

Henry T. Gage Middle School Case Study 2021-22



Background:

Henry T. Gage Middle School is located in the city of Huntington Park, California. We serve a predominantly Latinx community and are a Title I school. Our middle school is composed of youth spanning grades sixth through eighth and our work centers on our mission and vision of attaining academic excellence and developing social responsibility.

[School Mission & Vision](#)

Purpose:

Our partnership with the Quaglia Institute supplements our collective school goals as we strive to prepare our students to become proactive, responsible members of a 21st century global society.

It is our belief that by embracing the work of student voice and aspirations that we can design and implement empowering opportunities for Gage Middle School students to take on leadership roles and ownership over their contributions to our school, our community, and beyond.

Implementation:

Self-Worth:

- Belonging
- Heroes
- Sense of Accomplishment

The 2021-22 school year was challenging as we returned to in-person learning. Because of the reintegration process and socialization needs that students presented much of our focus this year centered in the area of Self-Worth.

Belonging & Connection

A poster for Henry T. Gage Middle School Fall 2021. The title "Henry T. Gage Middle School" is in a large, stylized font, with "Fall 2021" below it. The poster contains several paragraphs of text and images. The text describes the school's focus on helping students develop a sense of belonging and connection, mentions a "Start With Hello" presentation, and describes a "Spirit Week" activity. Images include students holding signs, a "Smile" sign, a "HELLO" sign, and a "KIND" sign.

Henry T. Gage Middle School 
Fall 2021

This fall our focus was on helping students develop a sense of belonging and connection to our school, our staff, and their peers.

Students participated in a Start With Hello Presentation from Sandy Hook Promise. Through this violence prevention program, students were taught how to recognize when another student is alone, ways they can reach out and help lonely or socially isolated students, and different strategies to connect with other students to build a socially inclusive school community.

This schoolwide presentation kicked off a Spirit Week that included student volunteers greeting their peers at the morning entrance gates and a lunchtime activity that invited students to voice their ideas of ways we can show kindness in school and display them on a community banner.

We also had classes meet up outside in the morning, introduce themselves to each other, and participate in a getting-to-know-you activity which included our teachers.

A student club will be promoted to empower students in taking a proactive role in shaping school culture next semester.



Sense of Accomplishment



Academic Recognition



Biliteracy Award Recognition Celebration

Engagement:

- Fun & Excitement
- Curiosity & Creativity
- Spirit of Adventure

We also leveraged our Academy structure to increase student engagement. Each Academy devoted one week each month to reinforce a connection to our school community and engage in fun/thematic activities within their groups. Sporting challenges, like basketball tournaments and soccer match-ups, gallery walks that showcased student art, and CPR basic training events, for example, helped boost student curiosity and engagement.





A Spirit Rally also took place during lunch where students and staff celebrated their Academy together, participated in fun activities, and won prizes.



Purpose

- Leadership & Responsibility
- Confidence to take Action

Leadership and responsibility are visible within classroom routines and instructional practices as students are given roles where they lead discussions and share ideas, building on their confidence. There has also been an increase in student clubs being sponsored where students are taking on active roles within their specific foci.

Moving forward, we plan to incorporate more and/or expand on opportunities for student leadership in our school community,

Evaluation:

The activities and efforts during the 2021-22 school year in relation to Quaglia's guiding principles/conditions strengthened our sense of community and also heightened student engagement. Students shared their excitement and interest in these events with staff and teachers and we found that to be evidence of a high degree of success.

Nonetheless, as we reflect on our efforts this year, we also recognize the need for more student ownership, leadership opportunities, and further exploration of the results gleaned from the [Student Voice Survey](#).

Support staff and teachers were given access to the survey response data and time was provided to individually and collectively review, interpret, and consider responsive next steps ([Independent Reflection](#) - [Shared Padlet Link](#)). These insights will guide future work with student voice and aspirations.

Next Steps:

Stakeholder input and student voice survey responses will continue to lead our direction for the upcoming school year as we build on our work with Quaglia's guiding principles and infuse more opportunities for student leadership roles.

In fact, support staff have already utilized data from the student voice survey to establish goals for the 2022-23 school year:

Jan 2023 Goal:

By January 2023, 60% of students will feel they are a valued member of the school community; they will feel report a sense of pride connected to our school.

June 2023 Goal:

By June 2023, 80% of students will feel they are a valued member of the school community; they will feel report a sense of pride connected to our school.

Conversations surrounding existing or past practices with high-impact reform have also taken place with the intention of addressing some areas of improvement derived from the data.

Low Effort/High Impact Change Ideas:

- Student Recognition Announcements
- Gage Dollars
- Teacher surveys
- Improved communication between all stakeholders
- Shout-Outs
- Playing music during lunch
- Leadership Application process

While we faced many challenges as students and staff adjusted to in-person school during a pandemic, together we learned and grew together in many ways. We strengthened our capacity to move forward with student voice and aspirations and will continue to meet, discuss, plan for, and implement work that is conducive to achieving academic excellence and supporting the development of social responsibility.