

San Mateo County Office of Education

Strategic Plan

2023-28

SAN MATEO COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

Excellence and Equity in Education



Commitment to Equity

The San Mateo County Office of Education welcomes and embraces individuals from all backgrounds, races, ethnicities, disabilities, gender identities, sexual orientations, immigration statuses, and religions. At the San Mateo County Office of Education, equity means providing every learner aged 0-22 with the education and support needed to thrive in school, career, and life, and every staff member with opportunities to grow and further deepen their impact.

To achieve equity, The San Mateo County Office of Education commits to:

- Disrupt inequitable practices and replace them with equity-driven, transparent systems
- Improve outcomes for historically and currently underserved student groups, honoring their strengths and talents
- Continue to educate ourselves so we are better able to confront and dismantle systemic inequities
- Center voices of those who have been historically marginalized and underserved

Overview

In March 2022, the San Mateo County Office of Education began its five-year strategic planning process, building on the vision, mission, and goals of the previous strategic plan while looking at opportunities and challenges on the road ahead.

A steering committee and four subcommittees led the work, engaging all staff and the San Mateo County Board of Education to receive input and feedback throughout the planning process. The planning teams reviewed data ranging from the annual County Office of Education employee survey to the California School Dashboard and considered frameworks such as the California English Learner Roadmap and the Universal Design for Learning Guidelines. A draft of the plan was shared with many partners who provided additional ideas and feedback.

A team of school staff came together to focus deeply on County Office of Education school programs. The group worked to understand their systems, identify strengths and areas for growth in the different school programs, and develop recommendations based on the principles of improvement science.

The result of this learning, collaborating, and visioning is reflected in this document, the San Mateo County Office of Education 2023-2028 Strategic Plan. The plan moves the County Office of Education closer to realizing its vision of Excellence and Equity in Education – Every Student, Every Educator, and Every School. Along with its mission to inspire students, invest in educators, invigorate leaders, and involve families and communities, the vision is the organization's North Star, guiding staff's work and keeping the focus on those we serve. This plan provides a road map for how we will ensure that all San Mateo County students have access to a high-quality education that meets their needs and sets them on the path to fulfilling their dreams.

The strategic plan is centered on four goal areas critical to an education system that serves all students well. The first goal focuses on supporting students in becoming expert learners who are resourceful, knowledgeable, goal-oriented, purposeful, motivated, and strategic.



Accomplishing this requires a whole-child approach that supports students' academic, social, and emotional needs. The goal includes objectives that address all students, schools, and early learning programs in San Mateo County as well as objectives specifically focused on students in County Office of Education school programs, including special education, court and community, and early learning classrooms.

The second goal addresses the critical need for a well-prepared and diverse workforce to help learners realize their full potential. The education workforce, which includes certificated, classified, and administrative staff, directly impacts the trajectory of our county's students, and developing and supporting educators is a top priority.

The third goal captures the County Office of Education's understanding that we cannot do this work alone. We recognize we have an important leadership role to play across both the county and state, advocating for students, families, and educators; ensuring sufficient and equitable funding; and uplifting the diverse voices of the community in education decisions.

The fourth and final goal zeroes in on County Office of Education staff who provide the backbone support that makes all these other goals possible. This "OneSMCOE" team-oriented goal includes, values, and supports all employees of the San Mateo County Office of Education. By investing in our staff with meaningful onboarding, professional development, and opportunities to grow professionally and personally in a supportive culture, we ensure our readiness to provide the important support our students, educators, families, and schools need.

As stated earlier, this strategic plan builds on the vision, mission, and goals of the previous strategic plan and the impactful work already underway at the County Office of Education. Aligned with the goals of our previous strategic plan, we have made great advances in our work fostering equity, supporting multilingual learners, creating climate-ready and sustainable schools, expanding educator pipelines, improving communication, strengthening organizational culture and climate, and developing hubs of excellence across the County Office of Education. While this and other important work may not be called out specifically in this plan, it remains part of the fabric of who we are and what we do.

The pandemic demonstrated the essential role of the County Office of Education in supporting educators and administrators, mobilizing and distributing resources, advocating on behalf of students and families, and leading during uncertain times. Instead of retrenching, the County Office will boldly move this work forward to ensure San Mateo County becomes a more child-centered community that supports every young person's journey from cradle to career.

We hope you will join us in this effort.





Role of the County Office of Education

The San Mateo County Office of Education provides key support and resources to school districts, educators, students, early learning and care providers, and the greater community.

