



EQUITY ROADMAP 2021-2022

Introduction

SLCUSD has a significant responsibility, as well as an opportunity, to affirm and support every student's potential. Doing so requires eliminating barriers and creating and maintaining a system in which every student thrives. As we move towards this future, SLCUSD will assess to ensure that we are meeting our commitments to our students, and we will work to improve when we fall short. This Equity Roadmap is one overarching resource for moving SLCUSD forward. The District Equity Plan and the site Single Plans for Student Achievement (SPSAs) are more specific resources that detail goals, action steps, and progress.

The Equity Roadmap

The purpose of the SLCUSD Equity Roadmap is to support the District in creating common understanding and identifying affirmation-based solutions for every student. Rather than approaching students through a lens of "at-risk" we must use an asset-based lens, embracing their promise and potential. The Roadmap is a solutions-focused narrative with embedded data spotlighting three high impact areas: Academics, Student Well-Being, and Personnel. In each area, best-practice recommendations, as well as the data-based need for those solutions, are presented. Improvement in each area may require change across Board policy as well as District and Site action.

The Roadmap complements and supports the Board Priorities, the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP), the overall District budget, the District Equity Plan, and the Site SPSAs. In utilizing the Roadmap, it is necessary to have new thinking about finances and about community relationships.

The SLCUSD Equity Journey

A decade ago, SLCUSD began a focus on equity under the imperative of "All Means All." Three years ago, in response to a traumatic experience involving a teacher's threatening and disparaging writing about LGBTQIA+ people, SLCUSD began an intentional equity focus. The journey started with the creation of a District Equity Leadership Team and the Common Ground Advisory Task Force, the writing of a District Equity Plan, and adoption of a Board goal on equity. Since then, the Superintendent, the District, and the Sites have taken bold action to further the Board goal and the Equity Plan. The San Luis Obispo Education Foundation (SLCEF) has played a key role in the success of every SLCUSD student. The Equity Leadership Team's working definition of Equity is:

To eliminate educational barriers and provide equal educational opportunities for all students to meet rigorous academic standards.

Intentional actions already taken to address equity can be found across SLCUSD. Some examples include:

- Formation of the Superintendent's Student Senate and the Common Ground Task Force.
- Provision of professional learning through the Gender Spectrum and Equity Institutes and in Culturally Responsive Practices
- Funding allocated to diversify SLCUSD's book catalogue
- Sponsorship of the 21 Day Racial Equity Social Justice Challenge
- Anti-bias training included as part of the interview process
- Greater focus on hiring bilingual staff
- Creation of equity goals in the Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) at each school site
- Anti-bullying training with *Stand Up Act Out*

The District has also addressed real-life needs of students. Some examples include:

- Any student can be provided a district device and wifi hotspot
- Food is available to every student regardless of economic status, and the District responded swiftly to the increased need for food during the COVID crisis
- Transportation is funded and kept at low cost

- Child-care during the pandemic is subsidized by the District
- The SLCEF has set up a fund to help students with economic needs and supplied hands-on innovation kits to students across the district
- Counseling staff have been expanded, as has social emotional learning (SEL).

The District has an Equity Plan and each school site has equity goals written into its SPSA.

District Equity Plan and Site Equity Goals

The District Equity Plan, and each site’s SPSA are a major piece of our equity work. The SPSAs address the unique needs of the school’s community. Examples of work at various sites include eliminating barriers caused by fees, revamping homework policies, promoting the use of students’ primary language, and implementing the *Leader in Me* program. Additional examples of site action are highlighted throughout the Roadmap and in the Appendix.

The work of the school sites is critical and while the Roadmap and District Equity Plan should be reviewed regularly, so must the Site equity goals within the SPSAs. It is important for the Sites to continually share and learn from one another so that actions on equity can become iterative and systemic across our district. SLCUSD is working on protocols for supporting sites with the formation and implementation of their SPSA equity goals.

The Equity Leadership Team

The Equity Leadership Team created the original SLCUSD Equity Plan and came up with the District’s working definition of equity, to “eliminate educational barriers and provide equal educational opportunities for all students to meet rigorous academic standards”. The Team began as a small group of staff, and grew to now include District students, teachers, administrators, teachers on special assignment, Board members, and community members. In 2018-2019 the Equity Leadership Team recommended that the Team look at developing metrics to measure SLCUSD’s equity progress. The Equity Roadmap was born out of that recommendation and is the result of three years of collaboration and visioning by the Equity Leadership Team.

