

ANNUAL REPORT

June 2023



LIVE • LEAD • LEARN

SAN MATEO-FOSTER CITY
SCHOOL DISTRICT



DEAR SAN MATEO-FOSTER CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMUNITY,

I am thrilled to share with you the 2022-2023 Strategic Journey Report! This report is our way of ensuring that everyone in our community, especially our parents, teachers, classified staff, and administrators, understand the purpose and significance of our work. The strategies and actions outlined in the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan are already propelling us to new heights. This report highlights the outstanding work and dedication of our team members.

In the San Mateo-Foster City School District, we refuse to settle for the ordinary routine of education. When we adopted our Strategic Plan, we embraced a different approach—one that involves a year-long collaborative effort with diverse stakeholders, including our devoted parents, dedicated teachers, hardworking classified staff, and exceptional administrators.

Our plan established three fundamental district priorities—Achievement, Equity, and Wellness—which were approved by our visionary Board of Trustees. Our 2022-2027 Strategic Plan is based on understanding the current reality our students face, envisioning their future, and taking the necessary steps to bridge the gap between the two.

We have identified five crucial building blocks that form the foundation of our district's progress: Family and Community Engagement, Professional Development, Data-Informed Decision-Making, Shared Leadership, and Responsible Fiscal Support. The report provides detailed information about each building block, as well as an overview of the strategies implemented during the first year of our 2022-2027 Strategic Plan. We are committed to documenting, monitoring, and communicating our progress to ensure that our achievements are recognized and celebrated. This annual report showcases the positive impact of our collective efforts and underscores our commitment to transparency.

As we move forward, implementing groundbreaking strategies in various disciplines, including campus climate, early literacy, mathematics, and more, the San Mateo-Foster City School District is gaining statewide notoriety. Our strategic plan serves as our roadmap, guiding us through each step of this journey.

Today, as we present our annual report, we invite you to join us in celebrating the remarkable accomplishments and unwavering dedication that you bring to our district. Together, we will continue shaping the lives and futures of our students, empowering them to reach their fullest potential.

Thank you for your presence, unwavering support, and the invaluable contributions you make every day. Let's embark on this journey together, united by our commitment to educational excellence and the well-being of our students.

Diego R. Ochoa



BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Shara Watkins
Board President
First Term: 2017
Term Expires: November 2024
Area: At-large



Kenneth Chin
Board Vice President
First Term: 2019
Term Expires: November 2024
Area: At-large



LaTisa Brooks
Board Clerk
First Term: 2023
Term Expires: November 2026
Area: 2



Alison Proctor
Board Trustee
First Term: 2019
Term Expires: November 2026
Area: 1



Maggie Trinh
Board Trustee
First Term: 2023
Term Expires: November 2024
Area: At-large

EXECUTIVE CABINET



Diego R. Ochoa
Superintendent



Patrick Gaffney
Deputy Superintendent/Chief Business Official



Diana Tavares
Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources



David Chambliss
Assistant Superintendent of Education Services



Dennis Hills
Assistant Superintendent of Student Services



Dr. Christian Rubalcaba
Director of School Leadership

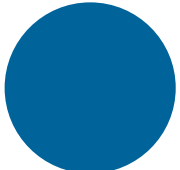
CONNECTION TO STRATEGIC PLAN

The San Mateo-Foster City School District's Annual Report is a significant milestone for the district, as it provides a comprehensive overview of the progress made towards achieving its 5-year strategic plan. This report serves as a comprehensive communication tool to inform stakeholders, including parents, teachers, staff, and the broader community, about the district's achievements during Year 1 of the Strategic Plan implementation.

This report is data-driven, as are all of our district communications. By highlighting the district's performance in alignment with our Strategic Plan goals (Achievement, Equity, and Wellness), this Annual Report will help all members understand the strides we have made.

The 2023 Annual Report crystallizes our messaging because it aligns to our 5-year strategic plan which outlines specific, measurable goals and objectives. The district is currently working to identify areas of success and needed improvement, providing a foundation for continued progress and future planning.

