

# CHANGING LIVES - THE EBC SCHOOL PROGRAM

Changing Lives - the unofficial motto of the Esther B. Clark School - reflects what staff members set out to accomplish daily for their students who face severe emotional and behavioral challenges. This goal drives the way staff interact with their students and their students' families, as well as *with* each other. In following the students and staff through a typical day at EBC School, it's easy to see why these two words capture the essence of the school's mission.

## THE MORNING ROUTINE:

Our multi-grade level classrooms are staffed by four professionals; a Lead Teacher, a Behavior Specialist, a Teaching Assistant, and a Classroom Clinician. They stream through the door between 7 and 7:30 to grab that first cup of coffee, complete their clerical chores, and settle into their classrooms. Between 7:30 and 8:15, they are checking the phones and computers to check voice mail and e-mails from parents of students who had difficult evenings or mornings. This intensive home-school communication ensures that what happens at home is rewarded and/or consequence at school, and what happens at school is rewarded and/or consequence at home - a hallmark of our program.

At home, our students are busy completing the morning routine designed by their family and the Behavior Specialist. The caretakers have been trained in the level and behavior system used in the school, known as the Positive Behavior Training system, or PBT. The adults write a message to their child on the week's PBT, read it to them, and assign a level from 0-3. Students hop on their bus, and are met at the curb by staff who will receive a Transportation Report for each student, as well.

First on the daily schedule are morning meetings and transitional activities that lead to English/Language Arts. Students are asked to reflect on their behavior just before recess at "check-in".

After recess is Math. These core academics are taught at the same time throughout the entire school so that students can receive instruction in any group in any classroom that meets their particular needs. All academics follow the state's curricular standards, and pupil progress is assessed through administration of STAR testing, the California High School Exit Exam, and any individual testing deemed necessary.

## THE AFTERNOON ROUTINE:

Lunchtime at EBC is peak Social Skills practice time, with staff coaching students in the use of Social Skills they have learned in direct instruction the previous week. The classes in the afternoon include History/Social Studies, Science, P.E., and Computers. More significantly, the Mental Health component is implemented in the afternoons, with activities that include individual therapy, Music and Art Therapies, and Family Therapy on a bi-weekly basis. Direct instruction is provided every Friday afternoon in social skills. Just before dismissal, our classroom teams write an end of the day message on each student's PBT, read it to them, and escort them out to transportation.

## THE EVENING ROUTINE:

Once a student arrives at home, they begin their routine, also designed by their family and the Behavior Specialist. Just before bed, adults write the final message on the PBT, and the whole process begins again the next morning.

## THE OFF-CAMPUS ROUTINE:

New this year are EBC's consultative services, designed to meet the needs of students who are still attending their neighborhood school, but are at risk for being placed at EBC, given their behavioral and emotional challenges. In this case, a member of EBC's administrative staff meets with the district's Special Education Director, designs a behavioral program to support the student, and a staff member from EBC becomes the consultant to the public school personnel.

Your home school district can provide you with more information.

