

Dear MPCSD Community,

The 2024-2025 school year builds on the fruition of two large-scale initiatives that will serve our community for years to come: facilities planning to ensure safe and secure campuses for all students, and strategic visioning to update our district's vision, mission, core values, and strategic directions. Underpinning both of these endeavors was the goal of creating an increased sense of belonging across our schools. I am proud to use this Annual Report to share details of these critical projects that involved the input and participation of our whole community.

One of our new Core Values is Teamwork, because in MPCSD we center on working collectively toward common goals with a commitment to quality and excellence. We lean on each other for encouragement and find strength in our shared endeavors. Our energy and actions lead to meaningful relationships and stronger outcomes for all. Teams come in all shapes and sizes across MPCSD. From our dynamic Maintenance Operations and Transportation team keeping our schools clean and functional to our teaching teams providing high quality learning experiences for our students, working in teams elevates our impact.

It is my pleasure and honor to be MPCSD's superintendent. The progress we make each year is a testament to the outstanding students, staff, families, and community here in our district. I look forward to our teamwork as we continue to tackle challenges and celebrate milestones.

Kristen Gracia

MPCSD Superintendent



Assistant Superintendent of Student Services Stephanie Sheridan, Superintendent Kristen Gracia, and Associate Superintendent of Educational Services Jammie Behrendt (pictured left to right) work closely to lead MPCSD.

Vision, Mission, Core Values

Following a full year of engagement with and input from staff, students, families, and the community, MPCSD is excited to launch its new Vision and Mission statements and Core Values.



VISION

Educating and empowering students while embracing childhood and adolescence.

MISSION

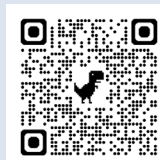
We provide an outstanding education where all students learn about themselves, one another, and the world so they can engage, achieve, and thrive.

CORE VALUES

Compassion • Perseverance • Creativity
• Inclusivity • Teamwork

These statements and values will guide the district's work over the next six years, aligned with the strategic directions for 2024-2030 that will focus on three areas:

- | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Grow | Strengthen | Create |
| student belonging | academic excellence | inspiring environments |



To read MPCSD's vision, mission, core values, and strategic directions, follow this QR code or visit <https://district.mpcsd.org/about-mpcsd/vision>

Our Financial Picture

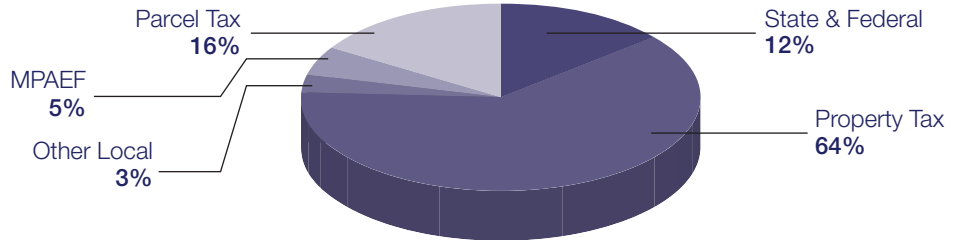
MPCSD is one of the approximately 10% of California school districts that are “community funded.” This means we receive more funding from our local property taxes than what the state will fund us. Average daily attendance (ADA)* funding in California in 2022-23 was \$22,142 for elementary (TK-8th grade) districts. Due to our strong local property values and community support, MPCSD received \$27,725 per ADA for fiscal year 2022-23, the most recent year financial data is available at Ed-data.org.

