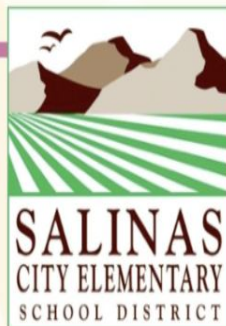




Salinas City Elementary School District Family Resource Centers



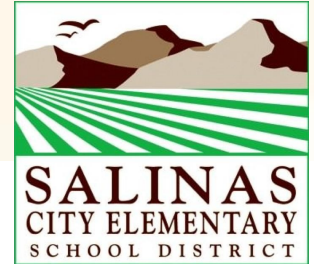
Connecting with Compassion Effective Strategies for Identifying Homeless



***Cheryl Camany
Homeless & Foster Youth Liaison***

***Alma Mota Rodriguez
School Community Coordinator***

This is Us



8,577

Students enrolled from preschool to grade 6



4,187

Multilingual Students designated as English Language Learners (ELLs)



3,521

Students enrolled in Dual Immersions (DI)



3,661

Students designated as foster/homeless



579

Classified and support staff members, including substitutes



787

Teachers and certificated staff members, including substitutes



55

Administrators

Homelessness is Not The Same For All Students

Total Homeless Students Enrolled: 3,661

(42% of district enrollment)

Additional Younger Siblings not enrolled: 1,425

ages 0-1: 552

ages 3-5: 873

TOTAL SCESD HOMELESS: 5,086



Why Family Resource Centers? (SCESD has 4)

Family Resource Centers are neighborhood hubs connecting individuals and families to essential resources and support



Los Angeles County
Office of Education



Family Resource Centers Data



5,131

Backpacks & School Supplies



1,019

Hygiene Kits



4,678

School Uniforms



3,568

Books



18,360

Benefited from Food Bags



3,851

Food Bags



1,813

Stuffed Animals



88

Adopt a Family

Family Resource Centers Data (cont.)



898 Referrals & Parent Request



1,573 English Classes



3,550 Toy Giveaway



569 Citizenship Classes



1,330 Parent Workshop Attendees



418 Literacy Classes



454 Holiday Event Attendees



2,765 Dental Kits

What is our Purpose?

Resource Distribution

Coordinate Services

Training/Meeting Space

Events

Advocacy

Student “hang out”

Enrollment

Information/Referral

Technology

Workshops

Family Support

Needs Assessment





FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER SERVICES

Servicios del Centro de Recursos Familiares



EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

*Programas para
la primera infancia*

TRANSPORTATION

Transportación

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Desarrollo Profesional

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Útiles Escolares

BACKPACKS

Mochilas

IMMEDIATE ENROLLMENT

Inscripción Inmediata

DISPUTE RESOLUTION

*Resolución de
Conflictos*

FOOD BANKS

Banco de comida

HOUSING ASSISTANCE

*Asistencia para
la vivienda*

COUNSELING

Asesoramiento

AFTER SCHOOL & SUMMER PROGRAMS

*Programas
extraescolares
y de verano*

TECHNOLOGY FOR PARENTS

*Apoyo tecnológico
para padres*

WORKSHOPS

Talleres

ADVOCACY

La Abogacía

MEDICAL, DENTAL & OTHER HEALTH SERVICES

*Servicios médicos,
dentales, otros
servicios de salud*

INFORMATION & REFERRAL TO COMMUNITY RESOURCES

*Información y
referencia a recursos
de la comunidad*



Tier 3 Individual Services “Specific to One”

