

San Diego County Office of Education

# STRATEGIC PLAN

2025-30



san diego county office of  
**EDUCATION**

FUTURE WITHOUT BOUNDARIES™



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*El Plan Estratégico está disponible en español. Pida una copia en [communications@sdcoe.net](mailto:communications@sdcoe.net).*  
The Strategic Plan is available in Spanish. Ask for a copy at [communications@sdcoe.net](mailto:communications@sdcoe.net).

# INTRODUCTION

**Anchored in San Diego County Board of Education goals and the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) North Star goal of reducing poverty and increasing belonging, the 2025-30 strategic plan is a guide for our work over the next five years.**

It is designed to amplify our organizational efforts as we seek to advance our mission of inspiring and leading innovation in education as one organization — we are SDCOE!

The County Office directly serves thousands of students each year in our Juvenile Court and Community Schools, special education schools, early education programs, migrant education program, Linda Vista Innovation Center, and Cuyamaca Outdoor School. The County Office also provides a variety of services for the approximately 480,000 students served by 42 school districts and 128 charter schools across San Diego County.

We are uniquely positioned to make a lasting impact through SDCOE's programs and services to support high school graduation rates, college and employment readiness and matriculation, and belonging practices to reduce poverty.

Our board goals focus on the topics of career pathways, equity for our historically underserved students, modeling leadership and innovation, and strengthening our organization's culture.

In line with our equity focus, we listened to our community members and partners to inform the SDCOE *Equity Blueprint for Action*, which provides actionable, research-based practices that build equity and encourage belonging for our students.

Our North Star framework connects the board goals and blueprint, adding a curb-cut culture and strategy of transformational teaching and learning in community schools. It also highlights the importance of building belonging both within and among SDCOE colleagues and our educational partners and for the students in our region.

The SDCOE guiding principles outline how we will operationalize our work to achieve these goals and are a tangible guide to design a culture of belonging.

These foundational understandings have led us to the development of our strategic plan. SDCOE retained Seed Collaborative (Seed) in 2024 to help create an inclusive, co-creative process to create our 2025-30 strategic plan that advances our mission and achieves our North Star.

Our strategic priorities and desired outcomes were co-created through SDCOE's Strategic Planning Committee (SPC), made up of team members across divisions, locations, and classifications who referenced feedback from hundreds of employees and Seed's strategic analysis and assessment of our organization.

Our strategic plan combines the voices of our colleagues and the vision of our leaders to uplift the children and families in San Diego County so they can thrive now and in the future.



*Find more*  
on the SDCOE Strategic Plan

[www.sdcoe.net/StratPlan](http://www.sdcoe.net/StratPlan)

# SDCOE'S 2025-30 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

In order to achieve our North Star goal, SDCOE commits to focusing on two strategic priorities and seven desired outcomes for the 2025-30 strategic planning cycle.

These priorities were created by an employee-led SPC using feedback from hundreds of our colleagues, an in-depth assessment by Seed, and anchored in the foundations of our board goals, North Star goal, *Equity Blueprint for Action*, and guiding principles.

» To facilitate discussion and consensus on the strategic priorities, Seed provided a series of questions and structure for the nearly two dozen employees in the SPC. Committee members dedicated several days to considering the questions and developing the following priorities, which were reviewed by the entire organization with the opportunity to provide feedback.

**Equity:** *A practice that ensures all students, staff, and families have what they need, when and how they need it, in an effort to achieve fairness and justice.*

