

# Special Education

## Strategic Plan

### The purpose.....

The purpose of the Strategic Plan is to define the structure of programs for students with disabilities in order that they may access standards-aligned content, high quality learning environments, individualized support and resources in the least restrictive environment with priority placed on meaningful student involvement. The Strategic Plan is organized around six priorities that compose the backbone of a highly effective special education program. Each priority has a central goal that is aligned to the SDUHSD Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP), and contains specific action steps/tasks to ensure each goal is implemented in a specific, methodical, and consistent manner. The Strategic Plan is intended to be a broad outline of the structure of the special education program.



### The process.....

The Special Education Strategic Plan is the result of the Special Education Task Force effort. The Task Force was comprised of representatives from all stakeholder groups, including parents, teachers, administrators, transition specialists, and staff. Task Force members participated in ten collaboration sessions that spanned over eight months; investing over 50 hours of teamwork. During each session, members discussed the current status of programs in the district, researched exemplary programs in the state and nation, reviewed parent survey data, and designed a plan for improving support for students.

### Program Priorities

- 1 Transitions/College and Career/Post-Secondary
- 2 Communication
- 3 Curriculum/Instruction and Programs
- 4 Professional Development and Staffing
- 5 Inclusion: Meaningful Student Involvement
- 6 Accountability/Oversight

## The Team of Representative Stakeholders....

### Facilitator:

Maureen O'Leary Burness

### Project Lead:

Mark Miller: Associate Superintendent of Administrative Services

Meredith Wadley: Director of School and Student Services

### Parent Representatives:

Karen Rusnak

Kent McIntyre

Nancy Lazerson

Lisa Shulman

Sophy Chaffee

### NCCSE CAC Representatives:

Julie Law-Cheeseman

Amy Flicker

Joanne Stress

### Certificated Staff (Special Education):

Elizabeth Marshall: Academic Support at TPHS

Liz Dargan: Academic Support at SDA

Kellie Maul: Functional Life Skills at Oak Crest

Diane Dekker: Learning Center at EWMS

Paula Goodfellow: Speech and Language Pathologist

### Certificated Staff (General Education):

Erin Charnow: Math at LCC

Mark Van Over: Social Science at CCA

Duncan Brown: Counselor at SDA

Matt Livingston: Science at TPHS

Roxzana Sudo: English at TPHS

### Workability:

Nathan Molina: Transition Services Coordinator

### Classified Support:

Elizabeth DeVal: Workability/TPP

### Administrators:

Rob Coppo: Principal TPHS

Jeremy Meadows: Assistant Principal LCC

Briahna Weatherford: Principal Oak Crest

Cara Dolnik: Principal at Carmel Valley Middle School

Tiffany Hazlewood: Program Supervisor District Office





## **Our vision.....**

The San Dieguito Union High School District provides a full continuum of supports and services to each and every student in Special Education so each student is prepared and able to achieve a level of competence, self-reliance, disability awareness and independence, based on their own unique abilities, so each transitions successfully to their future.

## **Our mission.....**

- We maintain a “Students First” philosophy. We structure each classroom and educational environment to meet the needs of each and every student.
- Our students learn, grow, and thrive in innovative programs that build independence and prepare each student for a successful transition to life after school.
- We provide and sustain a balance of life skills, academic skills, social - emotional supports, and transition curricular options based on students’ true and ever changing/evolving abilities, interests, and future goals.
- Each student is respected as a unique individual and offered high expectations, not bound by label. Decisions and practices will be student-driven and based on evidence and data.
- We support students as they enter the SDUHSD, to prepare each student to be a successful student during their years in the District, focusing on effective communication, organizational skills, and academic supports for instruction and homework.
- We provide supports to students so that they each actively participate in their educational processes, including the IEP process and in activities that increase self - advocacy and self-determination.
- We work with parents as partners so that they are well informed and educated about programs and supports available to students within the District as well as when they transition to young adulthood.
- We will provide the necessary supports to all staff so that they are informed both of student needs and of evidence-based ways to address and support those needs.

**Priority #1**

**Transitions ~ College/Career Readiness ~ Post-School**

The District will provide appropriate resources to support transition planning and implementation for each and every student with an IEP in order to facilitate effective transitions, from entry to the district through graduation or a completion of a certificate, with a focus on services, goals, and post-school objectives.