Support Local Education Agencies

The County Office of Education ensures that school districts are fiscally accountable and solvent, approves school district Local Control and Accountability Plans, and provides services to support district operations and bolster student success.

Instruct Students

The County Office of Education provides direct instruction to special populations of students through its Special Education School Program, Court and Community Schools, and Preschool Program, and supports the educational needs of students in foster care.

Offer Instructional and Technical Support

The County Office of Education provides support to early learning programs and school districts in curriculum and instruction, assessment, technology, and program development.

Develop the Education Workforce

The County Office of Education builds a supportive environment that attracts, develops, and retains a diverse education workforce across San Mateo County through its teacher recruitment, induction, administrator credentialing, and teacher and administrator retention support programs.

Lead High-Impact Countywide Initiatives

The San Mateo County Office of Education advocates for youth and education, raises public awareness of educational issues, and initiates innovative, high-impact programs to benefit San Mateo County students and families.

VISION

Excellence and Equity in Education

Every Student • Every Educator • Every School

MISSION

Inspiring Students
Investing in Educators
Invigorating Leaders
Involving Families & Communities

CORE PRACTICES

The San Mateo County Office of Education puts its values into action daily through five core practices:

Growth Mindset

We believe everyone can learn, grow, and move the organization forward.

Accountability

We take personal responsibility to lean in, set goals, measure progress, and serve as leaders and team members.

Trauma-Informed Approach

We adopt principles and practices that promote safety, empowerment, healing, and shared responsibility.

Sustainability

We ensure the County Office of Education and schools countywide serve present and future students through practices that are environmentally, socially, and economically responsible.

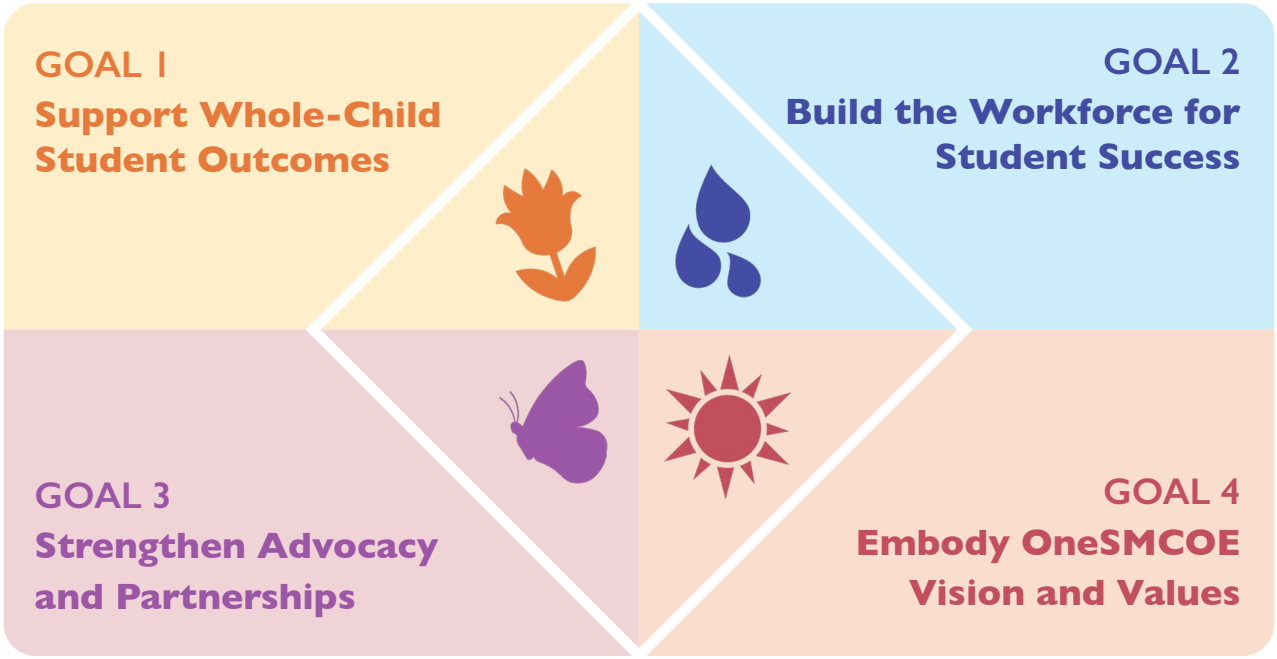
Cultural Humility

We challenge our personal biases and embrace learning about ourselves and others as a lifelong process.



