



STRONG TEACHERS, STRONG CLASSROOMS:

Enhancing Quality Instruction

Goal #1: Strengthen quality instruction by improving engagement and rigor for all students.

High-quality instruction is a cornerstone of the District's mission to engage and prepare all students to excel in a global society.

Sequoia Union High School District (SUHSD) provides our students with a rigorous curriculum taught by teachers who take part in a range of training and development opportunities designed to foster excellence in teaching and learning.

The District provides teachers with the following supports to enhance instruction:

- **Professional Development:** Teachers are offered high quality professional learning opportunities aligned to the District's instructional focus—to provide rigorous, engaging standards-aligned instruction with embedded language supports and meaningful technology integration. Professional development takes place as:
 - Two all-day staff Professional Development days
 - Teacher Orientation Week
 - June Professional Development Institute
 - Release Day Trainings
 - Afternoon Professional Development
- **Constructing Meaning Institute:** Constructing Meaning provides teachers with the process and tools for weaving explicit language instruction into content-area teaching. Lesson planning is driven by the content and academic language demands of discipline-specific learning.
- **Instructional Rounds:** Teachers and Administrators observe classes, debrief, and plan with Instructional Coaches using rubrics focused on areas of interest chosen by individual sites.
- **Coaching:** Teachers work with Instructional Coaches who assist in analyzing data, action planning, delivering rigorous content to students, and facilitating subject area councils.
- **Teacher Leadership/Apprenticeship:** Sponsors opportunities to deepen understanding and skills while building site support capacity.
- **Personalized Teaching Support:** New teachers are provided with personalized support to provide high-quality instruction to engage students and foster excellence for SUHSD's diverse population through the Teacher Induction Partnership for Success (TIPS) program. Teachers also have the opportunity to participate in a voluntary Peer Assistance Review which provides personalized coaching for veteran teachers looking to expand their practice.



OVERCOMING BARRIERS: Ensuring Equity and Inclusion in All Classrooms

Goal #2: Utilize an equity lens to bolster student outcomes by overcoming institutional and instructional practices that perpetuate inequities in student outcomes.

Equity is a core value at Sequoia Union High School District (SUHSD); staff fosters an environment of academic excellence and inclusion that prepares all students for success.

We recognize that every student arrives to the District with a unique set of experiences that must be taken into account when delivering instruction.

Additionally, we believe students need equitable access to the educational tools in our mission to close the achievement gap.

The District provides the following initiatives to strengthen equity and inclusion:

- **Partnerships:** As part of efforts to increase dialogue, engagement, and support, the SUHSD, in partnership with partner districts (and over 50 youth-serving agencies, parents, and the community-at-large) continues to work to identify and address the unique needs of students. Additionally, students have access to support services to further their success in and out of the classroom.
- **Deconstructing Implicit Bias:** An educational training series for site teams on implicit bias, restorative practices, culturally-relevant teaching practices, and leveraging the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) framework.
- **Equitable Practices:** Research shows that missed school creates an inequitable education experience. SUHSD is implementing an alternative to suspension program at the site and district levels to ensure all students stay in school. Research also shows that heterogeneous classrooms create better learning environments for all students, and SUHSD is pursuing this idea through the implementation of the Algebra I Initiative and a heterogeneous Ninth Grade (NGSS) Biology pilot. Funding is part of the equity landscape, and the District is initiating a Budget Committee to ensure transparency in processes for site and district budget allocations.
- **Close the Digital Divide:** SUHSD is committed to providing increased availability of Chromebooks in the classroom, as well as one-to-one devices, and network access for students currently without computing resources.
- **Diverse Learning Environments:** SUHSD supports a diverse learner population through programs that meet student needs beyond comprehensive high schools by offering an Independent Study program, Middle College Dual Enrollment, and a Small School Portfolio.



EMBRACING THE WHOLE STUDENT:

Recognizing the Importance of Supporting Students Both In and Out of the Classroom

Goal #3: Ensure all students receive appropriate academic, behavioral and socio-emotional support by initiating steps to full implementation of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) at all sites.

As leaders in education, it is understood that in order to educate students the whole child is embraced. In doing so, we become partners, which enables the removal of barriers from educational pathways.

The District is instituting the following framework to further support students:

- **Initiate MTSS:** Provide increased and/or improved services for all students. This includes systemic strategies to effectively support student success, assist in leveraging resources, and align Districtwide evidence-based, school-wide supports for academics, behavior, and social-emotional learning.
- **Small Group Intensive Supports:** Create intensive programs for critically high-need students that include innovative programming to align with educational code and best practices, and hat emphasize student progress.
- **Specializing in Special Education:** Establish systems for continued effective management of the Special Education Program, including mechanisms for proper oversight, monitoring, and staff training.
- **Wrap-Around Services:** Expand wrap-around support services for alternative programs and provide internal sources of support for mental health and academics, as well as partner with community agencies.



CHANGING THE WORLD BY CHANGING METHODS: Developing New Pathways and Models as Part of Our Forward Thinking

Goal #4: Support and promote successful student outcomes through the District's small schools and alternative programs.

Sequoia Union High School District is continuing to position itself as an innovative leader in education, and developing the next-generation of trailblazers and problem solvers.

We understand that success cannot be achieved by doing the practices of the past, instead it requires a willingness to push boundaries in the pursuit of supporting our students' personalized needs and developing pathways that take students beyond today to the unknowns of the future.

The following small school and alternative program initiatives are being pursued:

- **State-of-the-Art Facilities and Programs:** Completion of small school and alternative program construction projects which create physical learning spaces conducive to innovative models of learning. One example of such a facility is the Technology, Innovation, Design, and Engineering (TIDE) Academy.
- **Create Awareness of Specialized Schools:** Increasing enrollment at Redwood High School, TIDE Academy, East Palo Alto Academy (EPAA), and Middle College through continued development of instructional models and academic pathways, and supporting these efforts through targeted outreach and wider community communication.
- **Alternative Pathways:** Developing Career Technical Education (CTE) Pathways, and fortifying the Independent Study program by engaging in planning for the future of the workforce in partnership with industry and community college partnerships.