LCAP Priority Area: College and Career Readiness

**Action Step #1**

Upon enrollment to the District, students will develop a vision plan for their future, their Individual Transition Plan, as per IDEA, to be updated annually. It will be based on personal goals, strengths, values, and interests to meet their academic, college, career and/or IEP goals, with specific CTE pathways and/or classes identified, as appropriate.



**Action Step #2**

Every student and case manager will maintain an online digital transition profile/portfolio that begins when they enter 7th grade, to serve as a real time living document, to be populated and updated as the student progresses. The transition portfolios, as adopted by the District, "Californiacolleges.edu" will serve as a means of documenting progress toward their post-secondary-goals.

**Action Step #3**

Students will build skills necessary for work experience development, including marketable skills transferable to a job, as appropriately related to each student's ITP/transition portfolio.

**Action Step #4**

Students will have access to an expanded choice of career interest inventories as part of their exploration of career possibilities.

**Action Step #5**

The District will expand the current College and Career fair to include more vocational options. In addition, the district will explore extending the time of the event to include a "sensory friendly" option for students with disabilities and opportunities to support increased attendance for students with disabilities.

**Action Step #6**

The District will build community partnerships with local companies to encourage more opportunities for participation of students in work experiences.



**Action Step #7**

The District will expand an Education specialist(s) ability to communicate current labor opportunities, etc. for post-secondary options, including colleges/universities with disability resource centers.

**Priority #2**

**Communication**

In order to facilitate trust and collaboration among all stakeholders, the District will develop a transparent, consistent and comprehensive system of communication.

LCAP Priority Area: School Climate and Culture

**Action Step #1**

The District will actively promote a digital Special Education “Parent Handbook” that provides information regarding the IEP process, progress on goals, continuum of services available in SDUHSD, program locations, transition process, continuum of services, and make available to stakeholders on the District website, including through each site.



**Action Step #2**

School site/District websites will be updated/created to be easily navigated and accessible, with information on the Special Education department., e.g., with current programs, staff, contact info, district information, etc.



**Action Step #3**

School site staff will ensure consistent information about school events and activities to parents/ legal guardians.



**Action Step #4**

The District will partner with the North Coastal Consortium for Special Education (NCCSE) to provide SELPA-wide parent informational sessions focusing on education, training, and employment within the district.



**Action Step #5**

The District will make available to parents information on outside agencies/programs/resources (e.g. Mira Costa, DOR, SDRC, etc.) to best inform, train, and prepare all stakeholders for specific post-high school opportunities.



**Priority #3**

**Curriculum/Instruction ~ Programs**

Programs within the district will develop and implement specific, evidence-based instructional materials and strategies, appropriate to support each Special Education service, on an ongoing basis, driven by students' IEPs/individual transition plans (post-secondary education, employment, and independent living skills.) The District will allocate the necessary resources and provide staffing to support the delivery of each service, on an ongoing basis.

Services across the district will be strategically evaluated for utility and localization of equitable resources as related to student needs and stakeholder involvement.

LCAP Priority Area: Student Achievement, College/Career Readiness

<p><b>Action Step #1</b> For students in fundamental, foundational, and functional courses, to ensure access to the California State Standards, the District will explore opportunities to appropriately follow the aligned curriculum, implementing a standardized curriculum to be used district-wide for the continuum of special education services.</p>  <p><b>Action Step #2</b> To ensure access to the adopted California State Standards, curriculum for students with IEPs, the District will ensure there are appropriate supplemental materials for all core content area classes.</p>	<p><b>Action Step #3</b> Ensure that each student has access to a range of appropriate elective offerings on all school sites, as available.</p> <p><b>Action Step #4</b> Create and implement consistent and standardized skills continuum for an Academic Support class with supports and resources across all sites.</p> <p><b>Action Step #5</b> Students will have embedded in their program access to information that presents options and pathways (program availability, CTE, apprenticeships, employment, and the like) for subsequent years and for post-graduation.</p>	<p><b>Action Step #6</b> Continue the development and implementation of a district wide multi-tiered system of behavioral health scope and sequence to identify resources to best meet the needs of at-risk student populations in a timely and effective manner.</p>  <p><b>Action Step #7</b> In order to provide prompt access to behavioral health services from well-qualified professionals with training and/or experience with students with special needs, the district will establish protocol and timelines for proactive and preventative behavioral mental health supports and interventions.</p>
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**Priority #4**

**Professional Development and Staffing**

The district will adopt a professional development plan utilizing evidence-based practices to prepare and support all staff so they are able to provide IEPs and services to meet students’ individual needs, and will allocate the necessary resources and staffing to provide support in fulfilling students’ IEP needs.

