

SFUSD Vision 2025

Reimagining
Public Education in
San Francisco
for a New Generation

June 2014



Vision 2025 defines what we believe education needs to be for every SFUSD student. It is not only a plan, but a call to action. This is something we must and can do for the future of our students, their families and the entire San Francisco community.

BOARD PRESIDENT SANDRA FEWER

The plan is bold but simple: in it every student is challenged to kindle her or his unique spark, chart a course for a meaningful future, and build the knowledge and skills to achieve it.

SUPERINTENDENT RICHARD A. CARRANZA



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Thank you to the Evelyn and Walter Haas Jr. Fund for their generous support of SFUSD and Vision 2025

Introduction



In the fall of 2013, the superintendent of San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD), under the leadership of the Board of Education, launched an ambitious undertaking: to develop a new vision for the future of public education in San Francisco, and then use that vision as a guide to transform the city's school system, over the next decade, into one of the premier systems in the world.

Earlier in 2013, we released a two-year strategic plan that strongly signaled our commitment to reimagining SFUSD in order to better and more equitably prepare our students for the demands and opportunities of life and work in the 21st century. While this plan is already helping to break new ground in the way that education is being delivered in this city, it quickly became clear that we needed a longer-term plan as well—one that reached far enough into the future that it could serve as a true “north star,” guiding and aligning all of the District's plans and innovations, both big and small, toward the same clear and ambitious goal.

But what should that future look like? What do our students need from their education, and what does SFUSD need to look like to make that happen? How might we innovate while still maintaining and supporting the good work being done today?

To answer these questions, we initiated a process designed to engage the city in imagining and exploring the possibilities for our school system over the next decade. Getting to that vision was no small undertaking. Throughout the 2013–2014 school year, we engaged hundreds of stakeholders—including teachers, administrators, parents, students, paraprofessionals, elected officials, community based organizations, representatives from the mayor's office, members of the funding community, and academic thought leaders—to collectively grapple with the challenges and opportunities facing education in San Francisco today.

Our visioning process was both grounded and inspired by the bold and thoughtful participation of each of these stakeholder groups, as well as by research and experiential learning journeys that took us deep into the world of best and emerging practices in Pre-K through high school education. From the outset, our process was framed by four guiding questions:

- 1 How are current and future trends shaping the world into which SFUSD students will graduate over the next 10 years?**
- 2 What knowledge, skills, values, and experiences will the SFUSD graduate need to thrive in the San Francisco of tomorrow?**
- 3 How will we transform what, how, when, and with whom students learn to prepare them for the future?**
- 4 What will it take to rally schools, families, businesses, the city, the District, and the community at large around a shared vision? How will we cooperate to give it life?**

The vision shared in this document is both our response to these questions and a statement of our deep commitment to improving academic, social, and emotional outcomes for all of our students while helping to restore balance in our city in equitable and socially just ways. It is our deep belief that we have both the opportunity and the responsibility to create a new and better future for our students, our schools, and, by extension, our city—and that doing so will further position San Francisco as one of the most innovative, forward-thinking cities in the world.

If there was one surprise in this process, it was the extent to which a shared vision already exists in our community and how easy it would be for diverse groups, given the tools to build and communicate these ideas collaboratively, to agree on the types of teaching and learning environments we want to build in San Francisco.

This report reflects the best thinking of all of the stakeholders who gave us the gift of their time. We hope that everyone who reads it feels as committed as we do to creating the social transformation that is necessary to realize the future that Vision 2025 promises for our students and for all of San Francisco.



The Path to the Vision

Building on 30 Years of Reform History and a New Strategic Plan

Vision 2025 builds on solid scaffolding provided by the 2013-15 strategic plan entitled Impact Learning. Impact Lives. The vision is also informed by the many successes and challenges involved in three decades of educational reform.

present

- 1983** Consent Decree and Reconstitution
- 1992** Comprehensive School Improvement Plan
- 2005** Dream Schools
- 2008** Strategic Plan: "Beyond the Talk"
- 2013** Strategic Refresh: Impact Learning. Impact Lives.

1. Implement the SFUSD Core Curriculum and use student data to make informed decisions and monitor our progress toward goals.
2. Provide tiered levels of academic and behavior support to all students using a Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI 2) model.
3. Build a clear vision, culture and conditions for college and career readiness at all school levels.
4. Differentiate central office supports to schools through a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS).
5. Recruit, develop and retain highly qualified teachers, leaders, and staff.
6. Increase awareness and build the supports necessary to fully implement SFUSD's Family Engagement Standards.

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10 Big Shifts from 2014 to 2025



1 Graduate Profile
The SFUSD Graduate Profile will define the knowledge, skills, dispositions and behaviors we expect our graduates to possess so they are prepared to thrive in life and career.

2 Personalized Pathways
All students will have personalized learning and development pathways.

3 Reimagined Space and Time
We will reimagine the school day, keeping learning standards constant while we explore new ways to use space and time.

4 Motivation and Mastery
We will embrace engaging new ways to demonstrate mastery while motivating and inspiring ever-greater levels of learning.

5 Real-Life Tasks
We will integrate rich and meaningful real-life tasks into all levels of the curriculum.

6 Cultural Competence and Multilingualism
Students will be globally aware, multilingual and culturally competent, and fluent in a range of “second languages” including sign language and computer coding. Our graduates will see diversity in its many forms as an asset.

7 Blended Learning
All our schools will be equipped with technologies that support blended learning and increase personalization.

8 Talent and Collaboration
We will attract and grow top talent to fuel our students’ success and to embody a culture of boundless aspiration, innovation and collaboration.

9 Innovative System
SFUSD will be a center of innovation and a leader in creating an engaging new learning eco-system in the Bay Area—and beyond.

10 Aligned Investments
Funding and other forms of investment from public, private and philanthropic sources will be more tightly aligned to our vision.



2025

The Vision Process

Research



The Vision 2025 process was grounded in research. We interviewed and conducted hands-on workshops with district administrators, principals, teachers and community members to learn what was important to them. We also drew on published work of and advice from respected academics, education futurists, regional planners and policymakers.

Guiding Coalitions

Spaced over four months, each session brought together more than 150 stakeholders for a day and a half of learning, reflection, and facilitated small-group collaboration. These highly interactive sessions were designed to create common understanding, promote frank dialogue about problems and opportunities, and connect SFUSD more deeply with the broader community.