During this journey we learned that equity is complex and cannot be assessed and responded to adequately solely through data points. While analyzing data and identifying barriers is important, that alone is not enough -- action must be taken. Therefore, the Roadmap is a solutions-oriented and supportive guide for the District along its journey to creating systems that intentionally serve all students. It is important to return to the Roadmap as a living document so that as students’ needs change, new information is considered and systemic solutions are implemented.

Equity Roadmap At-a-Glance

To aid the reader, an at-a-glance document presents key concepts of the Roadmap. This document is meant solely to help summarize the information and should not be used in isolation.

[One-page summary will be linked here]

Three Areas of Focus

The Equity Roadmap focuses on three high impact areas of focus:

- Academics
- Student Well-Being
- Personnel

Each area is critical to student success, and there is room for SLCUSD to grow. The Equity Roadmap is solution-focused, making high-level recommendations to advance equity across the district. After the

introduction and recommendations, the reader will find data to support needed change; however, data is not the focus – action is. At the end of each section, questions for further consideration are provided so that SLCUSD has a framework for next steps.

The District Equity Plan and Site SPSAs use disaggregated district data to determine specific outcomes for students and staff and plan next steps toward meeting these outcomes, taking into account each of these focus areas. The District and Sites update these plans annually, evaluating progress toward outcomes. Progress should include both academic data and student feedback.

Academics

Background

The District is responsible for the academic success of each student. SLCUSD has begun to use a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) model. Students should thrive, not just survive, within our educational system. To improve our academic outcomes, we must change our systems. This means we must remove barriers while also affirming and sustaining students' backgrounds and experiences such as race, class, culture, family structure, gender, sexual orientation, disability status, and primary language. While SLCUSD has made growth in academic practice, we know that our systems do not yet support all students as effectively as we want them to. Therefore, policies and practices must change.

This work is an ongoing process as staff and students progress and our demographic change. As we continue to learn, we should continue to implement policies, systems, and structures that best support academic success. Intentional training, practices, and funding are needed to achieve this.

Recommendations

1. **Eliminate Barriers.** We must take action to identify and eliminate the systems that perpetuate inequities so that instead of creating barriers, our systems affirm students and support them in achieving their full potential. SLCUSD should investigate and take action to change how students are recruited for, or screened out of, opportunities. We must also reconsider entrance requirements for classes to ensure that the very existence of those requirements has not created barriers. Success is created by using a framework for decision making that includes the cycle of creating access, providing support, analyzing outcomes, taking action, then checking again for what systems change is needed. The District will need to take bold action and to articulate this work across the District Equity Plan and Site SPSAs, prioritizing system change over one-off solutions.

Potential actions to address this recommendation include:

- Institute grading and homework policies that eliminate barriers for all students and reflect knowledge over task completion
 - Eliminate barriers and provide the needed support for early and advanced opportunities, including rethinking entrance requirements, adding sections of advanced classes, and ensuring access to quality preschool programs
 - Provide academically enriching activities across K-12 at no cost (e.g.: art, music, sports, service and recreational clubs)
2. **Leverage the power of teachers, site leaders, and school staff.** With self-awareness, teachers, site leaders, and school staff have the power to promote growth for every student. We must invest in training as well as systems in which teachers, site leaders, and other school staff

recognize and monitor their own unconscious bias. Doing so will allow campus adults to consciously support each student to achieve their full potential.

Potential actions to address this recommendation include:

- Provide teacher training such as Universal Design for Learning, Culturally Responsive Pedagogy, and how to reduce unconscious bias in grading
- Provide site leader training for recognizing and supporting teachers and staff in using these practices
- Create school site and district-level systems for continual introspection and improvement

3. **Shape an inclusive worldview.** Both underrepresented and dominant culture students benefit from curricula (books, lessons, projects, activities) that reflect a range of human experience. Providing such curricula gives students the background to be successful in our diverse world.

Potential actions to address this recommendation include:

- Use PK-12 curricula, including reading lists, district-wide, that provides windows into the larger diverse world and mirrors so that students see themselves reflected in the materials and books
- Add a high school Ethnic Studies requirement
- Provide ongoing teacher, site leader, and community training and discussion/introspection on how to accurately show human diversity such as culture, economic background, gender and sexual orientation, and more

Illustrative Data

All student groups should achieve at high levels. When outcome and access data demonstrate that some student groups are achieving at much lower levels, the system is not achieving the District's goals. Examples of the disparities within the District's current systems are indicated by disaggregated a-g completion and advanced course/accelerated pathway completion data. These examples are important because they affect graduation and college entrance.

