



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



RIVERBEND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## Model Program/Practice Summary

1. Name of Model Program/Practice:

SOAR – Riverbend Elementary School's Intervention Program

2. How long has this Model Program/Practice been in place?

☐ Less than 2 years      ☒ 2-4 years      ☐ 5-8 years      ☐ 8+ years

3. What is the Target Area? (*Choose at least one area.*)

Target Areas:

- ☐ Career Technical Education
- ☐ Chronic Absenteeism and Dropout Prevention
- ☐ Civic Education Awareness
- ☒ Closing the Achievement Gap
- ☒ Education Supports
- ☐ Nutrition and Physical Activity/Education
- ☐ Parent and Community Involvement
- ☐ Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
- ☐ Use of Technology
- ☐ Visual and Performing Arts

4. What are the target populations? (*Check all that apply.*)

Race/Ethnicity Subgroups:

- ☒ American Indian or Alaskan Native
- ☒ Asian
- ☒ Black or African American
- ☒ Filipino
- ☒ Hispanic or Latino

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- ☒ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- ☒ White
- ☒ Two or More Races

Other Student Groups:

- ☒ Socioeconomically Disadvantaged
- ☒ English Learners
- ☒ Students with Disabilities
- ☒ At-Risk Students (Academic, Social, Emotional, Behavioral, or Health)
- ☐ Other (*specify*)

5. What strategies are used to implement the Model Program/Practice? (*Check all that apply.*)

Strategies:

- ☒ School Climate
- ☐ Small Learning Communities
- ☐ Parent Involvement
- ☒ Data-Driven Decision Making
- ☐ Health Support
- ☒ Social/Emotional/Behavioral Support
- ☐ Professional Development
- ☐ Other (*specify*)

6. How is your Model Program/Practice referenced in your district's LCAP? [Refer to the State Priorities listed in Education Code (ED) sections 52060 and 52066. Charter schools must address priorities in EC Section 5206(d).]

Note: When completing the Model Program/Practice Narrative, your response needs to provide clarifying explanation on **how your implementation** of the Model Program/Practice **at your school site is distinguished** from the district's model.

Yuba City Unified School District, through the LCAP has established goals and related services. Each school site has site specific goals that are directly aligned with the district's focus goals. The resources allocated at each site are deployed strategically by site administration.

RIVERBEND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**Model Program/Practice Narrative**

**Model Program/Practice Name:** Riverbend Intervention Program

(Model Program/Practice narrative—limit your responses to four (4) pages total)

**Description of the Model**

*SOAR- Student Outreach and Academic Response* is Riverbend Elementary School's intervention program. The program is designed to meet the needs of students not progressing in the general education setting (Tier1). The students enrolled in *SOAR* meet 20-25 minutes each day in 4-6 week sessions for targeted instruction in an area of need. The identified students are monitored and supported through more frequent assessments and data-driven interventions delivered via small groups.

The *SOAR* Program was designed to address the needs of Riverbend students who were identified as being at-risk of experiencing and developing learning gaps in their academic skills, mainly reading. Other factors adding to the need of the *SOAR* Program were the increasing rigor and expectations in new academic standards. Riverbend Elementary School, along with the school district, and the rest of the state was transitioning from CA State Standards to Common Core Standards. Not only were changes in classroom instruction required, but students who were falling behind needed supplemental or small group intervention to meet the increasing academic demand. After analyzing the student testing data, the team had determined that approximately 15% of the Riverbend students were needing support beyond the school wide reading curriculum.

The *SOAR* Program emerged through a discussion during the 2011-12 school year at the Riverbend Elementary School's Site Council. The need to create an intervention model unique for Riverbend was discussed. Through a collaboration process, an intervention program was identified, and further developed with the use of onsite resources. A teacher was selected as the program coordinator; and the *SOAR* Program was born!

The *SOAR* Program was, and still is, a unique intervention model that was not offered anywhere at the district level. The *SOAR* Program started as a site-funded intervention model. Riverbend Elementary School made a conscious decision to implement the *SOAR* Program during school hours; that made the program participation by students not an option. Since other intervention programs at different school sites were offered as after school intervention, the *SOAR* Program was unique and stood out. The targeted population for *SOAR* was determined to be for Grades 1-8.

Since its inception, the *SOAR* Program has gone through many transformations. When it first started in March 2012, it was staffed with one intervention specialist teacher. The need grew and the school Site Council approved funding to add three para-educators to support the demand. With the existence of the LCAP funding model two years ago, our *SOAR* Program is now district LCAP funded. The *SOAR* Program continues to be run by one intervention specialist/coordinator, and three para-educators.