**Guiding Coalition 1:
The Forces Shaping
the U.S. Education
Landscape**
October 10-11, 2013

What are the goals of a 21st century education, and what forces of change will shape the education landscape in the year 2025? What will it be like to live and work in San Francisco in the year 2025? Experts in future studies, neuroscience, economic forecasting, and urban development shared their perspectives on the future of education, careers, and life in the Bay Area.



**Guiding Coalition 2:
The Future of Learning
Through the Eyes of
Students and Educators**
November 21-22, 2013

Both students and teachers shared their SFUSD experiences and how they would like public education in the city to evolve over the coming decade. Working in 15 design teams, participants engaged in a prototyping exercise, using creative materials to build tabletop models of what SFUSD schools could look like in the future, based on student and teacher needs.



**Guiding Coalition 3:
Equity, Social Justice,
and Three Scenarios for
the Future of SFUSD**
December 12-13, 2013

Participants explored two critical questions: How might we promote equity and social justice through the vision we create? And what systemic patterns must we interrupt to enable a more just and equitable future? A panel of parents representing the diversity of our students shared their perspectives on equity issues and parent voice in the school system. Participants also explored three provocative scenarios depicting different possible futures for San Francisco's schools. (These are shared in Appendix 2.)



**Guiding Coalition 4:
Review**
February 7, 2014

Guiding Coalition members had their first opportunity to review and react to an initial draft of the vision statement and the graduate profile—the set of skills, dispositions, capabilities, and knowledge that we want all SFUSD students to achieve.

Learning Journeys

SFUSD leaders and Guiding Coalition members made a series of live and virtual visits to innovative schools and learning sites—both inside and outside San Francisco—that are reimagining Pre-K–12 education by embracing new technologies and new learning models.

Video

The Vision team, along with students from Galileo High School, filmed each Guiding Coalition session, as well as numerous interviews with students, administrators, teachers, and parents that captured their unique voices and perspectives.



Engagement

Hundreds of Tweets and Facebook Posts, Likes, and Shares



Why this Vision? Why Now?

Education is Changing

There is little doubt that Pre-K–12 education will be transformed over the next decade—not just in San Francisco but in school districts across the U.S. Among education experts, there is deep consensus that the industrial model of education on which the U.S. has relied for more than 100 years cannot, in its current form, prepare our students to thrive in the future that is coming. Nor is it adequately serving students now. Among the 34 countries belonging to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the U.S. is behind only Switzerland in terms of spending per student—yet globally, we are well below average in both math proficiency (#22) and literacy skills (#17).

Unfortunately, the gap between what and how we teach our young people and the knowledge, skills, competencies, and dispositions that students in America will need to compete and thrive in the 21st century is only widening. We are not sufficiently preparing students for a world that demands higher levels of problem-solving, deeper levels of knowledge, and a broader range of skills and competencies; we are also not preparing them for the types of jobs and careers that characterize the knowledge economy. This is a problem not just for our students, but for our cities, our economy, and our country at large.

As a result, in San Francisco and across the U.S., we're seeing the emergence of new educational models that change the way that students learn and teachers teach. Significant shifts in our approaches to education and instruction—including the introduction of the Common Core State Standards (a set of rigorous subject matter standards that provide new clarity about what children should know and be able to do); a new national focus on science, technology, engineering, the arts, and math (STEAM) education; and a move away from the era of No Child Left Behind federal policy—are opening up exciting new pathways and options for learning.



There is also growing agreement that preparing students for the demands of 21st century life will require not just strong academic and career-focused instruction, but the development of a wider range of social and emotional skills and dispositions that have historically not been an explicit focus of public education. Meanwhile, new technologies are beginning to dramatically change what is possible in the classroom, opening up new options for more personalized and real-world learning and creating unprecedented opportunities to change the education paradigm and to nurture learning in ways previously unimaginable.

Yet there is no blueprint for what that new paradigm should look like—and no roadmap for San Francisco Unified School District or any other school system to follow. It is our belief that a reimagined SFUSD school system must link student learning not just with the requirements of life in a global society, but with the opportunities and imperatives of living, working, and thriving in the city of San Francisco—which is currently undergoing its own rapid transformations. By linking San Francisco's public education system more tightly to the city's emerging needs and opportunities, we have the ability to create brighter futures not just for our students but for the city as well.

San Francisco is Changing

Right now, San Francisco is a tale of two cities. On the one hand, San Francisco is a flourishing global epicenter of innovation and creativity in the throes of yet another economic boom, driven in large part by the technology sector. In 2013, there was more venture capital investment in San Francisco than in Silicon Valley. More than 1,700 tech companies now call San Francisco home, infusing the city with new creative energy and helping to drive down its unemployment rate to its current 4.8 percent—more than 2 percentage points lower than the national average.

On the other hand, the sharp influx of wealth, combined with limited available housing, has created an affordability crisis that threatens to undermine the values and spirit that have long defined San Francisco. Rents and home prices are soaring, and even longstanding families who have lived here for generations are being driven out, due to evictions or to simply being unable to afford the rapidly rising costs of living. Long known as a haven for immigrants and safe place for a diverse range of individuals, the city is threatening to contract into a place that only the wealthy can afford. More than 23 percent of San Francisco residents live below the poverty threshold, according to the Public Policy Institute of California and the Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality. The problem is particularly acute for the city’s low-income African American families. In 1980, 12 percent of San Francisco’s population was African American. Today, it’s just 6 percent.

While the city already has the lowest per capita number of children of any major U.S. city, that number continues to decline as more families leave. While the reasons for this outflow are largely economic, they are also driven in part by uncertainty among families about the quality of the city’s public school system. San Francisco is the highest achieving urban district in the state of California—and at the same time it has some of the largest achievement gaps between and among student subgroups, including English Learners, African Americans, Latinos, Pacific Islanders, and students with disabilities. We have also not yet been able to demonstrate a solution for engaging and retaining at-risk youth, particularly young men of color. With Vision 2025, we firmly declare that these current conditions will be neither tolerated nor ignored.



Why this Vision? Why Now?
Education is Changing
San Francisco is Changing

A Vision of Equity

The vision shared in the following pages is as much about addressing these longstanding disparities and inequities as it is about making classrooms vibrant, more engaging centers of learning that prepare all of our students for opportunities in both San Francisco and the wider world.