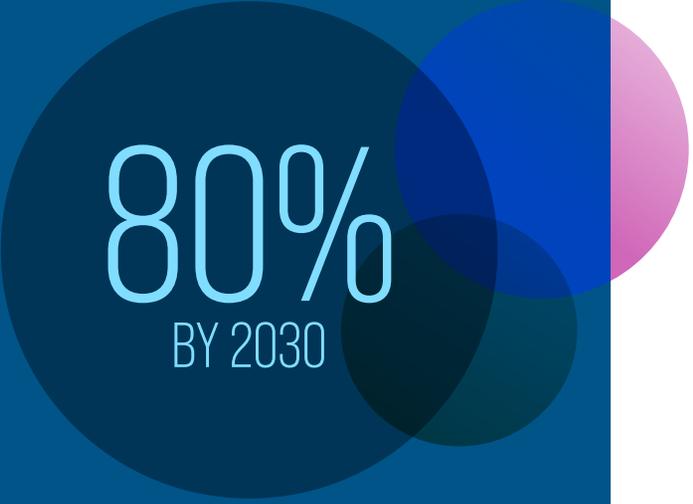


# GROUNDING QUESTIONS

- » How does SDCOE deepen the experience of belonging among its staff, students, families, and districts and charters?
- » What structures, policies, and practices need to be developed and/or revised to support the institutionalization of belonging at SDCOE?
- » How can SDCOE build an organization-wide bridging practice to help advance belonging?
- » What is SDCOE's role in advancing the North Star goal and belonging within San Diego County?
- » What is SDCOE's role in impacting the reduction of student poverty?
- » How can SDCOE leverage Board Goals 1 and 2 along with the *Equity Blueprint for Action* to increase standards that support college and employment readiness?
- » What college and career programs and partnerships at SDCOE work well? What opportunities exist to improve student and family linkage to college, vocational training, and employment? What are the opportunities for new or refreshed partnerships?
- » How can SDCOE better support school districts and charters to commit to and achieve the North Star?

# STRATEGIC PRIORITY ONE

Transform SDCOE policies and structures to foster belonging by strengthening trust, collaboration, inclusivity, transparency, equity, and relationships among staff, learners, partners, families, and their communities.



80%  
BY 2030

## DESIRED OUTCOMES

The desired outcomes under each priority specify the intended change, result, or impact of strategic priorities. They help define whether strategic priorities have been achieved. An organization-wide planning process will begin upon implementation of the strategic plan to develop targeted, achievable goals, progress metrics, and work plans to achieve these desired outcomes.

1. By December 2030, 80% of employees report strong agreement that they feel a sense of belonging at SDCOE and that the organization promotes trust, values employee feedback, and communicates effectively with this percentage maintained or exceeded after 2030.
2. By December 2030, 80% of employees report strong agreement that they have access to opportunities for professional growth, co-creation, and collaboration within and across divisions that is supported by managers and SDCOE as a whole.
3. By December 2030, 80% of families and partners associated with SDCOE programs and services report strong agreement that SDCOE offers opportunities for co-creation, values feedback, and communicates transparently.
4. By December 2030, 80% of employees report strong agreement that hiring and promotion processes are transparent, consistent, impartial, fair, and focused on the requirements of the position.



David

EDUCATION

Michael

EDUCATION

IntelSwab  
COVID-19 RAPID TEST

IntelSwab  
COVID-19 RAPID TEST

5  
↑↑  
Couldn't wait  
to meet you  
prime

# STRATEGIC PRIORITY TWO

Champion a collective responsibility to improve student outcomes through transformational experiences.



BY DECEMBER  
2030

## DESIRED OUTCOMES

5. By December 2030, all students in San Diego County local educational agencies that receive SDCOE programming will show improvement in outcomes, as indicated by the California School Dashboard, and other relevant local measures.
6. By December 2030, San Diego County students will report an annual 5% increase in feeling a sense of belonging at school.<sup>1</sup>
7. By December 2030, San Diego County local educational agencies will show improvement in college and career readiness based on the College and Career Indicator.



**Belonging:** *Intentionally fostering empowerment, inclusion, recognition, trust, and connections so every individual feels seen, heard, valued, and appreciated.*

<sup>1</sup> SDCOE will consider the best data sources to measure the achievement of this desired outcome. This may include the development of a new survey/data collection tool or may rely on existing data sources such as California Healthy Kids Survey, Project for Educational Research That Scales, etc.



