



Entry Plan Report

October 2023

Jeanette Rodriguez-Chien

Superintendent

Sonoma Valley Unified

School District

Sonoma Valley Unified School District Board of Trustees

Catarina Landry, *Area 1 Trustee* | Celeste Winders, *Area 2 Trustee*
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Dear Sonoma Valley Unified Community,

Thank you for your amazing support during this important initial phase of my tenure. Your partnership, insights, and collaboration have been invaluable. It is evident that our students are supported by a caring, dedicated community that is working hard to forge a vibrant future for all of our students.

The purpose of this entry plan and goals document is to outline how working collaboratively, we will plan for the future by refocusing energy on student achievement, aligning our resources to achieve improved student outcomes, and equipping our graduates to enter college or careers with the skills, knowledge and dispositions that they will need to be successful.

The entry and transition process begins with developing a deep understanding of the state of the district and individual schools. Listening, learning, asking questions, and building critical internal and external relationships are key elements to building foundational knowledge about the district's strengths, challenges, and opportunities.

I would like to express my gratitude to all of you who have generously shared your time, expertise and honest feedback to inform this plan. This is the beginning of an exciting, new chapter for Sonoma Valley Unified School District. I look forward to working closely with you to bring our shared hopes and dreams for our students to fruition.

Sincerely,

Jeanette Rodriguez-Chien
Superintendent





Structure and Timeline

The entry plan process began in late June and continued through September 2023 with individual and small group meetings with district administrators, school administrators, community partners, and community leaders to gather perspectives, historical context and identify potential opportunities. This entry and first year planning process will allow time to meet stakeholders, perform data analyses, conduct program and systems evaluations to begin the process for developing an operational plan based on the mutual expectations and priorities of the governing board, staff, and community at large.

The plan contains four phases:

Research

Plan

Implement

Evaluate



Five Major Tasks

- 1. Listen**—Create opportunities in the first 100 days to listen to the stakeholders of SVUSD
- 2. Assess**—Proactively collect, analyze and share information on the status of the district to be precise in our planning efforts
- 3. Communicate**—Opportunity to continue to engage stakeholders by meeting them where they are to build trusting relationships, listen to their perspectives to help identify
- 4. Long-term Challenges and Opportunities**—These conversations will help establish feedback loops with staff, families and community members.
- 5. Act**—Develop a clear theory of action to deliver early wins that showcase the district’s responsiveness to the learning and operational needs of the district.



Entry Plan Goals

1. Gather information and learn about the organization and community in a systematic and thorough manner;
2. Assess the school district and individual school building culture, strengths, challenges, and areas for continued growth;
3. Assess the state of the school district, including the instructional programs, operations, business systems, finances, audits, reviews in order to take timely action for improvement;
4. Identify and prioritize critical issues;
5. To focus organizational efforts and align resources to ensure all students are provided a world-class education;
6. Create a network of contacts and resources



In order to gather the information needed to develop priorities, goals and an action plan, quantitative and qualitative data was collected.

Data Collection Methods

- Identified and interviewed key personnel and stakeholders
- Reviewed data related to student achievement and student activities
- Visited district schools
- Reviewed data related to student behavior and wellness
- Held individual and group discussions

Interviews Conducted

- Board Members
- Building Administrators
- Business Manager (previous)
- Educational Services Director
- SAFE Grant Director
- Exceptional Student Services Director
- Manager of Information Technology
- Manager of Maintenance & Operations
- Manager of Nutrition Services
- Coordinators of Special Education
- Association Presidents (VTMA & CSEA)
- Community:
 - Non-profit Organizations
- Officials: Mayor, County Supervisor, City Council Members, County Board of Education Members, City Manager, County Superintendent
- Police Chief
- State Representatives
- Service Organizations
- Student Voice

Document Review

- LCAP
- District Budget
- District Financial Audit
- Professional Development Plan
- Safety Plans
- Organizational Charts
- Administrator job descriptions
- Collective Bargaining Agreements
- Federal grants and other funded grants
- Capital Improvement Plan
- Special Education Handbook
- Crisis Management Plan
- Prior Special Education Study
- Prior Organizational Study
- Student Performance Review—reviewed performance data to determine equitable student outcomes. This data was disaggregated by race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, language proficiency, exceptional needs and other key characteristics. More current data will need to be reviewed and include:
 - Literacy, Numeracy, and other core subject area data
 - Attendance
 - Kindergarten Readiness Data
 - English Learner Reclassification data
 - Graduation and dropout rates
 - A-G and On-Track rates
 - Metrics for Socio-Emotional Learning



Other Entry Plan Activities

Governance

- Met with individual trustees
- Met with Board President to determine how all work together in service of students, schools, and community
- Planned and participated in Governance Training to establish common ground and understanding of our roles and how we will support one another