Great cities demand excellent—and equitable—public education systems. Yet despite good intentions and well-orchestrated efforts in the past, we do not yet have a premier public education system that can provide a solid foundation for all of the children of this generation—let alone generations to come. We must insist on a vision for a whole new world in which innovation, community, family, leadership, and social justice are a seamless part of what great teaching and learning look like in San Francisco. This is critical, because the quality of our public education system can and will play an enormous role in nurturing the soul of the city and in defining its future.

This is a seminal moment in the city of San Francisco. How we prepare our students will have an impact on the community members they become. How invested we become in their success—as a district and as a city—will be reflected back to us for generations to come. Yet as Vision 2025 clearly illustrates, we believe it will be possible to look back on the decade that is about to unfold as the time when we worked together across racial, language, and economic lines, harnessing all that the city has to offer in service of creating an education system that attracts and engages all youth and families in a world-class education that both lives up to and enhances the global reputation for innovation that is San Francisco.



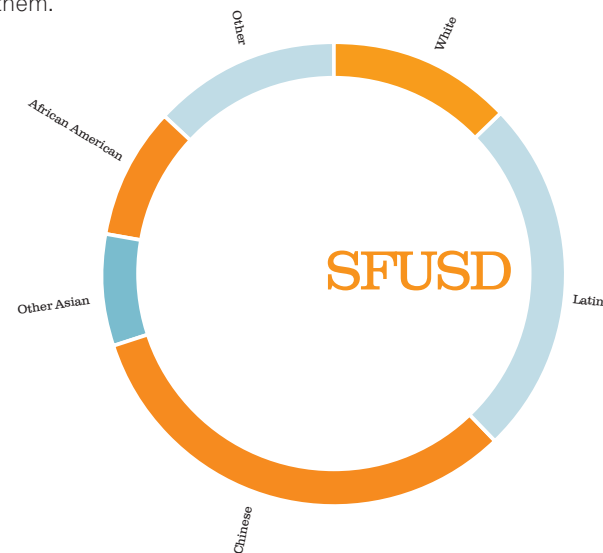
We can preserve the rich cultural tapestry of this city by ensuring that all our graduates have the skills and knowledge they'll need if they choose to stay here. San Francisco's 53,000 public school students are currently more diverse than the city is projected to be overall. In that sense we already have the pipeline to a diverse workforce in the future.

If our students are to retain the option to make their lives in the city in which they were raised—and, in so doing, to preserve the city's multicultural heritage—we must ensure they graduate well-equipped to compete in the local workforce and to address the social, economic, civic and environmental challenges of life here in the mid-2020s.

We know today where the high-paying jobs will be in the San Francisco of 2025. Nearly 58,000 jobs will be added to the local workforce in the next decade, a 10% increase from 2015–2025. These trends can be expected to continue through 2040 as the Professional Services, Health and Education, Leisure and Hospitality, Government, and Information sectors all increase their footprint in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Science, technology, engineering and math proficiencies will be keys to success in the Bay Area job market. We expect our graduates to be accomplished in the arts and humanities. That commitment is critical to our mission as educators. We also know, however, that the greatest number of high-paying jobs in the future will require more competency in science, technology, engineering and/or math (STEM).

The income differential between STEM and non-STEM careers will be consequential. In 2010, a worker with a high school diploma or less in a non-STEM career earned 59.6% less than a similar worker in a STEM occupation, and we can expect that differential to continue. Yet in San Francisco the number of living-wage job opportunities that don't require advanced degrees—many, but not all STEM-related—are growing too. Jobs like home health aids and pharmacy technicians may require on-the-job training or vocational certificates (or, in some cases, an Associates degree) but not an advanced degree. So the jobs will be there for our graduates. We need to make sure all our students, particularly those of poverty and color, are ready for them.



Why this Vision? Why Now?

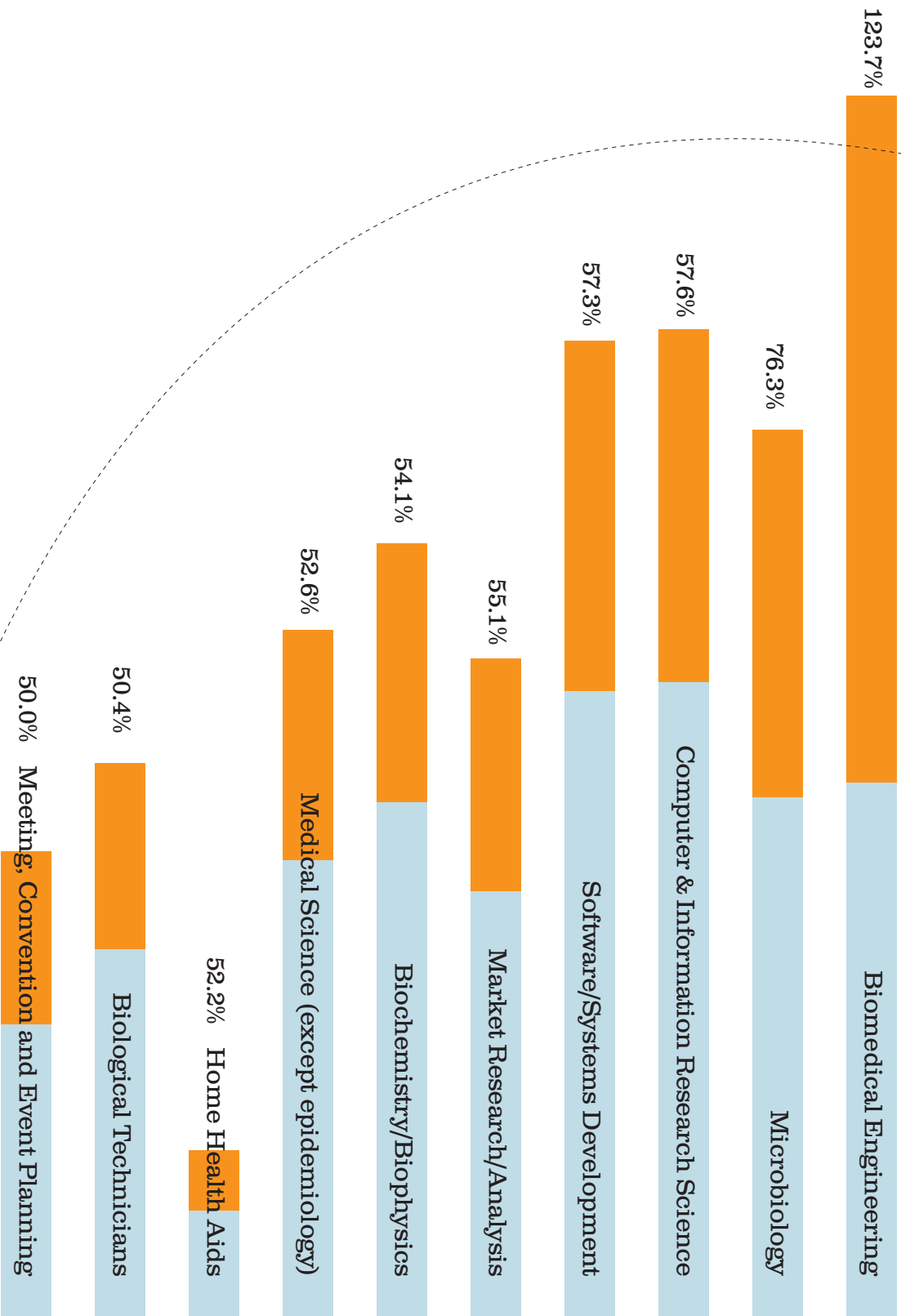
Education is Changing
San Francisco is Changing