Strategic Goals

San Mateo County Office of Education's 2023-28 Strategic Plan includes four strategic goals



Support Whole-Child Student Outcomes

Foster positive relationships and learning environments that help students achieve personal and academic success. This goal addresses A) all schools and B) San Mateo County Office of Education schools, specifically.

Build the Workforce for Student Success

Prioritize and strengthen a culturally and linguistically diverse workforce committed to equitable and antiracist practices.

Strengthen Advocacy and Partnerships

Establish a strong advocacy and partnership system centering community voices.

Embody OneSMCOE Vision and Values

Demonstrate and embody the County Office of Education's vision, values, and core practices at every level of the organization.

GOAL 1

Support Whole-Child Student Outcomes

Foster positive relationships and learning environments that help students achieve personal and academic success

The plan's first goal, Support Whole-Child Student Outcomes, includes two parts: A) objectives that address all students and schools in San Mateo County and B) objectives focused specifically on students in County Office of Education school programs, including special education, court and community, and early learning classrooms. These two strands reflect that the County Office of Education has direct influence on the students in its school programs and an indirect impact on the students in school districts and early learning and care programs. However, both strands focus on helping students become expert learners who are positioned to reach their highest potential.

Value Statement

The County Office of Education acknowledges and honors all our students bring to their learning, including their unique lived experiences, their community values, and their individual interests and talents. By anchoring in who our students are, educators can accelerate learning and help students become expert learners.

Expert learners are students who know themselves and manage their own learning. Expert learners are resourceful, knowledgeable, goal-oriented, purposeful, motivated, and strategic. The County Office of Education recognizes that supporting the whole child means helping students grow academically, behaviorally, and social-emotionally to reach their highest potential.

Goal 1A. All Students and Schools: Foster positive relationships and learning environments that help students achieve personal and academic success.

Strategic Direction

Goal 1A focuses on how the County Office of Education can best support the work of *school districts and early learning and care providers* to help improve student outcomes. The County Office of Education will be responsive and adaptive, working with communities and districts to understand their needs and providing equitable, timely, and targeted tiered supports.

Desired Outcomes

- Effective first instruction
- High quality mental health and social-emotional supports
- Equitable access for students with disabilities and multilingual learners
- Tiered supports for districts

Goal 1B. County Office of Education Students and Schools: Align systems through collaboration to support better outcomes for youth in County Office of Education school programs.

Strategic Direction

Goal 1B focuses on how the County Office of Education can align systems through collaboration to support better outcomes for youth in *our school programs*.

Desired Outcomes

- Effective instruction that meets the needs of students
- Common strategies and practices that support all students throughout our programs
- School climate that prioritizes student identity, belonging, and agency
- Increased family and caregiver engagement, empowerment, and participation
- Tiered supports for student success

Goal 1A. All Students and Schools:
Foster positive relationships and learning environments that help students achieve personal and academic success.

Objectives and Sample Actions

A.1 Support educators in providing high-quality instruction

- Provide professional development in effective pedagogy
- Offer coaching for effective teaching and school leadership
- Support the adoption of materials and strategies for diverse student populations
- Deepen County Office of Education expertise in professional development, coaching, and leadership

A.2 Coordinate and strengthen quality behavioral health and social-emotional supports for students, educators, and families

- Pursue funding to lower caseloads for school counselors and increase the number of behavioral health professionals in schools
- Offer professional development and coaching in identifying, understanding, and supporting mental health and social-emotional needs
- Support district efforts to increase student access to mental health services
- Expand opportunities for students to develop leadership and a sense of belonging through direct student-centered activities

A.3 Dismantle silos in programs serving students with disabilities and multilingual learners to provide full access to high quality learning environments and instruction

- Partner with districts and early learning providers to promote inclusive learning environments, flexible approaches, and variability of learning
- Support districts in aligning reclassification strategies and decreasing barriers to access A-G or elective classes for students who are multilingual learners
- Provide resources for inclusion through the County Office of Education's Center for Access and Engagement
- Engage families of students with disabilities and multilingual learners to play integral parts in how plans are designed for their child

A.4 Provide tiered supports for districts and early learning providers based on need and size

- Engage districts, students, and families in identifying areas of need
- Organize supports across the County Office of Education's departments and communicate to districts
- Provide professional development, strategies, and coaching in tiered supports and services in instruction, social-emotional learning, mental health, and data analysis

Goal 1B. San Mateo County Office of Education Students and Schools:

Align systems through collaboration to support better outcomes for youth in the County Office of Education's school programs

Objectives and Sample Actions

The objectives and sample actions for Goal 1B address the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of students in County Office of Education programs. They are grouped by school program: K-22 Special Education, Court and Community Schools, and Anne Campbell Center for Children and Families.

