

### West Covina Unified School District—Orangewood Elementary School

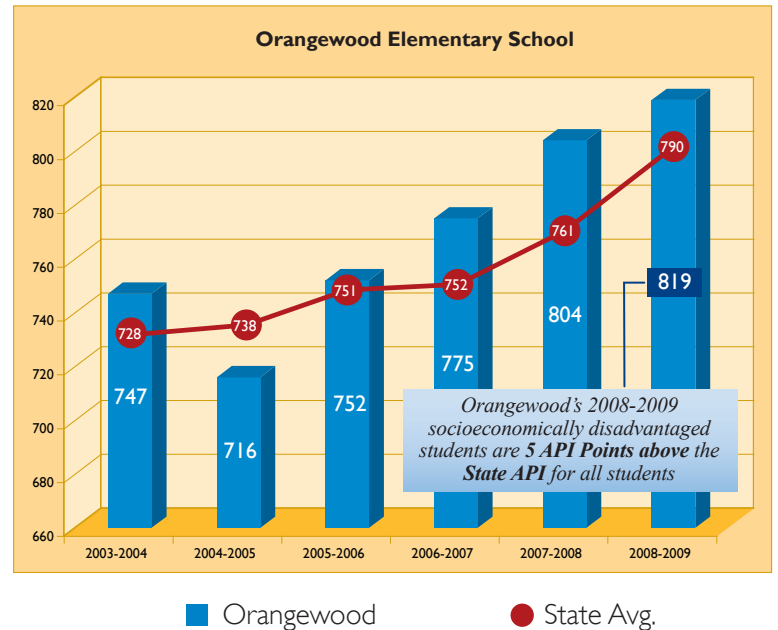
#### *Maximizing Learning through the Alignment of the Instructional Program*

#### Challenge

Orangewood Elementary School, in the West Covina Unified School District, is twenty-four percent English Language Learners, and the California Department of Education designated 73% of the students as socio-economically disadvantaged. The school improved 103 API points (716 API to 819 API) between 2005 and 2009. This is remarkable when compared to the statewide growth of 52 API points over the same period. Orangewood's Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Students' API is 793 which is 5 points above the state average for all Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Students.

#### Solution

When asked about this growth, Principal Mary Donielson stated that the school put systems in place to cut through the clutter of daily work distractions so that teachers could focus on high quality instruction. Ms. Donielson said, "We take away the reasons students can't succeed, and we remove the barriers to success."



Two programs were particularly important to Orangewood's impressive improvements in student achievement. One was Success for All. Success for All (SFA) is a comprehensive reading approach designed to ensure that every child will read at grade level or above. Orangewood uses SFA strategies and materials in primary grade classrooms to support reading comprehension, reading fluency and phonemic awareness. Ms. Donielson also praised Standards Plus (SP). The SP lessons ensured that all students were exposed to rigorous grade level content standards every day. Since the SP materials were written to the state standards and the SP instructional calendar is aligned to district pacing guides, the program helped the staff reorganize and align the school's other instructional materials.

#### Results

Orangewood put systems in place to help them implement the best elements of a variety of curricular materials and programs. They frequently analyze data to help them identify students' strengths and weaknesses and they provide multiple targeted interventions. Most importantly, they use the state standards as their curriculum and they utilize other materials including Standards Plus to support their standards based educational model. The school's positive attitude and systematic approach to learning helped Orangewood meet and exceed all its API growth targets and its AYP criteria.