A Vision of Equity—Trends

The vision outlined in this report is more than an effort to better prepare SFUSD students for the 21st century world. It is an intentional plan to interrupt some of the trends we've laid out here. This is a statement of how earnestly SFUSD takes its role as a diversity engine for San Francisco's future workforce by graduating highly skilled and culturally competent young adults who are ready for the high-income jobs and high-impact opportunities that will be available to them in 2025.

Our vision is both a response to what is happening in our city and a stance about the bustling, diverse, and equitable San Francisco that we intend to help create.

2025



 projected increase in projected income

Source: www.onebayarea.org, July 2013

2012

Visions are creative, descriptive stories designed to help us step outside the constraints of the present in order to more fully and openly explore what we want to see happen in the future. It is important to note that the vision depicted in the following pages is not a strategy. Rather, its chief goal is to paint a rich and aspirational picture of what SFUSD could look and feel like in 2025. This picture will serve as a guiding star that aligns our actions, shapes our strategies, and directs our growth—as a school district and as a city—in the years ahead.

Vision 2025 is based on the many ideas and contributions generated by a wide range of stakeholders throughout the visioning process, which took place during the 2013–2014 school year. While that initial process has ended, it is important to recognize that the vision itself will, inevitably, continue to evolve. In the coming years, we will identify additional opportunities to engage with a similar cross-section of stakeholders in helping to clarify and refine Vision 2025 as our needs, our resources, our opportunities, and our aspirations expand in ways that we cannot yet anticipate.

A Truly Equitable School District

In 2025, the San Francisco Unified School District is unified in exciting new ways. The District's strong commitment to equity and social justice across all of its communities and all of its schools enables not just some students but all students to realize their potential. Every school and every student is part of a District-wide system of supports designed to ensure that all students and families—of every race, language and ethnicity, learning level and ability—have the support and the resources they need to thrive. The District's commitment to the success of every student means that all are ensured the opportunities to learn, grow, and express themselves—and that each school is capable of helping its students achieve their goals.

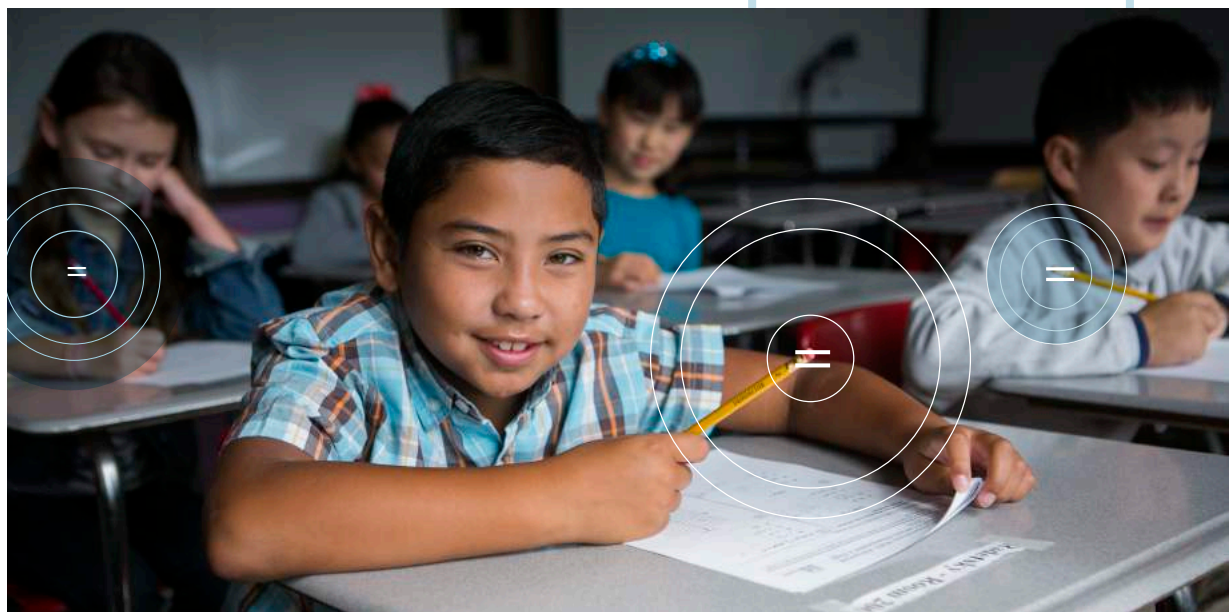
Across the District, all available resources are carefully marshaled to create the optimal conditions within every school community and to set up every student to reach their maximum potential. The school system continues to maintain a commitment to social justice, refining a system of resource allocation based on providing equitable levels of support to all students. There are also mechanisms in place to address institutional bias—and continuous learning, improvement, and reflection are the norm. This leads to a deeper ability among all adults in the school system to recognize where inequitable and disproportionate outcomes exist and take positive steps to counteract and address them.

Members of the broader school community acknowledge that fostering positive relationships among students and adults is critically important. The District has made great strides in emphasizing family empowerment and shared accountability among all stakeholders. The embrace of Restorative Practices continues to foster more positive school cultures, as well as more trust, cooperation, listening, accountability, and mutual understanding among all members of the school community. This enhanced relational trust has encouraged increased levels of collaboration among adults, improved student engagement, and created thoughtful discourse around accomplishing shared goals.

