Student Learning* is a specific data collection format that is used to document and track the interventions that students receive over the years. When a teacher has reason to believe that a student is not meeting grade level standards, he/she completes a form with the academic need of the student and documents the progress or lack of on the same form. We call these our Intervention Documentation Folders, affectionately known by our staff as "Orange Folders", and they are passed on from year to year so that any teacher with a student who has received intervention will be able to see the student's history. This allows for teachers to make informed decisions about the academic needs of their students. The implementation of tailored plans for students, common instructional plans and regular collaboration has resulted in this growth. All students grades K-5 are given reading fluency tests every six weeks. If students show that they are below the 50th percentile on this test, they are given further assessments to dial down and specify their areas of need. Students are placed in groups where the instructional focus is based on this need.

4) Targeted Intervention Program

A *Customized Approach to Student Learning* includes specific plans for meeting the social-emotional and behavioral needs of our students. The data that builds a background for the urgency for the need of a strong *Social Emotional Learning* curriculum includes high numbers of homeless and foster youth. This portion of our overall population fluctuates between 6% and 10% of our total population. Approximately 17% of our students who continue to struggle meeting grade level standards are students with disabilities. Because the amount of time in our day is finite and teachers must focus on academic instruction, our full time school counselor reaches every student in our school by implementing in class curriculum through our King Avenue Elementary Counseling Services program. This curriculum is grade specific and focuses age appropriate skills such as: listening and helping others in 1st grade and anxiety and friendship in 3rd grade. Similar to specific plans for students needing academic support, the students that need extra social-emotional and/or behavioral support participate in interventions such as: conflict management/resolution sessions, referrals to community resources, behavioral interventions in the classroom. The school counselor regularly works with administration, special education staff, and families to develop and implement plans for

students' needs. The success of these plans is evaluated in Student Study Team Meetings, IEP's and Parent Conferences. Students who participate in Social Emotional Learning display lower levels of emotional distress and more favorable attitudes toward school.

We value our commitment to student success. We work to implement alternative behavioral interventions. Suspension is our last resort and used in only the most severe cases. Behavioral Support Plans are designed by our team to build on the strengths of students. Proactive plans to guide students who are struggling behaviorally are made and tailored to individual need including: helping in classrooms, helping other staff members, peer tutoring and alternative placements for specific parts of the school day. The *Nurtured Heart* Approach is also utilized in many classrooms and various settings across the school as a way to impact students' school experience with a positive, strength-based focus.

3. Results of the Model Program/Practice

Ensuring improvement requires the continuous analysis and evaluation of our *Customized Approach to Student Learning* components. Many subpopulations have shown growth on both formative and summative assessments. The implementation of tailored plans for students, common instructional plans and regular collaboration has resulted in growth.

All teachers are able to articulate specific academic plans for each of their students. For three years, every student at King Avenue School has continually shown growth in their reading fluency scores. Our English learners have shown progress as measured by the CELDT. Our CELDT data shows improvement. From 2013-2014, 48.9% of our English learners increased at least one proficiency level on the CELDT. The largest improvement is students increasing from Intermediate (level 3) to Early Advanced (level 4). During the past three years, our numbers of reclassified students have increased from 0 students in 2012-2013 to 5 students in both 2013-2014 and 2014-2015.

The data collected over the past three years in our Intervention Documentation Folders, shows students are responding successfully to their individualized plans. The data in these folders show that the majority of the students who participate in tailored plans have met their goals and exited intervention in their focus area. For example, during the 2014-2015 school year, of the 12 English only first grade students who received targeted English Language Arts intervention, 7 students met grade level performance targets while the other 5 made progress toward goals. Similar success occurs in every grade level.

Qualitative measures that show success of the *Customized Approach to Student Learning* include: walkthrough data, Student Study Team notes, a decrease in the number of students who are suspended, focused and data driven teacher collaboration notes during professional collaboration sessions and Academic Conferences. The number of students suspended for 2 or more consecutive days decreased from 17 students in 2012-2013 to 7 students in 2013-2014. Parents have attended *Nurtured Heart* parenting classes. Notes from collaboration meetings over the past three years show that teachers are focusing on data analysis and instructional strategies. All grade levels are focused during their collaboration on making specific plans for their classrooms based on the needs of students as shown on forms called, Data Collaboration and Analysis. Feedback from a consultant who has worked with King Avenue teachers for the past five years states:

I have worked with Sara (Principal of King Avenue School) and her team of teachers at King Avenue Elementary over the past several years. Through professional development, grade-level collaboration, and in-class coaching, teachers have been exploring and implementing strategies to meet the diverse needs of the students they teach. Beginning last year, teachers began intentionally tracking and using fluency data and diagnostic assessments in reading to identify student needs. The data is used to provide in-class small group instruction and to form groups and guide lesson planning for additional intervention support. Data is collected, reviewed and analyzed regularly and groups are flexible and fluid based on student progress.