Professional development is the essential part of any educational program. Professional development, at the site level and district level, is provided to the intervention staff to build a sound understanding of the philosophy and the execution of the school and district expectations to build fidelity and to ensure successful implementation for the RTI program for the students.

In the *SOAR* Program, the *SOAR* specialist and the para-professionals provide specific intervention using district adopted curriculum; e.g. Treasures, enVision, Go Math!, Houghton Mifflin, Soar to Success, online and computer based components of the adopted curriculum, other research-based curriculum, and Khan Academy (online).

The goals and outcomes of the *SOAR* Program are to provide targeted intervention to return students back to their classroom without the need of more intensive interventions. The *SOAR* Program is also able to identify those students who are in need of more specialized services. Through close monitoring and instruction in *SOAR* intervention, students' social-emotional, behavioral, and academic achievement needs are identified and addressed accordingly. This is accomplished through intensive intervention structured to the unique needs of each student. After referral, each student is tested using Treasures curriculum diagnostic assessments for first through fifth grade ELA, grade level math assessments, or for grades six through eight, STAR literacy or math assessments. Combining teacher input and test data, a targeted intervention strategy is created for the unique needs of each student.

Every three weeks, or as needed, teachers are provided with individual student progress reports. Teachers have this information available to share with the parents. At least three times a year, a report is delivered to the Riverbend Site Council on the overall effectiveness of the program.

Riverbend's *SOAR* program has been continuously viewed as being a very effective and practical program in terms of the implementation and results. Soon after the *SOAR* intervention program was up and running, we were honored that YCUSD encouraged other schools within the district to come out and observe our implementation of the *SOAR* program. As a result of our success, either the intervention specialist or the instructional coach from Lincoln School, Bridge Street School, Andros Karperos School, and Butte Vista all scheduled visits to observe our Intervention Specialist working with our students. They also consulted with our *SOAR* specialist on how and what tools they could take back and adopt at their sites. We are pleased to say that it did not stop here. Our site continued with ongoing collaboration and assistance with these sites throughout the year.

## **Implementation & Monitoring of the Model**

Since its implementation in March 2012, Riverbend School's *SOAR* Program has been a model intervention program in the Yuba City Unified School District. This program came out of a concern addressed by the Riverbend Site Council to offer an intervention program to take place during school hours. Based upon the original Site Council recommendation, they are frequently updated on the progress of the program.

Accountability is built into the *SOAR* model through sharing data among the general education teachers, special education, para-educators, speech and language specialists, administrators, counselors, parents, and the *SOAR* specialist. In addition, student accountability takes the form of timely arrival, regular attendance, and focus on lessons during each *SOAR* session.

There are several models used to communicate the implementation and monitoring of the *SOAR* Program. The *SOAR* specialist shares appropriate individual data with the classroom teachers and parents, aggregate data with the Riverbend Site Council, and is an active member of the Riverbend Leadership Team. She is also a contributing member at all Student Study Team (SST) meetings.

The *SOAR* Program continues to contribute to improving student achievement and narrowing the achievement gap. For the 2015/2016 school year, the Riverbend Site Council, in coordination with teachers and administrators, determined that one of the highest priorities for

intervention would be a focus on fluency in grades 1-5. To meet this goal, the new SOAR specialist drew upon over twenty years of her experience teaching reading coupled with her expertise as a Treasures Curriculum Trainer to train intervention para-educators and coordinate phonics and fluency instruction. The ongoing training and monitoring focuses on the use of district-adopted curriculum and best practices to enhance fluency instruction.

Closing the achievement gap between the targeted and non-targeted students is accomplished through monitoring evidence triangulated from assessments such as STAR Math®, STAR Reading®, STAR Early Literacy® (diagnostic assessments), Quick Phonics Survey, San Diego Quick Assessment, scores obtained from research based curriculum assessments—formative and summative, teacher anecdotal records, and professional judgement.

The intense interventions are systematically applied to students based on their demonstrated level of need and addresses academic gaps. Some of the guiding principles and foci that serve as key components of Riverbend's SOAR Program are:

- Universal screening to identify need for additional support.
- Collaborative, team-based approach to development, implementation, and evaluation of academic intervention(s).
- Intense, multi-tiered application of an array of high-quality, evidence-based instruction matched to individual and group needs.
- Continuous progress monitoring to determine impact of intervention(s).
- Professional development and fidelity of implementation.
- Tiered service delivery.

