

Annual Report

to the community 2025



Dear MPCSD Community,

The 2025-2026 school year promises deep engagement and intentional growth guided by our district's three strategic directions: grow student belonging, strengthen academic excellence, and create inspiring environments. With our vision, *Educating and empowering students while embracing childhood and adolescence*, firmly in place and our leadership team consistent from last year, we have what it takes to make a meaningful impact for our students and community.

Already, our strong vision and outstanding staff have led to great momentum toward our goals, which we are excited to present here in this annual report.

We will maintain high expectations as the public school district that shows up

for every student regardless of their needs or circumstances. We will intentionally reflect and respond to the strengths and needs of our students, staff, and community. We will continue to uphold our promise to invest in safe and secure facilities with our projects funded by Measure U. Our commitment is evident.

Each of us wears many hats to support the education of students across the Menlo Park City School District. We are grateful to our community for its consistent belief in and support of the rewarding work happening at the Early Learning Center, Encinal, Laurel, Oak Knoll and Hillview Schools.

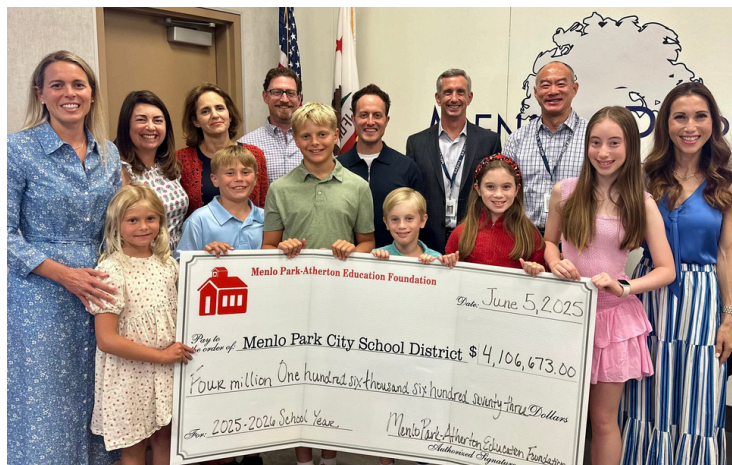
In partnership,

Kristen Gracia

MPCSD Superintendent

43 Years (and counting) of Community Support

Since 1982 MPCSD has been supported by the Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation (MPAEF) which was founded by parents to augment the district's budget in the wake of Prop 13's education funding cuts. MPAEF seeks to enable the Menlo Park City School District (MPCSD) to provide an exceptional education to all students, beyond what is possible with public dollars alone.



MPAEF Presidents and Executive Director present MPCSD School Board members with the 2025-26 grant.

Every year MPCSD uses MPAEF's generous grant to help fund specialist and elective classes, mental and physical health, academic support, innovative classroom projects, and high quality professional development for all staff. Nearly 65% of district families support the One Community Campaign, the annual fundraiser for MPAEF and our Parent Teacher Organization partners.

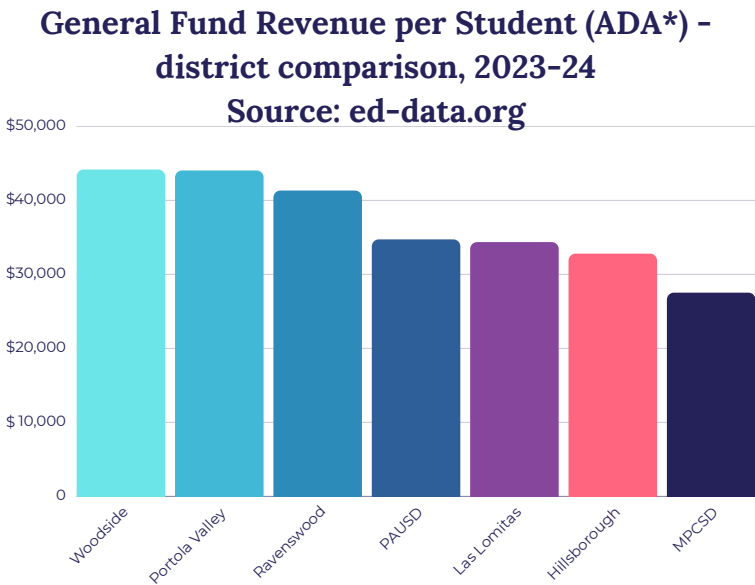
School Funding: It Takes More Than Property Taxes

MPCSD is Community Funded, as are about 15% of school districts in California. This means that the per-student funding target determined by the state is met by local property tax dollars, not state funding. Community funded districts' school funding is not dependent on enrollment - the same funding "pie" needs to cover the total student population at any given time.