K-22 Special Education Program

B.1 Engage students in a comprehensive curriculum that reflects state standards, provides access for all student skills and abilities, and fosters growth toward Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals

- Utilize adopted curricula consistently and monitor student progress with instructor support and self-guided check-ins
- Identify, participate, and implement pedagogy related to the Common Core Aligned 4C's (Communication, Collaboration, Creativity, and Critical Thinking)

B.2 Identify and use common strategies and practices that support all students through Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

- Establish common school-wide student expectations and acknowledgment systems, and increase fluency of communication
- Research, agree on, and utilize a common tool for monitoring and supporting student behaviors

B.3 Research and implement evidence-based Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum that values students' identities and increases students' sense of belonging

- Integrate daily systematic SEL within the five established domains (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making skills)
- Reflect on and improve how we serve students through cultural diversity and celebrations

Court and Community Schools

B.4 Identify and implement teaching strategies that support students' various learning modalities

- Engage with college and career professionals to identify Career and Technical Education pathways that result in the acquisition of skills, certifications, and internships
- Adopt and implement curriculum with fidelity, ensure standards-aligned instruction, and provide students with relevant learning opportunities

B.5 **Identify and use common strategies and practices that support all students through Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports**

- Review examples of successful incentive systems used by similar programs and reimagine how we provide options based on students' input and interests
- Implement a redesigned incentive system that includes routine monitoring of student data to determine effectivenes

B.6 **Create and maintain a continuous system of care that increases students' social-emotional competencies across the five established SEL domains**

- Develop a multi-disciplinary team that engages all partners involved in supporting student wellness to review student needs, coordinate additional supports, and celebrate growth
- Complete orientation meetings with all students entering programs to gather baseline data for use in goal setting

Anne Campbell Center for Children and Families

B.7 **Expedite and maximize student access and engagement in curriculum through a streamlined and accessible referral process, improved information sharing and capacity building with partners, and a robust transition-planning process**

- Digitize all forms, records, and referrals and maintain them on an updated platform
- Train district partners on the referral process
- Provide professional development to IEP teams and district staff to support successful transitions and student access

B.8 **Develop accessible supports and engage staff in professional development on behavior principles and interventions that consider a student's disability and how it impacts their access to education**

- Train staff in how to read all elements of an IEP, including the Psycho-educational Report and Behavior Intervention Plans, and track data to support the pursuit of plan goals
- Develop an internal resource library that provides information and tools for all staff

B.9 **Improve knowledge in the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) competencies to identify and support student social-emotional and mental health needs while also increasing family and caregiver engagement, empowerment, and participation**

- Attend SEL and mental health trainings that address support across all CASEL domains for all students
- Provide caregiver cafes and ongoing education that focuses on student access and support



GOAL 2

Build the Workforce for Student Success

Prioritize and strengthen a culturally and linguistically diverse workforce committed to equity and antiracist practices

Value Statement

The County Office of Education supports the development and recruitment of a well-prepared diverse workforce to support learners between ages 0-22 to realize their full potential academically and socially. The County Office of Education recognizes that all certificated, classified, and administrative staff have a direct and indirect impact on the educational outcomes of students and their families.

Strategic Direction

The County Office of Education will support the development of a sustainable San Mateo County education workforce that shares its student-centric commitment and core values. The County Office of Education will work to broaden pathways to teaching and align teacher demographics with student demographics to foster cultural connections. The County Office of Education will empower educators to excel in their careers in the Bay Area, thrive in our community, and make lasting, positive student outcomes.