Overall, the 2023 Annual Report represents a step towards ensuring the district's 2022-2027 Strategic Plan is implemented successfully. If we succeed, all students will receive a high-quality education in a safe and supportive environment. This report will be a valuable resource for the district and its stakeholders to evaluate progress and make informed decisions about the future of the San Mateo-Foster City School District.






OUR DISTRICT

Vision

The San Mateo-Foster City School District educates, inspires, and empowers every student in every school every day to live, lead, and learn with integrity and joy.

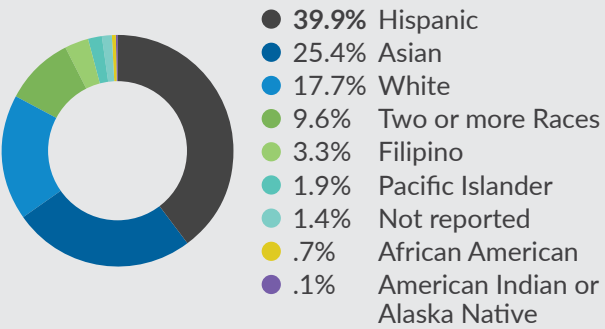
Mission

The San Mateo-Foster City School District provides rigorous, high-quality, and equitable education while partnering with our families and community to support all students to achieve their full academic, social, and emotional potential.

-  **21 Schools K-8**
-  **\$180M Annual Budget**
-  **\$484M General Obligation Bonds**

Enrollment

10,067 Students (2022 - 2023 School Year)



50 Languages Spoken

English, Arabic, Hindi, Spanish, French, Russian, Chinese, Tamil, Japanese, Portuguese, Korean, Urdu, Tagalog, Greek, and many more!



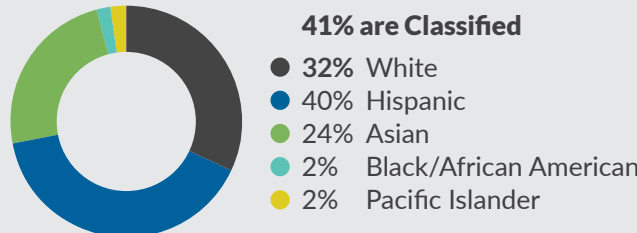
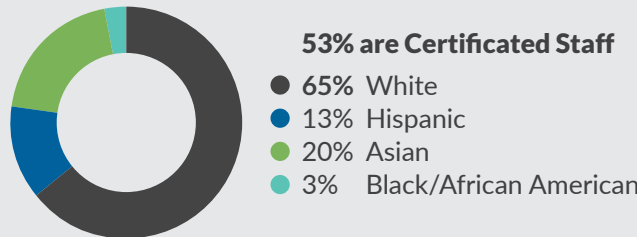
Test Scores

The district is proud to announce that we have been honored as "High Achieving" in both English and Math on the CAASPP statewide exams. Our students outperformed over 80% of scores statewide.

The district also created an L3 Report to promote how well we've achieved on the California Dashboard. Learn more by visiting the San Mateo-Foster City School District's Communication Reporting Document's webpage. [Learn More](#)

Staff Demographics

The San Mateo-Foster City School District employs just over 1,240 talented certificated teachers, classified staff, and administrators.



EXPLANATION OF THE BUILDING BLOCKS



Family and Community Engagement

Our commitment is to create a culture in which parents, school staff, and community partners work together to facilitate student growth before, during, and after the school day.



Professional Development

The Strategic Plan goal attainment is deeply connected to providing our classified, certificated, and administrative staff with the research-based professional growth they need and deserve.



Data-Informed Decision-Making

As a high-performing school district, our focus will be on creating data-driven decision-making systems. Every aspect of our work will connect to a process of identifying data, collecting data, analyzing data, and using data to improve.



