

Section 1: Executive Summary

Introduction

Cesar Chavez is an elementary school in the Hyattsville area that has been in operation for six years. Students hail largely from El Salvador, Mexico, The Dominican Republic, and various parts of the contiguous United States. A Two-Way Spanish Immersion was initiated in 1999, in response due to our dominant Spanish speaking population. The program services kindergarten through four grade, and has enabled the school to accommodate smaller class sizes in those grade levels. The Two-Way Spanish Immersion program enables a cross-cultural dialogue between our students. Students act as peer tutors in their areas and/or languages of strength. The program is a success when consistently implemented. In addition to our Two-Way Spanish Immersion program, we also accommodate a Model Comprehensive curriculum in grade kindergarten through six. Our future school improvement includes an expansion of the Two-Way Spanish Immersion program into grade five and the establishment of a pre-kindergarten on school grounds.

Major Initiatives

Our MSA scores increased in grade 3 in math by 26% and in reading by 24.8%. In grade 5 our MSA scores increased in math by 18.2% and in reading by 15.1%. Although we made positive gains, reading comprehension continues to present a challenge, particularly to our ESOL population. Reading fluency is another stumbling block for many of our non-native English speakers. Since fluency enhances comprehension, classroom read-alouds and libraries will become an integral component of our reading and language arts block. Having made the largest gains in math needs assessments data show that basic skills need to be improved in order for the students to excel at math problem solving. The in-service schedule reflects reading comprehension work sessions through the teaching of BCR's and reading comprehension strategies. The math focus will be to build up basic skills in order to improve the problem solving needed for word problems and math BCR's. In-services will also be held on math technology that provides basic math remediation programs. An after school tutoring program will be held again for grades three through six. The after school tutoring program will allow students working below grade level in reading and/or math to reinforce the skills needed to be successful in school and on the MSA. Kindergarten through sixth grade teachers will be trained in the new reading series at both the county and school levels. In-services will help aid teachers to be more effective in the classroom and to have a better understanding of what is expected of students on the MSA. In order to address the science needs of the school, the science chairperson will ensure that all grade levels have all the necessary Science PLUS and AIMS activity books which will help prepare for the science portion of the MSA in the following years. Three of our teachers have participated in the Prince George's County Action Research Program and presented their literacy research at the 2004 SOMIRAC conference and through staff development activities. Each year additional teachers will be encouraged to participate in the Action Research Program in order to enhance staff development and professional growth.

The 2003-2004 school year began with the reorganization of the Parent Teacher Association at Cesar Chavez. The parents became active in fundraising efforts and after school projects. All efforts will be made to ensure that the PTA will continue to be a positive influence on our community.

Safe and Orderly Environment

The success of a safe and orderly environment hinges on accurate and effective communication for all stakeholders. Cesar Chavez will prepare an information packet for parents, students, teachers and staff to be distributed in English and Spanish. Monthly newsletters will keep communication viable between the school and home. The School Counselor and teachers will conduct a classroom review of the Code of Student Conduct and prepare information materials for students at age appropriate levels. School rules and expectations will be clearly posted at appropriate locations. Teachers will refer disruptive students to the School Counselor and to the Assistant Principal for screening and appropriate administrative discipline. The School Counselor and Administrative Team will make recommendations that will reflect positive student behavior plans, which will result in more effective academic/behavioral performance. Students will engage in Second Step, G.O.L.D. (Generating Outstanding Leadership Development), Student Representative, and Peer Mediation training to further support their knowledge base of strategies and skills conducive to appropriate peer relationships. Student incentives will be provided to augment the overall positive school climate and to lower the number of discipline referrals and suspensions. The attendance record indicates that the students are present 94% of the time. The PTA will work collaboratively with the school to develop equity and ownership of the school as a cooperative community in a monthly meeting forum.