Community funded districts do not receive most of their funds from the state or federal government. Instead, they get to keep a portion

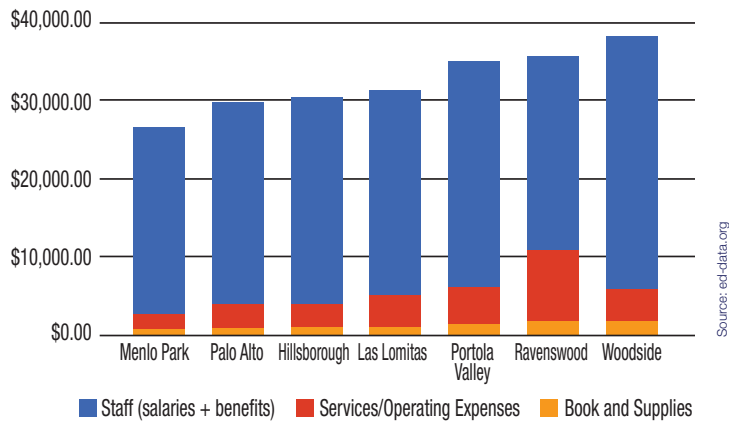
of the property taxes raised within their local jurisdiction. In addition to local education authorities (i.e. school districts), property tax is distributed among entities like the county, cities, water, and fire districts.

As you can see in the revenue graph below, property taxes represent 64%, MPAEF 5%, Parcel Tax 16%, state and federal funding is 12%, and other local funding 3%. MPCSD’s total revenue for fiscal year 2023-2024 was \$72,688,233 and 88% came directly from our local community. Thank you for all your support!

MPCSD Funding Sources 2023-24



Expenditure per Student – District Comparison, 2022-23



For this comparison, MPCSD is using data that is publicly available at ed-data.org and these numbers are based on a per ADA for Salaries & Benefits, Supplies and Services only.

*Total ADA, or average daily attendance, is defined as the total days of student attendance divided by the total days of instruction, per the California Department of Education. ADA is generally lower than the total enrollment because of students moving, leaving the district, or being absent due to illness. For comparison, MPCSD is using data publicly available at ed-data.org and these funding numbers are based on ADA.

MPCSD takes its fiduciary responsibility for your public funds seriously. In addition, district families are dedicated to supporting our schools above and beyond what taxes and other government funding provide. Many groups work hard behind the scenes to ensure that MPCSD manages its money responsibly and delivers the high quality education our community expects, and that helps protect property values within the district.

Finance & Audit: A School Board Committee

In addition to public Board meetings, the Board’s Finance & Audit Committee meets quarterly to review the district’s budget. Members of F&A have professional backgrounds in finance and business, and work together with MPCSD’s CBO and business office to present responsible budgets that reflect the community’s priorities while maintaining healthy reserves.

Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation

Since 1982, the Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation (MPAEF) has fundraised to enable MPCSD to provide an exceptional education to all students. Working with parents, local businesses, community members, and the district, MPAEF raises money to pay for high-quality teachers,

a comprehensive educational program, and teaching innovation beyond what is possible with public dollars alone. About five percent of the district’s revenue comes from the MPAEF grant.

Parent-Teacher Organizations

Each school - Encinal, Laurel, Oak Knoll, and Hillview - supports a vibrant PTO that raises money for school-specific initiatives and supplies. PTOs also organize the volunteers needed to run programs like art and library, and events that build community among families. The PTOs are the heart of their schools’ character and help create the welcoming sense of belonging that our students, staff, and families feel.

One Community Campaign

Each fall, the MPAEF and PTOs come together as the One Community Campaign to raise the money that families donate to support our schools. Over 60% of MPCSD families contribute to this effort, showing the strong community effort to ensure that art, music, library, science, world language, PE, Maker Spaces, smaller class sizes, and mental health and wellness are offered across our district. The Fall 2024 campaign goal is to raise \$3.75 million.

Facilities Planning 2024: Safe and Secure Campuses for All

MPCSD Schools - Encinal, Laurel, Oak Knoll, and Hillview - have costly facilities needs to keep students safe and secure. The School Board has placed a general obligation bond, Measure U, on the November 2024 ballot that if approved by voters would provide funds for facilities projects across the district. Major projects would include converting to electric heat pumps for HVAC to improve sustainability and add air conditioning to all MPCSD classrooms, and constructing new buildings at Laurel's Lower Campus to improve earthquake safety.

What's planned for the whole district?



Secure Campuses

Access control, intrusion detection, and fire alarm upgrades would mitigate risk and increase our safety posture, helping our schools be prepared for any emergency.



Climate Resilience

Climate change means more hot and smoky days than ever before.