The District is fully committed not just to access and equity within San Francisco public schools, but to empowering students to foster social justice in their communities. A core goal of SFUSD is to instill in its students both a sense of pride in their racial and cultural identity and an appreciation for the unique and diverse identities of others. Indeed, San Francisco continues to boast one of the most diverse student bodies in the country. By framing that diversity as an asset at every turn from pre-K through high school graduation, SFUSD produces broadminded graduates who possess a deep respect for others, enabling them to be thoughtful and compassionate members of their communities and of the world.

SFUSD Definition of Equity:

The work of eliminating oppression, ending biases, and ensuring equally high outcomes for all participants through the creation of multicultural, multiethnic, multiracial practices and conditions; removing the predictability of success or failure that currently correlates with any social or cultural factor.



Students Find Their “Sparks” —and Their Voice

In 2025, SFUSD students graduate from high school with a sense of purpose and self-efficacy. They possess the skills and confidence to achieve their dreams and goals for their future. Graduates understand that they are part of a global society, and feel a sense of responsibility to make a contribution both at the local level and in the wider world. They are equipped to succeed in either context and have a clear sense of the next steps toward accomplishing their career goals.

This confidence comes from having been “seen” and nurtured for who they are throughout their public schooling. All students entering the SFUSD school system are viewed through the lens of their assets—the unique set of abilities and aspirations that define who they are. Indeed, a key component of a SFUSD student’s education is the development of a healthy self-identity. Just as having a student body that reflects tremendous diversity in race, ethnicity, language, and background is considered a District advantage, so too is the spectrum of assets that students bring to a school seen as contributing to the richness of the learning environment for everyone.

Helping students discover, pursue, and realize their motivating “sparks”—those activities and interests that help them express their personalities and can set the trajectory for the rest of their lives—is seen as central to the SFUSD learning experience. Role models play a part in helping students identify their interests and passions, and schools provide high levels of enrichment and exposure to experiences beyond students’ known local context. Meeting experts and mentors from a variety of sectors—including business, government, and social services—expands students’ horizons and exposes them to a wider world of learning.



Student input and voice are at the forefront of learning. In addition to gaining a mastery of expected learning standards, every student has a personalized learning pathway tailored to his or her unique needs and interests—and all students participate in planning and goal-setting when it comes to their own learning. SFUSD’s student-centered learning environment employs new methods and technologies to ensure that all students have an opportunity for their voices to be heard.

Content Knowledge

Ready to think, learn and grow.

We help our students master the fundamentals they need to know to succeed—like math, English, computer science, and art—and develop problem-solving and critical-thinking skills



Career and Life Skills

Ready for career, ready for life.

We help our students acquire the knowledge, skills and experience they need to navigate in the world, think critically and communicate effectively. We partner with local businesses to expose students to real challenges and learn how to solve them.



Global, Local, and Digital Identity

Ready to tackle a changing world.

We equip students with the skills they need to succeed in the future. They learn new languages, understand new technologies and participate in local apprenticeships.



KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

The Graduate Profile: Developing Students to Compete and Thrive in the 21st Century World



SFUSD is committed to helping all students develop strong academic knowledge and skills, as well as a host of dispositions and behaviors, that increase their curiosity and engagement, activate their full potential for learning, and prepare them for life, work, and study beyond their secondary school years. While the pace and the path toward achieving these outcomes will vary among students and unfold along a set of learning progressions, the goal is for every SFUSD student to possess these capacities by the time they graduate.

DISPOSITIONS AND BEHAVIORS



Leadership, Empathy, and Collaboration

Ready to lead, ready to work with others.

We organize activities in teams to help students learn to work together. We also encourage students to work with partners outside the classroom, such as family members and mentors, to prepare students to both lead and collaborate.



Creativity

Ready to create.

We provide opportunities for our students to be creative and at the center of solutions. They tackle environmental problems and make their communities more inclusive.



Sense of Purpose and Sense of Self

Ready to be their best.

We believe in each and every one of our students. We nurture their growth and teach them life lessons so they can recognize their purpose and value. We encourage each student to reach their full potential, whether they require extra support or a new challenge.

The Reimagined Classroom

SFUSD’s student-centered approach to learning has led to a near total transformation of the teaching and learning experience. Classrooms have become dynamic 21st century learning environments supported by an array of pedagogies and pathways. They are, in effect, inquiry-based learning hubs or hands-on “labs” that expose students to new kinds of content and more deeply engaging ways to acquire knowledge.

More and deeper human relationships. While technology can magnify the impact and deepen the efficacy of the interaction between teachers, students, and content, it is not a substitute for human relationship. Incorporating technology into the classroom frees up more time for teachers to dive more deeply into lessons and content. Teachers and students are also supported by a host of other adults who contribute to classroom learning, including parents who have students in the school, community members with lessons and skills to share, and a range of skilled paraprofessionals—all of whom play an expanded role in supporting the dynamic learning taking place inside SFUSD schools.

Lessons based on real-world content with real-world application. Students work with teachers, industry experts, and their peers to create and launch their own real-world projects, creating tighter connections between their school work, their personal interests, and the world outside the classroom. These projects help lift lessons “off the page,” connect them to real life, and help students understand how their studies can translate into real-world occupations.

More technology. All classrooms are infused with next-generation media and technology capabilities, including universal wireless connectivity and devices that enable collaboration not only within the classroom but among teachers and students globally. These technologies also create rich opportunities for blended learning, where students learn at least in part through the online delivery of content and instruction, have more control over the pace of their learning, and receive real-time feedback on their work.



Mastery-based learning. Students continually move at a self-determined rate through levels of accomplishment and toward full mastery of a subject, skill, or competency. This approach ignites students' intrinsic motivation to learn and to seek, and pushes them beyond their known talents, interests, and competencies. Students spend less time on skills they have already mastered and are not locked into a "median" pace of learning. Ultimately, this approach helps accelerate everyone's learning and ensures that students, including English Learners and special needs students, receive the right resources and interventions exactly when they need them.

Authentic, performance-based assessment. A reimagined digital assessment system marks students' progress and creates much more authentic accountability than a reliance only on scores and grades. When students feel they fully comprehend a topic, skill, or piece of content, they participate in any number of real-time formative assessments that determine their command of a subject, identify any areas of confusion, and recommend additional material based on those results.

