

PROMISE



PALO ALTO
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
CHAMPIONS OF EXCELLENCE

Annual Report

JULY 2026

[PROMISE.PAUSD.ORG](https://promise.pausd.org)

Palo Alto Unified School District



Students Enrolled

10,124



High Quality Staff

1,696



Student-to-Teacher
Ratio

13 to 1



Per-Pupil Spending

\$35,864



Over 1.1 Million Meals
Served

1.1 M
Million

**At
a
Glance**



Access to arts, music, &
library instructional
programs

100%



National Board-Certified
Teachers

39



Career Pathway Electives

120⁺



Raised by PiE to
support our
students

\$4.9 M
Million



Moody's and S&P
General Obligations
Bond Ratings

AAA

Superintendent Glass's Message



This edition of the Promise reports on a year of real effort across PAUSD, and it reports honestly. Some results show meaningful progress; others show where the work remains unfinished. Both belong in this document, because the value of the Promise has always been its willingness to measure publicly what matters. That discipline, and the daily work behind these pages, belongs to PAUSD's educators, staff, students and school communities.

This update also lands during a period of transition. Over the coming months, the district is engaging staff, families, and the community about what's working, what needs attention, and what PAUSD should be known for in the years ahead. That engagement may shape how the district sets and tracks its goals, including the Promise framework itself. What will not change is the commitment to public accountability for results. This document is that commitment in practice.

Jason E. Glass, Ed.D.
Superintendent & Chief Learner

Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging

Spring 2025-26 Panorama Survey Results

Grades 3–5

Sense of Belonging



▲ 6
Greatest increase

Teacher-Student Relationships



▲ 4
Greatest increase

Grades 6–12

Sense of Belonging



▲ 1

Teacher-Student Relationships



0

Academic Achievement & Progress

Increased the number of student groups performing at the highest levels on the CA Dashboard:

ELA: 6–8 student groups at “Blue” or “Green”

Math: 5–7 student groups at “Blue” or “Green”

Systems of Support

- Over 800 K–12 students are receiving Tier 1 support plans
- 100% of school sites are expected to complete equity-centered MTSS Fidelity & Progress Reviews by the end of the school year

Inclusive Practices & Student Access

71.2% of Students with Disabilities spent more than 80% of the instructional day in general education settings, exceeding the 70% target.