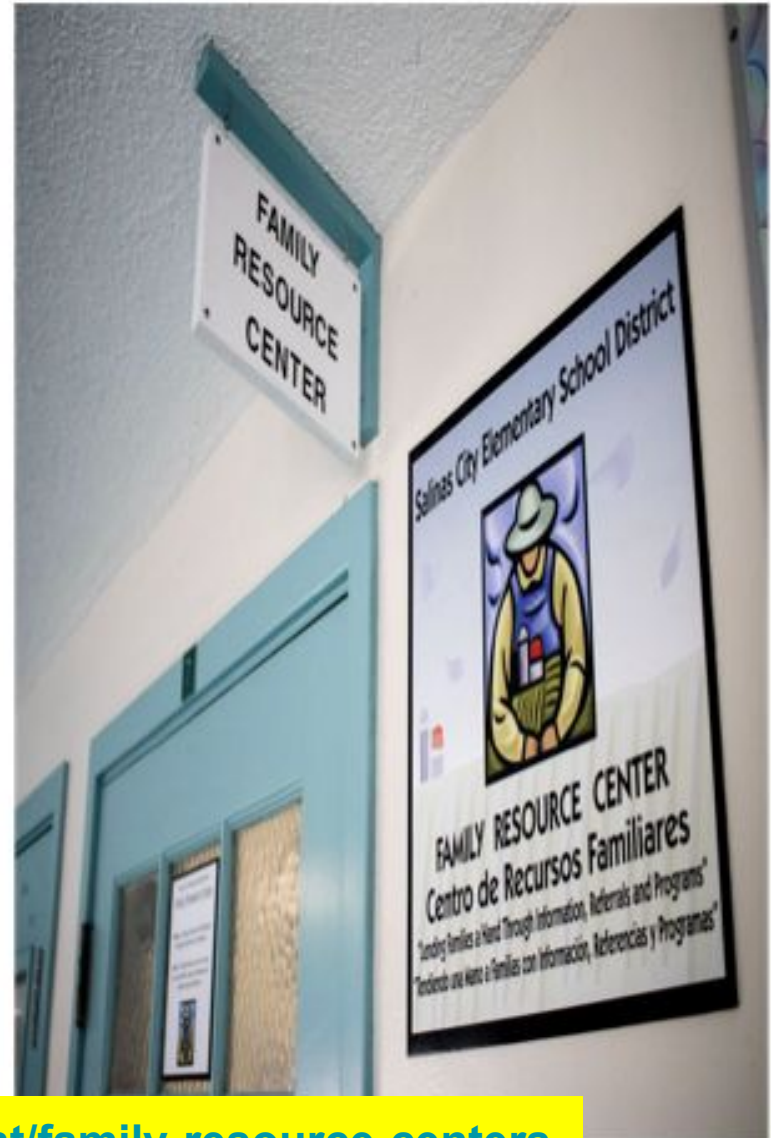


Emergency Cases

- Team Effort and Collaboration
- Create Action Plan
- Follow-Through, Case Management



Family Resource Centers



<https://www.salinascityesd.org/departments/family-resource-centers>

Family Resource Centers



<https://www.salinascityesd.org/departament/family-resource-centers>

Strategies for Identification




Step-by-Step Process to Identify Homeless Students

1. Understand the Definition of Homelessness

According to the McKinney-Vento Act, a student is considered homeless if they lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including:

- **Sharing housing with others due to loss of housing, financial difficulties, natural disasters, lack of adequate housing, or similar reasons**
- **Renting a room due to financial difficulties or loss of housing**
- **Living in a car, campground, abandoned building, trailer park, garage or other inadequate accommodations that may lack water, electricity, heat or have mold or pest infestation**
- **Living in a motel or hotel**
- **Staying in a shelter**

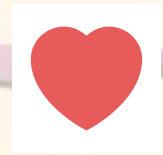
 **Key Insight:** Many families do not self-identify as “homeless.” Use sensitive language like “unstable housing” or “difficulty finding a place to stay.”



2. Implement Screening at Enrollment and Re-Enrollment

- **Include a Student Housing Questionnaire in ALL enrollment packets (including pre-enrollment, preschool, special education, migrant, extended learning, intersessions, summer school)**
- **Ask non-stigmatizing, clear questions such as:**
 - **“Where is the student currently living?”**
 - **“Is this arrangement due to loss of housing or economic hardship/financial difficulties?”**
- **Ensure translations and interpreter services are available**





3. Train the Whole School Community

Why It Matters: Everyone - not just counselors - plays a role in noticing signs of homelessness

- **Train ALL roles:** teachers, administrators, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, nurses, after-school staff, office personnel, any support staff, etc.
- **Conduct training at least annually on:**
 - **The signs of housing instability**
 - **Legal protections under McKinney-Vento**
 - **How and where to refer students**
 - **Trauma-informed and Sensitive Questioning**
 - **Subtle indicators of homelessness and how to respond with sensitivity**

✓ *Example:* A teacher notices a student wearing the same clothes multiple days and refers them for follow-up.

💡 **Pro tip:** Homelessness is often first noticed through physical signs or inconsistent attendance.

Recognize Subtle Indicators

Know the Signs!

Be familiar with common characteristics of children who are homeless:

- Chronic hunger or fatigue
- Erratic school attendance
- Multiple schools
- Lack of records
- Poor grooming or hygiene
- Gaps in learning
- Transportation problems
- Lack of school supplies or preparedness for class



Know the Signs!

- Parents who seems confused when asked about the last school their child attended
- Address is a motel or shelter
- Statements from the family when enrolling:
 - “We’ve been having a hard time lately.”
 - “It’s a new address. I can’t remember it.”
 - “We move a lot.”
 - “We are staying with friends for a while.”
 - “We are staying with relatives for a while.”





4. Observe Behavioral and Academic Indicators

Flag Students who Show:

- **Frequent absences or tardiness**
- **Fatigue, hygiene issues, or hunger**
- **Carrying their belongings with them**
- **Poor concentration or behavior changes**
- **Difficulty obtaining required documents (proof of residency, immunizations, etc.)**



Creating Support Environments

Support the Academic Solution

- Adjust assignments so children not living in permanent settings can complete them.



- Review the academic record and closely monitor the educational progress of the student.



• Evaluation Priority

- RSP
- Speech
- Occupational Therapy
- Health Screenings
- Glasses
- Counseling
- SST



- Connect the child with tutoring and remediation services, if needed.



Support Physical and Psychological Safety

Create an environment which promotes safety, calming, and de-escalation.

Staff realizes that maladaptive behaviors today once served the student as a useful response in the past.

