



# ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

2020-21



san diego county office of  
**EDUCATION**

FUTURE WITHOUT BOUNDARIES™

# A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Partner in Education,

The San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) is pleased to share our latest annual report. The 2020-21 school year held unique challenges, but with each new curve ball, our team was there with support, recommendations, and up-to-date information so that students would be safe, supported, and ready to learn.

SDCOE exists to empower students in the programs we operate as well as all of the students who attend school in San Diego County. We build expertise among teachers, principals, and school staff members so they can serve our region's youth. We help parents become advocates for their children. We help break down the barriers that keep students from the success they deserve. And we engage the community as partners so all students thrive now and in the future.

This year, our efforts included partnering to provide COVID-19 vaccines for school staff, developing a school reopening dashboard, getting internet access and devices to students, and creating curriculum so educators could focus on strengthening relationships with students. SDCOE also continued to address the social and emotional needs of our region's children; provide fingerprinting, hiring, purchasing, and warrant processing; and engage and educate the children in our Juvenile Court and Community Schools and special education schools.

Our mission is inspiring and leading innovation in education; it's a call to action as well as a goal. So this year, we continue to keep our focus on four key areas – equity, innovation, career technical education, and organizational effectiveness – as the pathway to a future without boundaries for every child, regardless of race, disability, ZIP code, or gender. We believe in a future that reflects the best of a diverse San Diego County.

To stay up-to-date on our programs, services, and activities, visit [www.sdcoe.net](http://www.sdcoe.net) or follow @SanDiegoCOE on social media. If you would like to learn more about any subject that's addressed in the report, please don't hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,



**Dr. Paul Gothold**

San Diego County Superintendent of Schools  
[superintendent@sdcoe.net](mailto:superintendent@sdcoe.net)



**DR. PAUL GOTHOLD**



## THE ROLE OF COUNTY OFFICES OF EDUCATION

California has a three-level system of public education, which includes the California Department of Education, county offices of education, and local school districts. Regulations, funding, and policy decisions are generally established at the state level, while the day-to-day delivery of instruction is the responsibility of the more than 1,000 school districts throughout the state. The 58 county offices of education are the intermediate level of the public education system. County offices provide a support infrastructure for local schools and districts. They also fulfill state mandates to register teacher credentials, complete employee background checks, certify school attendance records, and develop countywide programs to serve students with special needs.

Local school  
districts and  
charter schools



## THE ROLE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

The San Diego County superintendent of schools, appointed by the County Board of Education, is the chief administrative officer, employer, and developer of programs and services as authorized by state statute or determined by needs or requests. The superintendent also provides educational leadership and administers mandated services. The superintendent has direct oversight responsibilities for approving and assuring school district budgets, calling school district elections, and assisting with school district emergencies by providing necessary services. The superintendent is also tasked with developing a three-year Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) for the schools operated by the County Office, and reviewing and approving the LCAPs for all school districts in San Diego County.



## THE ROLE OF THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

# BOARD

The County Board of Education operates under the authority of the California Constitution, the state Legislature, California Education Code, and the State Board of Education. Among other duties, the board is responsible for:

- Adopting the annual County Office of Education **Local Control and Accountability Plan** and budget
- Adopting policies governing the operation of the board
- Acting as the **appeals board** for student expulsions, interdistrict transfers, and **charter school petitions**
- Acting as the **County Committee on School District Organization** to review and approve proposals to change the way school district governing board members are elected
- Hiring and evaluating the county superintendent and establishing the rate of compensation
- Serving as the landlord and owner of property