98%

families agreed that IEP goals are clear & progress is effectively communicated

98%

family satisfaction with Special Education services

96.2%

Districtwide attendance rate, exceeding the 95% target

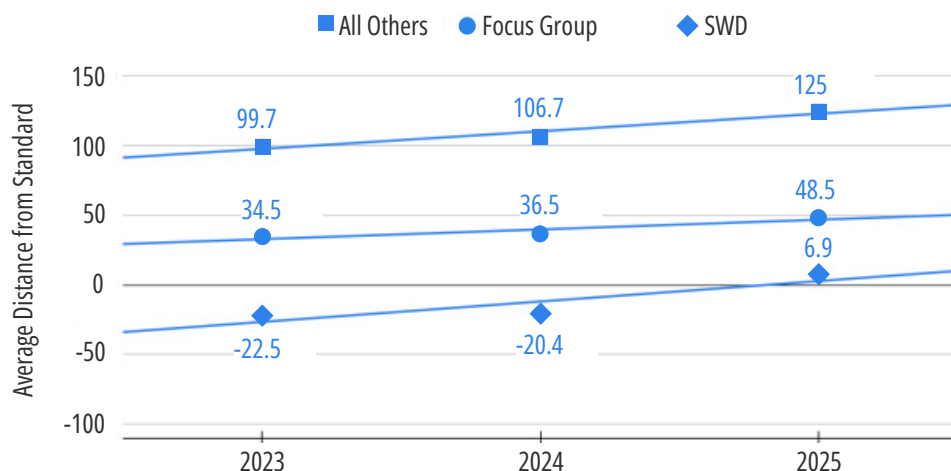
90.6%

A-G Completion for all students increased from 89.7% in 2024



Fifth-grade results reflect steady growth in ELA

Distance From Standard for matched cohorts from 2023-2025

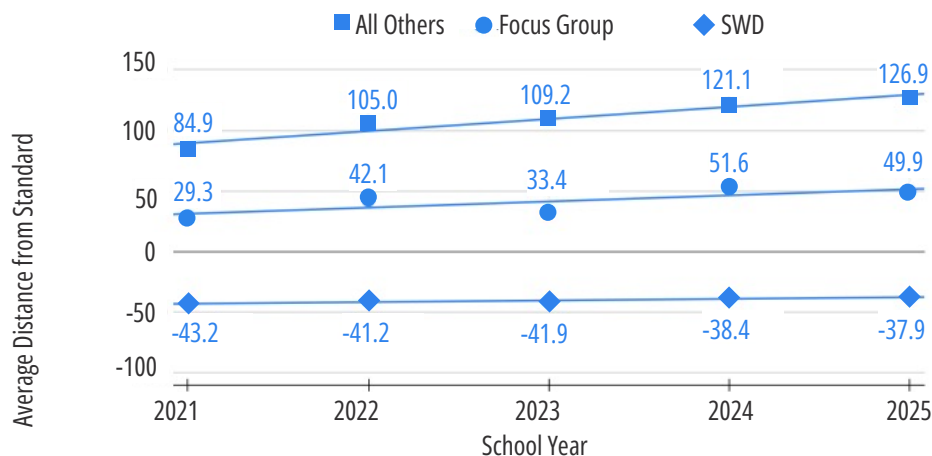


■ All Others ● Focus Group ◆ Students with Disabilities

Chart: 2025 Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment Results for English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA) and Mathematics Report (June 17, 2025 Board Meeting Report, Page 18)

Eighth-grade result reflect steady growth in ELA

Distance from Standard for matched cohorts from 2021-2025



■ All Others ● Focus Group ◆ Students with Disabilities

Chart: 2025 Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment Results for English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA) and Mathematics Report (June 17, 2025 Board Meeting Report, Page 21)

High Quality Teaching & Learning

English Learner Progress

- Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) students, former English Learners, exceeded the 80% target in ELA, improving from 79.9% (2023-24) to 82.75% (2024-25), and maintained stable performance in Math, 74.5% (2023-24) to 74.8% (2024-25)
- Decreased the Long-Term English Learners as a percentage of the EL population from 7.4% (2023-24) to 6.3% (2024-25)
- All students moved from Green (2024) to Blue (2025) on the CA Dashboard in ELA

Strengthening Instruction & Targeted Support

- All students moved from Green (2024) to Blue (2025) on the CA Dashboard in ELA
- The UCSF Multitudes Reading Difficulty Risk Screener was successfully rolled out for all K-2 students
- Middle school algebra teachers developed common assessments, analyzed student work, and adjusted instruction to address misconceptions and meet individual student needs
- i-Ready diagnostics, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), core ELA instructional blocks, and intervention time provided holistic support for elementary students' growth in reading comprehension
- Over 2,000 intervention plans were documented for K-12 students needing support

State Recognition

Greene Middle School and JLS Middle School have been officially designated as California Schools to Watch, and Fletcher Middle School has earned redesignation.

89.1%

of students are considered prepared on the CA Dashboard College and Career Indicator (CCI), an increase of 1.9% from the previous year

69.5%

of Long-Term English Learners made progress in proficiency, representing a 21.8% increase from 2024

450+

students are currently enrolled in dual enrollment courses.