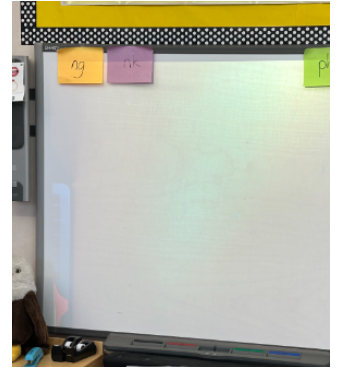
Over 90% of classrooms have no AC.

Modern, electric HVAC would improve indoor air quality and make learning environments more comfortable.



Seismic Safety

Built in 1959, classroom pod, administrative, and multipurpose buildings are outdated and would not be built this way today. Rebuilding Laurel to modern standards and upgrading other campuses would increase earthquake preparedness.



Modern Technology

Replacing 20+ year old classroom technology would improve safety, emergency communications, connectivity, and learning in the digital age.

Plus ... additional projects for each campus:



Encinal: small multipurpose room modernization, play structures and increased shade, nature learning spaces, solar expansion, asphalt repair



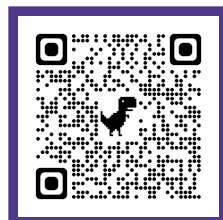
Laurel: new classrooms, office, multiuse space at Lower Campus, shade, play structures, outdoor nature spaces



Oak Knoll: modernize small gym, playground updates and increased shade, more nature learning spaces, classroom updates, exterior painting, asphalt repair



Hillview: battery energy storage system, more court space, usable bleachers, PE storage, modern locker rooms, kitchen upgrades with room for future cooking electives, asphalt repair, shade structures



Use this QR code to learn about MPCSD's facilities and the proposed improvements a bond could fund.

Why Measure U was Placed on the Ballot Now



Student Health and Safety

Student health and safety are district priorities.

Securing our campuses and upgrading building infrastructure would make us more prepared for emergencies and provide a healthier classroom environment.

Infrastructure Updates

Decades-old buildings and infrastructure are expensive (or impossible) to maintain. Most mechanical units are years beyond their expected lifespan. Replacing them now would improve efficiency and safety.

Matching Funds

By acting now the district can utilize over \$28 million in state matching funds, energy grants, and tax credits. Plus, building costs are projected to rise at least 5% each year.

What do students and teachers say?

“It’s hard to learn and teach in a hot classroom. It’s hard to focus when you’re hot and uncomfortable. My classroom got up to 90 degrees!”

— Oak Knoll 4th Grader

“I worry about the heat affecting my students’ growing minds, ability to focus, and their desire to even be in school. A reasonable temperature in class is a necessity.”

— Vince Lopez, Oak Knoll Teacher

MPCSD and Bonds Q&A

Q What is a General Obligation Bond and what can it pay for?

A School districts may issue general obligation bonds which must be approved by the voting community with 55% yes vote. Bonds may only pay for capital needs, including facilities, equipment, and technology. The amount a property owner will pay for a bond is dependent on the property’s value.

Q When has MPCSD issued bonds?

A MPCSD voters have approved three bond measures: a \$22 million bond measure in 1995 with 82% voter approval, a \$91.1 million bond measure in 2006 with 70.6% voter approval, and a \$23 million bond measure in 2013 with 75.3% approval. The 1995 Bonds covered modernization across the district. The 2006 Bonds built the Hillview

Middle School campus as it stands today, including performance and field space shared with the community. The 2013 Bonds built the Laurel Upper Campus on the space previously leased to the German American School. As enrollment rapidly grew a fifth school campus was needed. Today, Laurel School serves nearly 700 students across its two campuses.

Q Why did the Board place a bond on the ballot in 2024?

A Comprehensive facilities planning focused on ensuring safe and secure campuses for all students. The current facilities projects, including new classroom buildings at Laurel Lower Campus and electric HVAC across the district, require bond funding to implement.

Q How do MPCSD’s bond tax rates

compare with other school districts?

A MPCSD’s bond tax rates are the lowest in San Mateo County at \$24.90 per \$100k of assessed value. When the high school district is added to that, MPCSD residents still pay the second lowest K-12 bond tax rates in the county at \$64.00 per \$100k of assessed value.

