

Santa Clara Unified School District

VISION 2035

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR
AN EVER-CHANGING WORLD

Our community has spoken, and we are responding with a reimagined strategic vision that raises a radiant “north star” for us to follow, transforming what it means to receive an extraordinary, world-leading public education in the Santa Clara Unified School District (SCUSD).

Students who graduate from SCUSD will be lifelong learners who are ready for their futures, no matter their path. In this strategic vision, strong foundational academic knowledge and skills are amplified in core academics, effective communication, critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving.

Our students will be empathetic, compassionate ambassadors for equity, change, and well-being for themselves and others, both locally and globally. Our commitment is for each student to reach their full potential to the best of their abilities. Students are at the center of Vision 2035, with Adult and System Portraits supporting the actualization of our Graduate Portrait. Together, these portraits align leadership, teaching, learning, and resource allocation so that our learning system delivers on the promise of SCUSD’s Vision 2035.

We thank the nearly 2,000 students, families, and community members who have committed 6,000 hours to share their ideas, hopes, aspirations, and daring dreams to imagine this enterprising vision for our students. Please join us as we step into the work of bringing Vision 2035 to reality!

Board of Trustees



LOOKING FORWARD



In response to the societal, economic, and demographic changes that are reshaping our world, state, and community, SCUSD has launched an ambitious project to engage all of our community stakeholders in creating a bold, shared vision for our graduates. SCUSD Vision 2035 lays the foundation and laser-like focus for a series of strategic plans that will lead to immediate and long-term success for our students.

America’s schools—whose educational models were designed to meet the needs of past eras—fall far short of serving the needs of today’s students, let alone tomorrow’s. We face a pressing need to transform our antiquated educational system. Our rapidly changing world and global economy require that students leave our schools with the ability to be adaptive, agile, and ready to thrive in a society, with careers that have yet to be imagined.

Santa Clara Unified is leveraging the momentum of these unprecedented changes to transform teaching and learning from its traditional, rigid design to one that is responsive, adaptable, forward-thinking, and intentional in preparing students to thrive as they embark upon their lives and careers. All adults model the skills and dispositions they are teaching our children within an educational system that transforms and adapts to the ever-changing needs of our students.

Our community’s vision for a world-leading public school system requires that we commit our energy, expertise, and hearts to rise to its aspirational challenge between now and 2035. We are ambitious in our vision, and yet we will always focus on the immediate needs of our students, their families, and our staff.

We will address the present and future through a series of five strategic plans over the next 15 years, each setting the course for the next three years. Each plan will include research-based strategies and activities that we will implement, test, and refine over time. The plans are designed to allow us to continue what we’re doing well, disengage from what’s not working, and launch bold innovations that propel our students into the future. We look forward to partnering and collaborating with you to achieve Vision 2035.

Stella M. Kemp, Ed.D.
Superintendent

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INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS A VISION?

In fall 2019, the Board of Trustees and the Superintendent of Santa Clara Unified School District launched a community-wide collaborative process to develop the long-term vision for public education in SCUSD.

The elements of this vision were developed through the collaborative work of a guiding coalition—a group of 90 individuals selected for the diverse communities and viewpoints they represent—and expanded and refined over 54 community meetings and two community surveys (see the roadmap, p. 6, for more detail). The work included explorations of future trends that are likely to impact education; learning journeys* to schools and organizations that are already engaged in reinventing education; and collaborative design exercises that consider the needs of students, educators, families, and community members.

A “vision” is a bold leap into the future, painting a vivid picture of a destination—a “north star” that guides collective action and shapes the strategies to make it a reality.

A vision is long range, helping us step outside the constraints of the present and reimagine the possibilities of the future. Organizational changes take time, and longer time frames encourage us to be proactive and to anticipate and plan for changes. Thinking about the outcomes we want can bring new energy and solutions to persistent problems. Moreover, planning with the end result in mind frees our imaginations to think differently about our path forward. In that spirit, the text below includes stories of possible futures. These are not promises or predictions but are intended to inspire ideas and keep our focus on the future we want.

This does not mean that our work stays static in the short term. Bringing the vision to fruition by 2035 will require that we launch an accompanying

strategic plan* at the beginning of the 2020–2021 school year. This plan is the first in a series of five three-year plans that articulate the phases, the scope*, sequence*, and syncopation* of the work, and outlines the steps needed to make Vision 2035* a reality.

The vision and strategic plan are companion works—a vision is not a strategy. The vision identifies the “what” and the “why,” and the strategy defines the “how.” Before we decide how we want to move forward, we need to know where we want to go.

The vision for Santa Clara Unified School District focuses on what we want to be true for our graduates. It is a journey of creativity, learning, and continuous improvement. A shared destination will speed results by aligning actions and resources, and inspiring relevant collaborations.

* Learning journey: A virtual and/or in-person curated expedition to experience leading-edge ideas in play.

Strategic plan: A three-to-five-year action plan that sets strategic priorities, goals, and progress measures.

Scope: Describes which strategies in the vision will be implemented at any one time.

Sequence: Covers the order in which strategies have to be implemented.

Syncopation: Ongoing assessment and monitoring of the connections and interactions between strategies that are being implemented simultaneously.

Vision 2035: Santa Clara Unified School District’s 15-year vision for the future of the district.

Graduates of Santa Clara Unified School District are resilient, future-ready, lifelong learners who think critically, solve problems collaboratively, and are prepared to thrive in a global society.

WHY THIS VISION? WHY NOW?

Santa Clara Unified School District is situated in the heart of Silicon Valley, an area known worldwide for innovation in science and technology. Our community wants to ensure that its school district reflects the spirit of world-leading innovation, while also attending to the social and emotional needs of students and adults. The hiring of Superintendent Dr. Stella M. Kemp in summer 2019 signaled SCUSD's readiness to take the next steps in its evolution.

In a world of constant change, with young people competing globally for jobs and post-secondary educational opportunities, the pressures on students, families, and educators are intense. Our vision reflects high-quality academics that place SCUSD students at the forefront of these opportunities, in school communities that foster growth, resilience, and creativity; that build confidence; and that develop the abilities to work both independently and collaboratively.

Based on the key ideas developed by the Guiding Coalition* during the exploration of the future, the community has identified the importance of the following:

- Social-emotional learning and wellness, so that students are taught to handle stress, anxiety, and trauma in healthy ways
- Critical thinking ability and creative and constructive problem-solving skills, so that students can make use of what they learn, to analyze, identify patterns, draw inferences, and understand the roles of evidence and argument
- Real-world applicability, ensuring that students are prepared to thrive in the adult world, navigate change and hardship, take care of themselves and those they care about, and begin successful careers
- Being thoughtful, empathetic, and civically engaged

These qualities are timeless and enduring, as evidenced by the recent COVID-19 pandemic's major disruptions to the rhythms of life as a student. The SCUSD Vision 2035 clarifies action and creates a destination that helps identify what needs to be done and, equally important, what we need to stop doing.

* Guiding Coalition:
The visioning steering committee, made up of parents, students, educators, community leaders, business leaders, and elected officials.

OCT 1 - NOV 4

NEEDS-FINDING INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS

During the initial phase of the visioning process, more than 100 staff and community members were interviewed through individual sessions and focus groups. They shared their perspectives on the current school system, the historical context, and their aspirations for the future of SCUSD, helping generate initial ideas for the Graduate Portrait and the Adult Portrait.

NOV 16

STUDENT SUMMIT

During this session at Mission College, students shared their perspectives on the challenges they expect to face after graduation, along with the skills, knowledge, mindsets, and dispositions* they will need to thrive. They also shared stories about—and identified the attributes of—adults who have supported their success.



DEC 2 - 13



ADDITIONAL STUDENT INPUT

During focus-group discussions, more than 500 middle and high school students from all of our secondary schools contributed their thoughts, ideas, and suggestions. High school classes and groups included Biotechnology, Journalism, Career Technical Education, Diversity, Leadership, Teaching Assistants, Hispanic STEAM Program, English Learners, and the Gender and Sexuality Minorities Alliance. Middle school classes and clubs included Science, Geometry, History/Social Science, Robotics, Culinary Arts, and Middle School Matters. Input was also gathered from the superintendent's student council.



DECEMBER 9 - 13

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ROUND 1

We replicated the horizons exercise in targeted and district-wide community engagement events, soliciting input on the knowledge, skills, mindsets, and dispositions needed by future graduates to thrive in their lives and careers. We held a district-wide event at Cabrillo Middle School, along with targeted outreach focus groups with special-education families (Community Advisory Council), migrant parents, the Alviso community, English learner parents (District English Learner Advisory Committee), and Family Resource Center families. An online survey, conducted in both Spanish and English, generated 250 responses.



FEB 5 - 13

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ROUND 2

The next iteration of the draft vision was shared with the community. Along with a district-wide event at Santa Clara High School, we held targeted outreach focus groups with the Special Education Community Advisory Council (CAC), Migrant Parent Advisory Council, the Alviso community, the District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC), and the Family Resource Center.

We also held sessions for central office staff and at the elementary and secondary site leadership team (SLT) retreats. The superintendent's student council reconvened to review the latest drafts, provide feedback, and complete a survey. Finally, school sites were given tools to conduct a live feedback session at their sites, or participate in an online survey after watching a video introduction by Superintendent Kemp.

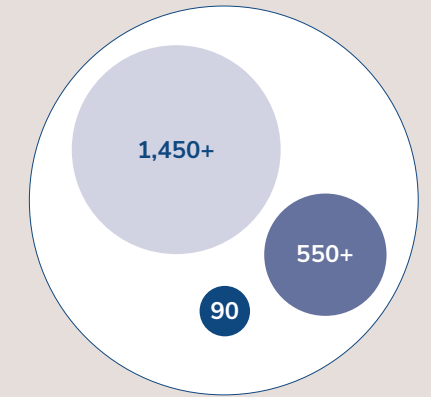
MARCH 31

PROCESS

The visioning process engaged thousands of stakeholders, including students, families, staff, businesses, community members, and philanthropic leaders.

The data generated in these meetings were analyzed and synthesized. After a series of draft ideas were vetted with various stakeholders, additional inputs, comments, and feedback were iterated* upon to develop these vision elements.

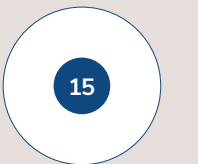
1,820+ Stakeholders



Targeted community engagement sessions



3 Surveys and 457 Respondents



Core team members

1,450+ Community members
90 Guiding Coalition members
550+ Students

6,010+ Hours



1,150+ Core team meetings, facilitation, preparation



2,600+ Guiding Coalition sessions



945+ Learning journeys



1,060+ Student participation



255+ Various stakeholder activities

THE ROADMAP

2019

OCT 7

BOARD MINI-SESSION

The Board of Trustees, cabinet, and core team* members were given an opportunity to understand the vision design process through an experiential overview prior to launching engagement activities with district stakeholders. They engaged in mini-versions of several design activities, including exploring future scenarios*, and understanding the needs of stakeholders through personas*.