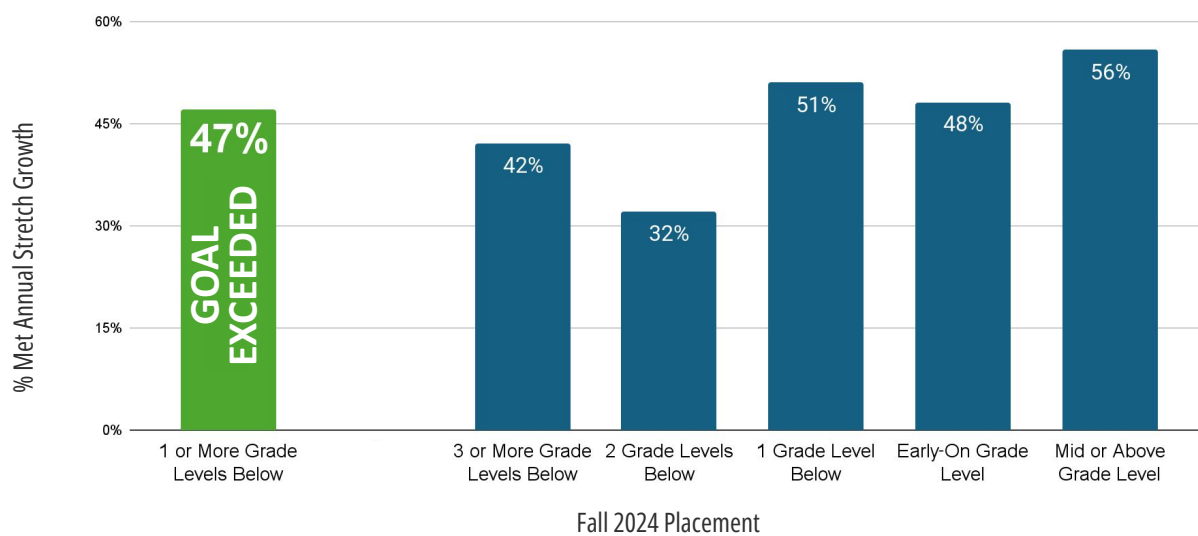




District-level progress indicator

Goal: Annually, 45% of K-5 students who scored below grade level on their fall i-Ready reading diagnostic will achieve their i-Ready stretch growth

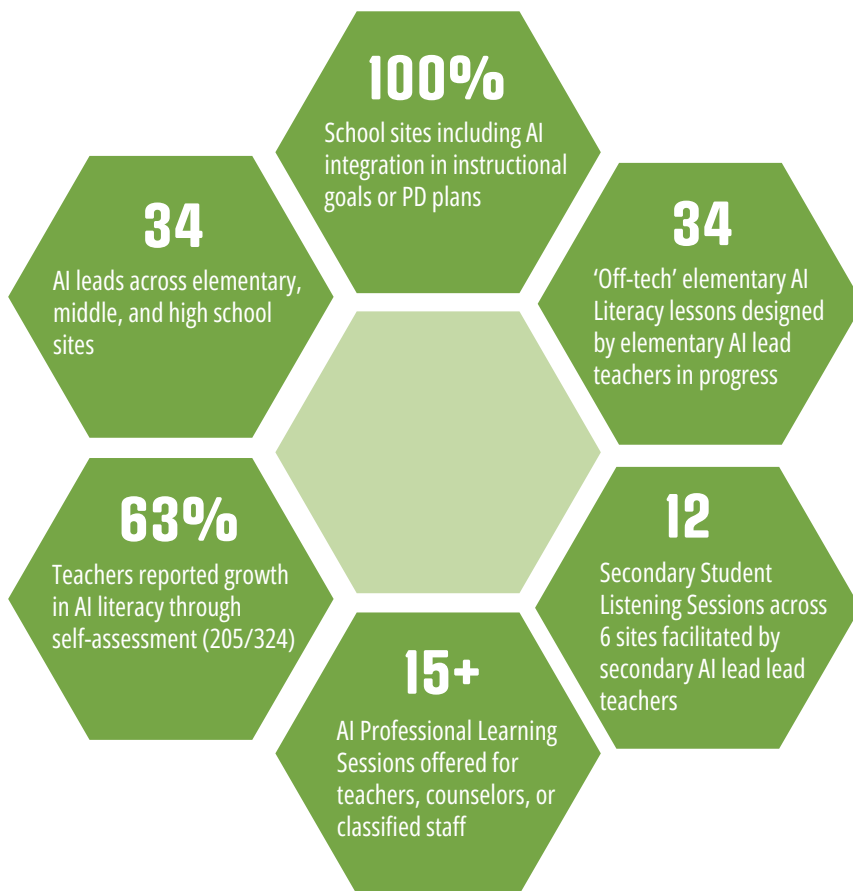
K-5 i-Ready Reading Annual Stretch Growth Met, Fall 2024 to Spring 2025