# IMPLEMENTATION

In order to ensure a collaborative, unified, and successful implementation of the strategic priorities, SDCOE will engage in an organization-wide planning process in the latter half of 2025 in order to develop targeted SMART goals, progress metrics, and division-specific work plans that advance the strategic priorities through targeted strategies to achieve the desired outcomes.

**Below are key points and considerations for each person in SDCOE as we begin the implementation phase of our strategic plan.**

- The strategic priorities offer an opportunity for transformational change for San Diego learners and SDCOE employees. Our organization must challenge existing systems and identify innovative solutions in the SMART goals, progress metrics, and work plan development processes.
- Internal organization-wide planning is an opportunity to practice belonging and pilot operationalization of strategic priority one through the practice of inclusion, co-creation, bridging, and shared leadership.
- In alignment with targeted universalism, SMART goals should articulate what SDCOE will do to advance strategic priorities for particular groups, supporting targeted pathways to achieving the strategic priorities and the North Star.
- Planning at both the divisional and cross-divisional levels is critical to ensure successful implementation of the strategic priorities, particularly priority one. Our work is a collective effort and each team's efforts must be aligned with and working toward our desired outcomes.
- Staff member feedback during the draft strategic plan survey included implementation suggestions that can serve as the grounding for the next phase.
- At least one, mid-stream, organization-wide evaluation of implementation progress should be included in strategic work plans to provide analysis that informs an understanding of early successes, challenges, and any needed adjustments in SMART goals, implementation tactics, or metrics. This allows for adjustments to both internal and external factors that may arise over the course of plan implementation.

**SMART Goals:** *Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound goals articulate what the organization will do over the life of the strategic plan to advance priorities toward desired outcomes.*

*Find more*  
definitions of key terms

[www.sdcoe.net/StratPlan](http://www.sdcoe.net/StratPlan)





# OVERVIEW OF SDCOE FOUNDATIONS

SDCOE operations, services, and programs are based on several organizational understandings.

## SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION GOALS

The four San Diego County Board of Education goals aim to develop and scale the provision of high-quality services, and generate meaningful outcomes as follows:

- 1** Connect the educational experience to the world of work to guarantee all students graduate prepared for college, career, and beyond.
- 2** Provide educational opportunities and supports to SDCOE schools and school districts so that all students, including our historically underserved students, are successful.
- 3** Become the leader and model for innovation, so that SDCOE scales, supports, and develops new opportunities for our schools, districts, and students.
- 4** Maximize human and operational resources to strengthen the organizational culture of SDCOE.





# SDCOE EQUITY BLUEPRINT FOR ACTION

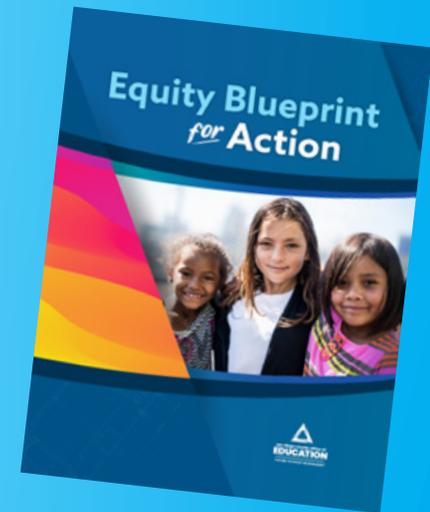
The SDCOE *Equity Blueprint for Action* aims to provide our organization, educational leaders, and community partners with research-based guidance to improve equitable outcomes for historically marginalized student populations. The blueprint integrates several tools and points of guidance; one layer contains a set of four equity themes, which are matched to state Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) priorities.

## EQUITY THEMES OR NEEDS

- **Asset-Based Systems** .....
- **Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Instruction** .....
- **Family and Community Voice** .....
- **Student Agency and Voice** .....