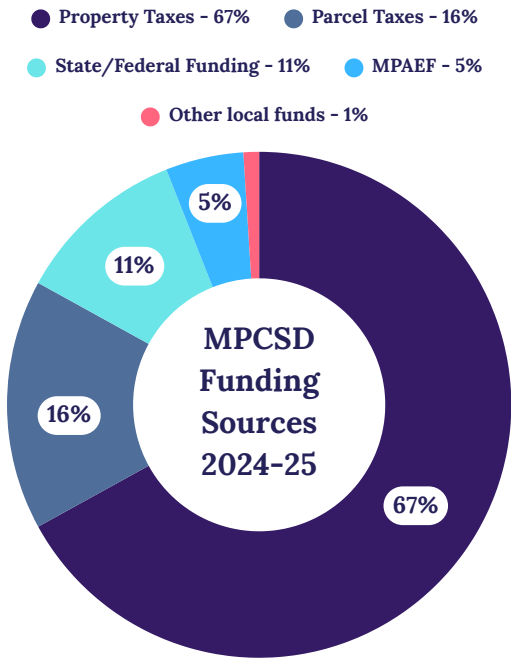
Property taxes fund many local agencies in addition to schools, like fire, water, libraries, city governments, and more. MPCSD receives only about 17% of local property taxes, funding roughly two thirds of our expenses. Prop 13 froze tax allocations as they were in the late 1970s, preventing adjustments for growth and leading to MPCSD's lower per-student funding compared to neighboring districts:

89% of total revenue is generated locally. Thank you, community!

MPCSD is fortunate that the local community has stepped up - since 1982! - to augment our property tax revenue. Parcel taxes, along with philanthropic giving through the MPAEF/One Community Campaign, allow us to provide the exceptional education that the community expects for its children. Thank you for investing in public education!



*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.



During the 2025-26 school year MPCSD is engaging in a **community-wide financial exercise** with these goals:

- Align budget to vision and priorities
- Implement best practices to address district goals
- Identify community priorities
- Anticipate increased expenditures related to Personnel, Operations, Capital Outlay, and Services, taking into account cost-of-living adjustments
- Facilitate three or more years of balanced budgets
- Maintain competitive compensation
- Maintain healthy reserve for economic uncertainties

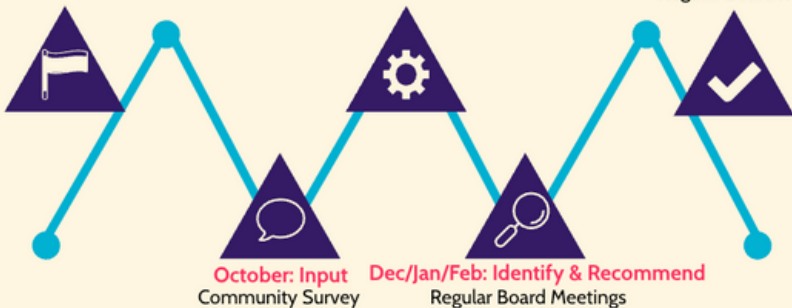


Use this QR code to learn more about MPCSD's Annual Budget

September: Information
Budget 101 Sessions

November: Analysis
Board Study Session

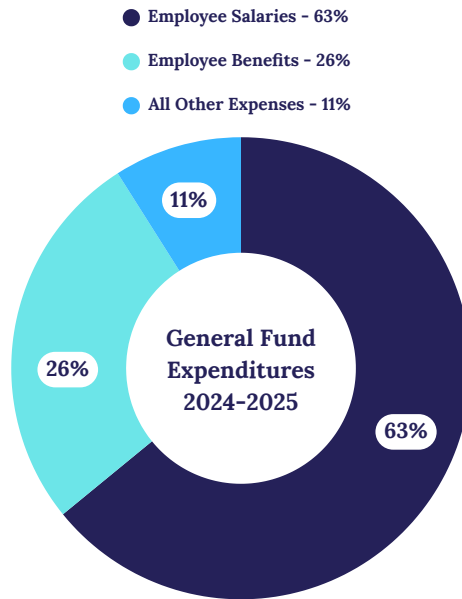
June 2026: Adopt Balanced Budget
for 2026-27
Regular Board meetings



We Are People Powered

MPCSD's most important resource is its incredible staff! Outstanding teachers, counselors, principals, nurses, classroom aides and paraeducators, bus drivers, tech and facilities maintenance staff, school front office teams, yard duties, and every other member of our team work to deliver on MPCSD's vision to educate and empower students while embracing childhood and adolescence.

The district's investment in its people is apparent through its budget, which is nearly 90%



dedicated to salary and benefits. With non-personnel expenses at only about 10%, our operations are extremely efficient.

MPCSD's School Board has publicly committed - through its Teacher and Staff Compensation Philosophies - to competitive pay for teachers and non-teaching staff, knowing that the most critical component of student success is a highly effective teacher. Because of this, MPCSD retains 93% of its staff, a remarkable feat given the pressures on the education profession across the country.