Access to advanced classes: One example of access issues can be seen in the District's middle school advanced English and Math populations.

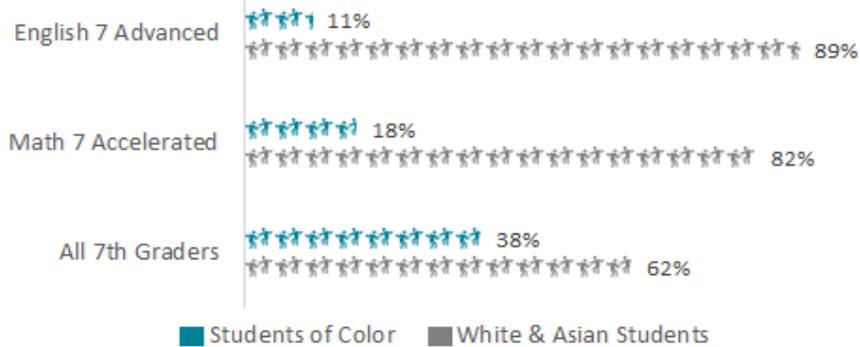
- Socioeconomically disadvantaged (SED) students comprise 33% of the 7th grade student body but are only 10% of Accelerated Math 7 students and only 4% of Advanced English 7 students (2018-19 data).
- Students of color comprise 35% of the 7th grade student body but are only 18% of Accelerated Math 7 students and 11% of Advanced English 7 students. (Note: For this analysis of advanced classes, students of color are comprised of Black, Hispanic, Filipino, Native American, and Mixed Race student groups.)
- High school advanced classes continue to follow these demographic patterns, as do trends over time

The lack of students in these groups enrolling in advanced classes means, for example, that there is a loss of an entire classroom of socioeconomically disadvantaged students from Math 7 Accelerated. In the chart below, these students are “missing” because they are disproportionately enrolled in Math 7 rather than Math 7 Accelerated.



Source: District AERIES data

Students of color are also missing from advanced classes, as depicted in the chart below:

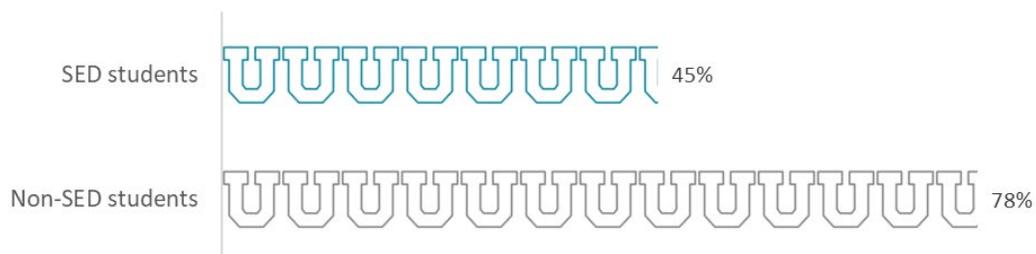


Source: District AERIES data. Note: For this analysis of advanced classes, students of color are comprised of Black, Hispanic, Filipino, Native American, and Mixed Race student groups.

A-g requirements: One example of student academic outcomes is whether high school graduates have completed the requirements for admission into the UC/CSU system, known as the “a-g requirements.”

- While nearly 80% of high school students who are not socioeconomically disadvantaged are completing the a-g requirements, fewer than half (45%) of students who are socioeconomically disadvantaged are completing these requirements by graduation (2019-20 data).
- Hispanic, Filipino, Black, and multiple race students complete a-g requirements at lower rates than their white and Asian counterparts (59% vs 67%).

Fewer than half of socioeconomically disadvantaged (SED) students complete a-g requirements



Source: District data

Questions to Consider

For every student to thrive academically we need systems that create access and establish support.

1. What resources, policies, procedures, or structures are needed/need to be changed?
 2. What teacher, leader, and staff training is needed?
 3. What culture shifts are needed?
 4. What community connections need to be made?
 5. How are we analyzing student needs and District progress?
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Student Well-Being

Background

Student well-being is a priority for SLCUSD. Some existing supports include social emotional learning (SEL) curriculum, counseling staff at each school site, and increased therapist support at the secondary level. Student feedback has increasingly been sought out to strengthen district and site support of students. It is critical to deepen this work, take action, and ensure that there is truly systemic attention to student well-being. For every student to thrive academically, the District needs to ensure systems that are affirming and provide concrete resources. Therefore, we must enhance on-campus and beyond-campus supports, while fostering strong relationships and school connectedness.