Q What is MPCSD’s Bond rating?

A MPCSD has AAA bond ratings from all three major credit rating agencies, Moody’s, S&P, and Fitch.

Q What will the rate be of Measure U?

A Measure U, the 2024 general obligation bond on the November 2024 ballot, would authorize \$123.6 million in bonds, levying approximately \$18.60 per \$100,000 of assessed value (raising \$8.5 million annually)

Distinguished All Around

Every school in MPCSD is a California Distinguished School. This state recognition is based on data reported through the 2023 Dashboard, with a focus on demonstrating excellence and growth in academic achievement in English Language Arts (ELA) and math, and ensuring a positive school climate. MPCSD is honored that Encinal, Laurel, and Oak Knoll Elementary Schools, and Hillview Middle School are all current recipients of this exceptional recognition.



Superintendent Gracia (far left) joins Hillview team members Aimee Mathenia (second from left), Michael Doroquez (second from right), and Principal Danielle O'Brien (far right) at the Distinguished School Award ceremony, which was held at Disneyland Resort in May 2024.

Our Leadership Team: Deep Experience and Community Ties

MPCSD's Leadership Team is comprised of the district's school administrators and department leaders. This team is responsible for implementing the School Board's direction while guiding the academic, physical, and wellness needs of students, maintaining our facilities, serving staff, and stewarding the public's investment in our schools. New members joining the team from the school sites are Andrew Dinh, Assistant Principal of Hillview Middle School, and Gina Watkins, Interim Assistant Principal of Encinal School. In addition, Sandra Franco joins as the new Director of Maintenance, Operations, and Transportation. Ms. Franco has been with MPCSD since 2016 including the past three years with MOT. She will build upon her already established rapport with the team, intimate knowledge of our facilities and community, and commitment to safety, students, and service. As MPCSD plans for multiple facilities projects in the near

future, we are excited to have Director Franco in this role.



Director Franco (left) and Maintenance and Operations Lead Russell Knight (right) are poised to shepherd many important facilities projects across the district in the coming years.

MPCSD Staff

MPCSD's excellent and award winning staff of 400 professionals serves the needs of our students and community. Seventy percent of our teachers hold advanced degrees and many have earned National Board Certification in their area of expertise. Our specialist teachers for library, art, music, world language, PE, and Special Education are credentialed in their subjects and leaders in their fields. We are only as good as our team, and the School Board is committed to professional compensation, especially given the high cost of living, that continues to make MPCSD an attractive employer for the best educators in the business.

- 195** Teachers, 139 with Advanced Degrees, 15 with National Board Certification
- 3** Instructional Coaches
- 35** Instructional Aides
- 64** Paraeducators to support Special Education Students
- 19** Credentialed Administrators
- 5** School Psychologists
- 7** School Counselors
- 1** District Mental Health & Wellness Lead
- 1** District Registered Nurse
- 5** Site-Based LVNs

District Leaders

- Kristen Gracia, Superintendent
- Jammie Behrendt
Associate Superintendent
- Stephanie Sheridan,
Assistant Superintendent
- Marites Fermin,
Chief Business Officer

MPCSD Board of Education

- Francesca Segrè
- Sherwin Chen
- David Ackerman
- Scott Saywell
- Jed Scolnick

School Board Updates for 2024

The two open seats for MPCSD School Board in this November's election were uncontested with incumbent Francesca Segrè and Josh Spira being the only two candidates who filed paperwork to run. Therefore the School Board will welcome Ms. Segrè to her second term and Mr. Spira to his first term when the election is certified and the Board holds its reorganization meeting in December 2024. David Ackerman is stepping down from the Board after eight years of faithful service.



MPCSD welcomed 22 new teachers this year, bringing more than 100 collective years of educator experience. They toured the district as part of 2024 New Teacher Orientation.

ELC staff:

- 10** Teachers
- 6** Aides

Community Engagement

MPCSD invites you to connect with us. **School Board** meetings are open for in-person or remote attendance. Meeting schedule, agendas, and Zoom details are available at mpcsd.org.