NOV 22 - 23

GUIDING COALITION DESIGN SESSION 1: STRATEGIC FORESIGHT* AND EMPATHIC DESIGN

The Guiding Coalition began with a journey into the future to imagine the world our graduates and educators will encounter over the next 15 years. We heard from a panel of futurists, read provocative scenarios of the future of Silicon Valley, and identified the needs of stakeholders (students, families, staff) through "personas" from the future.

With the "horizons exercise*," we explored aspects of SCUSD that might no longer serve the district, identified aspirations for the future of SCUSD, and brainstormed ideas on what to start or cultivate.

DEC 2 - 17

LEARNING JOURNEYS

Three in-person learning journeys were attended by 33 Guiding Coalition members, who visited 14 organizations in San Francisco, Fresno, and Southern California that exemplify excellence and innovation, and demonstrate future trends in action. These included educational systems; community organizations; higher education institutions; arts, media, and science organizations; and community learning programs.

All coalition members were also encouraged to explore the virtual learning journey, which consisted of more than 200 sites showcasing the future of education and society (also made available to the public).

2020

JAN 10 - 11

GUIDING COALITION DESIGN SESSION 2: SHAPING THE GRADUATE, ADULT, AND SYSTEM PORTRAITS

The Guiding Coalition shared inspirational stories from the learning journeys and reviewed data from the first design session, along with inputs from the community engagement events and survey, which were then consolidated into a "family" of ideas. Groups then worked on initial drafts of the Graduate Portrait, the Adult Portrait, and System Portrait.



FEB 28 - 29

GUIDING COALITION DESIGN SESSION 3: PRIORITIZING KEY ELEMENTS AND DEVELOPING CORE VALUES

After the second series of community engagement sessions, input and feedback were integrated into subsequent drafts of the vision elements. At our third and final design session, members of the Guiding Coalition worked in small groups to refine the next iteration of the vision elements. They also created an initial list of refreshed core values that will support our emerging vision.



THE ROADMAP

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MARCH 31

BOARD WORK-STUDY SESSION

The Board of Trustees reviewed the synthesized materials from the third Guiding Coalition convening and gave feedback on the three main areas of the vision and updated core values. Their feedback was integrated into the close-to-final drafts presented to the community through the community feedback website.



APR 19 – 26

VIRTUAL COMMUNITY INSTALLATION WEBSITE

The original community installation was redesigned due to the COVID-19 shelter-in-place order. Instead of an in-person showcase, we created a website depicting the near-final-draft narratives of the Graduate Portrait, Adult Portrait, System Portrait, and Core Values for final community feedback.



* Core team: The cross-departmental internal district team that collaborates and helps coordinate and facilitate the vision process to ensure that it reflects the community's needs and voices.

Scenarios: Descriptions of various possible futures that help us explore the mutual impacts of interesting developments and context.

Persona: A composite character created based on research and experience that allows a group to design for specific user needs.

Disposition: Prevailing tendency.

Strategic foresight: [U]ses a range of methodologies, such as scanning the horizon for emerging changes, analyzing megatrends, and developing multiple scenarios, to reveal and discuss useful ideas about the future.

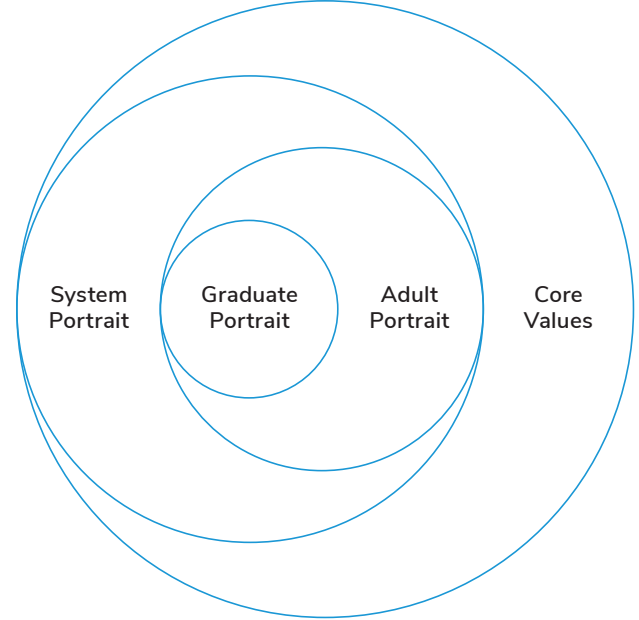
Iterate: To go through cycles of improvement or change, toward a clear outcome, based on new information or changing circumstances.

Horizons exercise: An exercise that helps groups and individuals think about the current state, the desired future state, and what needs to be nurtured in between.



THE VISION AREAS

VISION 2035 COMPRISES FOUR MAIN AREAS



The Core Values express the principles that guide the school district's actions in realizing the vision.

The Graduate Portrait envisions the outcomes for students—the community's aspirations for what graduates will know, be, and be able to do to thrive in their lives and careers.

The Adult Portrait articulates the qualities that the adults working in the school district will exhibit to promote each student's journey toward realizing the Graduate Portrait.

The System Portrait focuses on creating the conditions that will enable Santa Clara Unified School District students and adults to thrive and grow, guided by the core values.

The critical role of every school system is to engage students here and now, while preparing them to thrive in their lives and careers. However, the task of preparing our young people for the future is not ours alone. This vision for our students will only succeed if we work together as a community. This

vision is an audacious* call-to-action to support the students of Santa Clara Unified School District. It is written in present tense, as if it has already been realized, to give a sense of what the future it describes might feel like.

.....
 * Audacious: Showing a willingness to take surprisingly bold risks.

THE CORE VALUES

Core values are the enduring beliefs that guide an organization's actions over time. Tethering the core values to the vision makes the organization's ethics explicit and ensures alignment with its purpose.

The following seven statements were developed through the vision work. While core values are foundational, when creating any kind of system change, organizations need to articulate the mindsets, dispositions, and ways of working that align with the desired future. This set of SCUSD values creates the foundation for the vision by building upon and expanding the existing values.



STUDENTS FIRST

We believe that preparing students to adapt and thrive in a rapidly changing, globally connected world should inform every decision. We believe that incorporating student voice is essential to our success in understanding and meeting each student's needs.

EXCELLENCE THROUGH CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

We believe that achieving high performance and full potential for both the organization and the individual comes from a relentless commitment to excellence and the courage to adapt, change, and improve based on results. We believe in fostering a growth mindset by defining failures as opportunities for learning and continuous improvement.

INTEGRITY AND ETHICAL STEWARDSHIP

We believe in upholding our fiscal responsibility through integrity and high ethical standards. We gain high levels of trust and foster collective responsibility across our organization, through effective stewardship of our resources and consistent ethical, transparent, accountable behavior and actions.

CONNECTED FAMILIES AND COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY

We believe that community action is essential to achieving our vision and having a positive impact on student outcomes, including their health and wellness. We serve as a catalyst for a call-to-action with our parents, families, and community. Through support, engagement, involvement, and collaboration, we leverage our multiple perspectives and collective genius, develop better solutions, and deepen our shared commitment to success.



EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

We believe in bringing out the full potential of every student and staff member, through our commitment to equity, access, and inclusion*. We are passionate and unwavering in our belief that we can make a positive difference for every student if we embrace diversity, acknowledge our interdependence, and exemplify the courage to reflect continually on our personal and systemic biases, and make decisions that disrupt systems of oppression and injustice.

EMPATHY AND RESPECT

We believe that empathy—the ability to understand and share the feelings of another—is crucial for valuing diverse perspectives, effective collaboration, problem solving, and leading change. We believe that everyone has value and deserves to be treated respectfully.

WORLD-LEADING AND FUTURE READY

We believe that preparing our students and educators to thrive requires a culture of creativity and innovation. We are forward looking and future ready. We evolve by scanning the horizon for exemplary practices, inspiring fresh ideas, and adapting to our ever-changing world to meet our students' and educators' learning needs, now and in the future.

We honor differences and recognize intersectionality*—the overlapping identities that combine and intersect in the experiences of marginalized groups—in order to understand the complexity of the prejudices they face and respond with inclusive practices. Empathy and respect also lead to a kind and caring environment, enabling our staff and students to build strong relationships and foster mutual wellbeing.

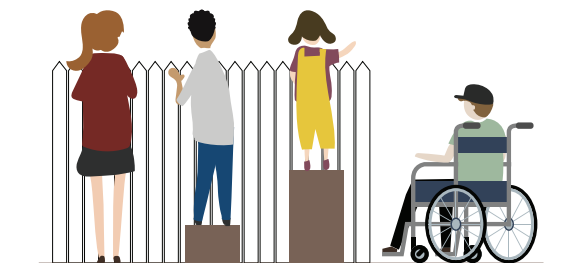
* *Inclusion: The act or practice of including and accommodating people who have historically been excluded (because of their race, gender, sexuality, or ability).*

Intersectionality: The complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect, especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups.

WHAT IS EQUITY?

“Educational equity means that each child receives what they need to develop to their full academic and social potential. Working towards equity in schools involves: Ensuring equally high outcomes for all participants in our educational system; removing the predictability of success or failures that currently correlates with any social or cultural factor; Interrupting inequitable practices, examining biases, and creating inclusive multicultural school environments for adults and children; and Discovering and cultivating the unique gifts, talents and interests that every human possesses.” (The National Equity Project)