Desired Outcomes

- Expanded pathways for credentialed and permitted teachers
- Successful recruitment and retainment of quality educators in San Mateo County
- A diverse workforce that more closely mirrors the student population
- Increased participation in our teacher residency programs

Objectives and Sample Actions

2.1 Address barriers to recruiting, retaining, and developing a culturally and linguistically diverse workforce.

- Design and share research and data tools for understanding and dismantling barriers to staff retention
- Work with institutions of higher education to connect graduates with careers in San Mateo County
- Develop a pay equity model for early childhood education and TK-12 teachers, including publishing pay ranges from across the Bay Area
- Establish a system for the launch of the Early Childhood Education Specialist Credential for PreK-3 teachers

2.2 Expand and strengthen pathways into the education workforce

- Expand the teacher residency program to prepare teachers, with an emphasis on special education, transitional kindergarten, multiple subject, and single subject credentials
- Seek funding opportunities and grants related to teacher residency expansion
- Seek and secure funding opportunities and grants to support the early childhood education workforce
- Expand opportunities for mentorship and job coaching

GOAL 3

Strengthen Advocacy and Partnerships

Establish a strong advocacy and partnership system centering community voices

Value Statement

The County Office of Education fosters excellent and equitable educational opportunities by improving connections to schools and child care programs, aligning efforts, and collaborating with the broader community. The County Office of Education's approach to advocacy and partnerships is grounded in meeting the needs of the whole child from age 0-22, valuing the diverse voices of the community, supporting the education workforce, and creating equitable systems. The County Office of Education uses its position to address countywide disparities and inequities.

Strategic Direction

The County Office of Education will help create healthy, empowered, equitable, resilient communities through its advocacy and partnership initiatives. The County Office of Education recognizes that input from students and families is critical and commits to strengthening its systems for ongoing community engagement. The County Office of Education will act on the communities' education priorities and advocate for policies and system changes to disrupt inequities. The County Office of Education can make the strongest impact through collaboration with partners on joint efforts.

Desired Outcomes

- Coordinated, frequent, and meaningful engagement to maintain a current understanding of community priorities
- An established cradle-to-career initiative for San Mateo County
- Coordinated advocacy efforts with districts, other partners, and community members
- Expanded and equitable funding for schools in San Mateo County



Objectives and Sample Actions

3.1 Enhance processes for soliciting, analyzing, and applying broad community input

- Assess the County Office of Education's current processes for gathering community input
- Partner with existing boards, advisory groups, and partners to engage communities
- Prioritize communicating with the community in languages they speak
- Survey partners to understand the impacts of County Office of Education programs
- Share family and community input with internal and external partners

3.2 Establish and promote a San Mateo County cradle-to-career initiative that provides learners with health, social, and educational supports from birth through college and career

- Map community resources for cradle-to-career initiative
- Define cradle-to-career partner roles, incentives, and expertise and establish/expand partnerships to streamline services, reduce duplication, and remove barriers
- Help districts develop effective strategies for smooth transitions as students move along their education journey

3.3 Create and implement an effective advocacy strategy that reflects community priorities

- Use community input to identify top advocacy priorities
- Collaborate with San Mateo County Legislative Affairs Office and Board of Supervisors
- Develop annual legislative agenda and advocate in partnership with the County Board of Education at the local, state, and federal level
- Partner with advocacy groups supporting the County Office of Education's priorities and help build and support countywide coalitions to address key issues

3.4 Secure resources to address funding inequities across San Mateo County

- Explore the creation of a local education fund
- Establish a common, equitable protocol for fee-for-service activities for schools
- Establish grant coordinator position
- Advocate with the State for changes to funding structures to advance equity

GOAL 4

Embody OneSMCOE Vision and Values

Demonstrate and embody the County Office of Education's vision, values, and core practices at every level of the organization

Value Statement

OneSMCOE defines who we are. It includes all employees of the San Mateo County Office of Education. OneSMCOE represents a shared commitment to serving students in authentic, culturally responsive, and impactful ways through daily action on our values and core practices: inclusion, equity, growth mindset, trauma-informed approaches, cultural humility, accountability, and sustainability.

Strategic Direction

Through this goal, the County Office of Education will build an organizational culture of community, collaboration, and belonging, supporting each other as professionals and colleagues. By modeling OneSMCOE core practices across and throughout the organization, the County Office of Education will model a strong student-centered commitment for districts and the broader community.