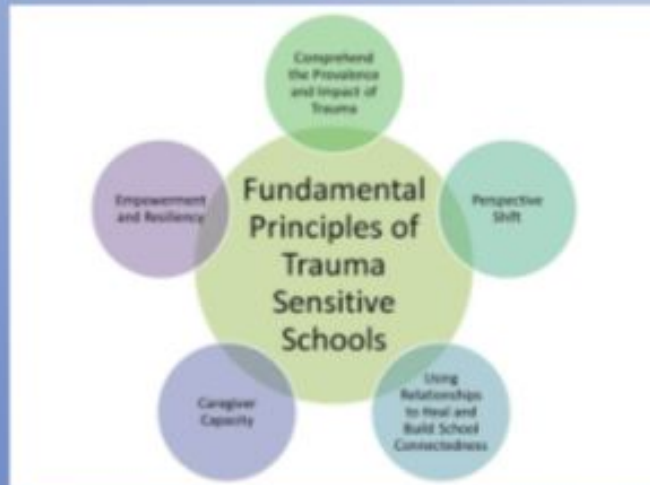
Homeless students do not respond well to discipline. Fight or Flight is very strong.



School is Trauma Informed Organization

- Understands trauma
- Recognizes the signs
- Knows how to respond
- Provides ongoing training and coaching

Try not take away possessions. Students may need their “stuff” nearby for security.



Support Physical and Psychological Safety

Create an environment which promotes safety, calming, and de-escalation.

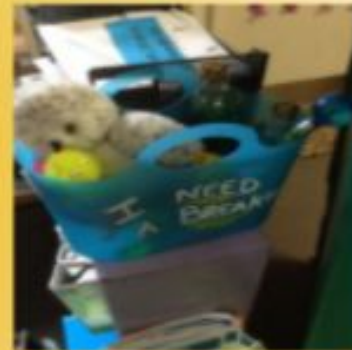
- Refrain from discipline for being tardy or late.



- Connect the student with the School Counselor so he/she/they can get to know the student and build a relationship.



- Have a designated “cool down” place in your classroom or school.



5. Build Strong Trust-Based Relationships

- **Foster safe, welcoming environments where families feel comfortable sharing their challenges**
- **Create open-door policies and multilingual support**
- **Use relationship-centered outreach (home visits, family liaisons, parent coordinators, cultural events, parent teacher conferences, IEPs, workshops, etc.)**
- **Establish consistent points of contact for families (i.e., one staff member they can always go to)**
- **Leverage family liaisons, community school coordinators, and after-school staff to regularly check in with students and families**
- **Protect privacy and handle disclosures with empathy and confidentiality**



✓ **Example:** A family reveals they're living in a motel during a resource fair hosted at the school.

Approaching Sensitive Conversations with Care

Alleviate Fear of Parent or Guardian

- Being homeless is not a reason to contact Social Services or Child Protective Services.
- Schools do not communicate with law enforcement regarding legal status.
- Forms and information regarding homeless status are confidential and are not released to contacts outside of the school or district.



6. Designate and Empower a McKinney-Vento Liaison

- **Every school district must have one**
- **Their responsibilities include:**
 - **Identifying and enrolling students**
 - **Informing families of their rights**
 - **Connecting students to services like transportation, counseling, school meals, and other support services**
- **Collaborate closely with Community School Coordinators and site-based supports**




7. Ensure Immediate Enrollment and Support Services

- **Homeless students have the right to:**
 - **Enroll without traditional documentation**
 - **Stay in their school of origin, even if they move**
 - **Receive transportation, meals, and academic support**
- **Act swiftly once a student is identified — don't delay enrollment or services**



8. Use Community Partnerships for Referral and Outreach

- **Develop referral pathways**
- **Local shelters, Housing organizations, and Health clinics**
- **Social Workers and Mental Health agencies**
- **Faith-based groups**
- **Nonprofits**
- **Host Resource & Health Fairs**
- **Bring Services directly onto Campus**

 **Example:** A family getting food from a school pantry mentions they're couch-surfing, triggering a support referral.

9. Monitor and Follow Up Regularly

- Keep case notes and ensure continued support throughout the school year
- Reassess housing situations during breaks or after extended absences
- Track whether needs are being met: academic, social-emotional, and material

Why It Matters:

Data can help identify students at risk, especially those who may not self-disclose

How to Do It:

- Monitor **chronic absenteeism**, changes in academic performance, or behavioral shifts
- Use **referral systems** from support staff, teachers, and partner agencies
- Collaborate in **multidisciplinary teams** (i.e., SSTs, care coordination teams) to flag concerns

✓ *Example:* A student's drop in attendance leads to a home visit where housing insecurity is uncovered.

Proactive Outreach



- **Student Housing Questionnaires (initial and annual)**
 - **Parent, Student, & Teacher Videos and Messaging**
 - **Class and School Incentives**
 - **Teacher Reminders**
 - **2nd Attempt to Collect Missing Questionnaires**
 - **3rd Attempt to Collect during Parent/Teacher Conferences**
 - **Calls to Parents to Complete In-person or via Phone**
- **Collaboration with Migrant, Special Education, Preschool**
- **Parent Requests for Services**
- **Staff and Community Referrals for Services**
- **Tiered Outreach to Unsheltered, Motels, Shelters, Shared**

Evaluate Program for Improvement

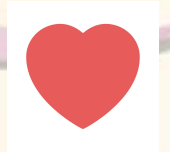
- **Stakeholder Input**
 - **Parents**
 - **Staff**
 - **Community**
- **Assess, Advocate, Implement**
- **Data-driven**