Shared Leadership

The work of guiding programs and schools is not done in isolation. Shared leadership will allow us to tap into the skills and background of all our stakeholders, regardless of language, race, income, positional authority, or access.



Responsible Fiscal Support

Sustainability is a vital component of any Strategic Plan, and ours will be bolstered by thoughtful, well-reasoned fiscal strategies. We will not over-spend or under-resource our goal strategies.



The San Mateo-Foster City School District's building blocks are Family and Community Engagement, Professional Development, Data-Informed Decision Making, Shared Leadership, and Responsible Fiscal Support. These building blocks are critical to achieving our Strategic Plan goals.

These building blocks help improve educational outcomes for students. Professional Development strategies ensure that teachers receive appropriate training and development opportunities to enhance their instructional skills. Data-Informed Decision Making allows educators to make informed decisions, and the district can use the information to provide additional resources and support to students who need it. Family and Community Engagement strategies aim to involve families in the educational process, while Shared Leadership ensures that all stakeholders have a say in how the district operates. Together, these strategies can help guarantee that students receive a high-quality education that prepares them for future success.

These building blocks are embedded into each Strategic Plan action plan. They ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the district by managing resources effectively. The district can reduce expenses, increase revenues, and optimize resource utilization. By doing so, the district can guarantee that it remains financially viable over the long term, enabling it to provide high-quality education to students.

Lastly, these building blocks address the ever-changing demographics in the district. We serve a diverse student population, so our Family and Community Engagement strategies provide to all families, especially underserved families.

With these building blocks in place, our future is bright!



FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



The district's communications department initiated a layered communication approach to reach families where they're at. Through in-person and virtual parent engagements, social media, podcasting, Youtube Live Town Halls, and community convenings with elected officials, partners, and families, we have seen exponential growth in family and community engagement. We are especially proud of the high levels of parent involvement in our North Central San Mateo community.

Community School Initiative To Empower Parent Voice

Our Community Schools initiative has provided families and the community with a voice. Our five Title 1 schools have offered monthly Family & Community Input meetings to discuss the process, join the Community Schools movement, and elevate parent input. At each school, families have attended in significant numbers, showing how committed they are to their children's education and success. Leading the work, Dr. Christian Rubalcaba, Director of School Leadership, provides an executive summary for the work during the planning phase. [Learn More](#)

Engaging Families With At-Home Early Literacy And Math Interventions

The district created five new, full-time positions at the district level called Community Services Specialist (CSS). These positions are solely responsible for communicating directly with families and providing any support a parent may need. With the addition of at-home academic interventions such as Footsteps2Brilliance and ST Math, our new Community Services Specialists review student data, track usage of at-home programs, and call families to encourage at-home learning.

Building Bilingual Parent Leaders Through English Language Coaching

The Multilingual Learner Services team has built parent leadership and engagement by piloting English Together and engaging a robust group of parents in the District English Learner Advisory Committee. [English Together/ Ingles Juntos](#) is a non-profit organization that leverages research on language learning to provide English language "coaching" to the Latino immigrant workforce in the Bay Area. The program was implemented with Spanish-speaking parents at Lead Elementary School and Baywood Elementary School. The parents received weekly English language coaching from community members for ten weeks to improve their English language skills in the workplace.

Promising Programs

Preventing Academic Failure (PAF) and Footsteps2Brilliance (F2B) are literacy strategies to ensure that every student becomes a grade-level reader by 3rd grade.

Spatial-Temporal (ST) Math is an at-home math resource for all K-8 students. Services Specialists monitor the use of this instructional program that leverages the brain's innate spatial-temporal reasoning ability to solve mathematical problems, track usage data and call families to provide support.



SMFC HOSTED COMMUNITY CONVENINGS AND SUMMITS

The San Mateo-Foster City hosted a 2-day Literacy Summit to share the district's new, innovative instructional reading programs. The district partnered with Footsteps2Brilliance and PAF Reading during the well-attended event. Over fifteen schools and districts were represented at the event from all over Northern California.