Innovation & Social Responsibility

AI NOW! Initiative

- As California prepares to issue statewide AI guidelines and a model policy by 2026 (SB 1288; Ed Code §33328.5), PAUSD is already leading the way in its third year, grant-funded AI NOW! Initiative
- 75% of all PAUSD teachers participated in AI-focused learning opportunities YTD
- 100% of IT Desktop Support staff participated in AI literacy learning
- 72% of secondary teachers participated in the Districtwide PD Day AI sessions, and 80% of elementary teachers participated in the winter AI professional learning session



89.1%

of students prepared for college and career as measured by College Career Indicator (CCI)

95%

of elementary students received digital citizenship lessons

2000+

secondary students participated in the CTE Showcase, Advanced Authentic Research Symposiums, or Career Fairs

400+

seniors are projected to complete a 4-year VAPA or a CTE Pathway Program upon graduation

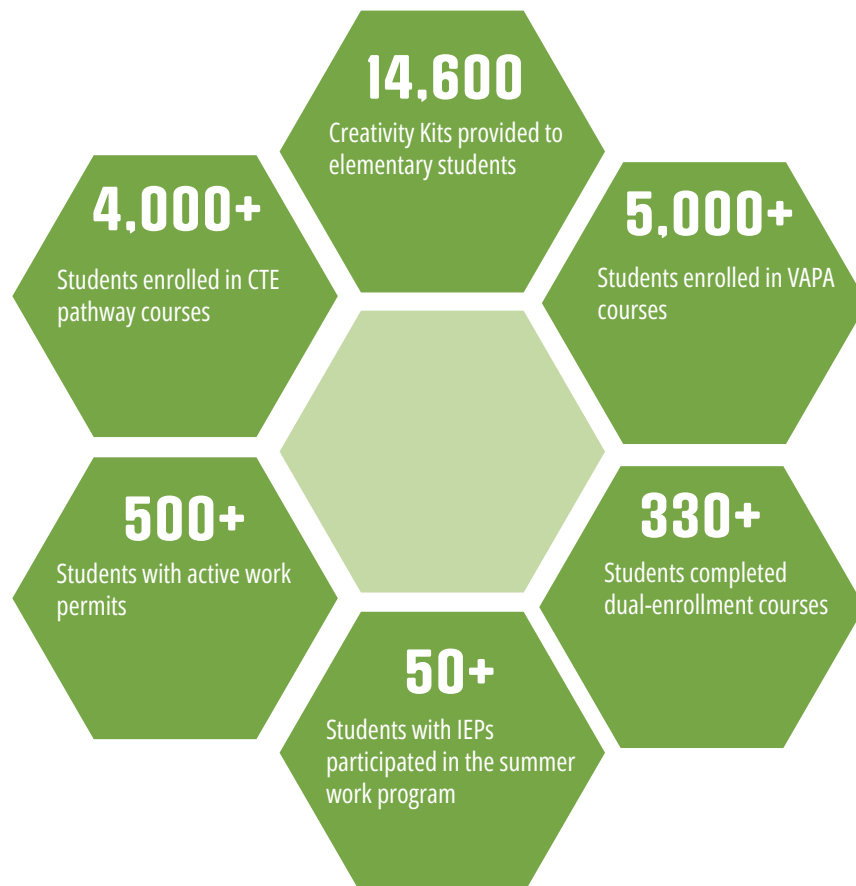




Student Success & District Initiative

- 80–90% of seniors on track to earn the Seal of Civic Engagement
- With 151 certifications earned YTD, including YouScience, Food Handler, SafeSitter, and NAF, students are on track to meet the 2024-25 baseline
- Palo Alto Middle College High School proudly added 9th and 12th grades, becoming a full four-year high school and celebrating its first graduating class
- A District Sustainability Program Manager was successfully hired, and comprehensive plans for a District Sustainability Plan are underway
- Nutrition Services was officially recognized by Sustainable Stanford for its outstanding student-centered and sustainability efforts.

Student Impact Highlights



Mental Health & Wellness

Strategic Partnerships

Expanded mental health education, suicide prevention, grief support, and parent education opportunities in partnership with:

- The Jed Foundation
- Outlet/LGBTQ+ Youth Space
- San Mateo Pride Center
- Allcove
- Children's Health Council
- Kara

Student Wellness & School Climate

- Increased favorable perceptions of school climate for both elementary and secondary students
- Therapist-led Parent Education Series are now available at the elementary level.
- Uwill virtual therapy services expanded K-12 student access to mental health care beyond school hours.
- District therapists completed Cue-Centered Therapy (CCT) training, led by Stanford University's Dr. Victor Carrión

Staff Well-Being

- Districtwide Fall Walk and Spring Steps Challenges encouraged teachers and staff to collaborate, stay active, and promote overall wellness
- The New Staff Wellness Space at Palo Alto High School officially opened