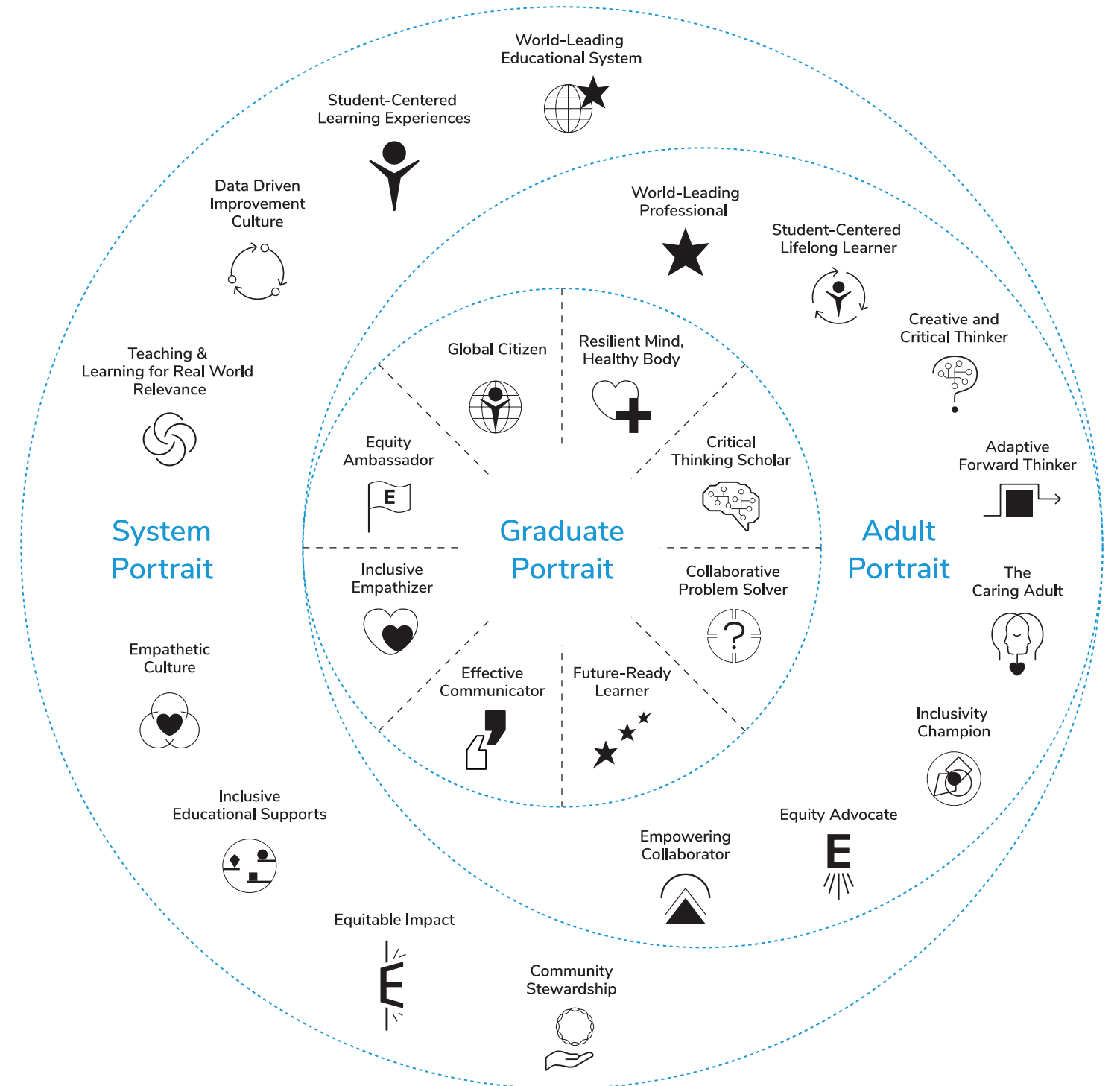
“In education, the term ‘equity’ refers to the principle of fairness. While it is often used interchangeably with the related principle of equality, equity encompasses a wide variety of educational models, programs, and strategies that may be considered fair, but not necessarily equal. It has been said that ‘equity is the process; equality is the outcome,’ given that equity—what is fair and just—may not, in the process of educating students, reflect strict equality—what is applied, allocated, or distributed equally. Inequities occur when biased or unfair policies, programs, practices, or situations contribute to a lack of equality in educational performance, results, and outcomes. For example, certain students or groups of students may attend school, graduate, or enroll in postsecondary education at lower rates, or they may perform comparatively poorly on standardized tests due to a wide variety of factors, including inherent biases or flaws in test designs.” (The Glossary of Education Reform)





INTEGRATED DIAGRAM

This diagram shows the Graduate Portrait at the center, supported by the Adult Portrait, which is supported by the System Portrait. This diagram shows how the other elements of the vision wrap around the Graduate Portrait and how every element in it is supported by the Adult Portrait and the System Portrait.



THE GRADUATE PORTRAIT

Why have a Graduate Portrait?

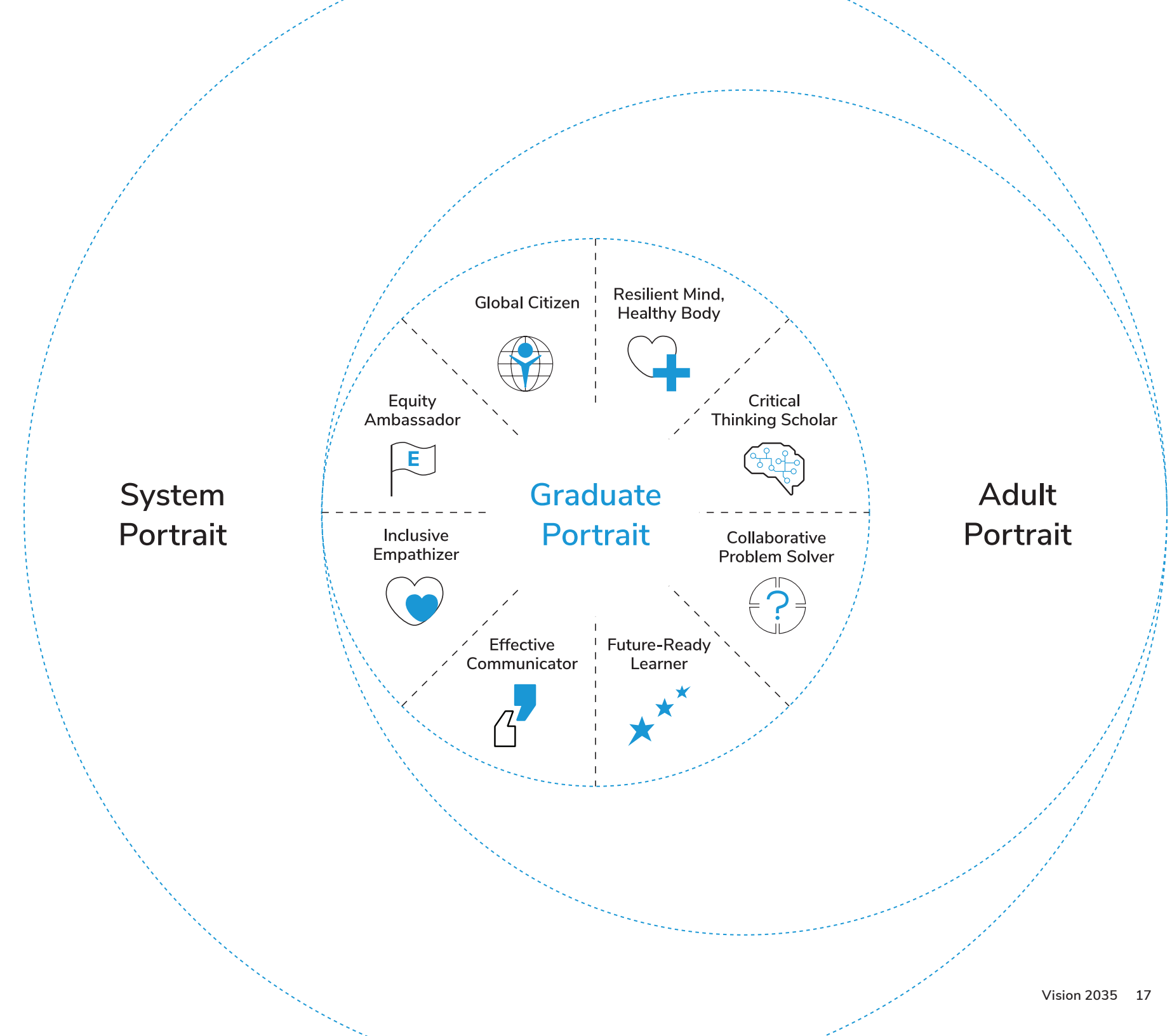
At the center of an educational vision is the Graduate Portrait—a description of the community’s aspirations for its young people. Our Graduate Portrait is courageous, informed by community values and foresight about likely trends our students may encounter. It describes the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and mindsets that Santa Clara Unified School District’s students need to thrive in life and career.

While the Graduate Portrait is aspirational*, our commitment is to support every student in working toward realizing its elements to the best of their ability. The aspirations are bold, to catalyze the system changes needed to improve student outcomes. Our Graduate Portrait will also guide adult actions and decisions, aligning leadership, management, teaching and learning, and resource allocations for student success. Our objective is to prepare each student for life beyond high school by supporting them in

reaching their full potential. We believe that all of the Graduate Portrait elements are important for ensuring that students thrive in the increasingly diverse environment in which they will live.

The following Graduate Portrait elements have been developed through iterative cycles of input, feedback, and revision, as illustrated in the roadmap (p. 6).

* Aspirational: Having or showing a desire to achieve a high level of success.





RESILIENT MIND, HEALTHY BODY



Students are mentally and physically resilient individuals who know how to manage stress, work toward a balanced lifestyle, make productive personal decisions, and cultivate networks of supportive and affirming allies.

Students are healthy, resilient, confident individuals, with effective personal strategies for overcoming challenges. These include knowing how to use their agency and self-advocacy to proactively communicate their needs to others. They also have self-care tools and tactics that foster mental and physical wellness. They manage stress and anxiety through practices that promote a balanced lifestyle of good nutrition, exercise, sleep, and setting healthy personal boundaries.

Students can identify and appreciate their personal assets, strengths, and skills. They understand the relationship between responsible decision-making and positive outcomes, and they are aware of the negative effects of inappropriate choices. They have developed emotional resilience by recognizing, managing, and expressing emotions constructively and applying mindfulness strategies.

Students have developed authentic, unique, positive personal identities that are reflected in their reputations and digital footprints. They express a deep sense of self worth and belief in their ability to accomplish goals. They know how to connect with and cultivate physical and virtual communities in which they feel respected, valued, and affirmed.

* Foundational academic knowledge: the core body of knowledge any student needs to graduate high school.
CTE: Career Technical Education.

CRITICAL-THINKING SCHOLAR



Students graduate with strong critical and creative thinking skills, developed by applying foundational academic knowledge across various disciplines to develop new understandings.

Students graduate with foundational academic knowledge* and skills that they can apply in an interdisciplinary way to think critically and creatively. They draw upon knowledge from a range of disciplines, including the sciences, the humanities, and the arts, to think across boundaries and synthesize information in new ways.

They can analyze, evaluate, and interpret information; ask relevant questions; and develop compelling arguments supported by evidence. They can also creatively and effectively develop and apply digital technologies and artificial intelligence tools and devices to enhance their ability to conceptualize, analyze, synthesize, evaluate, and interpret information. They can determine the validity of information and identify biased, misleading, and false information.

Stories from the future: Inspiring, creative, snapshots that help us imagine and maintain focus on a desired future through stories of fictional characters.