**Gregg Robinson**  
DISTRICT 1



**Guadalupe González**  
DISTRICT 2



**Alicia Muñoz**  
DISTRICT 3



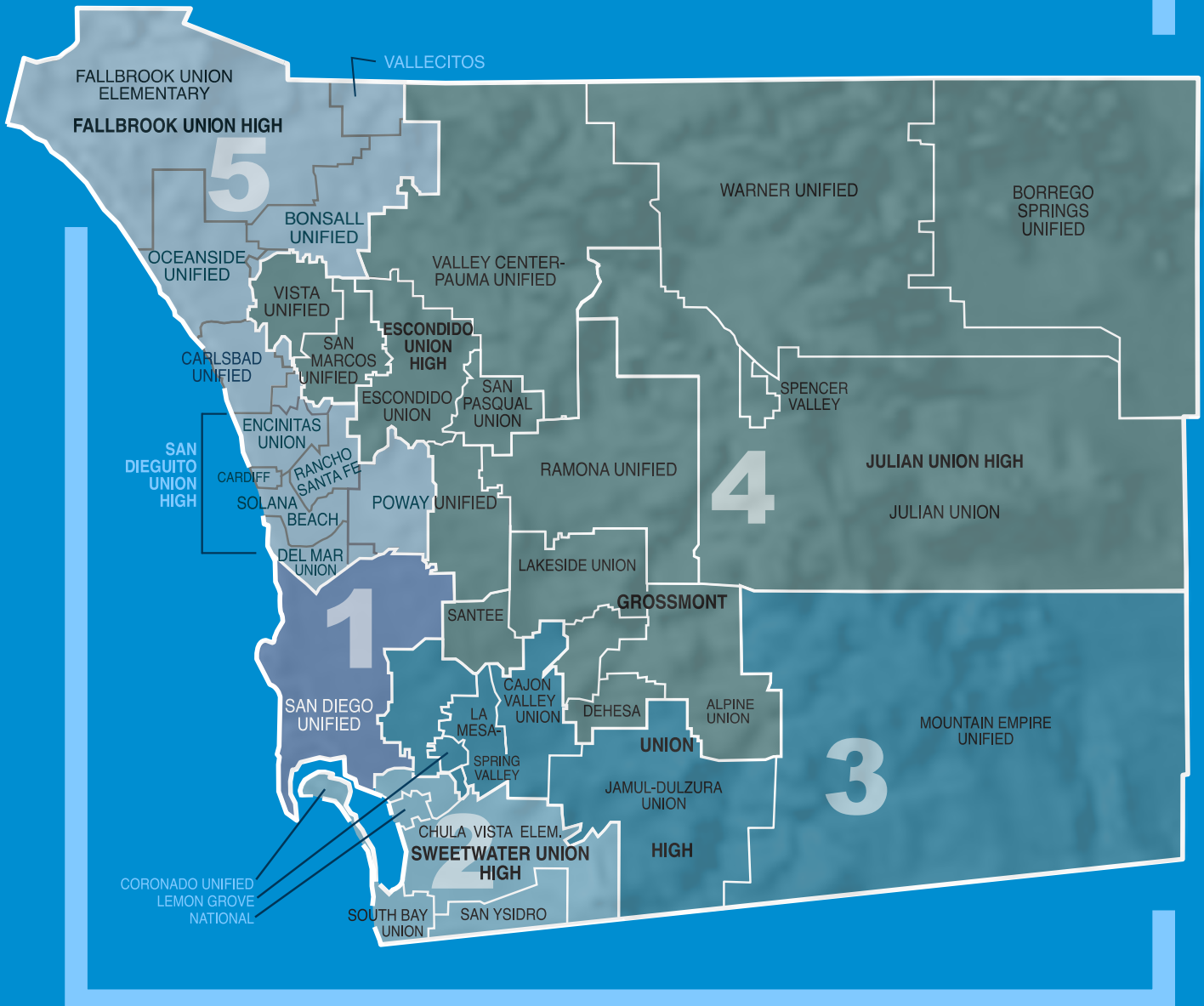
**Paulette Donnellon**  
DISTRICT 4



**Rick Shea**  
DISTRICT 5

Through its role of long-range policy development and other critical functions, the board works with the county superintendent of schools to offer the most effective education programs and district support services. The board also encourages the involvement of families and communities, and is a vehicle for citizen access to communicate about SDCOE's programs and services.