SMFC PARTNERSHIP LUNCHEON

This event brings together a large group of partners to meet one another and be awarded and recognized for their outstanding support for our students, parents, and communities across San Mateo and Foster City! Thank you to all of our partners who support all students and families in our district!



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

By investing in the ongoing professional development of our staff, we aim to create a more skilled, knowledgeable, and effective workforce that is better equipped to meet the needs of our students. This strategy is founded on the belief that professional development is not a one-time event but a continuous process that requires ongoing support and resources. The District provided impactful professional development opportunities for staff, offering over 150 options. Staff received up to 5 days in summer and 3 additional professional development days during the regular school year. Principals and site teams also participated, resulting in over 90% of staff reporting quality collegial interactions, over 90% understanding alignment with priorities, and 87% reporting developing new ideas for better support.

6th To 8th Grade Math Professional Development Strategies

SMFCSD's professional development for math teachers involves having Math Lead Teachers facilitate training sessions in Fall, Winter, and Spring. These sessions are aligned with peer coaching. Math Lead teachers visit classrooms daily, strengthening curriculum and instructional choices across the district. These Math Lead Teachers coach their peer, engage in cycles of inquiry, model effective strategies, gather student data, and co-teach lessons. This real-time support aims to foster collaboration and reflective practice for all math teachers in the district.

K-5 Literacy Professional Development

Kindergarten, First, and Second-grade teachers engaged in over 35 hours of ongoing and focused professional learning around SMFCSD's early literacy initiative. Professional learning topics included initial training on our PAF curriculum, where teachers met with cross-district grade level teams as well as on-site PD led by the school Language & Literacy ToSA. Offering a variety of PD structures allows staff to hear from other schools as well as dig into their own site needs.

Developing Critical Thinking In Science

OpenSciEd, an NGSS-aligned science curriculum, transformed teachers into facilitators who encourage deep and critical thinking. Our multi-layered professional development plan supported this shift. New teachers received two days of training with an OpenSciEd facilitator. Unit overviews were provided before each unit, followed by lesson planning and collaboration with grade-level teachers. The work continues with summer professional development and more collaboration opportunities from OpenSciEd.

Multilingual Learner Services

The Multilingual Team has designed and delivered professional development for all 4th and 5th-grade teachers and has collaborated with other district teams to deliver professional development to all SMFC teachers. Some of the professional development options included: support for newcomer students, reading intervention for students below grade level (REWARDS) and designing Inquiry cycles to target multilingual students' language and literacy needs.



Mentoring New Teachers

Our new teachers receive mentorship in their first and second years, making them more effective and offering support during challenging times. The mentor-candidate relationship is the most impactful element. Effective support combines "just in time" assistance and focused support based on the candidate's chosen area of need. Mentors meet SMFCSD Teachers for at least one hour per week.

Community meetings connect candidates with other teachers to collaborate and expand their practice. A District Teacher survey showed 95% of candidates felt well-supported. The evidence-based program addresses teacher attrition and improves classroom instruction, especially in high-need schools.



DATA-INFORMED DECISION-MAKING

As a high-performing school district, we are committed to continuous improvement and ensuring that our students receive the best possible education. To achieve this, we have developed a building block strategy for data-informed decision-making. This strategy guides us in creating a comprehensive and systematic process that allows us to make decisions based on accurate and reliable data. We believe that data is a powerful tool that can inform every aspect of our work, from identifying areas for improvement to evaluating the effectiveness of our programs and interventions. By collecting, analyzing, and using data to guide our decision-making, we can ensure that we are providing our students with the education they need and deserve.

Using Data For Student Success In Math

SMFCSD Math Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) are curriculum-embedded assessments designed by Math ToSAs and Lead Teachers. CFAs measure student understanding and performance on current unit concepts and procedures, as well as their application and communication of mathematical thinking through performance tasks. Teachers use rubrics to score student work, gaining insights into student thinking and communication. Math teachers calibrate scoring and carefully review student work before entering scores into the database. The scores provide more than “right” or “wrong” responses; they inform teachers about student approaches, strengths, and areas for improvement. Math CFA results demonstrate strong performance on grade-level standards K-8.

