



THE DISTRICT BRIDGE

Sharing Our Progress, Accomplishments, and Appreciation

FALL 2017

Dear Friends,

Classrooms look so different today than they did decades ago. In addition to bookshelves and multiplication charts, visitors might see tools for connected learning, or drawings of faces depicting specific emotions. Chairs may be arranged in clusters instead of rows, and teachers may be encouraging discussion rather than insisting on quiet.

Traditional subjects like math, language arts, science, and social studies remain critically important, and our standards-based curriculum forms the basis for each school day. But we now know that children need more. In order for true learning to occur, children need to feel safe, respected, and accepted; to be engaged; and to be unhindered by obstacles such as hunger or lack of healthcare as they tackle their schoolwork.

We follow a plan to help remove barriers to learning and deliver equal access to enrichment in every classroom so that all children can thrive. Every District initiative is a research-based, evidence-driven part of that plan, and each has been made possible by you — our neighbors, partners, and friends. We are most grateful.

Sincerely,



Benjamin H. Picard, Ed.D
Superintendent, Sunnyvale School District



OUR SCHOOLS

Bishop Elementary
Cherry Chase Elementary
Cumberland Elementary
Ellis Elementary
Fairwood Explorer
Lakewood Elementary
San Miguel Elementary
Vargas Elementary
Columbia Middle
Sunnyvale Middle

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Jeffrey Arnett
Anita Herrmann
Michelle Maginot
Reid Myers
Nancy Newkirk



Pick a School, Any School

There's magic in every classroom

Our studies are engaging! In every school, students connect with the larger community through field trips, special projects, and visits from corporate or community volunteers. We build music, art, gardening, and movement into daily lessons. Students learn to work in groups, develop critical thinking skills, perform science experiments, and use technology to conduct research and present findings.

In addition, our Programs of Choice allow families to select schools whose instructional emphases fit their interests — science, dual-language immersion, parent participation, leadership, technology with emotional intelligence, or an instructional partnership with Stanford University.

These options and the interactive lessons offered by every neighborhood school spur children to connect deeply with their studies, uncover their passions, and transform before our eyes into 21st-century learners!

Foundational to it all is the content-rich, standards-based curriculum that we use in every classroom at every school in our district.



Clearing the Path to Success

Knocking down barriers to learning

We strive every day to ensure each student's academic growth. But while all children are natural learners, those who are hungry, have precarious housing, or lack needed healthcare can fall short of their learning potential.

By partnering with local nonprofit service providers to address these obstacles to learning, we help every child succeed. Together we focus on building social, emotional, and physical wellness for all of our students, and offer eyeglasses, food, mental health support, family counseling, case management, and other assistance to our families in need.

Partnerships with select nonprofit organizations, community groups, and universities — others who care about and have expertise in helping children thrive — help us to ensure all children are fully prepared to learn when they enter our classrooms, so they can fully engage in the learning opportunities that lie within.

Consistent, Quality Learning

Planning, partnerships, and collaboration

Whether it comes in the form of partnerships, volunteer hours, or taxpayer dollars, community support makes all the difference.

Students are benefiting from the passage of Measure BB, which provides funding to support academic programs, provide technology, attract highly qualified teachers, and keep class sizes small.

Parents, as well as volunteers from corporations, service organizations, and community groups, generously give their time to work in the classroom or on committees in service to our children.

And on any given day, our students participate in learning activities delivered on-site by one or more of our 35+ partner organizations.

When added to our solid financial planning and management, this community support gives us stability despite economic fluctuations and other threats to school funding. That means consistent, quality learning for the students we serve, thanks to our caring community!



District students safely viewed the solar eclipse, thanks to glasses generously provided by Google. For a list of community partners, visit <https://www.sesd.org/Page/1004>.



Professional Development

Continuous learning for quality teaching

Engaging in continuous learning enables us to better serve our students and families.

We use research findings to inform our work, and our team members regularly refine their instructional skills through formal education.

We train in initiatives such as cultural proficiency, which increases awareness, understanding, and practices that promote effective instruction.

And we never stop refining lessons that nurture social and emotional growth by helping develop skills such as self-awareness, social awareness, relationship management, and responsible decision-making.

By being lifelong learners, and applying what we have learned in the classroom, we can help children build a foundation for success.



Congratulations to Lakewood School Principal Pamela Cheng, who recently received her doctorate in Educational Leadership from San Jose State University.

21st-Century Classrooms

The best place to grow a future

With the right materials — including well-designed classrooms, necessary tools, rich curriculum, and effective instructional methods — we are able to help students develop the skills they need for a 21st-century world: effective communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity.

We are grateful we are able to provide every student with ready access to technology; spaces and materials to build, make, and invent; access to outdoor areas for observation and study; and tools to put the scientific method into action. Plus, our fully wired classrooms provide teachers and students a rich array of resources to enhance instruction and learning.

Finally, our construction plan is right on schedule! Lakewood students are enjoying their new and improved school, and Bishop construction is well underway, with Cherry Chase and Ellis on deck to start classroom and site improvements. Learn more at <https://www.sesd.org/Page/3991>.



Photo credit: American Modular Systems, Inc.



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www.sesd.org

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We are proud of the many state and national awards our schools have earned, including:

- California Distinguished Schools
- Blue Ribbon Schools
- Gold Ribbon Schools
- Ashoka Changemaker School
- Hoffmann Awards

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