Students also have new ways to demonstrate what they have learned. Digital portfolios (which represent students' development over time), public presentations, and other creative forms of expression are used to communicate students' mastery of core content and the questions they are exploring. As a result, parents, teachers, colleges, and employers are able to gauge the full range of skills and competencies that students have developed—both in and out of school—beyond the traditional report card or transcript. Capstone projects demonstrate the attainment of students' personalized learning goals.

New approaches to "class time." To support and foster personalized learning, SFUSD has embraced new approaches (including but not limited to the "flipped classrooms" popularized in the early 2010s) that break from traditional "seat time" expectations and has scaled up the most successful new ways of structuring student and teacher time (such as by reformatted school schedules). Schools are also open for longer periods of time, further enabling new learning models and configurations. Students have wider access to supportive and varied learning spaces, resources, and people to help their learning.

50%

Percentage of high school courses delivered online in 2019 (projected)

45,000

in 2000

The number of K-12 students in the U.S. who took an online course

3

in 2009

million+

The City as Classroom

In 2025, learning isn't confined to classrooms but extends seamlessly into the dynamic city—and the wider world—that surrounds them. San Francisco has become a fully networked ecosystem of learning where education happens everywhere, in both formal and informal learning environments.

Carefully curated partnerships between the District, the city, local institutions, and local businesses (chosen both for their commitment to helping SFUSD students achieve Vision 2025 outcomes and for their diversity along socioeconomic, racial, ethnic, and linguistic lines) create an evolving array of opportunities for students to enhance their in-school experiences with new kinds of out-of-school, hands-on learning. The citywide learning network also offers students opportunities to demonstrate—and get credit for—mastery of skills and competencies that are harder to learn in a classroom setting.

Museums, parks, libraries, arts centers, entrepreneurial startups, and established businesses offer internships, apprenticeships, and other experiential learning opportunities that expose students to new areas of knowledge, tie academic and practical experience together, and enable SFUSD students to get pre-professional experience in their areas of interest. A student might learn the physical and mathematical basis of engineering in a formal learning experience, then use that information in a real-world setting, helping to develop smart buildings or robotic devices. Biology and biotechnology might be applied in a hospital setting, a commercial kitchen, or a research lab. Liberal and studio arts might be explored through developing museum exhibits, creating public art projects, or helping to stage professional productions.

These experiences offer support, mentorship, and feedback that galvanize progress for students who might otherwise struggle to identify their “spark” or see their future path—or, for that matter, the

real-world relevance of certain subjects. They also help students develop the tools and the skills to understand their career options and move seamlessly into a workplace to earn a living wage. As a result, there is a significant uptick in the number of SFUSD graduates hired (or sponsored through college with the promise of later employment) by local organizations. Additionally, an increased emphasis on the practical application of science, technology, engineering, math, and the arts has greatly increased the number of students who pursue careers or higher degrees in these subjects.

Opening the walls of the classroom also enables students to spend more active time outdoors, participating in activities that support both their physical and mental health and expand their engagement in the local environment. Students might regularly participate in beach cleanups, park improvement efforts, urban tree planting, and other service-oriented activities that get their bodies moving while also activating their sense of civic involvement.



Vision 2025
Students—The Classroom—The City
Teachers—Parents—Communities
Culture—Thriving—Target Groups

Teachers at the Core of the Vision

These major shifts in how San Francisco's students learn mean major shifts in how educators create, facilitate, and deliver instruction—and how they are selected, trained, and supported to advance in their careers. Teachers not only teach but also nimbly facilitate student learning along different paths and through multiple pedagogies—and they are trusted not just as experts in instruction but as the creators of educational experiences. Their practice is always changing and evolving, as they develop new ways to build the scaffolding that enables their students to connect to what they are learning across diverse environments and opportunities.

In order to meet these demands, teachers are given new opportunities to develop the skills and competencies they need to master their subject matter, innovate their practice, and collaborate with other professionals. The District has made it a priority to professionalize the field, honoring teachers' work and reflecting back to them the importance of their role not only within their schools but within the larger world. Teachers have time to plan, problem solve, and reflect on their work. Experimenting with new learning approaches, working cooperatively with other teachers and across disciplines, and engaging in peer-to-peer learning are also built into the job.

There is also a high priority on job-relevant and high-quality professional development. Personalized, mastery-based, and technology-enabled learning are not just for SFUSD students—these are principles that inform professional development for teachers and administrators too. All adults in the school system receive job-embedded support via instructional coaches and are given the tools to continuously grow and learn as professionals using the most current research-based strategies. SFUSD has a commitment to supporting educators' continued professional learning at every level of the career lattice. While there is an identified core knowledge base for all educators, teachers and others have an opportunity to develop a personalized professional learning plan that will contribute to their increased knowledge of content and pedagogy.



In addition to academic and technical knowledge, all adults in the school system are given the opportunity to develop the same social and emotional skills that the District aims to build and measure in its students—qualities like empathy, leadership, and resilience. In order to have the time, energy, and balance that the demands of teaching require, teachers are supported by additional educators, as well as by paraprofessionals, parents, counselors, and student interns who help to establish, encourage, and support the growth of self-driven learning for all students across all grades.

Recruiting the best teachers also remains a critical priority. In 2025, SFUSD is known for the quality and comprehensiveness of its new teacher induction program and its professional development strategies. As a result, SFUSD is able to attract and retain the most energetic, innovative, and talented educators, who together form a diverse and culturally representative faculty. SFUSD has also worked across a broad political spectrum at the local and state level to help California honor its commitment to education by continuing to raise funding to a level where all employees can be paid competitive wages, ensuring that SFUSD's educators can live and thrive in the city where they work.

Parents as Partners and Advocates

In 2025, a high percentage of SFUSD parents, caregivers, and families are deeply engaged in their students' learning. Indeed, supporting parents in advocating for their children and ensuring that all parents consistently feel like valued and respected members of the SFUSD community have become strong District priorities. Teachers, administrators, family liaisons, and other District representatives regularly partner with parents in more proactive ways, giving them full access to the information they need to be successful in navigating the school system, understanding their choices, and knowing how to access the variety of learning experiences that can help their children achieve their potential.

Schools have both deepened and broadened their communications and engagement with parents, reaching out to them in new ways to make sure that they feel more included and informed about what is happening in their children's schools—and pointing them toward the many pathways they can follow to become more actively engaged. SFUSD has both the values and structures in place to promote parent advocacy and engage parents as true partners in supporting student learning and contributing to building strong school communities.