Leveraging Data For Literacy Growth

In literacy, our aim is to cultivate students as proficient readers and writers, enabling them to engage with the world around them. Through our comprehensive assessments and collaborative efforts among teachers, we gain valuable insights for instructional decision-making. This year, our literacy benchmark assessments have showcased positive growth across all elementary grade levels and student groups. The combination of district benchmark data and increased utilization of Footsteps2Brilliance has deepened our commitment to equity. By leveraging this data, we can effectively identify students who would benefit from extended learning opportunities, such as camps, afterschool programs, and literacy and math boost initiatives. Notably, we have observed a trend where students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds who actively use Footsteps2Brilliance and receive impactful literacy instruction during the school day experience accelerated progress.

Data-Informed Hiring Practices To Reflect Our Student Population

The Human Resources Department is committed to a data-driven approach in our efforts to create a more diverse workforce that mirrors the students and families we serve in the San-Mateo Foster City School District. By analyzing staff data, we can gauge our progress in diversification. Before implementing the Strategic Plan, 13% of teachers identified as Latinx. For the 2022-2024 school years, 27% of newly hired teachers identify as Latinx, aligning more closely with our school demographics. Similarly, 18% of teachers previously identified as Asian/Pacific Islander. For the 2022-2024 school years, 27% of newly hired teachers identify as Asian/Pacific Islander, also aligning more closely with our school demographics.



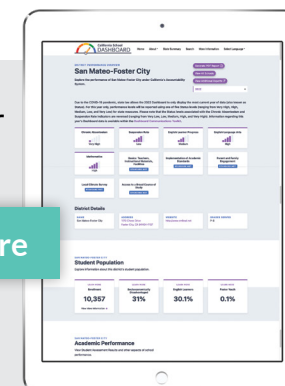
[Learn More](#)

Math Common Formative Assessments

The San Mateo-Foster City School District is strategizing our instruction to provide students with the necessary skills to reach grade-level standards. Through cross-site collaboration, classroom teachers working together, District support through Teachers on Special Assignment (ToSAs), and at-home learning resources, the following document shows families and the community how our 8th-grade students are doing. Students in our district take CFAs in Math three times a year and are administered in Sept/Oct, February, and May. These results provide feedback to teachers to inform instructional choices in the classroom.

Check out our CA Dashboard and explore the district performance under California's accountability system.

[Learn More](#)





SHARED LEADERSHIP

In the San Mateo-Foster City School District, we recognize that the work of guiding programs and schools cannot be done in isolation. That is why our district's building block strategy of shared leadership is essential. By adopting a shared leadership model, we can tap into the skills and background of all our stakeholders, regardless of their language, race, income, positional authority, or access. We are committed to creating a collaborative culture that values and leverages the contributions of all members of our educational community. In year one, we have implemented a variety of strategies to highlight this shared leadership model, ensuring that any policy changes or program implementations are done collaboratively for the betterment of our students.



Parents And Students Leading Community School Steering Committees

Our Community Schools initiative has ensured families not only have a voice but have an opportunity to join a decision-making team. Each site assembled a Steering Committee composed predominantly of families. Their collective task is to plan for ways to include more voices into the process, especially voices that often get forgotten or disenfranchised historically. They also have the task of ensuring a transparent input process. Parent empowerment through shared leadership is key!

Diversifying Hiring Panels

Ensuring we include input from parents, certificated staff, classified staff, and management enables our Human Resources department to utilize the skills, experiences, and voices of all stakeholders as we work toward recruiting, hiring, and retaining a more diverse workforce. Our interview panels for management positions include a diverse representation from our stakeholder groups. Representatives from these groups have also served on the District Diversity Hiring Profile Committee (October 2022) and the Equity Hiring Committee (February 2023) to help inform and guide recruiting, hiring, and retention practices in the District.