It is important to remember that this is an ongoing process. We must continue to ask, and take action on, how school sites and policies can create more connection between our SLCUSD education system and students/families. Intentional training, practices, and funding are needed to achieve this.

Recommendations

1. **Deepen student/family and school relationships.** Relationships matter. Schools, students, and families work in partnership to support students in achieving their full potential. Strong adult relationships increase students' resiliency, mitigating stressors and trauma and supporting student success. Every student should have a positive relationship with at least one adult on campus. Every family should feel they are a valued part of the school community. It is vital to listen to what our students/families tell us they need. Potential actions to address this recommendation include:
 - Ensure direct communication between staff and families that does not allow language, economic or educational differences between staff and families to reduce communication
 - Utilize student feedback for site and district-level decision-making and expand ways for students to provide feedback
 - Leverage student strengths and foster an asset-based approach, including restorative practices
2. **Provide windows and mirrors.** To thrive, students should see their identities, experiences, and motivations accurately represented in the curriculum, while also having the opportunity to gain insight into the identities, experiences, and motivations of others. A system focused on dominant culture runs the risk of teaching every student that only the dominant culture matters. Affirming and reflecting students across learning environments and experiences creates strong connections between students and their school community. Potential actions to address this recommendation include:

- Utilize culturally affirming, sustaining, and responsive instructional practices
 - Eliminate barriers and engage students from underrepresented groups into leadership and school connectedness opportunities
 - Provide, value, and fund extracurricular opportunities that reflect and appeal to the array of student interests and backgrounds
3. **Support every student being ready to learn, every day.** This includes systematically ensuring concrete resources such as family support, mental health/counseling, affirming and sustaining environments, and social-emotional learning. Ask what the district and sites can do systemically to provide the tools, structures, and environments that help students maintain learning readiness across grade levels. Potential actions to address this recommendation include:
- Increase counseling and provide training for all staff on culturally affirming practices, social-emotional learning, trauma-informed practices, restorative practices, and bystander advocacy
 - Provide technology, transportation, nutrition, and structural supports that eliminate barriers to school access
 - Leverage community partnerships that provide affirming student and family supports

Illustrative Data

All student groups should feel connected to school and have the support they need to be ready for rigorous learning. When outcome and access data demonstrate that some student groups feel less connected and have more discipline issues, the system is not achieving the District’s goals. Examples of the disparities within the District’s current systems are indicated by rates of suspension and data on student connectedness to school. These examples are important because students who are suspended, and those who are not connected, are not in school learning.

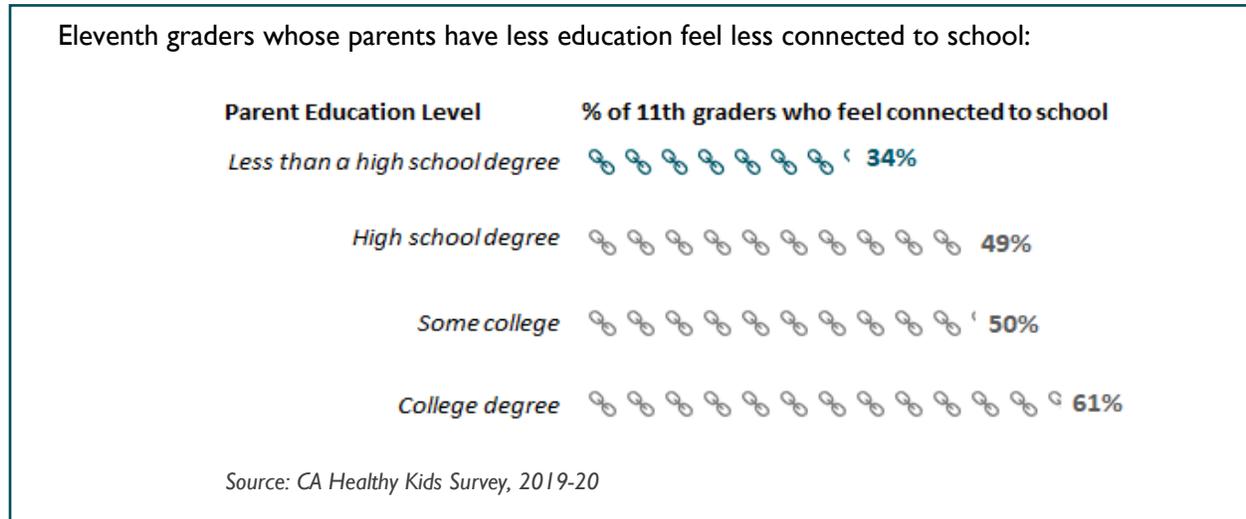
Suspensions: Many specific student groups have higher rates of suspension than the districtwide rate. This includes foster youth, students with disabilities, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, Hispanic and Black students, students of multiple races, English Learners, and Homeless students. SLCUSD has made growth in using restorative practices; however this data exemplifies the need to do more.