Supportive District Programs

Community Schools

- Serve as an academic institution & a hub for community support and partnerships
- Improve student learning, strengthen families, & create healthier communities
- Integrates academics with a range of supports and services
- Focuses on Whole-Child Support
 - Four Pillars:
 - Integrated student supports
 - Expanded learning time
 - Family and Community Engagement
 - Collaborative Leadership



***Community Schools* MATTER in Identifying Homelessness**

Building Trust to Reveal Hidden Needs

- Foster **strong, trusting relationships** with students, families, and community
- **Trust enables students and caregivers** to feel **safe sharing sensitive information**
- Families are more likely to **seek help** when **schools are seen as partners**, not just institutions



Integrated Support Systems

- On-site **social workers, counselors, support staff, and homeless liaisons** are trained to:
 - Recognize **subtle signs** of homelessness
 - Respond with **compassionate, trauma-informed care**
- Services are **coordinated and proactive**, not just reactive



Key Strategies Enabled by *Community Schools*

- **Family Engagement:** Regular communication builds trust, encouraging families to share housing-related struggles
- **Health and Housing Partners On-Site:** Having services co-located can lead to quicker referrals and disclosure of homelessness
- **School-Based Liaisons:** Community School Coordinators and McKinney-Vento liaisons can collaborate to train staff in trauma-informed practices
- **Data-Driven Supports:** Use attendance, academic performance, and behavioral indicators to trigger intervention protocols

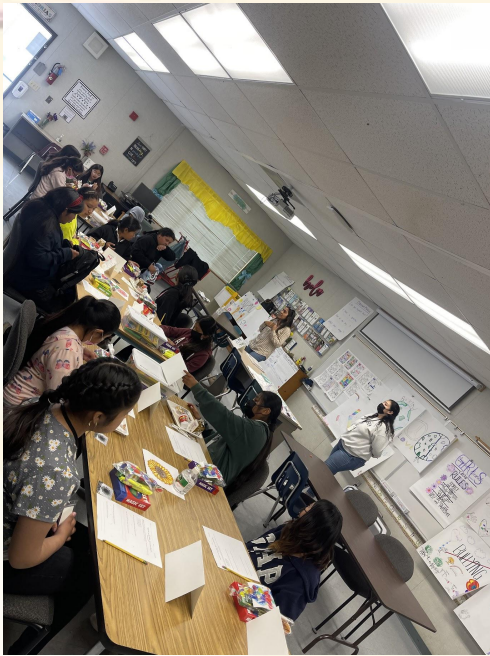


Mentoring Programs

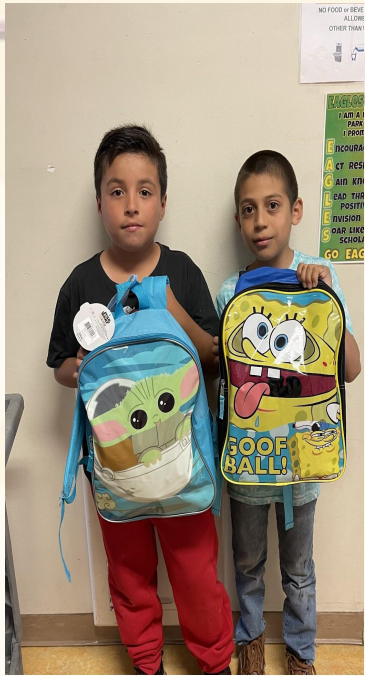
(Girls Lunch Bunch, Art Club, The Leader in Me, Santa Catalina, Girls Inc., Soccer Club, Faith Community, Football Camp, Art Therapy)



Service Learning



Backpack Giveaways





Sports & Game Days

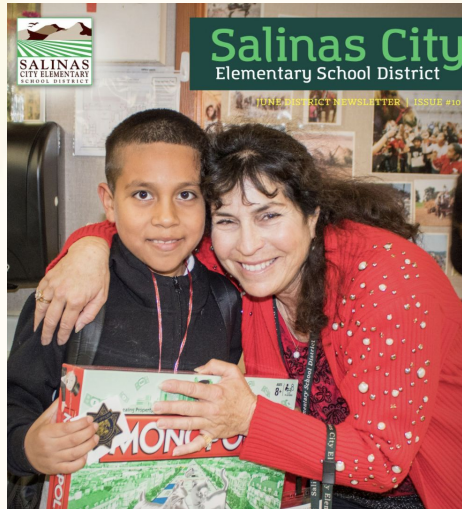




Field Trips (museums, farms, ranches, AT&T Pro-Am, movies, beaches, Steinbeck Center camp, colleges, theatres, rodeo)



Holiday Events (Thanksgiving, Christmas, Shopping Tour, Toys, Pozole Meals, Adopt a Family)



Tea Parties





Life Skills Workshop (Saturday, 8 AM - 2 PM)

- Work Experiences
- Resume/Cover Sheet
- Interview Practice
- Dress for Success
- Create an Email
- Job Search
- Other Tech Support
- Library Cards
- Clothes Closet