## LCFF PRIORITIES

- Student Achievement**
- School Climate**
- Course Access**
- Student Outcomes**
  
- Basic Services**
- State Standards**
  
- Family Involvement**
  
- Pupil Engagement**



# NORTH STAR FRAMEWORK

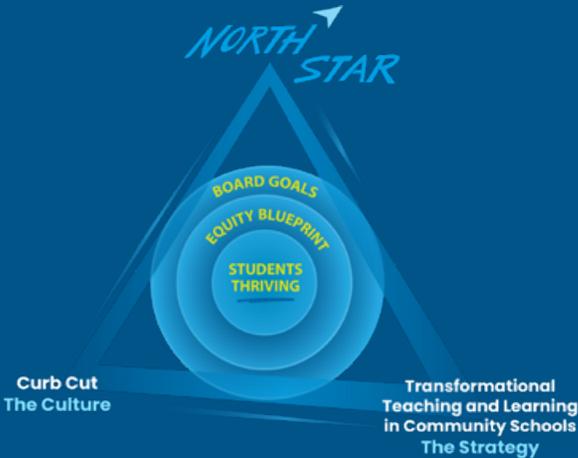
SDCOE's North Star goal is to reduce poverty and increase belongingness through public education.

The cornerstones of the North Star framework are a curb-cut culture committed to creating targeted pathways forward for everyone starting with the most vulnerable, and a strategy of transformational teaching and learning in community schools.

Community schools are hubs where educators, community members, families, and students work together to strengthen conditions for student learning and healthy development.

In the center are students and families thriving, surrounded by our board goals and the *Equity Blueprint for Action*.

Through our North Star, SDCOE commits to reducing poverty by both ensuring San Diego County students are college- and career-ready upon graduation from high school, and that the cycle of exclusion for those experiencing poverty is disrupted through the advancement of belonging in our region's schools.



# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following guiding principles help us activate our work and breathe life into the North Star framework. They are a tangible guide and offer a common language to help us take steps toward designing a culture of belonging so we can reach our goals.

Pursuing equity

Investing in a whole-child approach to education

Building on strengths within the organization to ensure conditions for learning

Using data and collective wisdom to inform and guide our decision-making

Committing to interdependence and shared accountability

Investing in building trusting relationships

Fostering a learning organization

These principles are based on the Community Schools Guiding Principles from the Institute for Educational Leadership and Coalition for Community Schools and were refined with input from SDCOE employees.



*Learn more*  
about our foundations

[www.sdcoe.net/StratPlan](http://www.sdcoe.net/StratPlan)

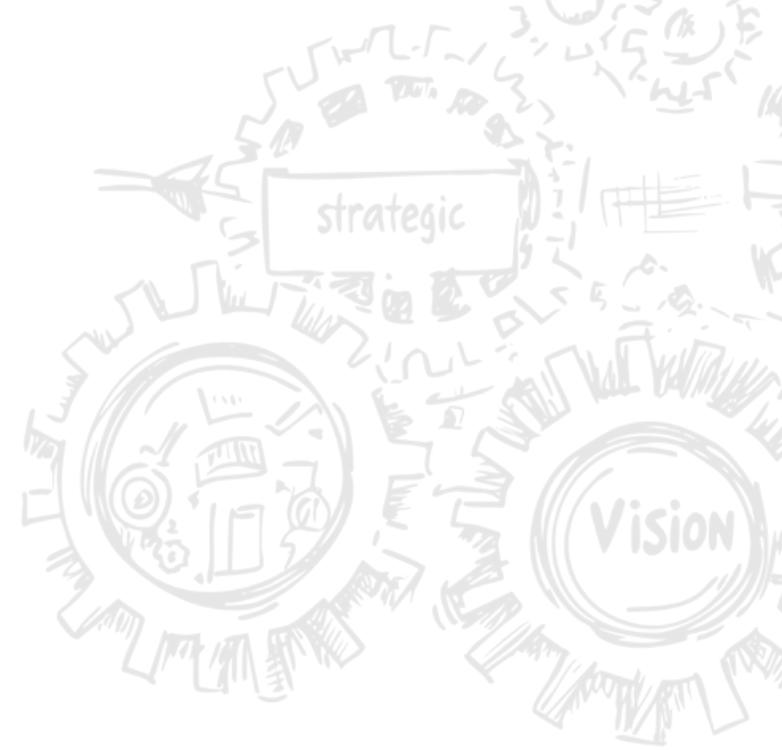


# STRATEGIC PRIORITY ALIGNMENT

The aim of the strategic plan is to tie these organizational foundations into tangible, achievable outcomes that align with the work of each person at SDCOE.