- If all student groups were suspended at the same rate as the district as a whole, 144 fewer students would have been suspended in 2019.



School Connectedness: Many SLCUSD students report high rates of school connectedness. However, there is work to be done for those students who are not feeling connected, as well as for many student

groups in 11th grade. At this critical time, as students prepare for college and career entry, a large drop in connectedness is reported by socioeconomically disadvantaged students, particularly those whose parents did not graduate from high school. English learners, Hispanic students and students of multiple races also felt less connected in high school.



Questions to Consider

For every student to feel connected and ready to learn we need systems that create access and establish support.

1. What resources, policies, procedures, or structures are needed/need to be changed?
2. What teacher, leader, and staff training is needed?
3. What culture shifts are needed?
4. What community connections need to be made?
5. How are we analyzing student needs and District progress?

Personnel

Background

The district strives to recruit qualified candidates who reflect our entire student population, so that students can see themselves in their teachers and also learn to see leadership from a variety of backgrounds. While the student body has diversified over the last two decades, the teaching staff has not. The district is working on the following actions: early hiring before the end of the prior school year to generate a larger applicant pool, implicit bias training for all staff involved in hiring prior to each interview, and use of multiple measures such as situational questions to evaluate applicant qualifications. Some in hiring positions have reported that housing costs versus income in San Luis Obispo County can be a deterrent to new employees who would have to move from out of the areas to work in SLCUSD.

Implementing and institutionalizing changes in hiring and retention is an ongoing process, not a one-time solution. It is important for San Luis Coastal to continually use best practice and data, including staff feedback, to refine and improve this process. Intentional data collection, training, practices, and funding for the Human Resources Department and managers are needed.

Recommendations

1. **Recruit and hire staff at all levels who reflect the student body.** It is important for students to see themselves reflected across school personnel, including leadership. It is up to the District to take action where it matters. Traditionally, we have not had a focused effort on recruiting and hiring teachers and administrators from a range of backgrounds. Additionally, the high cost of living in SLO County makes it difficult for people to move to this area. Potential actions to address this recommendation include:
 - Use recruiting practices that expand the diversity of the applicant pool such as developing broader relationships with teacher education programs, offering hiring incentives, and creating a recruitment plan focused on diversifying SLCUSD staff
 - Use anti-bias interview practices that focus on hiring people who may be different from the interviewers; include diversity-equity-inclusion (DEI) interview questions; research, update, and implement the most current rubric-based scoring; and stay abreast of new interview tool development
 - Monitor and report to the Board of Education and the public on the diversity of secondary, elementary, and district administrators, teachers, and staff

2. **Create welcoming work environments for people of all backgrounds.** School climate and community building is a major facet of the work to eliminate educational barriers. When adults feel welcomed, respected, and valued, they are best able to support students. As the district works to increase hiring of staff that is more representative of the student body, systemic supports are needed to ensure that staff of all backgrounds feel connected within their school and district communities. Potential actions to address this recommendation include:
 - Provide funding and structural support for self-organizing, staff-led affinity groups
 - Create and recruit for leadership opportunities among underrepresented staff
 - Support and amplify the concerns and solutions of underrepresented groups without putting the burden of doing all the work on those groups