3,179

students screened for hearing

2,863

students screened for vision

182

risk assessments 2025-26 YTD

220

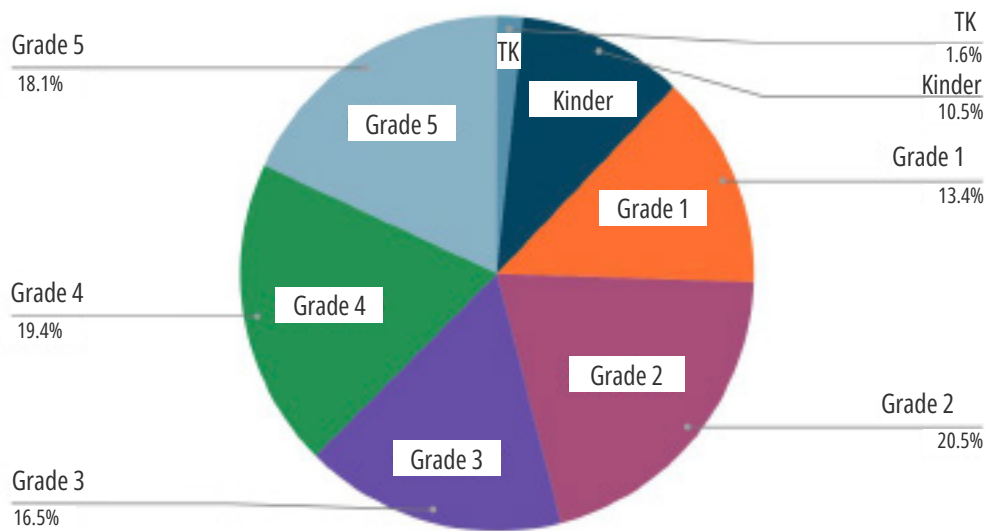
staff support sessions delivered



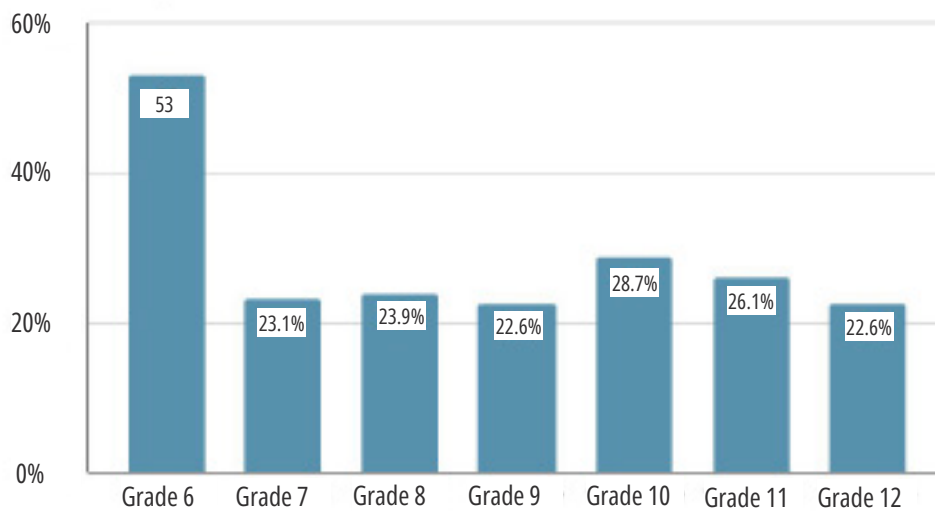


Who is accessing school-based services?

Elementary Referrals



Secondary Referrals



Serve & Celebrate Others



Celebration and Recognition Culture

- All schools proudly hosted dynamic multicultural events and diverse learning opportunities for their communities
- Weekly highlights and celebrations showcased student talent and achievements, and community contributions
- Unity Day events highlighted kindness, empathy, and inclusion across all school sites
- Student Nutrition Services hosted the Annual Tasting Day, where over 500 students and families voted on new menu items
- Future Chef winner prepared a creamy, flavorful Sri Lankan Milk Rice, a rich, coconut-infused dish served with a spicy Sri Lankan salsa
- Arts in Unusual Places featured a pop-up outdoor art gallery showcasing high school 2D and 3D student artwork, small ensemble performances in Choir, Band, Jazz, Orchestra, and Theatre by students from both high schools at the Stanford Shopping Center
- Students across the District earned top placements and recognition in competitive academic, career, journalism, and performing arts events with some advancing to national and international levels

100
Years of service



PAUSD's Hospital School now supports 450–500 medically fragile students each year.





Learning Through It All

PAUSD's Ronald McDonald House classroom was featured by Glamour magazine for its student and family support of Continuity of Learning, Flexible Instruction, Individualized Support.



Glossary

Advanced Placement AP Exam: A standardized, college-level exam administered by the College Board to assess a student's mastery of the material covered in a corresponding AP course.

AVID: Advancement Via Individual Determination