# BOARD AREAS

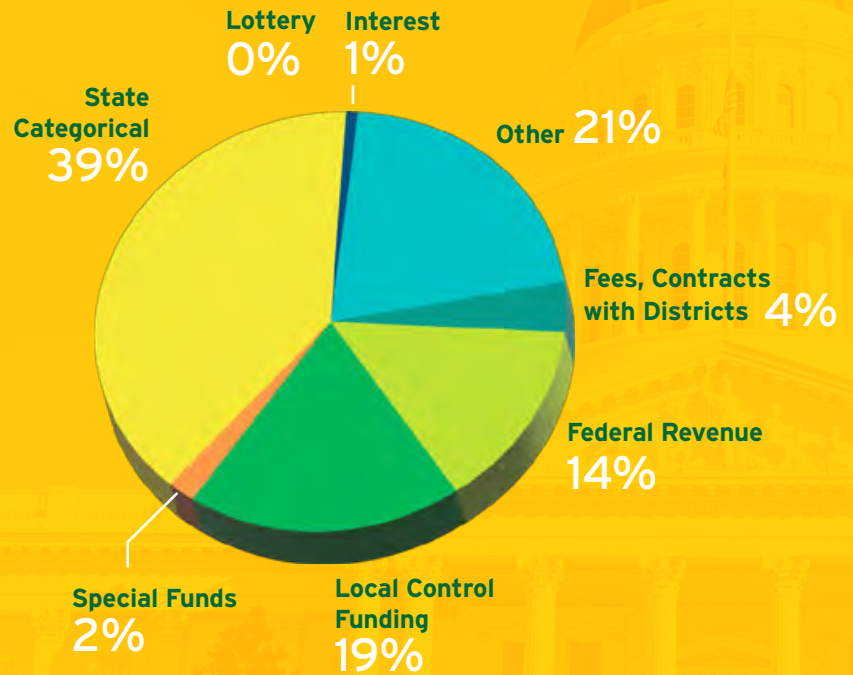


# SDCOE REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES

## REVENUE AND SOURCES

**\$681,558,072**

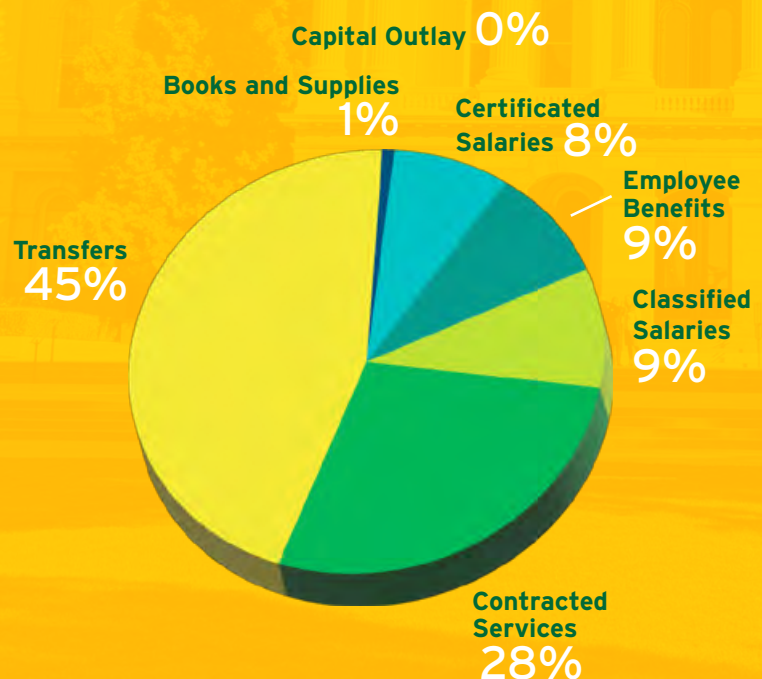
Lottery	\$463,129
Interest	\$4,081,339
Other	\$146,229,730
Fees	\$25,383,311
Federal Revenue	\$92,377,216
Local Control Funding Formula	\$131,666,819
Special Funds	\$16,192,687
State Categorical	\$265,193,841