3. **Train staff around recruitment, hiring, onboarding, and retention.** For students to succeed, adults must have the knowledge and abilities to hire staff that represents the student body. We must also interact with all members of the school community in a welcoming and inclusive way. Attention must be paid to every point in the hiring process, including cultivating a more diverse teacher pipeline, how new staff are recruited and hired, the training they have when onboarded, and the support they receive to feel valued across their careers. Potential actions to address this recommendation include:
 - Train, and improve existing training, for everyone involved in the hiring process to help create a broader applicant pool, to recognize implicit bias, to recruit widely, and to use interviewing techniques that reveal candidates' experience, knowledge, and strengths
 - Train leaders involved with new teachers to design and implement new teacher learning, mentoring, and support that creates inclusive work environments for employees of all backgrounds
 - Train all staff to uphold district values of inclusivity in interactions with colleagues, students, parents and community members, including substantive anti-bias training

Illustrative Data

Students should see themselves reflected at all levels of District staffing. When staffing data shows disparities, the system is not achieving the District's goals. Current staffing shows disproportionality across the SLCUSD. Students of color do not see staff who look like they do and students who are white do not see examples of school professionals from all backgrounds. Boys and girls do not see all genders

represented equitably across teacher and school site leadership positions. This is important because we know that students learn about the paths available to them from the adults they see in their lives.

Staff Gender: Women are underrepresented in secondary leadership positions, by two to one, and there are no female secondary principals; men are underrepresented as elementary teachers by seven to one. Classified staff are predominantly women. Non-binary data for staff is based on self-reporting to Human Resources and is not collected at this time for students.

	Students	Employees						
	SLCUSD Students	SLCUSD Managers - Elementary	SLCUSD Teachers - Elementary	SLCUSD Managers-Secondary	SLCUSD Teachers - Secondary	SLCUSD Managers - Not Site-based	SLCUSD Teachers - Not Site-based	SLCUSD Classified Staff
Male	52%	41.7%	12.3%	67.7%	42.8%	41.2%	4.2%	25.2%
Female	48%	58.3%	88.7%	33.3%	57.1%	58.8%	95.8%	74.8%
Non-Binary	*	0%	0%	0%	.5%	0%	0%	0%

Sources: SLCUSD HR, Jan. 2021 data for staff. State of CA CDE Dataquest 2019 data for students.

* Non-binary student data not collected by State of California

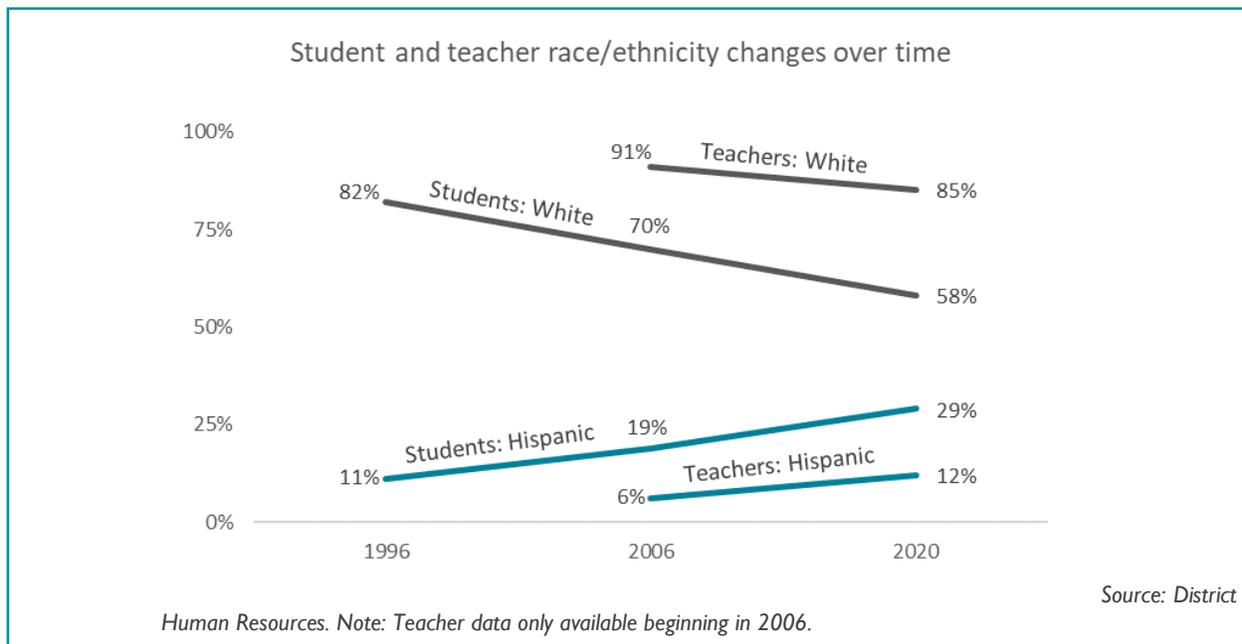
Manager = Principals, directors, supervisors/administrators (exempt employees)