Virtual & In-Person Workshops



Tents & Sleeping Bags



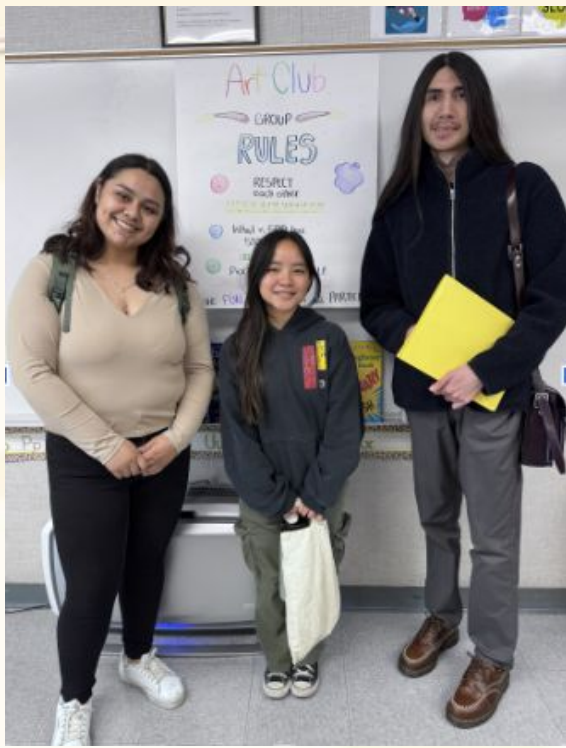
Health Outreach (blood pressure, diabetic clinics, dental, hygiene, health fairs, self-care, mobile clinics, optometry, nutrition, NOW program, social/emotional, art therapy, check-ins)



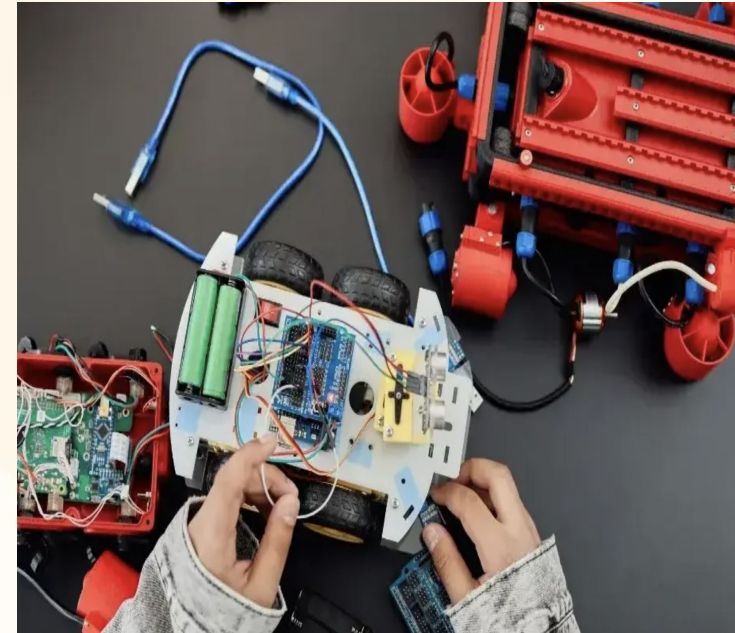
Shelter & Motel Outreach



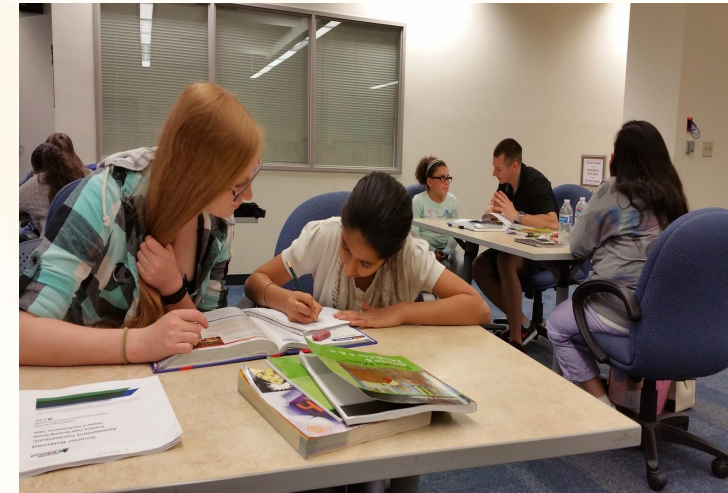
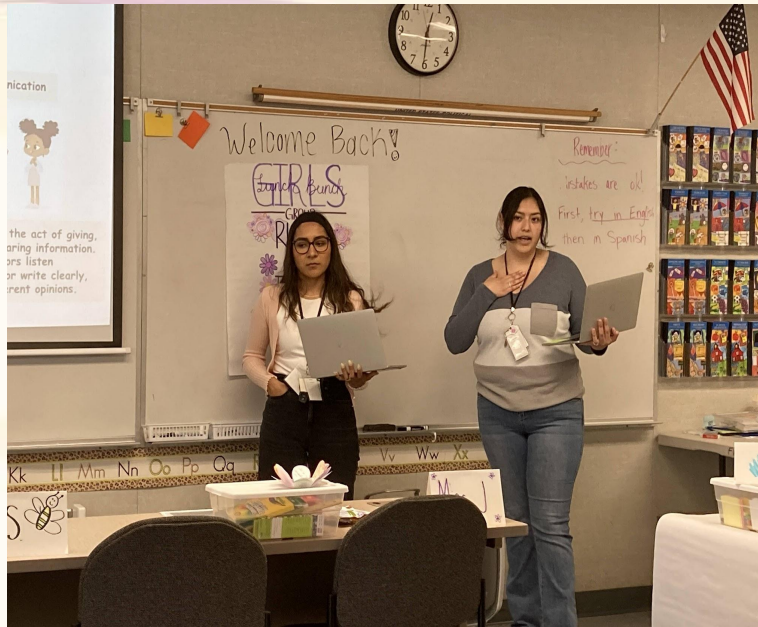
Social Work Interns (NPS, MIIS, CSUMB, Brandman)