## EXPENDITURES BY CLASSIFICATION

**\$634,422,506**

Books and Supplies	\$7,019,475
Capital Outlay	\$1,565,264
Certificated Salaries	\$52,648,675
Employee Benefits	\$56,022,428
Classified Salaries	\$55,609,013
Contracted Services	\$179,531,193
Transfers	\$282,026,458





# SAN DIEGO COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS



**42** Number of School Districts



Students Who Are Foster Youth  
**0.2%**



Students Who Are Experiencing Homelessness  
**3.1%**



Students with Disabilities  
**13.9%**

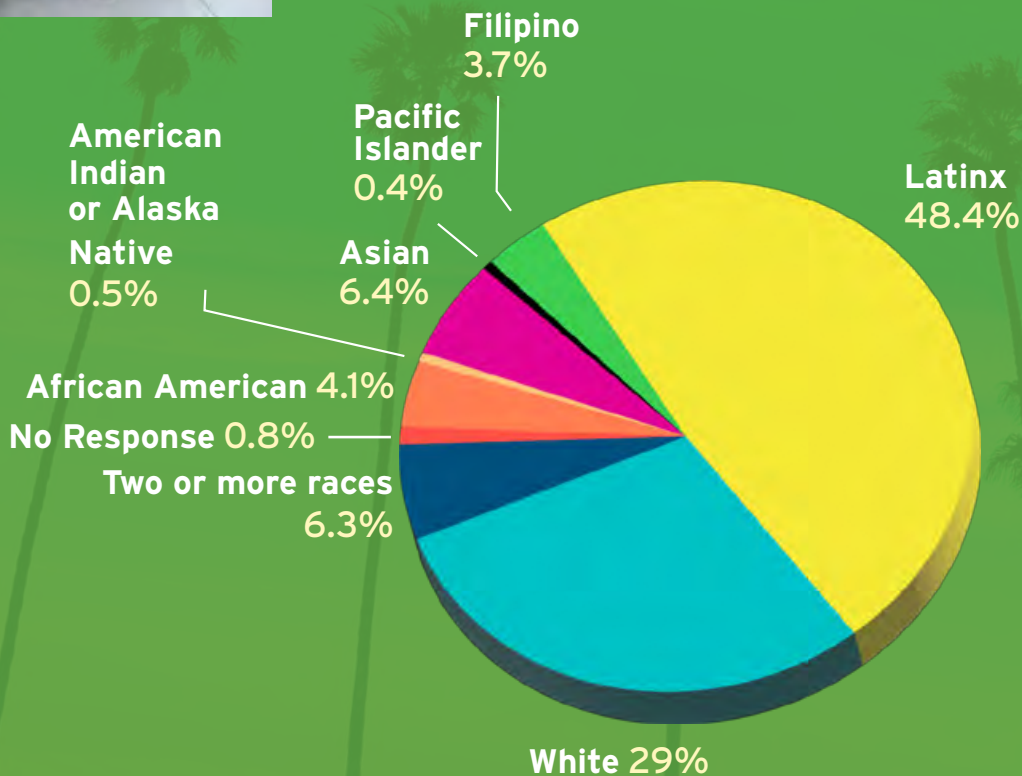


Students Who Qualify for Free or Reduced-Price Meals  
**50.4%**



Students Who Are English Learners  
**17.1%**

**490,068** K-12 Public School Enrollment



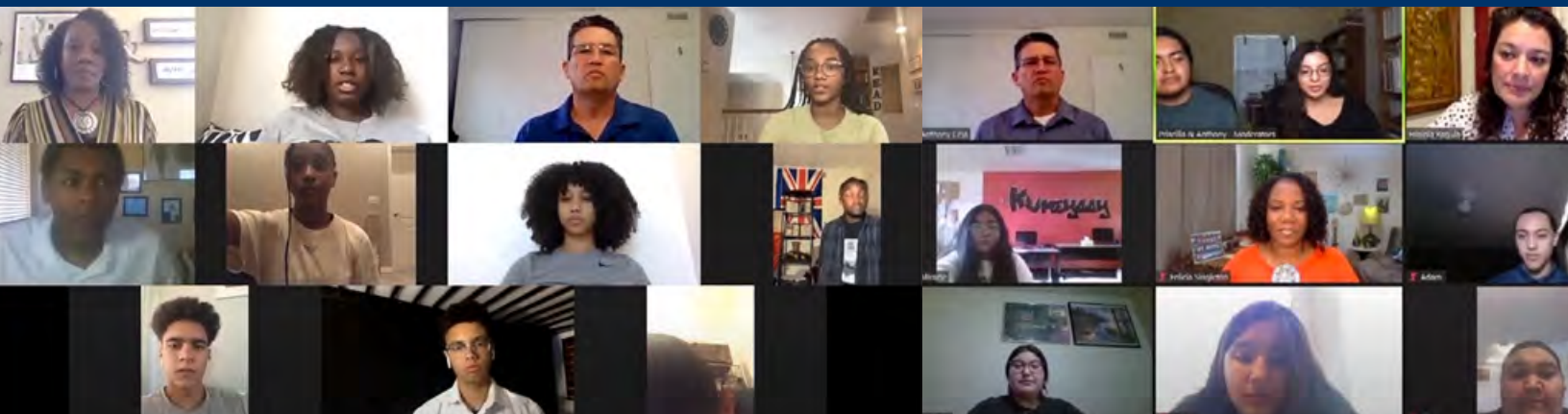
Source: 2020-21 California Department of Education DataQuest

# Student Voices LEAD THE WAY FOR EQUITY

This year kicked off the SDCOE Student Experience Panel series featuring high school-age students from across San Diego County. These brave young people came together virtually to talk about their encounters with bias and discrimination in school, and their experiences receiving support from adults and their peers to be their best selves. The panels are facilitated by SDCOE's Equity and Student Support Services teams.

We incorporated these powerful young voices and feedback from community members along with research-based best practices to create the first **Equity Blueprint for Action**, which includes actionable steps educators can take in their districts, schools, and classrooms. All students are deserving of a world-class education with high expectations from caring adults who love and support them.

**HOW DO WE BETTER  
SUPPORT ALL STUDENTS?  
FIRST, WE LISTEN.**



We consistently heard from students that they want to see more diverse perspectives and examples of positive contributions – from their cultures and others – in their classrooms and curriculum. Students want to be seen and understood as they seek to see and understand others.