MAX'S STORY FROM THE FUTURE*

Max is pretty excited about the year 2 CTE engineering pathway class he'll take in his senior year at Santa Clara High School. Max will collaborate with other students to design artificial intelligence (AI) enhanced glasses that will provide just-in-time social-cues feedback to older students and adults. The project is supported by engineers at a technology firm known for its revolutionary child-development robots.*

As a second grader, Max was diagnosed with autism, and subsequently, his IEP team determined there was a need for a vetted resource to support his learning needs. He was given an AI-enhanced social-emotional learning robot, as part of the assistive technology support he received from the district. His robot helped Max practice interpersonal skills, read social cues, and build relationships with other people in a safe, comfortable environment designed for young learners with autism. As a senior, Max will bring critical lived experience as an asset to the collaborative team, thereby helping the team design better solutions for meeting the needs of students and adults with autism.



COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVER



Students know how to collaborate effectively with diverse teams to understand problems and develop creative, realistic solutions that address the needs of people and situations.

Students are highly skilled problem seekers and solvers. Through engagement in interdisciplinary, collaborative projects, they know how to identify and describe problems, assess underlying causes, generate creative solutions that meet diverse needs, and implement solutions with an understanding of real-world consequences.

They value teamwork and seek diverse perspectives to understand problems and enhance solutions. They work effectively in teams, with people from diverse backgrounds and experiences, and also with entities such as intelligent machines.

They are cognitively flexible, and knowledgeable about different approaches to problem solving. They are creative and know how to use a variety of tools and techniques to develop fresh, new ideas. They are comfortable managing complexity and ambiguity. They are skilled systems and strategic thinkers, able to anticipate cause-and-effect relationships in systems and identify actions needed to implement solutions. Students augment their problem solving capabilities through the development and use of technology.



FUTURE-READY LEARNER



Students are well prepared for their futures, with key life skills, a strong sense of direction, the ability to plan, and self-directed learning skills that enable them to adapt to a rapidly evolving world.

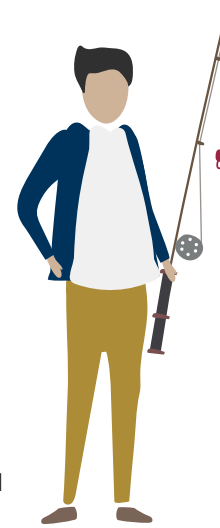
Students are well equipped for life after graduation. They have productive aspirations for their futures, informed by real-world learning, and work and service experiences. They have broad, practical knowledge of various college and career pathways and are prepared to follow initial steps after they complete high school.

They are able to use technology responsibly to support their learning efforts, be productive, stay healthy, work, and be independent. They are adaptive learners, maintaining competence by recognizing when new learning is needed, and they are equipped with the “how to learn” skills needed to reskill and upskill, thereby maintaining

relevance in a rapidly evolving career landscape. Students are curious and self-reflective, and they see learning as a lifelong journey. They have a growth mindset and believe that goals are attainable and that outcomes can change with effort and learning. They use critical feedback productively to support personal growth, and they take risks, recognizing failure as a natural part of the learning cycle.

They are armed with key career-building skills. They can represent their knowledge, skills, and experiences in a variety of formats and media, effectively prepare for and undergo interviews, and build supportive professional networks, in person and virtually. They have strong productivity skills and can manage team projects—organizing, prioritizing, and planning effectively to meet deadlines. They also have practical knowledge and skills to navigate real-life challenges regardless of their pathway. As a result, they know how to manage their finances responsibly, take care of basic needs, and live independently.

MICHAEL'S STORY FROM THE FUTURE



Michael is a senior at Wilcox and will be the first in his family to graduate high school. At the ninth grade career planning workshop with families, Michael's mom shares that the kinds of jobs her family typically had were all being automated. She's excited that CTE credits were a graduation requirement and wants Michael to get “future-proofed” experience.

During an interdisciplinary design exercise, Michael learns about the Shoreline Project. He became interested in how that would work and in his sophomore year applied for an externship with the Water Board. This gives him experience as part of a collaborative team, helping him demonstrate his Collaborative Problem Solver learning. He also discovered an interest in hydrology, getting a taste of what a career might be like and gaining experience that will help him apply for college, training, or an apprenticeship.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR

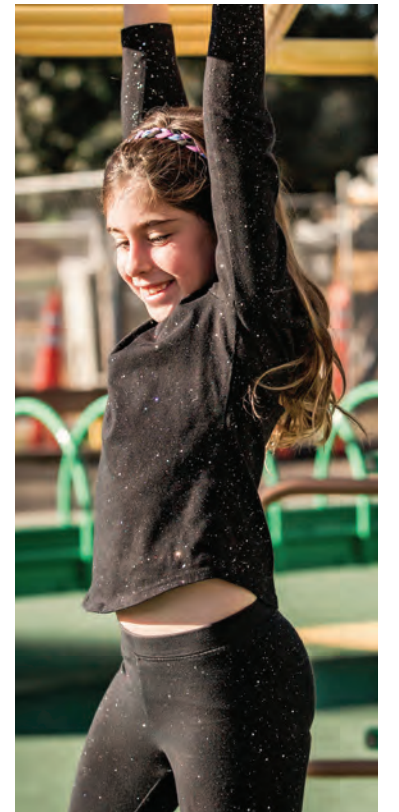


Students are effective and responsible communicators who can organize and express information in different ways to diverse audiences, using a variety of methods and tools.

Students can organize and express meaningful content for a variety of audiences. They understand when to use formal language and when to use less formal language. They can apply a variety of communication strategies, including writing, debating, storytelling, and presenting, using various forms of expression, including visual and

performing arts, photography, video, digital media, computational expression, and virtual and augmented reality.

They are skilled at listening actively to understand different points of view. They can hold meaningful conversations with people of different backgrounds and ages, and with intelligent machines. They can persuade others through public speaking, storytelling, and debating. They can communicate with others in more than one language, including computer languages. They exhibit ethical responsibility by ensuring that the information they communicate is factual, accurate, and reliable.



INCLUSIVE EMPATHIZER



Students have an inclusive mindset and they value and empathize with others who are different from themselves.

Students are able to relate to and empathize with people from diverse backgrounds and with different belief systems, cultures, neurotypes*, physical and learning abilities, identities, languages, socio-economic backgrounds, and ages. They have an inclusive and asset-based mindset, which fosters their ability to compromise, be kind, and live and work with others who are different from themselves.

They have deep listening skills, are open minded, and are aware of their own biases. As compassionate empathizers, they demonstrate care and concern for others and take action to address their problems. As empathetic individuals, they understand the emotional states of others. As cognitive empathizers, they can put themselves in someone else's place and understand perspectives that differ from their own.

* Neurotypes: Refers to different types of cognitive processing, including responses to social cues.



EQUITY AMBASSADOR



Students understand the historical roots of racial and cultural bias and how these have led to institutionalized and biased practices, and they know how to act in ways that promote equity.

As equity change agents, students have the agency, knowledge and skills to take action in challenging and dismantling conditions of race and culture based injustice. They have a racial equity and cultural inclusion mindset and an asset-based perspective on diverse communities. They can evaluate history from a polycentric perspective and are knowledgeable about racial justice issues. They can identify examples of institutionalized racism and take action to interrupt conditions that perpetuate inequality.

GLOBAL CITIZEN



Students have a global orientation, seeing themselves as part of a larger interdependent and connected worldwide ecosystem in which they have responsibilities as productive citizens.

Students possess a global consciousness and sense of responsibility. They can see beyond themselves and recognize the connectedness of the broader world. They can think systemically and differentiate between the local and global, and short and long-term impacts of personal, business, and societal decisions.

They are culturally competent and inclusive and are able to relate, communicate, and collaborate with others in their community and around the world, in-person and through technology. As responsible citizens, they act ethically and fairly in their choices and inspire others to engage in civic life and government. They act as responsible environmental stewards who understand sustainable living strategies.

THANH'S STORY FROM THE FUTURE

Thanh is a sixth grader at Peterson Middle School and an English Language Learner. Her family recently moved here from Vietnam.

The district-wide focus on inclusion and on equity means that each student gets what they need in order to learn, and Thanh is given various supports. Audio-enabled signage in all SCUSD spaces helps her navigate easily and learn English at the same time. She found this especially helpful at the farm where she now volunteers, gaining her service-learning credits during weekends. She has a translation device for her own use; her teachers all have basic English language learner training; and she has a bilingual mentor, an eighth grader who helped introduce her to the U.S. educational system and who gains Inclusive Empathizer experience by mentoring.





GRADUATE PORTRAIT IMPLICATIONS

Successful implementation of our Graduate Portrait will require collective effort, some of which will be clear immediately, and some of which may be more emergent. The following three areas of focus will accelerate the comprehensive development of the Graduate Portrait.

DEVELOP A GRADUATE PORTRAIT CONTINUUM

The Graduate Portrait describes the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and mindsets that Santa Clara Unified School District's collective community believes students need to thrive. While this is an aspirational picture of what we strive to support in all students, the portrait needs to be broken down into snapshots of a learner on a successful growth path.

For example, what should an "equity ambassador" look like in elementary, middle, and high school? For kindergartners who may already have a digital presence, when and how do we integrate learning about "building a positive personal identity that is reflected in their reputation and digital footprint"? What life skills will help students become independent, and what are the best ways for students to demonstrate their learning at various stages of their development? These are some of the questions that we will address to identify guideposts for our learners and the adults who support them on their journeys.

PROTOTYPE WAYS TO INTEGRATE STUDENT INTERESTS AND REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE

How might we truly ignite student engagement by integrating interest and choice into the learning experience? How do we make sure we maintain rigor and ensure that students gain the core knowledge needed to make connections in an interdisciplinary manner? And how might we maintain interest and rigor while making learning relevant to the real world? Moreover, how do we manage this integration of interest, rigor, and real-world relevance across our system, not just in a few classrooms or only some of the time?

A disciplined innovation and prototyping approach could help us create low-risk learning as we prototype promising ideas and methods that can be scaled across our district.

INCLUSIVE DESIGN FOR LEARNING

SCUSD is committed to advancing the Graduate Portrait elements while supporting each student in reaching their full potential. The most significant implication of this commitment is the need to apply human-centered design that considers the needs of the full range of human diversity with respect to ability, learning/thinking, language, culture, gender, age, and other differences.

Historically, learning has been designed to meet the needs of diverse learners, primarily through specialized programs. The needs of special education, talented and gifted students, English learners, culturally specific groups, and alternative education

have often been addressed by separate programs, specialized staff, or strategies that address the specific challenges facing some students.

Universal design for learning (UDL), an educational framework that guides the development of flexible learning environments that accommodate individual learning differences, is a familiar educational structure. Our future work will need to extend this practice to better integrate the full range of human and learning differences. This way of working and thinking is known as Inclusive Design for Learning (IDL).

Designers of inclusive learning experiences recognize that every learner is different. Differences are the norm; therefore, the notion of accessibility expands dynamically to address the range of human diversity. The goal of inclusive design for learning is to take advantage of human diversity during the design process, to build learning experiences that not only adapt to each learner, but also empower each learner to contribute to the design of their own learning.