MPCSD People by the Numbers



Teachers, Counselors & Psychologists



Student-Facing Support Staff



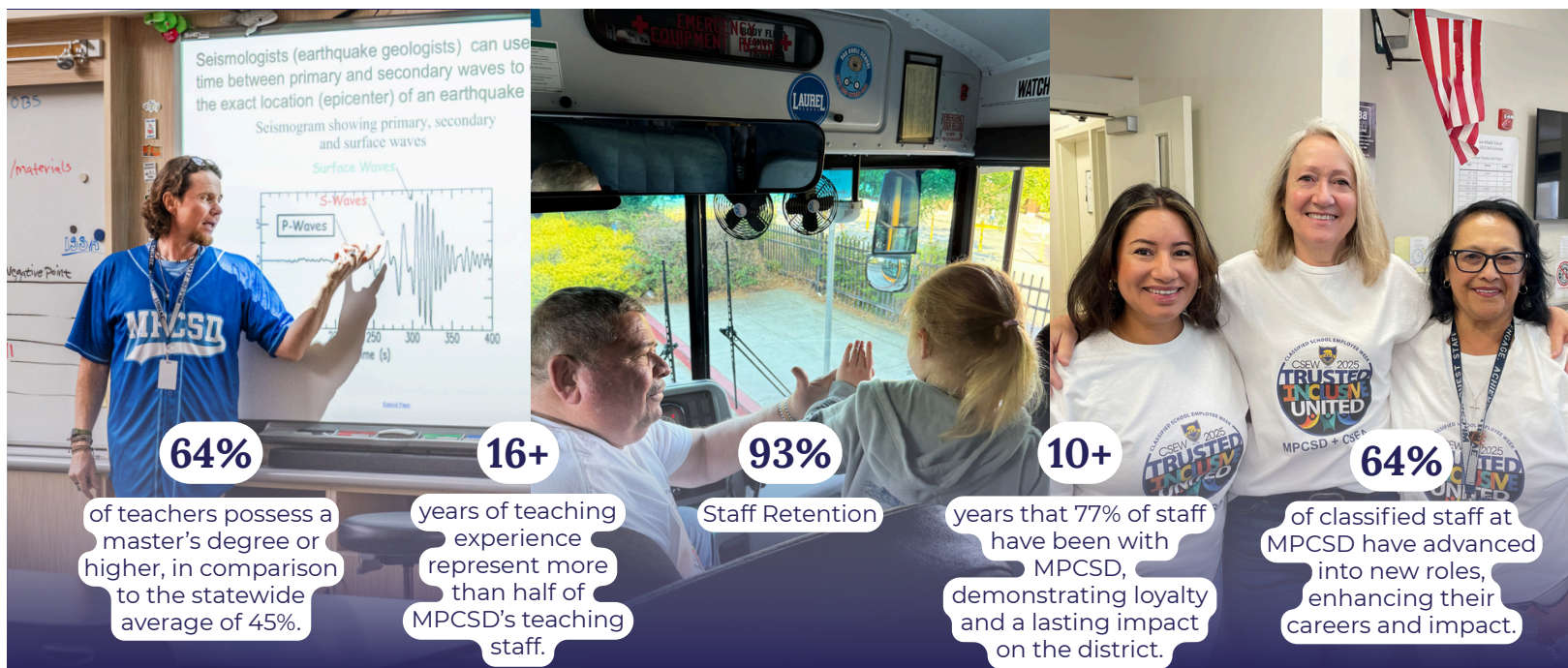
Tech & Facilities Support Staff



School Leaders



District Administrators



MPCSD is in Year Two of a Six Year Strategic Direction Cycle

Our Vision and Strategic Directions help guide our budgeting as we invest in these student-centered priorities. We are happy to share progress on our three Strategic Directions: **Grow Student Belonging**, **Strengthen Academic Excellence**, and **Create Inspiring Environments**

GROW STUDENT BELONGING



MPCSD believes it is our job to create the conditions where every student feels that they belong. We make a point to greet each child by name, and ensure books and lesson materials reflect the diverse backgrounds of our students and their families. Our social-emotional learning curriculum is well developed. We invest time and effort to ensure that every student has trusted adults on campus they can go to for help.



START WITH HELLO WEEK
See someone alone - Reach out and help - "Start with Hello"
A YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM FROM SANDY HOOK PROMISE

WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 15-19				
MONDAY MEET-N-GREET MONDAY Grab a name tag at break and "Start With Hello!" 	TUESDAY UPSTANDER TUESDAY Celebrate Upstanders and change-makers who step up for school safety- send them an Upstander Gram!	WEDNESDAY WEAR GREEN WEDNESDAY GREEN OUT! Wear green today as a symbol of unity, inclusivity, and solidarity!	THURSDAY TRUSTED ADULT THURSDAY Connect to a Trusted Adult and celebrate Trusted Adults throughout the school community.	FRIDAY MOVING FORWARD FRI-YAY Come to the Hawk's Nest at lunch and sign the pledge!