CA Dashboard: An online tool that provides information about the performance of California schools and districts on state and local indicators, including those related to student achievement, college and career readiness, and equity.

Certifications: Verifications of skill or knowledge attainment based on generally-accepted skill standards for an occupation. PAUSD offers several certifications through its CTE programs.

California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS): The nation's largest statewide, anonymous student survey, assessing school climate, mental/physical health, and risk behaviors in Grades 5, 7, 9, and 11. CHKS is supported by the CA Department of Education, and it helps schools collect data for state accountability (LCAP).

CAASPP: California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress

CTE: Career and Technical Education

English Learner (EL): A student who is in the process of acquiring English language proficiency, developing their ability to listen, speak, read, and write in English to a level that allows them to succeed in an English-dominant classroom.

ELA: English Language Arts. Information to help students achieve progressive levels of mastery so that they may communicate effectively in English and, ultimately, participate fully in society and the world of work. ELA classes help students improve their listening, speaking, writing, and reading skills.

ELPAC: English Language Proficiency Assessments for California

General Obligation Bond Ratings (S&P/Moody's): Rating systems to provide clarity around the components of credit risk.

IEP: Individualized Education Plan

Literacy: Literacy is a combination of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Early literacy refers to learners using

these skills from Kindergarten through 5th grade.

Mental Health and Wellness Associates: Provide mental health support through group and 1:1 counseling, class presentations, parent and teacher consultation, site team collaboration, parent and staff psychoeducation.