IDL builds in positively reinforcing cycles of inclusion by working with the individuals the design is intended for so that it is informed by lived experience. The goal is to enable and promote learners' self-knowledge and self-determination so they can recognize their own learning needs and access available choices. Design also extends beyond the traditional inclusion of language, neurodiversity, and physical and learning differences to include culture, gender, age, and the intersectionality of these differences. Inclusive design also takes advantage of flexible digital tools to develop a one-size-fits-one, personalized design approach to inclusion.



THE ADULT PORTRAIT

Why have an Adult Portrait?

Widespread successful achievement of the Graduate Portrait is only possible if a supportive and intentional community of adults work together. What attributes will the adults need to help students succeed? Based on broad community input and the design work of the Guiding Coalition, the eight elements described below are those deemed most critical in supporting students to achieve the Graduate Portrait.

This Adult Portrait applies to all adults working in the school district, not just teachers, because every adult's work supports student success; therefore, the language here is broad. The district holds high expectations for all adults, and so these elements

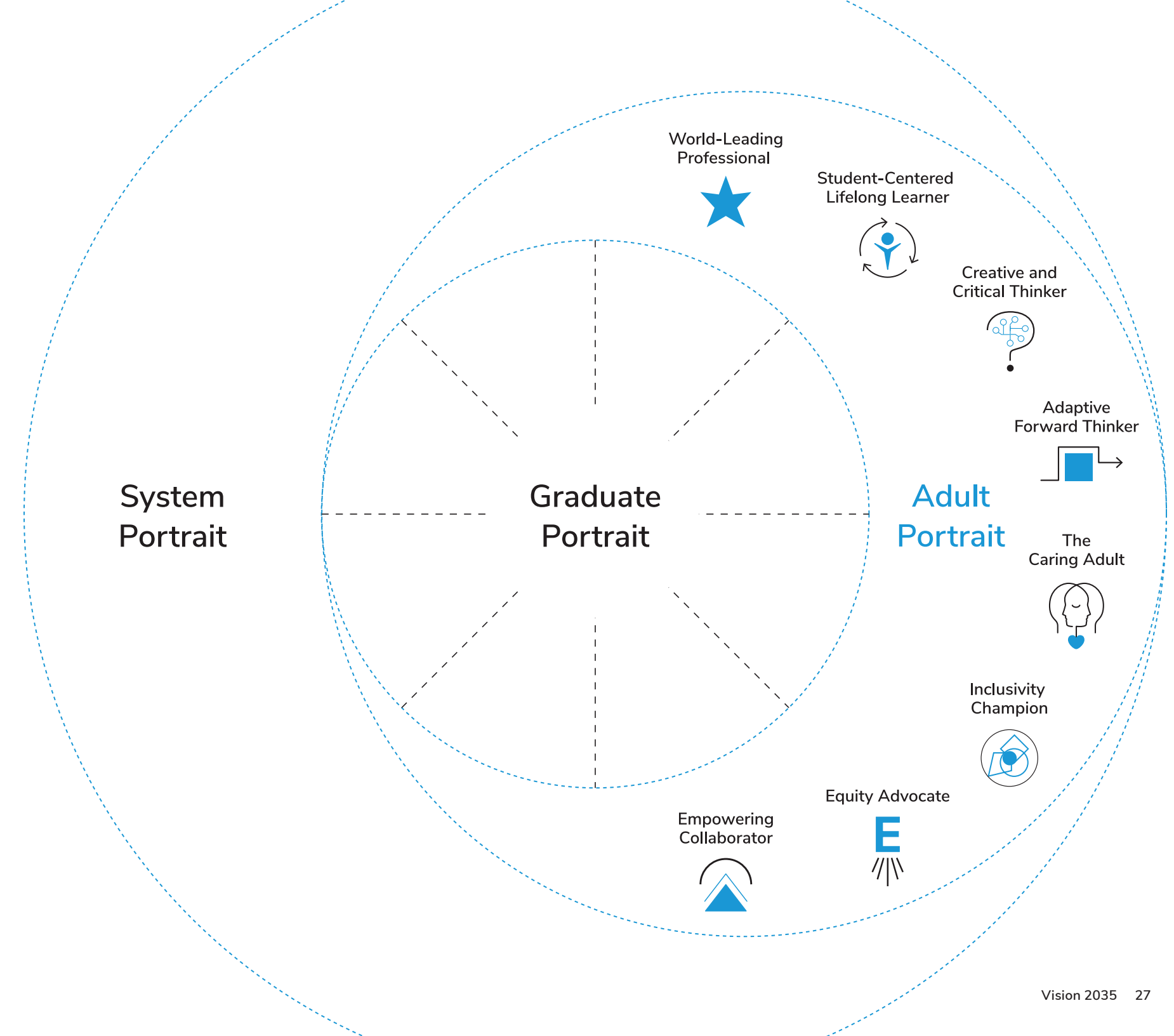
include deep expertise in, and continuous learning about, any adult's area of expertise. Teachers are expected to have deep content knowledge and strong instructional skills; administrators are expected to be outstanding educational leaders and managers; support and operations staff are expected to provide excellent service in their areas of responsibility; and all adults are expected to engage in ongoing learning. The elements also include areas that prepare students for their futures, support their readiness to learn, and support a strong collaborative culture for the adults.

Many adults at SCUSD already embody some of these attributes, but the purpose of this part of the vision is to create an aligned culture and to support all adults in developing all of the attributes over the

course of the vision timeline. This is a long-term vision. Developing and prioritizing the Adult Portrait will be part of SCUSD's journey and its strategy for recruitment, professional learning, and staff development.

The ability of adults to model and continuously develop these attributes will be critical in helping students. They will also help adults support one another and create respectful and beneficial relationships with the community that further support students' learning and skills building.

The following Adult Portrait elements have been developed through iterative cycles of input, feedback, and revision, as illustrated in the roadmap (p. 6).





CAROLINA'S STORY FROM THE FUTURE

Carolina teaches math at New Valley High School. She is a veteran teacher and also a product of SCUSD. She lives with her family in the house she inherited from her immigrant grandparents.

Carolina was asked to think about making her classes interdisciplinary. She acknowledges that she was very resistant. "I saw it as a criticism, and there was nothing wrong with my math classes!" In a district-wide professional development session, however, she was partnered with history teacher Steph, and asked to brainstorm an interdisciplinary class. They came up with a class on African Fractals, which included math, history, geography, and architecture.

The group loved the concept, and so Carolina and Steph were persuaded to try it out with their classes to win an innovation grant. "My math classes just lit up. And they loved seeing the real-world application of this complex math. I was also invited to add to the educator portal for Creative and Critical Thinker, and the grant enabled me to attend a conference."

WORLD-LEADING PROFESSIONAL



Each adult at SCUSD has deep expertise and strives for excellence in their area of responsibility, whether instruction, administration, support, or operations.

Adults aim to create a world-class educational system and work to continually improve their practice. They adopt strategies, practices, and decision-making approaches that are based on evidence, research, and data, making processes unambiguous and transparent. Educators have deep content knowledge and are skilled instructors; administrators and managers develop as strong leaders, seeking out leadership opportunities; and all adults take proactive responsibility for their work. They hold high expectations for all to support each student's success. They build trust by being consistent and reliable.

Adults are also knowledgeable about, and dedicated to, meeting the needs of students, colleagues, families, and the community. They are skilled and responsible communicators who understand the various audiences for their work, have a variety of strategies for reaching them, and have the courage to initiate difficult conversations when necessary.

STUDENT-CENTERED LIFELONG LEARNER



Adults at SCUSD commit to the moral imperative of education, by providing high-quality, accessible, bias-free learning for all.

They are passionate about their work and their roles in creating the foundations for every SCUSD student to thrive in their lives and careers. Adults demonstrate curiosity and a commitment to lifelong learning, making them well-informed, current, and knowledgeable about their areas of professional responsibility, whether that is in the classroom, or supporting the classroom.

Adults seek out a variety of learning opportunities; use data proactively; and request, accept, apply, and provide constructive feedback. They work to create a joyful and engaging environment for all. They focus on "working smarter," and demonstrate a growth mindset by challenging and inspiring students and one another to take risks, and seeing failure as a natural part of the learning cycle.

They listen to students and develop the ability to apply meaningful feedback to support students in becoming self-directed learners. In turn, adults are supported with training and skills development, and active sharing of successful practices, so that they know how to inspire each student to succeed.





CREATIVE AND CRITICAL THINKER



All adults at SCUSD continually develop their abilities to become skilled creative and critical thinkers, moving easily among a variety of thinking strategies according to the situation and need.

As creative thinkers, they use innovation and imagination to think differently and to see problems from a variety of angles. They work constructively to generate ideas with students and coworkers, and design and develop creative solutions iteratively. They exercise their critical thinking by analyzing data and evidence to identify and clarify problems, and evaluate arguments. They use analysis to create a sound basis for inference, and to develop and implement solutions. They support students in understanding how to learn, how to embody a growth mindset, and how to feel confident exercising their own critical and creative capacities.

Adults deepen their thinking continually, opening up to different perspectives and interpretations by continuously reflecting on personal and systemic biases. They understand how systems operate and are able to constructively assess where and how to create change.

