



WINTER 2022



THE DISTRICT BRIDGE

Sharing Our Progress, Accomplishments, and Appreciation

Dear Friends,

What do kids need? This is the question that drives Sunnyvale School District (SSD) every day. In a broad sense we've known the answer for a long time: kids need safety, support, connection, and opportunity. They need their basic needs met and the support of caring adults who see and value them for the unique individuals they are.

Getting to know our students is one of the greatest joys of being an educator. The research is increasingly clear: providing the individualized resources and support students need is the key to unlocking their full academic, social-emotional and behavioral growth.

Families play an integral part in helping us to understand the perspectives, cultural influences, and individual needs of their children. We gain a meaningful understanding of students' strengths and challenges by combining family input with what we learn through regular student assessments.

We use this accumulated knowledge to help us craft the best approach to supporting academic and social-emotional growth through differentiated teaching strategies and support from our nonprofit partners, universities, and local voters. You have repeatedly shown us that you want what's best for our community's children and their futures.

Thank you for working alongside us to give all of our children what they need. This collaborative effort is another contributor to the joy of being part of the SSD learning community.



Michael Gallagher, Ed.D.
Superintendent, Sunnyvale School District



OUR SCHOOLS

Bishop Elementary
Cherry Chase Elementary
Cumberland Elementary
Ellis Elementary
Fairwood Explorer
Lakewood Tech EQ
San Miguel Elementary
Vargas Elementary
Columbia Middle
Sunnyvale Middle

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Jeffrey Arnett
Isabel Jubes-Flamerich
Michelle Maginot
Nancy Newkirk
Bridget Watson

Respect and Celebration

The first step toward fostering learning growth is creating a safe school climate.

Our teachers work to model respect and encourage recognition, showing all children that they are valued. We appreciate and celebrate their diverse cultures, backgrounds, and experiences, and we consider how these factors affect their learning and our teaching.

Within our classrooms and campuses we carve out special spaces where children can go when they need a break. These “calming corners” help students re-center themselves, enabling them to stay focused on the academic challenges at hand, and preventing disruptions in the classroom. Our staff also regularly check in during morning circles and throughout the school day to see how kids are doing. We increasingly employ strategies like flexible seating options and hand-held “fidget toys” to help students focus and get the wiggles out.

We provide our students with an environment where they have the freedom and confidence to think inventively and to share ideas so they can ignite their critical thinking and let their creativity soar.





Space to Play and Learn

In addition to creating an environment that fosters learning by treating students and their families with respect and appreciation, we continue to enhance our physical environment, making it safer, more welcoming, and more enriching.

Our 2013 Measure G bond funded major campus modernizations at Bishop, Lakewood, San Miguel, and Cherry Chase, as well as technology; site security; heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems; and site improvements at all 10 of our District schools.

Now that we have finished our Measure G work, we are turning to our 2018 Measure GG projects, starting with completely renovating Ellis Elementary School. Next on deck for modernization is Sunnyvale Middle School. The design process for this major effort begins in the spring of 2023.

In addition to improving the safety of our learning spaces, having well-maintained and state-of-the-art schools also reminds children every day that they matter. Thank you to the Sunnyvale community for supporting our Bond Programs and enabling us to build and maintain the flexible, well-equipped learning environments that our students deserve! To learn more about our Bond Program please visit <https://www.sesd.org/domain/894>.



A Helping Hand

Our learning spaces set the stage for student academic growth. In these nurturing surroundings, we deliver engaging lessons and support in ways that are accessible to all of our children's different learning styles and needs. We offer rich opportunities for students to challenge themselves and leverage their strengths while providing tools to help give them a boost when they need additional assistance.

Using our Multiple Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) framework, we provide a continuum of support, helping students to meet our high academic, social-emotional, and behavioral growth standards. Our strategies help children build on their assets to thrive so they will have the tools and experiences to become their best selves.

Our MTSS initiative is also designed to increase attendance, enhance school climates, and improve academic performance — challenges that were aggravated by the pandemic. Our efforts are paying off; in June we were one of six school districts recognized statewide for exemplary practices that reduce chronic absenteeism and improve student attendance!



A Caring Community

Foundational to all our efforts is the need for the basics: fuel for strong bodies, friendships for well-being, help to counter learning struggles, and opportunities for students to push themselves to their next stage of academic and social-emotional growth. Our community has joined us to ensure our children have this strong foundation.

We offer free breakfasts and lunches to every student every school day. Additionally, we continue to provide supplemental food for our families during weekends and holidays when school meals are not served, thanks to Second Harvest Food Bank.

Family Resource Centers (FRCs) at San Miguel, Vargas, and Columbia Middle School provide additional support for families, ranging from educational workshops for parents, to diaper distribution days. Thank you to First 5, Community Health Awareness Council, and the City of Sunnyvale for making these FRCs possible!

Our community partners help enrich our students' learning opportunities with games to play at recess, after-school sports and clubs, mental health support, and more. Combined with our highly qualified staff, excellent facilities, and rich instruction, our community partners help us provide the resources every child needs to achieve academic growth.



Student Learning Outcomes

Today's students face high expectations for growth and achievement. The Sunnyvale School District's job is to provide them with the tools and support they need to meet those expectations. Not only do we provide rich, engaging instruction taught by caring teachers in safe, nurturing, and joyful classrooms, but we also provide guidance to help children recognize their emotions, manage their own behaviors, and practice empathy and respect. We are proud of the work we do and celebrate each of our students' successes!

While the COVID-19 pandemic posed significant challenges to students and communities nationwide, our children are quickly reaching and beginning to exceed pre-pandemic performance levels. Overall, California students fared better than their counterparts around the country, and Sunnyvale students outperformed state averages.

Targeted small groups of students across all grade levels made particularly noteworthy progress last year, improving a full grade level in reading proficiency throughout the District. We plan to continue and build upon the targeted support that contributed to this and other areas of growth. Together we can ensure all students can learn without limits!



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www.sesd.org

Our Mission

Sunnyvale School District provides every student with a strong foundation of academic, behavioral, and social-emotional skills to prepare them for success in a diverse, challenging and changing world.



SCAN ME!

or visit our website at
sesd.org to learn more!



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