Robotics



Tutoring (in-home, virtual, after/during school, shelters, apt./trailer complex, weekends)



Other Services

- Haircuts
- Laundromat
- Food
- Diapers/Wipes
- Optometry/Glasses
- Shower
- Socks/Shoes
- Volunteer Training
- Tech Support
- Transportation
- Home Visits
- Childcare Safety Plans



Family Leadership Conference

- *fall and spring*
- *300 parents, 300 in the Kids Kamp*

Community Resource Fair (35-40 partners)



Sophia Witting, SCESD Teacher on Special Assignment for New Teacher Induction, staffed a teacher recruitment table at the Community Resource Fair.



Staff from the Housing Authority of Monterey County, which provides housing solutions to the most vulnerable residents of the community, were on hand to offer assistance to SCESD families.



Staff from Carmel Yoga, one of the partner agencies that provides enrichment in our After School Program, helped recruit families to sign up. #namaste

Engagement With Community Partners: Combating Food Deserts

The District has an ongoing partnership with the Food Bank for Monterey County, which routinely distributes fresh produce to our families at school sites. For the conference, the Food Bank distributed 604 food boxes at the end of the event. This aligns with the Board's priority of maintaining strong relationships with the community.





Superintendent Rebeca Andrade (center), with an SCESD student performer and Family Resource Center Coordinator Cheryl Camany.



Food Service staff lay out platters of fresh produce and salads in preparation for the lunch rush.



District staff and administrators await the day's important guests:
Our Families

Parent Coordinators & IT Teams



Above: Some of the District's Parent Coordinators, ready to greet families arriving for a Parent Leadership Conference. At right: Members of the District's IT Department after a long day of providing technology support for keynote speakers, breakout sessions, and performances.



Family Engagement: Keynote Speakers

In another first, the Spring Family Leadership Conference featured two keynote speakers. To open the event, veteran educator, Sylvia Dorta Duque de Reyes, presented on the importance of parent engagement and connectedness for a child's education. To close out the event, Dr. Casey Grover, Chief of Emergency Medicine at the Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula, presented on addiction issues and tactics to keep children drug and alcohol free.

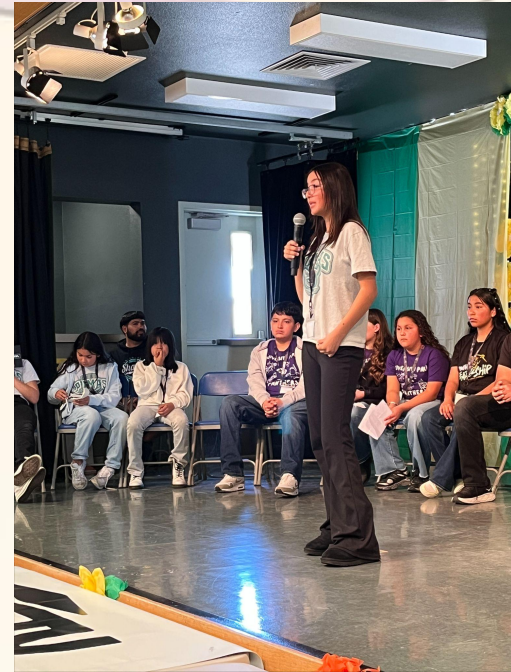




KIDS Kamp (300+)



Student Panelists



Students perform a Folklórico dance, one of three groups of students to perform at the Spring conference.



Folklórico performers and their leader prepare to take the stage. Traditional dance is an important cultural touchstone for many of our families, and is taught in the District's After School program, and several schools also offer instruction for enrichment time.



Country Western Dance



Inclusion also is a priority enmeshed in the District. Here, students from a Special Day Class at University Park School perform "We Are Family," incorporating both singing and signing—in American Sign Language—along with dance.