Cross-Collaboration To Support Multilingual Learners

The Multilingual Learner Services team enhanced shared leadership by creating a Teacher Leads Committee. The group was formed by teachers on special assignments and classroom teachers who took a leadership role to learn about the California Multilingual Roadmap and gather Multilingual Learners data from their sites.

Teachers Transforming Instructional Practice

The district's strong results are directly related to classroom teachers and their collaboration. SMFCSD has developed a system to distribute leadership among teachers and ToSAs. We embrace group autonomy by holding collaborative spaces for teachers to meet across sites and then to work with their site TOSA and their grade level team to adjust curricular resources as needed for their context. This structure empowers teachers and allows all educators the opportunity to learn and grow from the experiences of their peers. Our literacy and math ToSAs support our strategic plan by pushing into classrooms to support implementation and by modeling lessons, co-teaching, observing, and offering a sounding board for individual teachers to grow in their teaching practices. With our 23 literacy focusing on K-2 and our seven math ToSAs focused on 3rd grade, this real-time classroom support is designed to engage teachers in collaborative and reflective cycles to deepen their teaching practice.



Empowering Community Voices through Community School's Initiative

Led by Director of School Leadership Dr. Christian Rubalcaba, watch the following video that provides our community of stakeholders a closer look as to how the San Mateo-Foster City School district is taking shared leadership to the next level through the empowerment of parent and student participation.



George Hall Elementary
Multipurpose Building



Top Quality School Facilities

Our district supports and collaborates with a Citizen's Bond Oversight Committee (CBOC) for Measure X (\$148M) and Measure T (\$409M). The CBOC is comprised of eight members of our community including parents, taxpayer organizations, seniors, and community members at-large. The committee meets to review progress, and tour projects such as the Borel Gymnasium and the George Hall Multi-Purpose Room. The CBOC also reviewed the fiscal and performance audits prepared by consultants and confirmed that funds were spent in accordance with the bond language.

LEGO Room



RESPONSIBLE FISCAL SUPPORT

At the San Mateo-Foster City School District, we recognize that responsible fiscal support is a critical building block in achieving our strategic plan goals. Sustainability is a fundamental component of our plan, and we are committed to ensuring that our fiscal strategies align with our long-term objectives. Our district's building block strategy of responsible fiscal support is based on the principles of thoughtful, well-reasoned financial planning that avoids overspending or under-resourcing our strategic goals. By taking a strategic and responsible approach to our finances, we can ensure that we have the resources needed to achieve our goals while remaining fiscally sustainable over the long term.





RESPONSIBLE

FISCAL SUPPORT

Preparing Children For Their Future - College And Career Exploration

The district partnered with the SMFC Education Foundation to apply for a generous STEM grant provided by Gilead Sciences' Gilead Foundation. The funding has helped establish CCE Labs at each of our middle schools. For the first time this year, we offered a college and career elective at the four comprehensive middle schools. The College & Career Exploration (CCE) course allows students to discover myriad careers. This course provides students with a series of 2-3 week hands-on instructional units in different career-focused modules. For example, students complete 2-3 week units in Computer Graphics, Game Development, Marketing, Robotics, Flight & Drone Technology, Culinary Arts, Nursing, and Forensic Science. Students may choose from both college and vocational careers modules. At the end of each module, activities conclude with students making the job more real by discovering information about the career opportunities in their area of choice, who is hiring, and what the average salaries are in that field. The CCE elective course also prepares our students for the Career & Technical Education (CTE) pathways available at our San Mateo Union School District High Schools.