One of the goals (Focus Goal 2.5) in the Yuba City Unified School District's LCAP plan states:

*Increase the ELA/Math performance of ALL students who are not at grade level proficiency.*

The above mentioned YCUSD LCAP focus goal has been the emphasis of Riverbend's SOAR program long before the District adopted it as one their goals. The SOAR Program serves as Tier 2 of the Rtl model at the Riverbend Elementary School, as reflected in the District's LCAP.

## **Results of the Model Program/Practice**

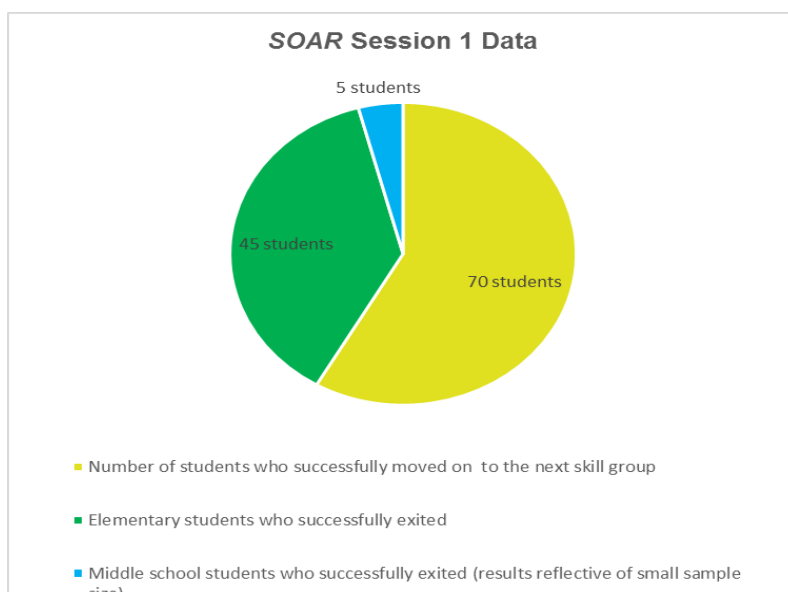
The program has evolved over time and its focus has changed, from primarily addressing reading needs to providing academic interventions in reading and mathematics (including some behavioral intervention). These changes came about based upon the evaluation of site needs, along with the District LCAP goals. As stated earlier, 2015-16 began with a focus on reading fluency.

The SOAR Program has gone through numerous personnel adjustments and changes. Since 2012, there have been three SOAR specialists. Each SOAR specialist gave the program their touch but the vision of the program was never compromised. The SOAR's first and second intervention specialists/coordinators moved on to become school administrators. Starting this school year, the SOAR Program is headed by an experienced intervention specialist who is new to the program, but not to the position. She created a successful Intervention program at April Lane Elementary School, another site within the Yuba City Unified School District.

As a result of the implementation of the SOAR Program at Riverbend Elementary School, the need for students to require Tier 3 services has greatly reduced. The goal of the SOAR

Program is to move students “down” the pyramid from Tier 2 to Tier 1, achieving successful inclusion in the general education classroom. Due to the timing of the implementation of SOAR, it was not possible to present longitudinal data of CST and SBAC to evaluate the impact that was made by SOAR on our students.

Let’s take a moment to reflect on how many Riverbend students have already been positively impacted this school year. The SOAR Program staff have successfully provided services to an average of 120 elementary and middle school students each week. These students meet in small groups to focus and develop their reading fluency or math skills. Their progress is assessed every three weeks or earlier, if needed. Forty-five elementary, and five middle school students have successfully met their intervention goals and have exited the SOAR Program. These students have returned to their classrooms where their teachers continue to monitor and provide ongoing classroom interventions. The remaining 70 students receiving SOAR Program support have progressed to another academic skill group to address their next targeted intervention goal. It is important to keep in mind when interpreting the data in the figure below that the number of middle school students participating in the SOAR Program are limited in quantity as compared to elementary school students.



*The SOAR Program* has been in effect since March 2012 when it was site-funded. Today it has become an integral part of the Riverbend’s instructional program. Based upon the number of students who have benefited from this program, it’s imperative that it continues for years to come. Riverbend School does not want to stop here. Our goals are to not only continue providing our students with SOAR interventions, but to maximize and improve on our delivery model and those we target. This year we will continue serving a large number of elementary school students. We will target our middle school population by increasing the number of students we serve. In addition, we want to improve the quality of the services delivered so that more middle school students are successfully exiting SOAR or moving onto the next targeted skill group. We will be analyzing our data to help determine how effective we are at Tier 2, thereby reducing the number of students requiring Tier 3 interventions.

We are very excited about the positive direction in which Riverbend is heading and cannot wait to share the data with our Riverbend community.