LCAP Priority Area: Student Achievement

**Action Step #1**

To ensure that teachers have access to meaningful, timely and relevant professional development that translates to classroom and student needs, the District will survey teachers and school staff on their needs for professional development, then develop and prioritize a comprehensive professional development plan to ensure systematic training and updates for all stakeholders.

This may include, but is not limited to:

- Special education delivery models (nesting, co-teaching, etc.) and the use of evidence-based practices in the area of inclusive practices;
- Managing special education programs on school sites for administrators and leaders;
- Information on developing and implementing a systematic data collection and analysis method for progress on goals;
- Information on available post-high-school options, including community and 4-year colleges which offer supports to students with disabilities;
- Transition assessments and activities to support student ITPs;
- Writing legally compliant IEPs and ITPs
- Social-emotional learning
- Effective use of instructional aide supports

**Action Step #2**

District and sites will develop a staffing and training process for instructional assistants in order to timely recruit and retain the best staff possible to implement the district’s vision of supports.



**Action Step #3...**

Site leadership will work with Special Education teachers to best utilize their Professional Learning Community (PLC) time and identify resources to collaborate with one another on expected student learning outcomes, student assessments, support and intervention strategies, curriculum and instruction, and best practices across the district.



**Action Step #4**

The Task Force will request a review for the need for aides to work full time and qualify for benefits.

**Action Step #5**




The district will investigate evidenced based program models in other districts, whose results have proven to be effective for students with disabilities and how a similar program model may be incorporated into the SDUHSD continuum of services.

**Priority #5**

**Meaningful Student Involvement ~ Inclusion**

Each site will cultivate and ensure the creation of a culture/school environment that prioritizes and ensures meaningful inclusion opportunities, and emphasizes access, support and participation through mainstreaming and reverse mainstreaming as well as classroom and extracurricular opportunities for all students in the district.

LCAP Priority Area: School Climate and Culture

<p><b>Action Step #1</b> Each site will continue to support and provide accessible and integrated opportunities, and research expanded opportunities for extra-curricular activities for all students (e.g., reverse mainstreaming, Peer- to-Peer driven “Student Mentor Programs”)</p>  <p><b>Action Step #2</b> The District will create and establish a continuum of service models, focused on inclusive teaching practices (e.g. nesting, co-teaching, reverse inclusion, etc.).</p>	<p><b>Action Step #3</b> To ensure appropriate inclusion opportunities for students in special programs, or for students who spend the majority of their day in the special education environment, IEP teams’ annual discussions will include the opportunity to discuss access, participation, and support of each individual student with disabilities according to their specific needs.</p> 	 <p><b>Action Step #4</b> School sites will collaborate with students and parents to implement an Ability Awareness education and activities with the goal of providing information to all key stakeholders at school sites to best support students with a disability across the range of their needs.</p>
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**Priority #6****Oversight and Accountability**

Establish a data system to evaluate identified areas of the strategic plan.

**Action Step #1**

Establish a special education advisory forum made up of one representative parent ambassador from each site to meet with district and site staff quarterly to receive updates to address policies, procedures, and guidelines such as:

- Gather evidence and data to review, monitor, and discuss implementation of Special Education Strategic Plan
- Newsletter with parent updates (3 times annually)
- Special education issues and concerns within the district
- Collaboration between district staff and parents/community members for the development of a parent handbook.

Site councils will review the Special Education Strategic Plan along with the Single Plan for Student Achievement.



## *A Collaborative Effort!*

Over the course of **10 meetings**, spanning **8 months**, stakeholders from SDUHSD invested over **50 hours** of collaboration and discussion in designing and reaching consensus on the Special Education Strategic Plan. Each Special Education Task Force session included the following components: analyzing district data ( academic and program), consulting with state and federal regulations, researching exemplary programs in the state and nation and discussing implications for improving programs in SDUHSD. Each meeting was open to the public, and each meeting included an agenda item at which members of the public could provide input to the working group. Each session was carefully archived on the Special Education Task Force sub-webpage so that members of the public and staff could follow the progress towards developing the Strategic Plan over time. Meeting notes were approved by the members and posted to the Task Force webpage. A simple summary of Talking Points at the conclusion of each session was provided to each stakeholder, and was also posted to the Task Force webpage after each meeting.

To access the Task Force webpage, visit <http://www.sduhsd.net> and click on Special Education Task Force.