The San Diego County Board of Education also added a student board member position to elevate student voice at its board meetings. Five students were selected, one each to represent each of the five board member districts. These young people are in addition to Juvenile Court

and Community Schools student representatives who are chosen each month for recognition at the board meeting.

Reimagining schools is a collective effort and that includes our students and making sure they have a seat at the table where decisions are made that impact them. Together we can ensure high expectations for every student while showing respect and honor for the unique cultures and perspectives of our young people. Educational equity is a huge undertaking, but it's within our power to make the world a better place for our youth today and in the future.



# *FIGHT* TO PROTECT SCHOOLS FROM **CYBERATTACKS**

As cybercrimes and phishing scams increased during the pandemic, the SDCOE tech team boosted its efforts to help school districts fight attacks and protect student privacy.

Integrated Technology Services created Red Herring, an innovative web-based application that allows organizations to create, schedule, and launch fake phishing emails that are linked to training resources. The goal is to educate employees about everyday cybersecurity threats and raise awareness about phishing, which can be a scam email that tries to trick users into revealing personal or confidential information.

The Red Herring platform is being used by county offices of education across the state and its usage is rapidly expanding.

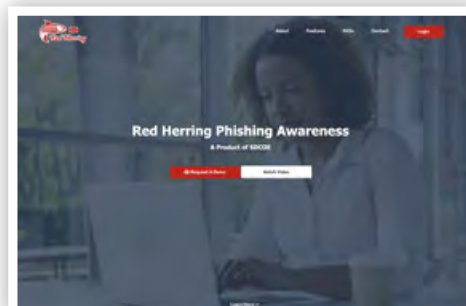
"Phishing attacks continue to make the headlines, and unfortunately, K-12 institutions are not exempt," said SDCOE Chief Technology Officer Terry Loftus. "By leveraging Red Herring, districts and county offices of education can efficiently assess staff security awareness as well as provide effective phishing awareness training, all in one solution."