Academic Excellence

- Met with district & school instructional leaders to discuss achievement data, instructional program design alignment, current goals, and staffing
- Conducted instructional walks at all schools and visited several classrooms to assess current landscape of teaching & learning
- Assessed most current performance data to determine baseline and quality of actions designed for continuous improvement
- Explored the current state of state and local assessment tools, strategic data monitoring and reporting
- Examined the current professional development planning approach and structure for district/site leadership and school site staff
- Examined the roles & responsibilities of principals, assistant principals, instructional coaches, TOSAs, instructional assistants, district coordinators and directors
- Reviewed general education, at-risk, special education and English learner program design
- Reviewed instructional minutes and schedules
- Examined instructional materials, programs and supplemental supports
- Identified common characteristics present that align to highly effective schools

Leadership/Personnel

- Reviewed district's LCAP, accountability for performance, various management systems, and overall leadership structure
- Reviewed communication and decision-making structures
- Conducted a mini-retreat with Cabinet to review district emphasis on MTSS and begin return on investment process
- Audited current district and school safety planning

Communication & Community Alliances

- Reviewed current internal and external communication strategies and approaches
- Analyzed current use of social media as a communication strategy
- Scheduled meeting dates and coffee chats with parent groups
- Attended meetings of various groups and organizations throughout the community
- Attended community celebrations

Operational & Financial

- Reviewed all employee contracts and plans for negotiation
- Reviewed the district's information technology systems and plans for the future
- Reviewed and assessed short-term and long-term facility needs with an emphasis on the learning environments
- Reviewed key district financial reports, budget, most recent audit, and grants
- Reviewed resource allocation and budgeting processes
- Met with district's legal counsel to review any legal issues impacting the district as well as to be briefed on existing and proposed legislation and regulations that may impact the district



Next Steps/Act

- Engage in developing Portrait of a Graduate, Educator and System
- Create structures to gather student voice and build agency (e.g student panels to gather input and feedback, including English learners, recently arrived youth, foster youth, unhoused youth and students with exceptional needs)
- Build awareness of innovative instructional programs/ courses ranging from robotics, STEM, visual and performing arts, foreign languages
- Re-envision academic offerings and curriculum for TK-12
- Build capacity of staff in effective Tier 1 instructional strategies- determine instructional focus system-wide
- Complete return on investment on programs to assess implementation levels and efficient use of fiscal resources
- Improve upon budget allocation methodologies
- Identify possibilities for school consolidation and reorganization
- Supporting executive leadership in taking a systems approach to data usage to drive systems change, grow promising practices and build leadership capacity
- Identify recruitment strategies for difficult to staff positions
- Continue to build on student focus and theme of “SVUSD has a heart for kids”
- Establish a “theory of action” that will inform our actions and resource allocation
- Adjust organization structure to promote efficiency, effectiveness and alignment of roles
- Explore parent engagement programs and strategies designed to leverage families’ assets to be empowered as they support their children
- Implement Special Education study recommendations
- Develop updated English Master Plan to address effective designated and integrated ELD instruction that accelerates reclassification and progress of English learners
- Continue to engage with city and county partners around identified school-related challenges and connect students and families to external resources
- Explore opportunities to expand mental health and wellness opportunities for sustainability of infrastructure and programs
- Establish data culture at district and schools
- Solidify MTSS framework (academic, social-emotional, behavior) and address gaps

Emerging Issues

- Special Education
- Declining Student Enrollment/ School Consolidation
- Communication Strategy
- Shared Vision, Mission, Goals
- Budget
- Academic Performance (including SWD and EL students)
- Instructional Minutes/ Master Schedule
- School Climate- Behavior, Belonging
- English Learner Master Plan





Conclusion

In the coming months, we will continue to learn from a diverse group of stakeholders to identify opportunities to improve district operations and outcomes.


The input received will help guide the development of a strategic plan for SVUSD 2024-2028. We will also engage staff in backwards planning a continuum of learning and program implementation aligned to the Portrait of a Graduate and actions laid out in the Strategic Plan. We will utilize research best practices and focus on growing our knowledge and skills regarding innovative and effective instructional pedagogy. We will collaborate with our educational partners to enrich student programs and provide additional support through the lens of a community schools model. We will have to develop clear structures, processes and protocols to carry out this work and create spaces for authentic input and feedback. We will leverage experts to provide insights, guidance and expertise on best practices to achieve academic coherence, attending to human capital strategies, effective fiscal management, and cultures of collaboration and inclusiveness.

In working effectively with the board of trustees, clear and transparent communications between the superintendent and trustees will be paramount to efficiently govern and be responsive to the needs of the students and stakeholders. To this end, the superintendent will continue to have regular meetings and briefings with trustees as evidenced by maintaining a cadence of superintendent updates, providing progress updates and presentations. External communications will also be important to inform stakeholders on the progress of district goals. We will strengthen our social media footprint and create structures for conversations with stakeholders. In order to increase engagement, we will share uplifting stories, share accomplishments and highlight individual, group, school and district successes.

The overarching long-term goals for the district is preparing all students with the knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to graduate college and career ready. And the other major goal is to create conditions in our schools where students feel like they belong, allowing them to grow and thrive. These are lofty goals, however, with the support of the trustees, staff, students, and community these can be achieved. Our students deserve it!

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