Look for us at the **Menlo Park Farmers Market** and other community events like **Sup & Sandwich** with Superintendent Gracia.

To subscribe to our newsletter, **Community Matters Quarterly**, and also receive notices about special events, use the "Join a District Email List" link at mpcsd.org.

Our Schools



Early Learning Center

Director Chana Stewart
95 Edge Road, ATH /
1895 Oak Knoll Lane, MP
650.463.1236
Serves Children Ages 2.9-5
Nurturing young children's curiosity, sense of wonder, belonging, and deep engagement with the world around them.



Encinal Elementary School

Principal Sharon Burns
195 Encinal Avenue, ATH
650.326.5164
Grades TK-5
We educate, nurture, and inspire all voices to contribute to a better world.



Laurel Elementary School

Principal Linda Creighton
Lower Campus, Grades TK-2
95 Edge Road, ATH
650.324.0186
Principal Alicia Heneghan
Upper Campus, Grades 3-5
275 Elliott Drive, MP
650.321.6010
We are confident students, passionate teachers, and an involved community.



Oak Knoll Elementary School

Principal Alicia Payton-Miyazaki
1895 Oak Knoll Lane, MP
650.854.4433
Grades TK-5
Every child an exemplary scholar, a valued friend, and a courageous citizen.



Hillview Middle School

Principal Danielle O'Brien
1100 Elder Avenue, MP
650.326.4341
Grades 6-8
Creating a middle school where all students, staff, and families feel valued, connected, and inspired.

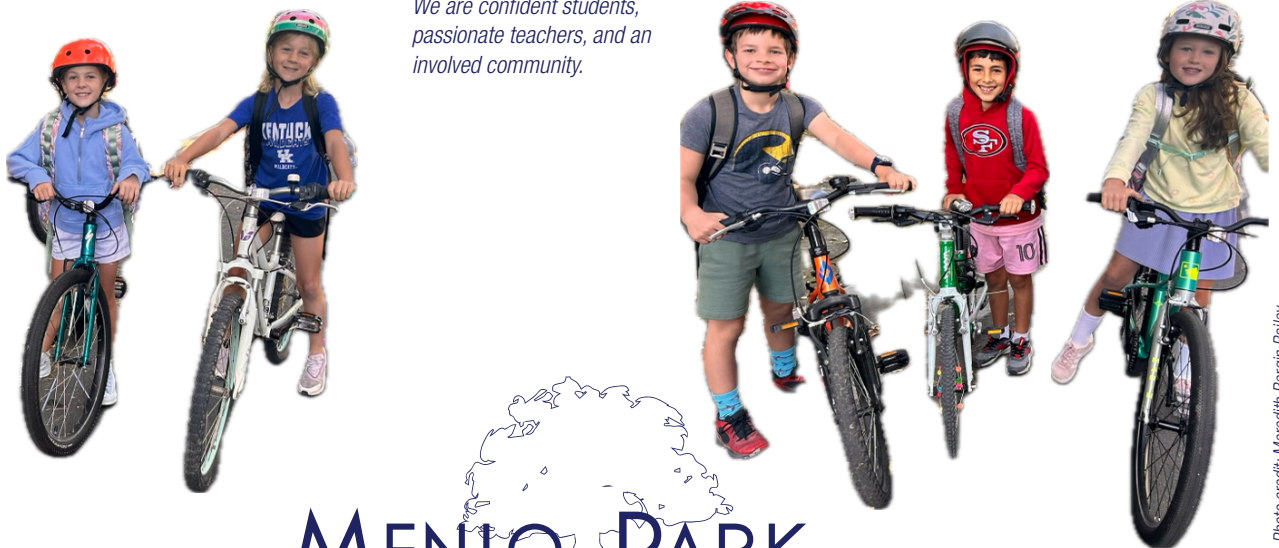


Photo credit: Meredith Bergin Bailey



EDUCATING AND EMPOWERING STUDENTS WHILE EMBRACING CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE.

181 Encinal Avenue • Atherton, CA 94027 • 650.321.7140



www.mpcsd.org

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