Integrated Technology Services leadership looked into cybersecurity training options, but found it to be cost-prohibitive. Instead, they decided SDCOE should build its own and offer a low-cost alternative to other educational agencies.

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**PHISHING ATTACKS CONTINUE TO MAKE THE HEADLINES, AND UNFORTUNATELY, K-12 INSTITUTIONS ARE NOT EXEMPT.**

- SDCOE Chief Technology Officer Terry Loftus



# JOY AND HEALING

## FOR STUDENTS IN JUVENILE DETENTION

Teachers in SDCOE's Juvenile Court and Community Schools (JCCS) are rethinking and reimagining what engages our most vulnerable learners. Through writing, woodwork, and music, students are experiencing joy in new knowledge and gaining skills that will support them through school and beyond.

Two districtwide projects, the Creating our Future Design Jam and *The Storytellers* digital magazine, gave students the opportunity to explore personally relevant topics while drawing from multiple subjects of study. JCCS instructional coaches Sara Matthews and Melanie Tolan facilitated both opportunities, working with teachers to provide guidance and materials to engage students.

"We know that it's critical to hear our students' voices loud and clear and to let them know that their stories matter," said Tolan.

Some of the flash narratives in the digital magazine were vivid and moving while others were simple and short. But all were introspective or showed students' creativity.

Teacher Mimi Seney created the Confined Redefined Project, which received the Advocacy in Action Award from Music for All, Inc. for its innovative use of music to expand mathematical concepts for the teenage boys who are detained or awaiting further adjudication for serious offenses at the East Mesa Juvenile Detention Center. It combines music and mathematical concepts through notation and rhythm.

SDCOE students at San Diego SOAR Academy at the East Mesa site say this innovative, creative new learning tool has brought them out of their shell and given them confidence.



**WE KNOW THAT IT'S CRITICAL TO HEAR OUR STUDENTS' VOICES LOUD AND CLEAR AND TO LET THEM KNOW THAT THEIR STORIES MATTER, ONE STUDENT SHARED.**

- Melanie Tolan, JCCS instructional coach

Students in classrooms at East Mesa juvenile detention facilities have been learning how to design and build beautiful wood furniture for sale.

"The intention is not just to build quality products but more importantly to produce youth with a high degree of professionalism, so they can succeed at whatever career they choose to pursue," said Alex Long, who teaches the building and construction class. "This program is one powerful tool to rehabilitate our youth and provide real, worthwhile opportunities for them upon release."





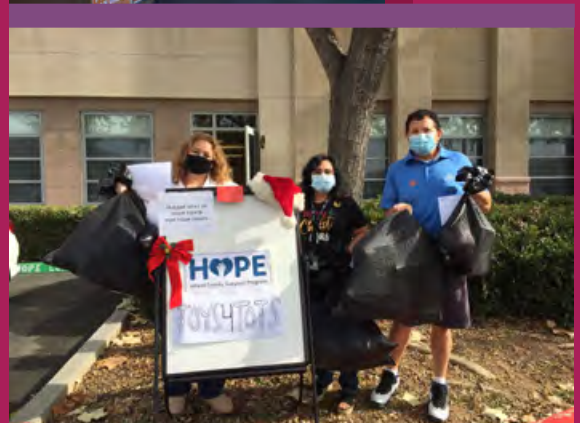
# A PART OF OUR *Vibrant* COMMUNITY

Every day, SDCOE employees are a part of their community in big ways, such as making sure 575,000 payroll checks are processed for school employees throughout the year. But they also have children and grandchildren in local schools, walk their neighborhoods, and are quick to respond when there's a need.

In November 2020, when thousands of families and individuals in need wondered where their next meal would come from, SDCOE employees stepped up. In partnership with Feeding San Diego, SDCOE held a drive-thru food drive where employees dropped off 2,500 pounds of food donations.