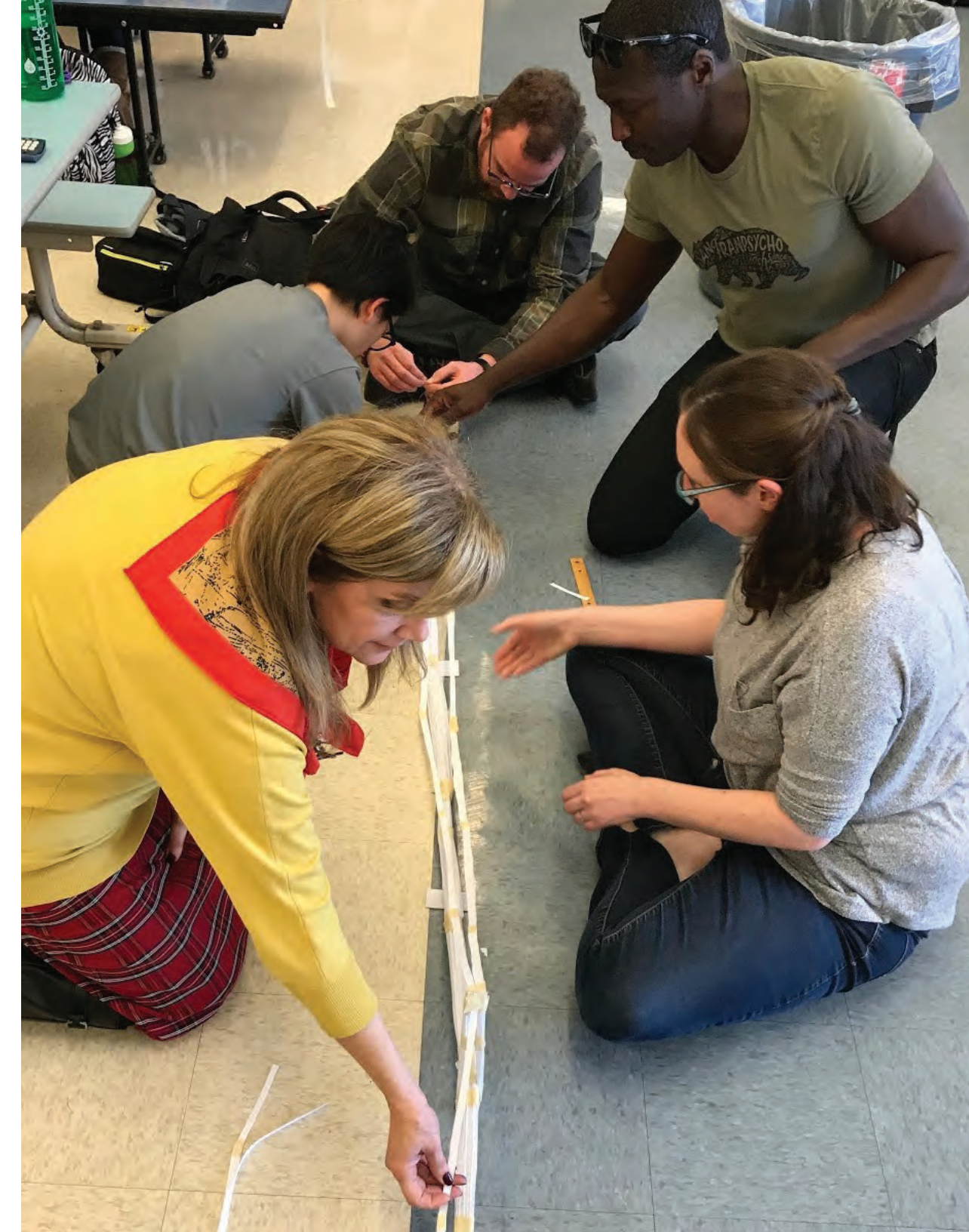
ADAPTIVE FORWARD THINKER



Adults at SCUSD prepare students to thrive in a changing world by modeling adaptability and resilience and by having a vision for the future that guides their everyday actions.

Adults demonstrate situational awareness and the ability to adapt to the changing needs of students, other adults, the community, and the world. They keep their work relevant and future ready by staying informed about local and global affairs, engaging with industry partners, upskilling to meet changing needs, and curating physical and virtual learning journeys.

They help students connect with the world around them by sharing their learning and creating opportunities for civic and community engagement locally and globally. Adults are flexible and open to change based on new information, ideas, feedback, technologies, and changing circumstances, and are able to evaluate the ethical impact and consequences of current and future trends. They are responsive to feedback, willing to implement changes, and agile enough to do so in a timely manner.





NOEL'S STORY FROM THE FUTURE

Noel has been in transportation at SCUSD for 30 years. At first, he assumed that the Adult Portrait would have little relevance for him. Then his department held a half-day training to discuss what the various elements of the portrait meant for their work.

As the first SCUSD adult that many students see each day, Noel has long been aware that it's important that he be friendly and warm to the students, while also holding the line around what is acceptable and unacceptable behavior on the bus. He was surprised when the communications team asked to interview him about this experience in a series of videos for the portal, saying it would be helpful for new hires. His manager also knew that Noel had an interest in electric and autonomous vehicles and suggested that he take some of his PD time to research this interest more and share the information with the management team as part of his Adaptive Forward Thinker role.



THE CARING ADULT



Adults at SCUSD demonstrate their care for students by being proactive and responsive to students' emotional needs, and holding high expectations for their success.

Adults listen to students and show kindness and interest in students' lives, at school and at home. Adults create an encouraging environment where

students and families feel welcomed and safe, to ensure that students feel supported while learning. Every student at SCUSD can name an adult who demonstrates care for them in these ways.

Adults are emotionally self-aware, present, available, and reliable. They build healthy relationships and communicate and model healthy boundaries with students, families, and coworkers. Adults recognize that self-care is critical to their ability to do their jobs, and they are supported in maintaining their own healthy mind, body, and spirit.

INCLUSIVITY CHAMPION



Adults at SCUSD believe in developing each student's assets and supporting each student in reaching their full potential by achieving and demonstrating the Graduate Portrait elements to the best of their ability.

Adults are knowledgeable about the diversity of neurotypes (i.e., different types of cognitive processing) and other learning differences, and they have the skills to integrate a range of responsive strategies, options, and accommodations to adapt to students' individual needs. Adults understand how intersectionality—the overlapping identities that combine and intersect in the experiences of marginalized groups, for example, poverty and learning differences—intensifies the prejudices people face. Adults foster inclusion and empathy at every site and every department. They are provided with support and training as needed, to underscore the asset base of each person in the system and the strengths of neurodiversity.

EQUITY ADVOCATE



Adults at SCUSD are courageous advocates for equity and access, and they work proactively to establish a culture of social and cultural empathy.

Adults are culturally competent leaders who promote diversity and embrace cultural differences, in both the workplace and the community. They work to become aware of their own biases. They understand the historical roots of racial bias, for example, and are active and intentional about changing injustice.

They collaborate to dismantle inequitable power structures, and to design equitable structures, practices, and processes that improve outcomes for marginalized students. They demonstrate support and respect for coworkers, families, and community members. At school sites, educators use culturally sustaining practices, by incorporating culturally and linguistically relevant content and responsive pedagogy. Adults demonstrate a racial equity and cultural inclusion mindset; respectfully and readily engage with diverse perspectives; and show a willingness to influence and model change.

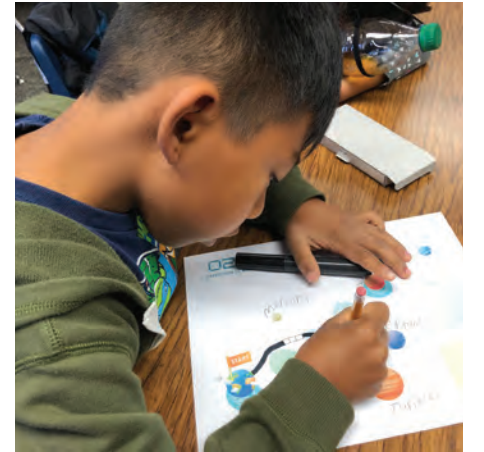
EMPOWERING COLLABORATOR



Adults at SCUSD are active collaborators with students, co-workers, families, and community members because they believe in the value of multiple perspectives and collective effort in improving student outcomes.

Adults prepare students for teamwork and facilitate collaboration among students and with external partners. They empower students to be confident self-advocates who take ownership of their learning and outcomes while working independently and in groups. Adults model self-advocacy concerning their work and its outcomes, help students understand the value of complementary skills and different roles in teams, and teach them how to navigate team dynamics.

Adults know how to listen deeply and share their expertise constructively. They can play flexible roles, depending upon the needs of a particular project or team, and they work proactively to foster collaboration across sites and departments.



ADULT PORTRAIT IMPLICATIONS



Although district offices and state departments of education often have lists of competencies, or standards, for educators and administrators, these are not directly tied to a Graduate Portrait, nor do they apply to all adults working in the school district. The difference here is that our Adult Portrait has been created through the same collaborative vision process that we used to create the Graduate Portrait, and it is specifically designed to support that work. This makes it more targeted to this district and more holistic.

The Adult Portrait has major implications for the human resources lifecycle, labor relations, and the kinds of relevant and persistent professional learning that adults will need in order to embody the portrait.

Which adults?

This portrait is intended to apply to every adult working in the school district, including classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, facilities workers, and office workers. It applies to everyone from the governance team to the newest hire because the work of every adult at SCUSD supports student success.

Parents, family members, and caregivers have the greatest influence on students' success. The Adult Portrait is not intended to apply to adults outside the school district staff. However, it will also be helpful for parents, family members, and caregivers, along with other influential adults, such as coaches, mentors, and community organization leaders, to know and support the aspirations for SCUSD adults. Feedback during the vision process also indicates that some family members would enjoy parent workshops and training to help them support their students' success. As the work on the Adult Portrait progresses, there may be opportunities to provide optional resources to families, based on the professional development that supports the Adult Portrait.

THE TALENT LIFECYCLE

The Adult Portrait will be used in the hiring process and will apply to each part of the human resources lifecycle (attraction, recruitment, hiring, onboarding, continuous development and evaluation, retention, transition, and separation). It is not expected that new hires will come with all of these qualities fully formed, but that they will understand the purpose of the portrait and be willing to adopt it.

It is a truism in educational recruitment to say that it is less important that someone begins with good teaching skills because those can be taught, but they must love children and be committed to their well-being. The Adult Portrait is an extension of that idea. New hires do not have to embody all of these qualities, but they must believe that every child can achieve success, want to do their part to support each student, and understand the Adult Portrait's role in creating a community of adults who share this commitment.

FOCUSED AND ALIGNED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

As all adults in the system are encouraged to develop the qualities in the Adult Portrait, they will be supported with targeted and relevant professional development. This will help adults determine what the elements look like in their particular context, how they can be developed, and what best practices look like in action.

The forward-looking and holistic nature of the Adult Portrait also brings the opportunity for more innovative professional learning options. These options can include in-person and virtual learning journeys to witness great ideas in action, or benchmark against other districts and organizations, and simulations to practice new skills and ideas.

As a set of characteristics that apply to all adults, the Adult Portrait also supports cross-departmental and cross-site collaborations, and interdisciplinary learning. This can enable the entire community of adults to learn from one another, spark innovation, circulate best practices, and build a shared understanding of how the whole system can best work to support students.



KRIS' STORY FROM THE FUTURE

Kris works as part of the wellness team at SCHS. While most of his focus is on students, he spends some of his time as a district-wide wellness coach, supporting adults in building resilience and empathy. He holds in-person and virtual office hours for any adult in the system who wants a wellness consultation and makes referrals for additional services as needed. He has also recorded a series of mindfulness meditations, stretching routines, and a short lecture on the three kinds of empathy for the staff section of the Wellness Portal.

This year, Kris has been collaborating with nutrition services and a student culinary arts club, prototyping a healthy meal-prep service to which SCUSD staff can subscribe. Although it is still early in the process, initial results indicate that this idea has the potential to bring revenue to the district; provide healthy, easy-to-prepare meals for working adults and their families; and give students culinary and business experience.

THE SYSTEM PORTRAIT

Why have an educational System Portrait?

An educational System Portrait describes the core characteristics that will need to exist within the school district. It also outlines the conditions that will be created, promoted, and practiced by educational leaders to deliver on the promise to the beneficiaries of the district.