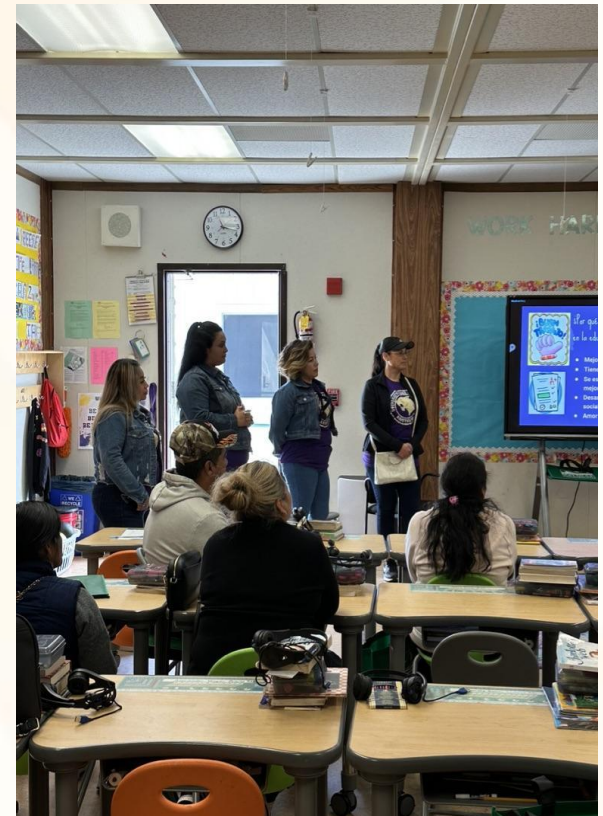
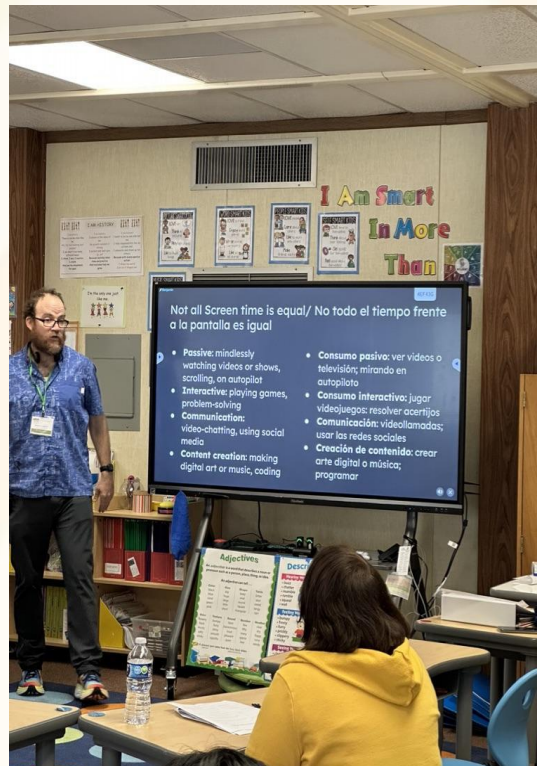
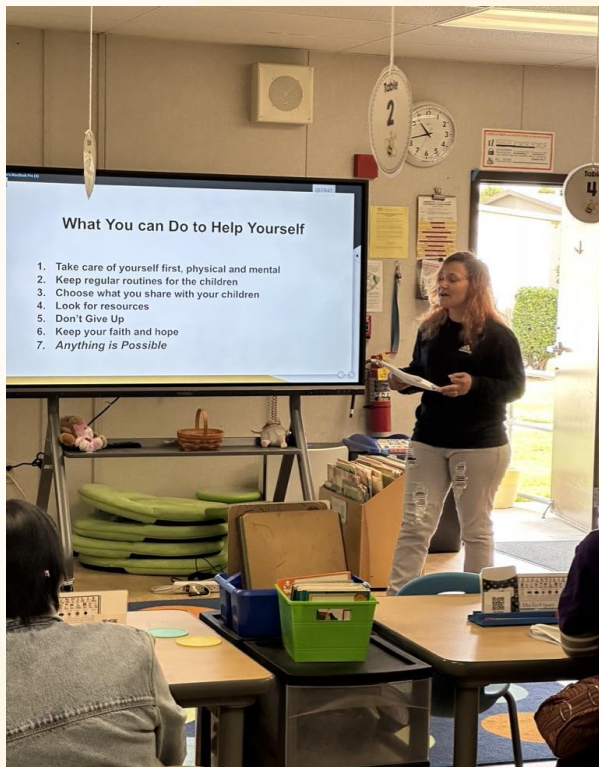