Desired Outcomes

- Common understanding of OneSMCOE and core practices
- Share information on County Office of Education employment trends and budget
- Personalized employee professional growth plans
- OneSMCOE community events and celebrations
- County Office of Education internal structural alignment and paths for career progression



Objectives and Sample Actions

4.1 Deepen the employee experience through sustained onboarding and professional learning

- Form an onboarding training team
- Develop curriculum for training modules
- Plan annual training schedule for new and established employees
- Develop a training team consisting of County Office of Education staff experts in various topics

4.2 Develop communication products that are 'About OneSMCOE; For OneSMCOE' to share data and trends with staff

- Expand data collection on staffing and share regularly through communication tools
- Create a biannual staff report
- Expand the internal newsletter, *Connections*, to include a weekly column about County Office of Education core practices

4.3 Create a professional development framework to guide personalized professional growth plans

- Develop career growth pathways for each job family
- Outline each department's growth opportunities, training, and supports, and identify professional development opportunities aligned with departmental goals
- Conduct a needs assessment and identify barriers to professional growth and advancement
- Develop templates and timelines for individualized career growth plans
- Establish a resource portal

4.4 Create opportunities to celebrate OneSMCOE organizational culture and diversity

- Install visual and digital displays at school sites to connect and share messaging
- Establish a San Mateo County Office of Education Speakers Bureau to share expertise across the organization and county
- Support LiveWell Committee activities
- Hold employee recognition events, including recognition for managerial excellence
- Recognize community partners for excellence in collaboration

4.5 Sustain current and competitive job classifications

- Use a completed classification study to map career growth for all staff
- Develop a plan to conduct ongoing review and alignment of classifications
- Keep a robust collaboration in place with Personnel Commission Services, Human Resources, Bargaining Units, and the Superintendent in support of a dynamic and positive workplace and workforce

Appendix A - Planning Process

The San Mateo County Office of Education began the five-year strategic plan update in March 2022, convening a strategic planning team of more than 60 employees representing all departments. The team included:

- Twenty-member Steering Committee that met monthly to guide the process and provide ongoing input and feedback
- Four subcommittees of 10-20 staff focused on each goal area
- A school Programs Subcommittee that worked on a parallel track to develop strategic goals specific to the Court and Community School Programs, K-22 Special Education Program, and Anne Campbell Center for Children and Families
- An equity team that developed the guiding equity statement
- Data advisors to support the planning process

Subcommittees reviewed the previous strategic plan, employee surveys, the County Office of Education's Equity Index, the California School Dashboard, and other guiding documents. They developed initial draft goals, objectives, and actions. In total, subcommittees held more than 30 work sessions, engaging the County Office of Education staff and partners throughout the process by:

- Presenting elements of the draft goals and gathering input at five OneSMCOE meetings, Leadership Seminar, OneSMCOE workshops, end-of-year school celebration and departmental meetings
- Holding a one-day work session
- Facilitating focus group discussions with the County Office of Education's staff and partners
- Managing an online feedback portal on SharePoint
- Conducting interviews with key partners representing districts of varying size and geographies across the region and state
- Giving presentations and facilitating breakout group discussions with the Children and Education Thrive Action Group

The San Mateo County Board of Education provided ongoing input and feedback by:

- Convening a Board subcommittee for four sessions
- Attending monthly Steering Committee meetings
- Participating in one-on-one interviews
- Holding a Strategic Planning Board Study Session
- Receiving reports and providing input at regular Board meetings

Appendix B - Progress on Previous Strategic Plan

The San Mateo County Office of Education made significant progress to implement the 2016 goals and objectives. Examples of key successes include:

- **Environmental Education and Sustainability Initiative.** The County Office of Education developed an ongoing environmental education and sustainability initiative to promote environmental literacy and stewardship for all San Mateo County students.
- **OneSMCOE Communications Plan.** The County Office of Education created a strategic communication plan that is clear, consistent, and comprehensive in articulating what OneSMCOE is and how the organization will continue to connect with the community.
- **Organizational Improvement Process.** The County Office of Education developed an annual staff survey designed to gather data on employee satisfaction and organizational culture and climate so that actions can be taken to ensure all the County Office of Education's staff feel valued and appreciated.
- **Equity, Social Justice, and Inclusion.** Hired an Executive Director, Equity, Social Justice, and Inclusion, to focus on equity initiatives within the County Office of Education and with school districts and partners in the county, established a County Office of Education Equity Team and a countywide Equity Community of Practice, and conducted organization-wide antiracism learning and work .
- **School Site Support.** The County Office of Education developed a staff survey for school site employees to identify their needs and as a result, additional training was provided for paraeducators and facility upgrades were made.
- **Teacher Residency Program.** The County Office of Education built a partnership with Alder Graduate School of Education and secured funding support for a Teacher Residency Program. The first cohort completed the program in 2022.



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