For students and adults to reach their Graduate and Adult Portraits, the system must be designed to support their work. A system is made up of an interconnected set of elements that includes an organization's structures, supports, standards, agreements, incentives, and cultures. These are

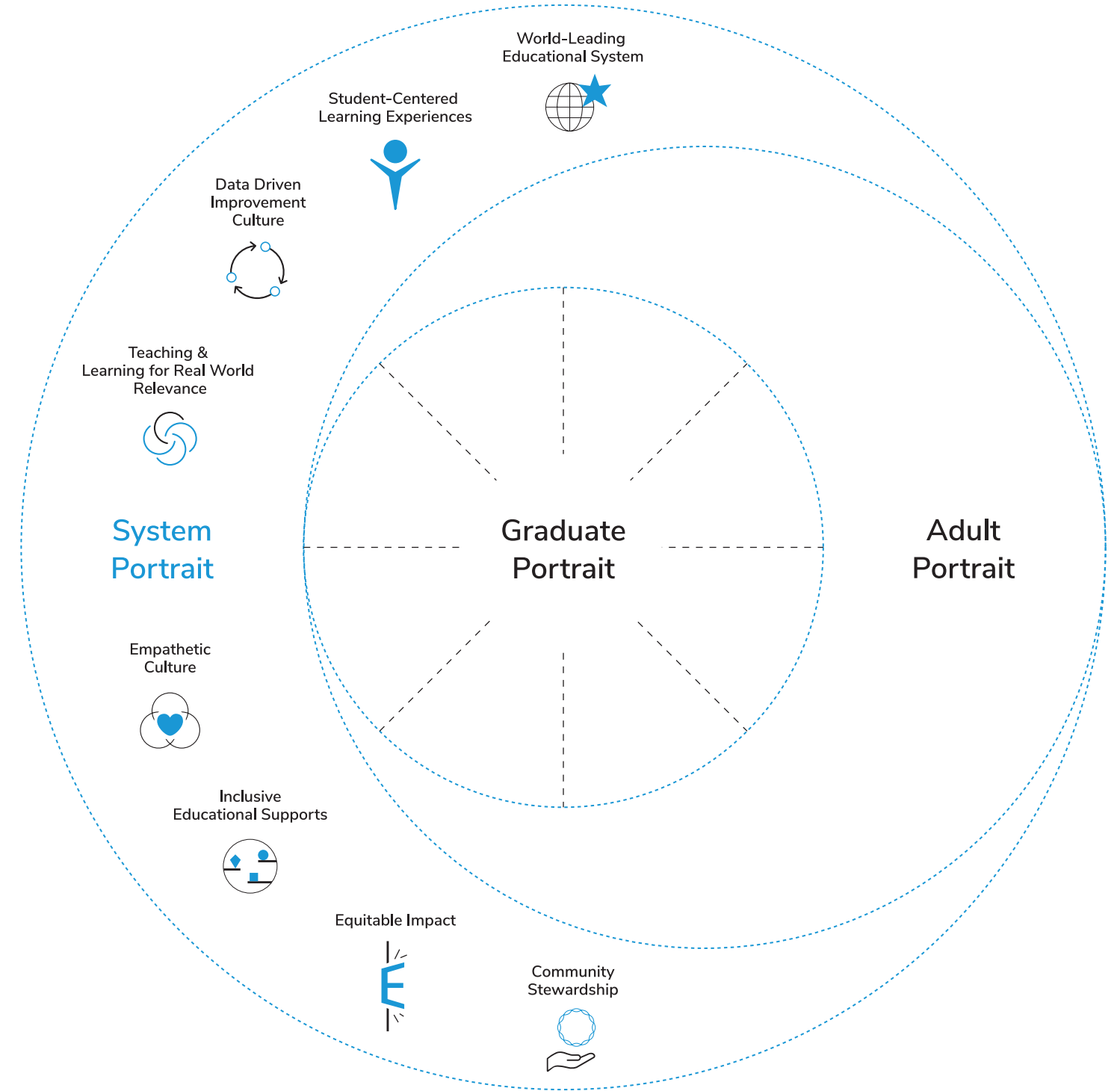
the component parts that need to be aligned with the goals of the Graduate and Adult Portraits and the Core Values. To this end, the following eight System Portrait elements have been identified. While some of these practices are already in place, these elements identify what must be practiced consistently system-wide, from individual school sites to central office departments, in order to collectively reach these goals over the course of the vision timeline.

The education model inherited by today's school districts was designed for the needs of the industrial era. Society, the economy, the environment, and the world of work have all changed dramatically

since then, requiring a significant redesign of educational systems to address current needs, enabling students and adults to succeed, today and into the future.

The System Portrait is created with the same long-term outlook, to lead the district in producing better options and outcomes for students, families, and the community. It illustrates the key characteristics that need to permeate the school district in order to meet this goal.

The following System Portrait elements have been developed through iterative cycles of input, feedback, and revision, as illustrated in the roadmap (p. 6).



JAGAT AND EVELYN'S STORY FROM THE FUTURE

Jagat and Evelyn have been friends since the second grade. They have a shared interest in robotics and were Robotics Club buddies from second grade through their first year at Dolores Huerta Middle School. When Jagat's mom was offered a promotion back in India the family moved. However, Jagat and Evelyn have continued to create together, using virtual robotics platforms.

This year, Jagat and Evelyn included their classmates and teachers in a more formal collaboration, for a World Health Organization competition, developing a drone-based medibot that can do surgery in remote locations under the guidance of doctors anywhere in the world.

Evelyn says she is grateful that her school allowed her to take some of her classes virtually so she could manage the time difference. Jagat credits the social skills of teamwork that he learned at SCUSD for their team's successful virtual collaboration. The fact that they built this capacity into their project will give them an edge in the competition.



WORLD-LEADING EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM



SCUSD is a proactive, world-class school district, operating at the leading edge of education.

SCUSD is a world-leading, innovative district. It is dedicated to ensuring that the community's fiscal resources are invested responsibly in leading-edge professional practices, materials, facilities, and technologies, to provide every student with an excellent education. The district actively recruits and develops a high-performing, diverse workforce that delivers exceptional services to students, families, and the community. Businesses, organizations, and families collaborate with educators in building a dynamic educational system that prioritizes students and enriches the community.

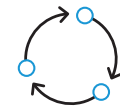
STUDENT-CENTERED LEARNING EXPERIENCES



SCUSD provides meaningful learning experiences that are centered on each student's interests and goals.

SCUSD listens and responds to student voices. By focusing on students' needs and interests, the district supports educators in building flexible learning environments that help students achieve and exceed standards. SCUSD encourages students to discover and progress toward their dreams, passions, and life and career goals through educational experiences that reflect their interests and needs. Education is a positive, self-directed, collaborative journey that creates the foundation for joyful lifelong learning.

DATA-DRIVEN IMPROVEMENT CULTURE



SCUSD leverages data to drive system-wide continuous improvement practices.

SCUSD uses cycles of continuous improvement as its core problem-solving methodology. District culture embeds the practice of these cycles system-wide to find root causes, track indicators, and implement effective strategies to meet and improve student outcomes. To ensure that each child is successful, equitable allocation of resources—along with instructional and administrative decision-making—are informed by ongoing collaborative data collection and analysis. The district trains every adult to support or facilitate research and implement findings to advance their work. This includes using progress-monitoring tools that help adults support students in reaching their academic, behavioral, and social-emotional learning goals. These data tools are also used collaboratively by students and adults in assessing their own progress, adjusting their strategies, advocating for their own work, and providing mutual feedback.





TEACHING AND LEARNING FOR REAL-WORLD RELEVANCE



SCUSD teaching and learning models focus on real-world application of academic and experiential knowledge.

SCUSD schools prepare students for life through standards-based learning that is rigorous, relevant, and interdisciplinary. Educational activities emulate the real world by teaching practical skills alongside foundational academic knowledge, all with the goal of preparing students to become successful adults. District-wide practices and incentives provide educators time, knowledge, and resources to collaborate with their colleagues and others, including industry professionals, in delivering this educational model. The district actively offers students ways to explore and pursue a variety of post-graduation options, including, but not limited to, college.

BILLIE'S STORY FROM THE FUTURE

Billie works as part of the educational technology team and is a data-driven equity leader. Under the district's widespread adoption of innovation practices, Billie was trained in human-centered design and uses this approach to include users in the design process and prototype ideas to identify any potential implementation challenges and risks through early testing.

Collaborating with students who have also been trained in these techniques, Billie and their team collect data that enables district leaders to examine the potential impact of technology investments. By prototyping ideas, they also gain a better understanding of the implementation challenges to be overcome in order to scale new remote learning technology successfully district-wide, especially for students and families who lack access to technology at home.



EMPATHETIC CULTURE



SCUSD's empathetic culture prioritizes health, wellness, and safety.

SCUSD supports and advocates for personal achievement and physical and mental well-being. The district's empathetic culture promotes personal accountability and collective responsibility for each other's well-being—students and adults—and for maintaining a kind and safe environment for everyone. Highly developed cultural awareness attends to the whole person, appreciating that every individual has value and is important.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONAL SUPPORTS



SCUSD provides appropriate educational supports to ensure that every student receives an excellent education.

SCUSD recognizes that learning is a continuum. Therefore, it distributes resources equitably and advances inclusive educational practices that ensure successful learning outcomes for every student. Diversity is intentionally destigmatized, and difference is regarded as a strength by recognizing and showcasing each individual's unique skills, talents, perspectives, and abilities. By embracing diversity and recognizing intersectionality, the district takes into account the overlapping identities that combine in the experiences of marginalized groups in order to understand the prejudices they face and respond with effective solutions. Educational supports are integrated so that every student and educator benefits from—and contributes to—enriching educational experiences.

EQUITABLE IMPACT



SCUSD intentionally applies culturally and linguistically responsive and sustaining practices to achieve equitable outcomes.

SCUSD uses data-driven methods to remove barriers and distribute resources to reach its equity goals and ensure the success of historically disadvantaged students. It intentionally disrupts predictive outcomes based on race and ethnicity



by responding to the unique needs of diverse communities. Educators are trained in, practice, and teach the most up-to-date, culturally relevant curricula. Through continuous professional development, all adults are supported in using evidence-based, culturally and linguistically responsive and sustaining practices that enable them to learn, grow, and hone methods that thoughtfully engage students, families, staff, and communities.

COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP



SCUSD is a responsible steward of community resources and a collaborative provider of community benefits.

SCUSD ensures that community fiscal resources are invested responsibly and used to benefit its stakeholders. The district's structures, practices, and culture focus on transparency and accountability, especially to support its most vulnerable families. It encourages students and adults to collaborate as concerned citizens to improve social, environmental, and political conditions, locally and globally. The district partners with others to strengthen the community's collective ability to make decisions proactively and take action to respond to new and existing challenges.