Mental Health Contracted Providers:

tbh – provides secondary students with 24/7 individual and group virtual coaching sessions, parent education, bilingual therapists, and culturally inclusive supports, and connections to resources.

Care Solace – Assists staff, students, and families in finding local mental health-related programs and counseling services.

Uwill – Immediate teletherapy platform available to students via the ClassLink portal.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS): A proactive, evidence-based framework used to address the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of all students. It uses data-driven decision-making to provide tiers of support (see Tiered Interventions). Key elements include universal screening, progress monitoring, and a team-based approach to ensure that resources are aligned to meet student needs early.

NAF: National Academy Foundation is an industry-sponsored nonprofit with a national network of public-private partnerships that support career academies within traditional high schools.

National Board-Certified Teachers: National Board Certification is the most respected professional certification available in education and provides numerous benefits to teachers, students, and schools.

OG: Orton-Gillingham methodology is a direct, explicit, multisensory, structured, sequential, diagnostic, and prescriptive way to teach literacy when reading, writing, and spelling does not come easily to individuals, such as those with dyslexia.

Panorama Education: An education technology company that specializes in K-12 survey platforms. Panorama provides tools to help schools and districts gather and analyze feedback from students, families, teachers, and staff to understand school climate and improve student well-being and academic success.

Pathway: A pathway is defined as a two-to-three-year course sequence that consists of an introduction (optional), concentrator, and capstone courses, as determined by the CDE.

Per-Pupil Spending: The amount of money spent on education by a school district or the state, divided by the number of students educated. For most purposes in California, the number of students is determined by Average Daily Attendance (ADA). (EdSource)

PiE: Partners in Education

PTA: Parent Teacher Association

PTAC: Palo Alto Council of Parent Teacher Associations works with District staff, Board of Education, community partners, and PTAs at 17 schools to support students and families.

Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP): Students who have transitioned from English Learner (EL) status to proficient in English, based on meeting state and local criteria, such as California ELPAC assessments.

SaFE: Student and Family Engagement. SaFE Specialists provide schoolwide support and resources to identified students and families.

State Seal of Civic Engagement (SSCE): A recognition program for California public school students who demonstrate excellence in civics education, community participation, and an understanding of the U.S. and California constitutions.

California State Seal of Biliteracy (SSB): A gold seal awarded to high school graduates who demonstrate proficiency in English and one or more additional languages. To qualify, students must typically complete English requirements with a 3.0 GPA or pass specific exams (like the CAASPP or AP English), and demonstrate world language proficiency via coursework (3.0 GPA in 4 years), AP/IB exams, or other approved assessments.

SED: Acronym for Socio-Economically Disadvantaged.

SWIFT: Systemwide Integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT) drives the PAUSD equity agenda.

Tiered Interventions:

Tier 1 interventions are high-quality classroom instruction, screening, and group interventions.

Tier 2 interventions are targeted interventions whose intensity varies across group size, frequency and duration of intervention, and level of training of the professionals providing instruction or intervention.

Tier 3 interventions are intensive interventions and include comprehensive evaluations, which may involve an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

TK: Transitional Kindergarten. Currently, children in California can enroll in kindergarten if they turn 5 on or before September 1. Younger children born after that date will be eligible to enroll in TK.

Unity Day: Unity Day, started by PACER's* National Bullying Prevention Center as the signature event of National Bullying Prevention Month. It continues to grow every year as a tangible representation of the universal message that our society wants to promote kindness, acceptance and inclusion to prevent bullying. (*Parent Advocacy Coalition for Education Rights)

Wellness Center: Wellness Centers provide safe, supportive environments on school campuses, where students can go to discuss a variety of issues – from depression, grief, self-esteem, family life and stress – to dating violence, sexual identity, and health needs. Through on-campus programming and community-based partnerships, students receive coordinated health education, assessment, counseling, and other support services to maximize student engagement and success.



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