In order to ensure that all families have equal access to important school information, every school's written communications are translated into multiple languages, and interpretation services are regularly provided at school meetings and events. Because the District takes parent engagement as a core responsibility, representatives from the District also do outreach into neighborhoods for parents who might not feel comfortable attending such sessions at school sites.

It used to be that families were engaged in their children's schools during the early years of their schooling but became less involved as their children grew older. In 2025, the vast majority of parents stay engaged throughout their children's entire school career. This continuous family involvement has had a transformational effect on the District, strengthening parents' roles as vital stakeholders and true partners in the District's efforts to lead community transformation. Parents feel empowered as decision makers within schools as well, and their voices (as well as the voices of students) are clearly reflected in the District's programs, services, and structures, many of which are the direct result of their recommendations.



Vision 2025
Students—The Classroom—The City
Teachers—Parents—Communities
Culture—Thriving—Target Groups

Schools as Centers of Community Life

In their “off” hours, SFUSD schools serve as vibrant community hubs that promote learning, health, wellbeing, collaboration, and resilience within San Francisco’s neighborhoods. Recognizing the need to help students and families gain access to a fuller array of services and supports that together contribute to whole-family success, the city’s public schools have become community schools in the truest sense, bringing together community resources and partners to offer a range of supports and opportunities for students, parents, and other community members before and after school, on weekends and holidays, and during the summer.

Working in close partnership with city departments and community-based organizations, SFUSD schools offer a full range of services to support the overall health and wellbeing of students and their families and help further the goal of preparing students for college or career. Onsite wellness centers address families’ physical and behavioral health needs, while nurses, social workers, and a host of paraprofessionals help families and students address at-home tensions. School staff work in integrated and collaborative ways to implement the community schools approach, and multidisciplinary school support teams know how to assess and support students’ needs. Schools have meaningful partnerships with community-based organizations and align their services and extended learning opportunities to support students and families.

Students are also offered a host of opportunities to bolster their in-school learning, including after-school tutoring, healthcare services, summer learning programs, and enrichment classes designed to advance their learning and link them to opportunities in the larger world, such as college or career counseling, financial literacy training, classes in poetry and the arts, and vocational training programs. Parents can also attend classes and receive practical and easy-access guidance on issues ranging from housing, employment, and government programs to how to use and manage technology in the home or help their kids transition to middle school.

The 2025 School Lunch Experience



12:11pm

Having preordered lunch online the night before, Tuyen grabs a brown bag from a rolling cart in the cafeteria—no waiting in line. Her meal is fresh and has been sourced from local suppliers and cooked in a communal kitchen. She devours it while seated with friends on beanbag chairs.



On her way out, she picks up a dinner kit for her family. In the early grades, Tuyen’s lunchroom focused on the routines and rituals of communal eating. In the middle years, students had “participatory” lunchrooms in which they collaboratively redesigned the lunch environment every year. Now in high school, Tuyen has a lunchroom that offers a range of options for bustling, multi-tasking adolescents.



A Culture of Innovation and Shared Purpose

Under the close guidance of the superintendent and the deputy superintendent for innovation, instruction, and social justice, the SFUSD Innovation Lab is a pivotal District investment in the development, testing, and refinement of promising new pedagogies, school models, policies, and practices. Schools, principals, and teachers with great ideas for new learning or teaching approaches have the opportunity to participate in Innovation Lab activities and become part of a larger network of learners. The central office plays an important knowledge management role in this regard, tracking and disseminating what is learned from prototypes and spreading and scaling those that prove successful. Just as importantly, District leadership sets quality standards for joint innovations and site-based innovations alike, ensuring that the most promising prototypes are vetted before being put into practice.

At the same time, the message is clear: innovation in SFUSD is a function of everybody working together. The District offers small pools of funding, training, technical support, or process coaching for multidisciplinary design teams—comprising some combination of principals, teachers, parents, students, and central office staff—who identify important problems of practice, commit to working collaboratively to identify potential solutions, and develop and implement promising approaches that can inform broader systemic strategies.

SFUSD operates as a coherent learning organization not just at the school site level but at a system level as well. There is a high degree of sustained collaboration among all parts of the school system, including the formation of new and more trusting alignments and alliances between schools and administrators and the creation of a new District-wide culture built around inquiry, shared purpose, and innovation. The chief goal of the central office is to support the field in accomplishing the goals that the District has set in policy.



Thriving Schools, Thriving City

While the District has little control over citywide issues like affordable housing and employment, it uses its leverage with the city to help influence policies and decisions that benefit District students, teachers, and families. In 2014, high costs and rents forced many families—especially African American families—out of the city, and San Francisco had the lowest per capita number of children of any major U.S. city. By 2025, San Francisco has emerged as a city that prioritizes families and is committed to ensuring that its youth are successful in and out of school.

Meanwhile, SFUSD has emerged as a point of pride in a city that once wondered whether its public school system would ever live up to its promise. Back in 2014, Superintendent Richard Carranza said, “The quality of our education system will play a huge role in nurturing the soul of the city and in defining the future of San Francisco.” Through its innovative learning approaches, its commitment to equity and social justice, and its focus on developing every student’s full potential of skills and talents, SFUSD has successfully linked student learning with the imperatives of life in an ever-changing global society—and in an ever-changing San Francisco.

SFUSD graduates can be found living in and contributing to every community in the city, and working and leading locally in jobs across all sectors and industries. The ability of SFUSD alums to work across racial, linguistic, cultural, and economic lines to harness the intelligence and resources of the city helps further elevate San Francisco as one of the greatest cities in the world. SFUSD continues to attract more families to San Francisco—and continues to graduate students who are well prepared to become active, engaged, and responsible community members in a city that welcomes their unique contributions.



Student Leadership in 2025

In 2025, students will be expected to be leaders in their own lives, schools, and communities. They will be trained as leaders throughout all of their curriculum, acquiring a suite of skills that includes empathy, active communication, problem-solving, collaborating with teams, project planning, taking the initiative, reflection, and evaluation. Students will also have authentic opportunities to practice these skills

through peer-to-peer education, mentoring, and tutoring; peer-to-younger-peer services (through partnered elementary and middle schools, and partnered middle and high schools throughout the District); internships and paid jobs for older youth in after-school and summer programs; youth advisory boards for CTE programs; student government;

and student-led training for SFUSD teachers on youth voice and leadership. Student voice will also be a consistent element of the communication and decision-making systems across individual schools and the district at large. Student input will be given on a proactive basis, allowing for real representation in decision-making at school sites and at the District level.