Brazilian Band

Performances

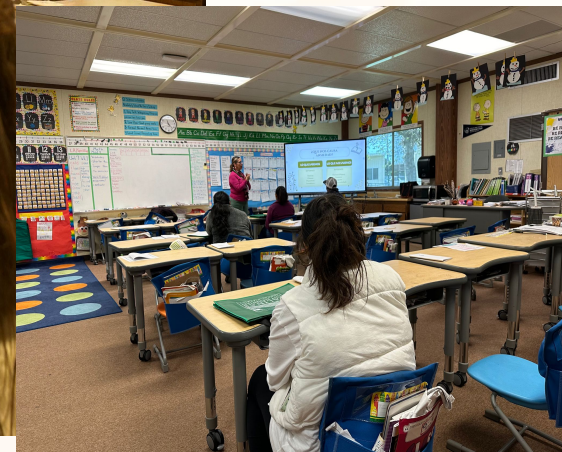
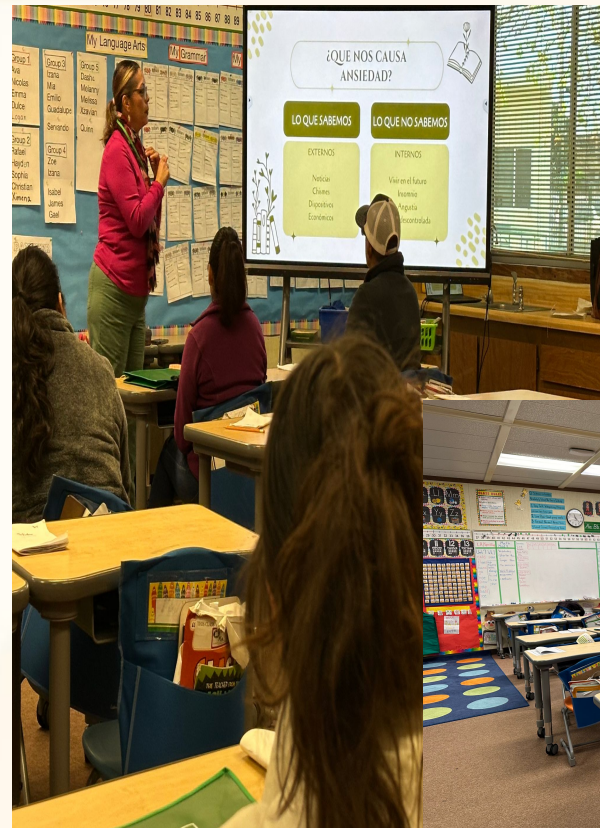
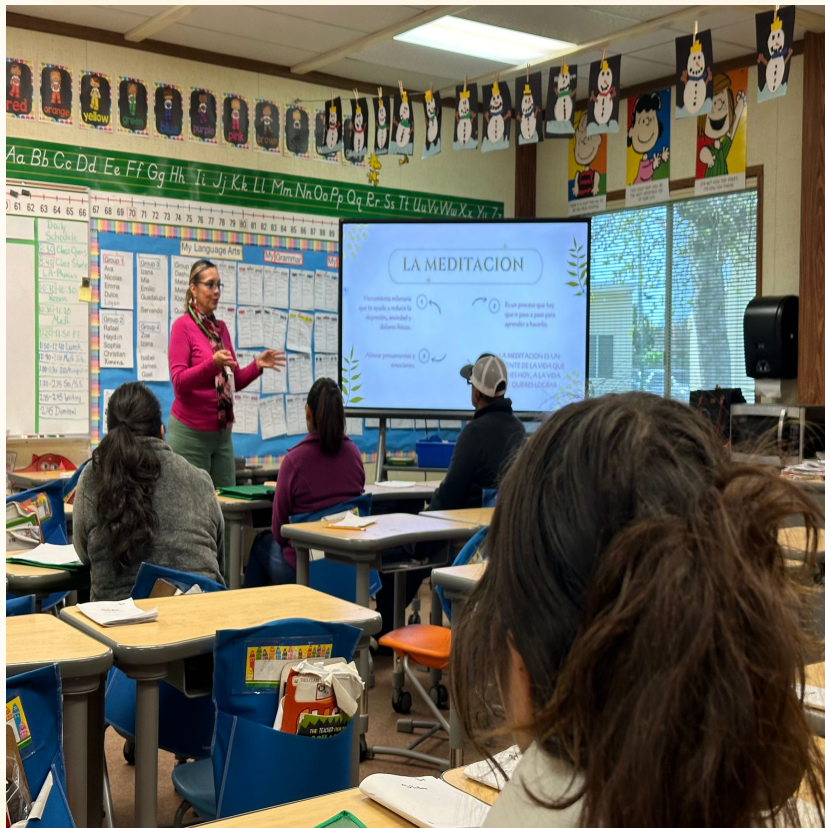
Family Engagement: Parents As Partners

For the Spring Family Leadership Conference, the District invited parents to lead breakout sessions - a first time occurrence for both the District and many of the parents. Sessions led by parents included: The Benefits of Mindfulness; Disaster Preparedness; A Common Sense Approach to Screen Time; How to Knit a Simple Headband; How to Recycle Right; Effective Parenting Strategies; Social Connectedness and Maternal Mental Health; and Navigating Parenting While Homeless, among others.



Family Engagement: Parents As Partners

Ms. Claudia Monjaraz-Galicia, our DELAC Member, presented to parents on the importance of mindfulness as a critical factor in supporting the well-being of students so they are ready for success at the academic, behavioral and socio-emotional levels.



Family Engagement: Hard Work Acknowledged

This year, the District initiated a special honor for the school that had the largest family attendance at the Spring Parent Leadership Conference. Host site University Park Elementary will hold the Distinguished Family Leadership trophy until the next conference, scheduled to take place at Roosevelt Elementary next October, to coincide with Roosevelt's 100-year anniversary celebration. In addition, UP Parent Coordinator Maribel Fregoso was acknowledged by the Board of Trustees with a Parent Leadership Conference honor for building such a strong bridge between the District and the families.

Board President Art Galimba (center, rear), with University Park Vice Principal Ruby Baloca (holding the trophy), Parent Coordinator Maribel Fregoso (to Ms. Baloca's left) and UPS parents. The UPS group was acknowledged at the April 2024 Board of Trustees meeting.





Reflecting on Joy, Connection, & Belonging

Think about how you can create an environment, implement procedures, and establish routines and structures that support our students' and our families' experiences. Our goal is to ensure that their time at school is joyful, filled with positive connections, and fosters a strong sense of belonging. Let's work together to make these values a reality in our daily practice.





Maya Angelou

“I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