## Strategic Priority One

- Seeks to accomplish the North Star by connecting poverty prevention and intervention to transformational experiences for learners.
- Aligns with the Socially Conscious Leadership portion of the *Equity Blueprint for Action*: “Socially conscious leaders serve, inspire, and empower through their own examples. They explore their own intersecting identities, analyze their mindsets, and hone their skills. They seek to create equity-centered, asset-based systems by implementing and sustaining positive changes that benefit those they serve. They focus their efforts on creating equitable access with consistently strong outcomes for all students, paying special attention to the needs of historically marginalized populations.”
- Advances Board Goal 4: *Maximize human and operational resources to strengthen the organizational culture of SDCOE*
- Embodies six of the seven SDCOE Guiding Principles:
  - Pursuing equity
  - Building on strengths within the organization to ensure conditions for learning
  - Using data and collective wisdom to inform and guide our decision-making
  - Committing to interdependence and shared accountability
  - Investing in building trusting relationships
  - Fostering a learning organization
- Responds to assessment data regarding organizational culture, building on positive attributes while addressing areas for improvement such as othering, perceived inequities, lack of authentic accountability, and barriers to collaboration.



## Strategic Priority Two

- Advances all four board goals.
- Embodies five of the seven SDCOE Guiding Principles:
  - Pursuing equity
  - Investing in whole-child approach to education
  - Using data and collective wisdom to inform and guide our decision-making
  - Committing to interdependence and shared accountability
  - Investing in building trusting relationships
- Aligns with the *Equity Blueprint for Action*'s central purpose of improving student outcomes through transformational experiences and the four equity themes
- Responds to assessment data regarding organizational culture, building on strengths and addressing areas for improvement
- Is informed by an understanding of poverty drivers and local educational agencies' alignment with the North Star

Taken together the strategic priorities respond to the assessment and align with all board goals, SDCOE Guiding Principles, and the *Equity Blueprint for Action*.



*Explore*

belonging, poverty, and transformational experiences

[www.sdcoe.net/StratPlan](http://www.sdcoe.net/StratPlan)



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The content of this report was co-created by the **San Diego County Office of Education Strategic Planning Committee** made up of employees representing all divisions and a variety of reporting levels and roles, with the help of consultant team **Seed Collaborative**.

We offer gratitude for their time, creativity, and courage to face and reflect on the strengths, areas of growth, opportunities, and challenges facing SDCOE.



We would like to thank the 70 SDCOE employees and 10 community partners who participated in the interviews and focus groups that shaped the assessment completed by Seed. Input from those participants, and all of the SDCOE employees who attended and shared feedback at the all-staff event in December 2024, served as the foundation for the SPC and the strategic planning process as a whole.

In addition, we would like to thank the 402 SDCOE employees who offered feedback, reflections, and implementation considerations on an early draft of the strategic priorities and desired outcomes through a staff survey and feedback process conducted in April 2025.

We developed this plan together, and together we will achieve these brave, bold outcomes to advance our North Star goal. **We are SDCOE** and it will require the participation, commitment, and passion of everyone at the County Office to make a lasting, positive impact on the lives of young people and their families in our region.

Thank you to all of our colleagues and educational partners across the region for bringing your unique strengths and best self to your work. There is a whole generation of young people out there waiting for us to show them that they matter. We know who we are and we know where we're going — now let's get to work!

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San Diego County Office of Education

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PLAN** 2025-30