Target Student Groups: Students with Disabilities

Vision 2025 represents a cultural shift in terms of how we think about the differential challenges—racism and poverty, for example—and the unique assets our students bring to their educational experience. In SFUSD’s next chapter we will ensure that each child is on a personalized learning pathway with the tools and resources they need to advance both academically and socio-emotionally.

We expect this degree of personalization will particularly benefit three target groups of SFUSD students.

Students with Disabilities:

Assistive technologies. Every school will have a suite of research-supported assistive technologies that give students with disabilities access to new ways of learning designed around their specific needs. In many cases, they will use the same devices as other students but the device will be loaded with the appropriate adaptive software. In other cases, students will have access to specialized technology created specifically with their disabilities in mind. Teachers and other adults will be well versed in the use of a variety of assistive technologies to enhance their students’ learning experiences.

A team-based, whole-child teaching approach. Students’ learning styles and strengths will be understood, respected and nurtured by all who work with them. In all classrooms—but especially in later grades—a team teaching approach (e.g., special education teachers, subject-area teachers, behavioral experts, social skills coaches, etc.) will ensure that all students get the attention and assistance they need to be successful. Teachers will have access to training, support, and resources required for team-teaching.

A focus on post–high-school success. Part of the job of SFUSD and its community partners will be to develop post–high-school pathways for all students that reflect and utilize their individual abilities while giving them the tools to move seamlessly into the workplace. Creating such pathways for students with significant disabilities will require an imaginative and diverse spectrum of internships, vocational education opportunities and apprenticeships as well as continued development of social opportunities for students who may otherwise feel isolated after leaving the school system.

A non-biased approach to subjective disabilities assessment. Currently, a disproportionate number of SFUSD students diagnosed with subjective disabilities—including learning disabilities, speech and language challenges, and emotional disturbance—are minorities, whereas the racial breakdown of students with objective disabilities—blindness, deafness, and other physical limitations—is much more racially balanced. In Vision 2025, special education is not considered the first or only avenue for students exhibiting behavior challenges. There are more interventions in place, not only to support students and teachers but also to help the school system identify where implicit bias is impeding our progress toward equity.



Target Student Groups: African American Students

Engaging experiences to nurture students' identities. We expect that personalized learning pathways and engagement around personal interests will help our African American students thrive. We will accelerate achievement and ensure success at critical transition points on the African American student's educational journey by adopting promising local, state and national strategies. These will range from rigorous implementation of the common core curriculum to real-world learning experiences and engaging digital learning programs and specialized ethnic studies programs.

Strong support networks and family partnerships. Partnership with the city and community-based organizations will ensure that African American students are interacting with cooperative adults and systems that fully support the aspirations and needs of African American students and their families. Families and caretakers will have clear roles in the shaping and promotion of learning opportunities that support the unique needs of their students. We will establish thorough communication and feedback loops between the District and African American families toward this end.

Research-based options and supports to achieve success. SFUSD will have take up President Obama's "My Brother's Keeper" initiative, a call-to-action to join a national network of school districts and cities who are committed to educate and support African American students and families. Supported by engaging workforce experiences throughout the course of their education, African American students will become leaders in high-demand fields to help diversify the City's workforce.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. Vision 2025 describes a school district where all staff, especially teachers and principals, are supported to achieve mastery of both the academic and multi-cultural strategies necessary to enact the values of equity. All teachers will have the deep professional development and support necessary to master and integrate culturally relevant pedagogy across the curriculum. All SFUSD staff will be able to identify and mitigate the impact of implicit racial bias and will have practical and research-based strategies to reduce stereotype threats that African American students and others of color experience on a daily basis. The SFUSD Board of Education and executive leadership will also identify and address institutional and structural forms of racism that continue to replicate oppressive learning conditions. We will maintain strong partnerships beyond SFUSD to address such pernicious systemic challenges. In addition, the restorative practices movement will be deeply rooted in all school cultures with the goal of increasing trust between African American families and school staff.



Target Student Groups: English Learners

English Learners will be provided the necessary resources and supports to succeed academically person par with their peers in 2025.

Accelerated Language Development. In Vision 2025, English Learners’ opportunity to accelerate English Language Development is evident throughout the instructional day, and all ELs have access to a pre-K-12 language pathway. English Learners will have ongoing opportunities to interact with other students and adults through academic discourse in both English and their native language. Technology will be accessible to all English Learners regardless of family background and will be used effectively to support language acquisition in English while continuing to develop and maintain our students’ native languages. Schools will have rich libraries of classroom materials aligned to the common core state standards and these will be available in multiple languages.

Teacher supports. Teachers will be adequately prepared to leverage the “reimagined classroom” so their English Learners have access to the core curriculum. English Learner’s parents will also be equipped with skills to contribute to their children’s academic success. English Language Development and technology classes will be readily available for EL parents seeking to better understand the needs of their children and to effectively partner with teachers.

Access to opportunity. English Learners will gain English proficiency as soon as is feasible so they have increased access to A-G courses for graduation and preparation for post-secondary education. Students’ goals and interests will not be impeded by their English proficiency; instead, their native language and English skills will expand their college and career options.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy: English Learners bring a wealth of cultural and ethnic contributions and identities. All teachers will understand the value that this diversity brings to the classroom and will be responsive to the cultures of different groups as they design curriculum, plan learning activities and establish assessment procedures.



In the coming years, the vision shared in this report will serve as a guiding force that aligns the District’s priorities, programs, and partnerships. It will also continue to inspire fresh insights into both what is necessary and what is possible for San Francisco’s students, families, schools, and communities.

But bringing Vision 2025 to life—turning it from a vision into a true social movement with a heartbeat all its own—will require more than that. It will require coordinated efforts across the city by multiple stakeholders. It will require that families, caregivers, educators, administrators, funders, and community members feel inspired to support, contribute to, and hold themselves accountable for better outcomes for all public school students—and, by extension, for the city of San Francisco itself.

We need everyone’s help in broadcasting this vision and doing their part to create the ecosystem that will help manifest and support it. It is only through the commitment of all of us—of all San Franciscans—that we will be able to truly transform education in this city, empowering our public school system to become an engine for growth and change throughout San Francisco.

We look forward to the work ahead—and to continuing to broaden and deepen the collective conversation about the future of our students, our city, and the world.

San Francisco has a rich history of dreams and determination coming together to make this one of the greatest cities in the world—imagine what this combination can do for our schools and our future.

SUPERINTENDENT RICHARD A. CARRANZA

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