District teachers = program specialists, itinerant, TOSA, psychologists, nurses (part of teacher bargaining unit)

Elementary and secondary teachers = teachers, site counselors

Classified = support staff, e.g.: secretarial, janitorial, bus drivers, aides, food service

Staff Race/Ethnicity: While the student body has changed over the last two decades, with more Hispanic students in the District, the teaching staff has remained largely white/non-Hispanic. As of 2020, 85% of teachers are white, but only 58% of students are white. Conversely, 12% of teachers are Hispanic while 29% of students are Hispanic.



Student and teacher race/ethnicity over time for groups with less than 5% representation:

	Students 1996	Students 2006	Teachers 2006	Students 2020	Teachers 2020
Asian	3%	3%	2%	3%	1%
Black	2%	2%	0%	0.7%	0%
American Indian	0.4%	0.5%	0%	0.3%	0.6%
Filipino	1%	2%	*	0.4%	*
Pacific Islander	0.2%	0.2%	2%	0.2%	0%
Multiracial	*	*	*	6%	0.6%

Source: SLCUSD HR Department

*Some categories not measured in some years. Filipino is not a category measured for teachers.

Multiracial only collected recently.

Questions to Consider

For students to see themselves reflected in school and district staff and leadership we need systems in place to address recruitment, hiring, on-boarding, and retention of new staff.

1. What resources, policies, procedures, or structures are needed/need to be changed?
2. What teacher, leader, and staff training is needed?
3. What culture shifts are needed?
4. What community connections need to be made?
5. How are we analyzing student needs and District progress?

Conclusion

SLCUSD aims to create and maintain a system in which every student thrives. To this end, the Equity Roadmap centers on district-wide solutions, using illustrative data to highlight the District's current status. It is a high-level document, focused on recommendations and examples of specific actions that fit the District's specific systems needs at the time of writing/update. In addition, the Appendix serves as a repository for research and best practices related to the recommendations.

This document is meant to be a living document, revised annually by the Equity Leadership Team. It is vital to continually ask ourselves what systems are working, how we can improve, who is being left out, and how best we can support the promise and full potential of each student. Such revision should include refinement of each of the three key areas: Academics, Student Well-Being, and Personnel. Progress should be regularly monitored, and review should incorporate new student needs, new systems needs, and new learning.

For the district to move forward in improving access and outcomes for students, we need to have a predisposition towards action. While data and discussion are important, we cannot get stuck there. We must keep moving to create real changes. This can happen through implementing recommendations via each site's SPSA equity goals and via the District Equity Plan. The School Board's focus on equity has been and will continue to be critical to SLCUSD's success.

Appendix

SLCUSD Equity Plan

Academic Recommendation Examples

Recommendation 1: Eliminate barriers.

- [Pacheco Elementary Homework Policy](#)
- [Standards-based Grading in High School: Where Grades Matter the Most](#)
- [5 Things to Advance Equity in Access to and Success in Advanced Coursework](#)
- [Untangling the Evidence on Preschool Effectiveness: Insights for Policymakers](#)

Recommendation 2: Leverage the power of teachers, site leaders, and school staff.

- [5 Examples of Universal Design for Learning in the Classroom](#)
- [What is CRP \[Culturally Responsive Pedagogy\]](#)
- [How to Reduce Racial Bias in Grading](#)

Recommendation 3: Shape an accurate worldview.

- [Windows and Mirrors Presentation](#)
- [People Represented in Books](#)
- [Ethnic Studies in California - Education Next](#)

Student Well-Being Recommendation Examples

Recommendation 1: Deepen the student/family and school bond.

- [Help for kids the education system ignores](#)

Recommendation 2: Provide windows and mirrors.

- [What is CRP \[Culturally Responsive Pedagogy\]](#)
- [Why English Class is Silencing Students of Color](#)
- [Leader in Me K-12 program](#)

Personnel Recommendation Examples

Recommendation 1: Hire staff who reflect the student body.

- [9 Strategies for Recruiting, Hiring, and Retaining Diverse Teachers](#)
- [Housing Opportunity Index \(HOI\) - NAHB](#)