Maximizing Measure V Parcel Tax

The Labor Management Initiative (LMI) team provided the Board of Trustees with fiscally responsible recommendations on ways to utilize Measure V Parcel Tax funding. Through LMI, a collaborative effort among leaders from The San Mateo Elementary Teachers Association (SMETA), The California School Employees Association (CSEA), and the District, a recommendation was approved by the Board of Trustees in to provide all certificated and classified staff a substantial one-time stipend along with the hiring of four (4) full time Mental Health Support counselors and social workers utilizing Measure V funding. This decision was reached in an effort to support the retention of outstanding staff as described in the language of the Measure V Parcel Tax.

Triple A (Aaa) Rated!

During Spring '23, the District received the highest credit rating possible for a school district. The excellent credit rating for the \$150 Million issuance of Measure T was conferred by Moody's Aaa and S&P Global A++. These dollars will fund projects such as Multipurpose rooms, adding energy-efficient air conditioning, solar shade structures, turf fields, and rebuilding Bowditch Middle School.

Competitive Grants Secured

The district has provided additional efforts to secure competitive grants that have allowed for various programs and initiatives to take place. The district has applied for and received many competitive grants like the California Community Schools Initiative, as well as the County of San Mateo's Anti-Bias Grant and Summer Programs Grant. Culminating in a \$1.2M in competitive grant funding throughout the 2022 - 2023 academic school year. These funds allowed the district to engage in various projects in alignment with our strategic plan goals of achievement, equity, and wellness for all students.





REFERENCED RESOURCES



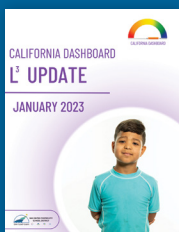
2022 - 2027 Strategic Plan

On June 9, 2022, during the district's regular board meeting, the Board of Trustees approved the 2022 - 2027 Strategic Plan. This established strategic plan is a road map that encompasses the focus and work the district is committed to. The plan has provided the district with a coherent approach to the 2022-2023 school year, with many strategic initiatives implemented. [Read Online](#)



L3 Report: An Analysis of Student Achievement Results in August 2022

This report introduces the district's internal test scores for August 2022. The report includes charts for grade-level reading starting in kindergarten, as well as attendance and discipline data. The purpose of L3 Report is to tell our story through the collection and analysis of student data to craft a message for our community, highlighting the use of the following Root Cause Analysis to identify our path forward in term of solving challenges and connecting all efforts to the Strategic Plan. [Read Online](#)



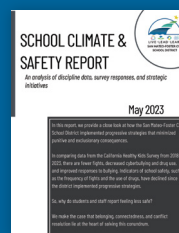
California Dashboard L3 Update

The CA Dashboard L3 Update was created to provide the San Mateo-Foster City community with an understanding of how to navigate this important resource and analyze how our students are doing compared to the neighboring districts. The Dashboard is a key component of California's integrated state and federal accountability system, providing communities with transparent and meaningful information about the performance of districts, schools, and county offices of education on six state indicators: graduation rate, suspension rate, English Learner Progress, academic performance in English language arts and mathematics, and chronic absenteeism. [Read Online](#)



SMFC District Ranking

The SMFC District Ranking document showcases the district's performance in various organizations and agencies that conduct rankings and evaluations based on different metrics and criteria. The three popular rankings included in the document are Niche, Great Schools, and the California Dashboard. Each platform uniquely assesses the districts and provides them with a grade or number of ranking. This document was created as continuation of the L3 Report narrative, highlighting and celebrating the impressive work the San Mateo-Foster City school communities have been doing as we embark on the year-one implementation of the strategic plan. [Read Online](#)



School Climate Report

In this report, we provide a close look at how the San Mateo-Foster City School District implemented progressive strategies that minimized punitive and exclusionary consequences. In comparing data from the California Healthy Kids Survey from 2018 to 2023, there are fewer fights, decreased cyberbullying and drug use, and improved responses to bullying. Indicators of school safety, such as the frequency of fights and the use of drugs, have declined since the district implemented progressive strategies. So, why do students and staff report feeling less safe? We make the case that belonging, connectedness, and conflict resolution lie at the heart of solving this conundrum. [Read Online](#)