



# THE DISTRICT BRIDGE

Sharing Our Progress, Accomplishments, and Appreciation

FALL 2019

Dear Friends,

Fall 2019 marks the beginning of the 120th year of the Sunnyvale School District story! From the opening of our first school, before Sunnyvale was officially a city, we have operated according to some basic principles — primarily, that our job is about more than teaching children scholarly facts and skills; our true purpose is to prepare children to succeed in life. Second, the forebears of the Sunnyvale School District understood that schools are not just facilities for holding classes; schools are gathering places to build and nurture community.

Throughout the decades, as the District has evolved to meet changing needs and keep improving outcomes for children, our core values have endured. Every person who has been involved in writing our story, including faculty and staff, families, partners, donors, and neighbors, has played a critical role in our development, as we continuously learn how best to serve children.

I hope you will join us in celebrating the District's 120th anniversary by sharing your memories with us; your stories will be valuable elements of our ongoing story.

Thank you for everything you do to give each of our students a happily ever after.

With gratitude,



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



## OUR SCHOOLS

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

## SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Jeffrey Arnett  
Michelle Maginot  
Reid Myers  
Nancy Newkirk  
Bridget Watson



## The Opening Chapters

Our story began with Encina School before the start of the 20th century. From the beginning, our aim was broader than helping children become capable students — our goal was to help them build a solid foundation in life. That meant that in addition to providing academic instruction at the schoolhouse, we also provided hot meals and showers to our 20 students, who came mostly from families employed by the cannery and local farms.

When the community got so big it outgrew our first — and then our second — school, the District created a plan to build three more schools. District leaders were intentional in designing the schools to welcome and accommodate guests from the community at large, in addition to students and their families.





## True to Character

Community involvement remains a hallmark of our operations today, and community members rightly have a sense of ownership and pride in the accomplishments of their neighborhood schools.

Our community members, including parents, families, neighbors, and volunteers from corporations, service organizations, and other community groups, generously give their time to work with and for our children. On any given day, one or more of our 35+ partner organizations deliver learning activities for our students on our campuses as well as out in the community.

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



## Plot Developments

Our values have remained constant, while the District itself has changed substantially! Now our student population numbers more than 6,600, and the biggest employers in the city are high-tech companies.

We have incorporated technology, new data-informed practices, and innovative curriculum into our proven instructional methods. For example, while our District has always aimed to meet the needs of the whole child, now we have integrated explicit social-emotional learning into everything we do. While earlier generations of students sat at desks arranged in neat rows facing the teacher, now children move around the classroom, collaborating on projects, discussing questions in small groups, and presenting their findings using multimedia tools. Today, our teachers include more hands-on and project-based learning in their curricula.

And with the growing awareness of the diverse ways children learn, for years our teachers have considered how each student learns best and differentiated instruction to meet every child's needs.







## New Chapters, New Choices

In addition to providing caring instruction and rich, challenging curriculum at all SSD schools, several of our schools have created special initiatives that offer distinctive ways to meet the needs of children and families. These Programs of Choice focus on diverse interests — science, dual-language immersion, parent participation, leadership, technology with emotional intelligence, and innovative instructional strategies from Stanford University. These options and the interactive lessons offered by every neighborhood school spur children to connect deeply with their studies, uncover their passions, and transform before our eyes into 21st-century learners!

Come to our Programs of Choice Showcase, 6-7 p.m. Tuesday, December 3 at the Sunnyvale School District Office to learn more! For questions about the showcase, please visit [www.sesd.org](http://www.sesd.org) or call 408-522-8200.



## Building to a Happily Ever After

We hope you share our pride in what we, together, have accomplished over the years — especially our role in preparing tens of thousands of young people to succeed in our changing world. As we get ready to celebrate our 120th anniversary, we are mindful that our long history is just the first chapter in our students' stories!

We invite you to share your anecdotes with us — memories of your time, or your parents' or grandparents' time in the Sunnyvale School District; or stories of how your experience in the SSD influenced your later life. Send us a message through our Facebook page @sunnyvalesd, or post or Tweet your story using the hashtag #WeAreSunnyvaleSD.

Thank you for being part of our story!



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**[www.sesd.org](http://www.sesd.org)**

**Sign up for our e-news at**

*<http://sesd-district-digest.org/subscribe>*

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

- California Distinguished Schools
- Gold Ribbon Schools
- Ashoka Changemaker School
- Hoffmann Awards
- Golden Bell

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