SYSTEM PORTRAIT IMPLICATIONS

Supporting the Graduate and Adult Portraits

The System Portrait illustrates the way in which the district system components (structures, supports, standards, agreements, incentives, and cultures) will be designed intentionally to support achievement of the Graduate and Adult Portraits.

The System Portrait was developed in alignment with the ideas that emerged from the Graduate and Adult Portraits. However, the ongoing planning and implementation of the system changes will be based on guiding and supporting the district to achieve the knowledge, skills, and mindsets outlined in the Graduate Portrait. Moreover, because a system is perfectly designed to produce an intended outcome, if we want improved outcomes for students and adults in this district, the system has to facilitate the new behaviors and actions instead of constraining them.



For example, elements in both Graduate and Adult Portraits state that teaching and learning will be different from what is seen consistently in SCUSD classrooms today. If students and adults are to engage in the desired teaching and learning methods, the system will need to adopt changes, such as redesigning how time and space are used; developing supports to help transition from the current model to the new one; creating curriculum standards and materials to reflect differences; communicating agreements about learning between students, teachers, and families; aligning incentives to consistently recognize these new behaviors; and supporting the cultural aspects that embed these beliefs within the updated system.

THE PURPOSEFUL PROCESS OF MANAGING SYSTEM-LEVEL CHANGE

School districts, like many other systems, are complex organizations, with both tangible and intangible parts woven together that are simultaneously independent and interdependent. This complexity makes system-level change a challenging and exciting endeavor, requiring iterative processes and continuous improvement cycles to ensure that the system achieves the desired results—in this case the Graduate and Adult Portraits.

For successful system changes to take root, all stakeholders need to be aligned and moving collectively toward the vision. This requires strong leadership to guide the vision implementation,

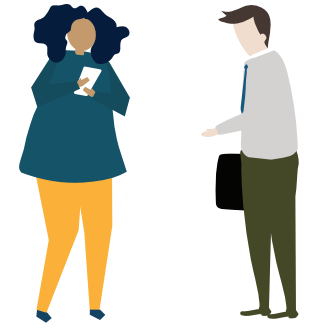
* Continuous improvement cycle: Using data to pause, assess, and reflect, and plan improvement before taking the next step (or cycle).

dedicated energy toward community coherence, stakeholder buy-in, shared ownership, alignment of resources and incentives, constant coordination, consistent and transparent communication throughout the process, and intentional development of a culture that reflects the Core Values. This is a purposeful process of managing change that requires school sites, central office departments, families, and the community to maintain a commitment to realizing these system changes over time for the benefit of current and future SCUSD students.

OUTLINE THE SCOPE, SEQUENCE, AND SYNCOPATION OF IMPLEMENTATION

Large-scale change does not happen quickly. Resource constraints can prohibit changes from occurring all at once, and there are benefits to progressive changes that come at a pace that allows the changes to become sustainable over time and embedded within the organization and its culture.

To ensure successful coordination in this implementation, a clearly defined scope, sequence, and syncopation are outlined in a series of accompanying strategic plans.



SIA'S STORY FROM THE FUTURE

Since 2023, Sia has been running a workplace simulation course for high school juniors and seniors. The course is open to students district-wide regardless of their home high school or academic standing. In the course, students can simulate starting their own small business or become part of a "skunk works" team in a fictional large organization. The course is virtual and operates on a game-like platform. This helps create a dynamic experience in which students respond to opportunities and challenges that emulate the real world. A recent skunk works experience was based on a health care organization. Students took roles as managers or health care workers and had to balance the cutting-edge work with their day-to-day clinical and administrative responsibilities.

Sia reprograms the simulation options each summer in collaboration with a group of local business partners. This allows her to keep the challenges fresh and the resources students might encounter in the workplace up-to-date.

A NOTE ON THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Over time, an organization realizes its vision by implementing a series of strategic plans. A vision is broad and incorporates a high level of description. The strategic plan, with its collective and coherent set of prioritized strategies, goals, and progress measures, defines successful implementation over three-to-five years. The strategic plan defines:

Scope

Which strategies in the vision will be implemented at this stage?

Sequence

In what order do strategies have to be implemented? Are some dependent on others, for example?

Syncopation

We need ongoing assessment and monitoring of the connections and interactions among strategies that are being implemented simultaneously so that we can ensure the alignment of implementation actions and “course correct” as needed.

The first strategic plan, covering the initial three years of this vision, will guide our work beginning in the 2020-2021 school year. Strategic plans are refreshed every three-to-five years to celebrate progress, reflect on implementation challenges, and course correct toward the vision by addressing changes to trends in our environment and needs of our students and families.



CALL TO ACTION

What can you do to support Vision 2035?

While Santa Clara Unified School District and its people are critical in creating the conditions to reach our vision and ensure that each student attains the Graduate Portrait, the district cannot accomplish this alone. As SCUSD partners, we ask you to consider that the health and success of the school district drives the health and success of the Santa Clara Unified community.

Whether you are a student, a parent, a grandparent, a teacher, a civic leader, a business leader, or a senior citizen, consider what you can do to support the Graduate Portrait, the Adult Portrait, and the System Portrait, and consider how you can positively influence the efforts of your organization, family, or community group to work toward these goals.

We look forward to your support and partnership throughout the journey to realize SCUSD's Vision 2035.



Acknowledgments

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Glossary

All definitions are from “Merriam-Webster” unless otherwise stated. (PS: Prospect Studio SF)

Adult Portrait

An inspiring description that outlines the knowledge, skills, dispositions and mindsets every adult in the district needs in order to support each student in reaching the Graduate Portrait. (PS)

Aspirational

Having or showing a desire to achieve a high level of success.

Audacious

Showing a willingness to take surprisingly bold risks. (“Oxford English Dictionary”)

CTE

Career Technical Education.

Continuous improvement cycle

Using data to pause, assess, and reflect, and plan improvement before taking the next step (or cycle). See also Iterate. (PS)

Core team

The cross-departmental internal district team that collaborates and helps coordinate and facilitate the vision process to ensure that it reflects the community’s needs and voices. (PS)

Disposition

Prevailing tendency, mood, or inclination; the tendency of something to act in a certain manner under given circumstances.

Equity

“Educational equity means that each child receives what they need to develop to their full academic and social potential. Working towards equity in schools involves: Ensuring equally high outcomes for all participants in our educational system; removing the predictability of success or failures that currently correlates with any social or cultural factor; Interrupting inequitable

practices, examining biases, and creating inclusive multicultural school environments for adults and children; and Discovering and cultivating the unique gifts, talents and interests that every human possesses.” (The National Equity Project)

“In education, the term ‘equity’ refers to the principle of fairness. While it is often used interchangeably with the related principle of equality, equity encompasses a wide variety of educational models, programs, and strategies that may be considered fair, but not necessarily equal. It has been said that ‘equity is the process; equality is the outcome,’ given that equity—what is fair and just—may not, in the process of educating students, reflect strict equality—what is applied, allocated, or distributed equally. Inequities occur when biased or unfair policies, programs, practices, or situations contribute to a lack of equality in educational performance, results, and outcomes. For example, certain students or groups of students may attend school, graduate, or enroll in postsecondary education at lower rates, or they may perform comparatively poorly on standardized tests due to a wide variety of factors, including inherent biases or flaws in test designs.” (The Glossary of Education Reform)

Foundational academic knowledge

The core body of knowledge any student needs to graduate high school, typically including math, English, science, literature, history, and geography. It may also include languages, art, and music. (PS)

Graduate Portrait

An inspiring description of the community’s aspirations for their young people that outlines the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and mindsets a community believes students need to thrive in life. (PS)

Guiding Coalition

The visioning steering committee, made up of parents, students, educators, community leaders, business leaders, and elected officials. Guiding Coalition members are chosen for the diverse communities they represent. They are tasked with contributing ideas, perspectives, expertise, and experience to the design of the district’s long-term vision through a series of events exploring the future of education and the needs of its students, schools, and educators. (PS)

Horizons exercise

An exercise that helps groups and individuals think about the current state, the desired future state, and what needs to be nurtured in between. (Adapted by Prospect Studio SF from “Deepening Futures with System Structure,” Hodgson & Sharpe, Wiley, 2007)

Inclusion

The act or practice of including and accommodating people who have historically been excluded (because of their race, gender, sexuality, or ability).

Intersectionality

“The complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect, especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups.”

“It takes into account people’s overlapping identities and experiences in order to understand the complexity of prejudices they face.” (YW Boston)

Learning journey

A virtual and/or in-person curated expedition to experience leading-edge ideas in play, within and outside of a specific field, to learn from others, stimulate fresh ideas, and gain inspiration that will inform the development of an organization’s future vision based on real-world examples. (PS)

Neurotypes

Refers to different types of cognitive processing, including responses to social cues. (PS)

Persona

A composite character created based on research and experience that allows a group to design for specific user needs, while protecting the confidentiality of real stakeholders, thereby allowing more open discussion of sensitive issues, incorporating more diverse perspectives, and offering an additional way to elicit “silent voices.” (PS)

Scenarios

Descriptions of various possible futures that help us explore the mutual impacts of interesting developments and context without committing to any specific option, thereby enabling the consideration of different options, including hybrid options. (PS)

Scope

In strategic planning, this describes which strategies in the vision will be implemented at any one time. (PS)

Sequence

In strategic planning this covers the order in which strategies have to be implemented. Are some dependent on others, for example? (PS)

Stories from the future

Creative, fictional character snapshots that help us imagine what might be possible, and maintain focus on a desired future. These are not predictions nor promises.

Strategic foresight

[U]ses a range of methodologies, such as scanning the horizon for emerging changes, analyzing megatrends, and developing multiple scenarios, to reveal and discuss useful ideas about the future. Strategic foresight does not attempt to offer definitive answers about what the future will hold. Foresight understands the future as an emerging entity that is only partially visible in the present, not a predetermined destiny that can be fully known in advance (predicted). There are no hard facts about the future, and the evidence base is always incomplete. The objective is not to “get the future right,” but to expand and reframe the range of plausible developments that need to be taken into consideration. (OECD.org)

Strategic plan

A three-to-five-year action plan that sets strategic priorities, goals, and progress measures, and that identifies interdependencies and the scope, sequence, and syncopation of priorities, roles, and resources. (PS)

Strategic vision

An organization’s guiding idea. It is an aspirational description that expresses the desired future the organization wants to bring about in the world. The vision works as a horizon point for the organization to move toward collectively. (PS)

Syncopation

Ongoing assessment and monitoring of the connections and interactions between strategies that are being implemented simultaneously so that we can ensure the alignment of implementation actions and “course correct” as needed. (PS)

System Portrait

An inspiring description of the core characteristics that will need to exist within a school district. It outlines the conditions that must be created for the Graduate and Adult Portraits to be achieved, and the Core Values to be expressed. (PS)

Vision 2035

Santa Clara Unified School District’s 15-year vision for the future of the District. (SCUSD)



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