STRENGTHEN ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Year over year, strong majorities of MPCSD students meet and exceed academic standards in English Language Arts, math, and science. Additionally, MPCSD offers a well rounded curriculum of specialist classes and electives at all grade levels, including music, art, language, wood shop, broadcasting, coding, engineering, and more.

The 2025-26 school year includes:

- Implementation of adaptive diagnostic assessment tools to strengthen classroom instruction and academic outcomes in math and reading
- Foundational literacy and targeted vocabulary
- Students as Mathematicians (*a partnership with MPAEF to spark curiosity and math discovery*)
- More STEM offerings at the middle school



CREATE INSPIRING ENVIRONMENTS



Measure U



In November 2024, 70% of the MPCSD community voted **Yes** to pass Measure U, a general obligation bond for school facilities. We are incredibly grateful to the community for its continued commitment to safe and secure campuses and for trusting us to deliver high quality, modern, future-ready, and attractive facilities projects - within budget and on time! Here is a snapshot of work that has already been completed and is ongoing for the 2025-26 year.

Completed summer 2025:

- data wiring upgrades
- asphalt repairs and play structure resurfacing
- tree planting
- intrusion alarm pilot systems
- door access control installations



Through September 2025 the district spent \$1.4M in Measure U funds, with plans to spend \$8-10M over the 2025-26 school year. We are actively engaged in the design process for major initiatives like new construction at Laurel School Lower Campus and modernization at Hillview. Districtwide HVAC electrification plans are due for state review by the end of 2025 and installation by 2027. The total amount approved by voters is \$123M.

The Citizen's Bond Oversight Committee will provide annual reports to the community. Keep track of our progress:



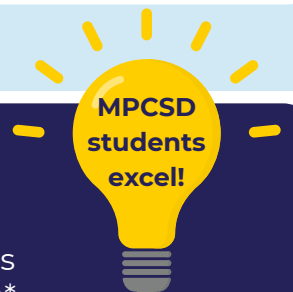
CALIFORNIA'S ACADEMIC LANDSCAPE



State assessment data from Spring 2025 shows improvement among **all grades** in **all subjects** measured: English Language Arts, mathematics, and science.

MPCSD continues to outpace statewide performance: *compared to the statewide average for percentage of students meeting and exceeding standards,

MPCSD scored 41 percentage points higher in math, 35 percentage points higher in science, and 31 percentage points higher in ELA.



+41

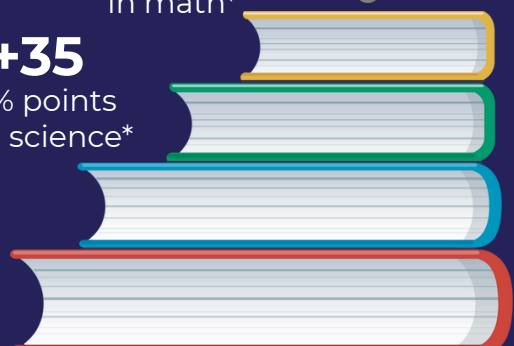
% points in math*

+35

% points in science*

+31

% points in ELA*



Community Engagement



MPCSD invites you to connect with us.

School Board meetings are open with in-person or remote attendance options.

Meeting schedule, agendas, and Zoom details are available at [mpcsd.org](https://www.mpcsd.org).

MPCSD reaches the community in partnership with Safeway Pharmacy to offer **vaccine clinics** (pictured left), at the **Menlo Park Farmers Market** (pictured center left), at the MPAEF's annual **Schoolhouse Rocks Run and Festival** (pictured right), through our parent education **Speaker Series** (pictured center right at an event with Lenore Skenazy in April 2025), and more. We look forward to seeing you around town!

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](https://www.mpcsd.org)



District Leaders: Kristen Gracia, Superintendent • Jammie Behrendt, Associate Superintendent
Stephanie Sheridan, Assistant Superintendent • Jackie Chen, Chief Business Officer

BOARD OF EDUCATION: SHERWIN CHEN • JED SCOLNICK • SCOTT SAYWELL • FRANCESCA SEGRÈ • JOSH SPIRA

EDUCATING AND EMPOWERING STUDENTS WHILE EMBRACING CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE.

181 ENCINAL AVENUE • ATHERTON, CA 94027 • 650.321.7140



[WWW.MPCSD.ORG](https://www.mpcsd.org)

SEND US A NOTE AT [INFO@MPCSD.ORG](mailto:info@mpcsd.org) • FACEBOOK @GOMPCSD / INSTAGRAM @MPCSDAYS