This year, SDCOE food service employees have been on the front lines serving and delivering food to students and community members throughout the pandemic. They worked with other districts and organizations such as the San Diego Food Bank to help provide and deliver millions of pounds of food and supplies to students and families across the county. They also provided food assistance for community members at an SDCOE facility in Linda Vista.

"A gentleman rolled into the parking lot of our food distribution in his wheelchair and asked me to please open the box and place all the items in the bag he carried. He shared with us that he had just opened the last can of tuna that morning and the food I was bagging for him would carry him until his next paycheck. We really do not know how incredibly blessed we are until we meet such contrasts. I feel grateful and honored to do what I do," said Lucero Diaz-Kennon, who is a school food service employee at SDCOE.





# A YEAR LIKE NO OTHER >

The COVID-19 pandemic added uncertainty and stress to the 2020-21 school year for San Diego County students, families, school staff, and education leaders. But from the moment the virus forced schools to close their doors in March 2020, SDCOE provided steady guidance and assistance with a focus on supporting all students and bringing the community together safely. Often, SDCOE created and released support documents for planning ahead of state and national guidance for reopening and keeping students and staff safe.

Even before school campuses closed in March 2020 to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, SDCOE was working to assist local schools and students in responding to and recovering from the pandemic. There was a huge information gap, which is why we created a website to consolidate COVID-19 and distance learning resources and information. We also knew that the leaders in district, charter, and private schools would need actionable tools created with input and feedback from our partners in public health. – San Diego County Superintendent of Schools Dr. Paul Gothold

## 2020

### MARCH

Created a pandemic response plan template to help districts and school communities minimize the spread of COVID-19 and communicate with stakeholders



Published a new website to consolidate COVID-19 and distance learning resources and information reaching nearly 120,000 users and gaining more than 300,000 pageviews through June 2021

### APRIL

Partnered with the teachers union representing educators at SDCOE to approve a contract providing supports for schools and teachers during distance learning

Released a Planning Assumptions and Recommendations document covering six areas: public health, school operation, economic impact, educational impact, social and emotional impact, and community

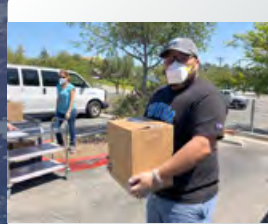


### JUNE

Launched a comprehensive framework with actionable and practical tools for reopening campuses in fall 2020 that was used in the development of the state's guidance



### JULY



Continued working with local internet providers to reduce costs and streamline the sign-up and installation processes for students and families

Maintained website with feeding program locations updated for families and students in need through the spring and summer

### AUG

Developed a decision tree in partnership with San Diego County Public Health to assist school personnel in making decisions on how to address staff or students who are ill

Created a website with resources and guidance to help families of U.S., transnational, immigrant, migrant, and refugee students continue their education during the pandemic

Highlighted equity challenges specific to American Indian communities during COVID-19 through a survey with statewide partners

### SEP

Worked closely with the County of San Diego to create a COVID-19 testing program for school employees

Created integrated and thematic units of study for grades K-12 based on state standards, so teachers could spend time making connections with their students and focusing on the essentials



### OCT

Established the School Reopening Dashboard to track the number of students who were participating in distance learning, hybrid learning, or full-time in-person learning, as well as the number of employees who were working in person on campuses



Distributed 7,000 Wi-Fi hotspot devices to students who didn't have a reliable internet connection as part of a broader effort to ensure students had the resources needed to succeed during distance learning

### JAN

By January 2021, SDCOE had helped provide internet and computing devices to 80% of students in the county who lacked access before the pandemic



### FEB



Established the COVID-19 vaccine rollout for TK-12 school employees in the county in partnership with the California Schools Voluntary Employees Benefits Association

Published *Engaging Students Through the Pandemic and Beyond* to help education leaders and teachers address the challenges of teaching and learning during COVID-19 and better support students

### APRIL

Released COVID-19 prevention planning and tips for graduation ceremonies



### JUNE

Released planning assumptions for 2021-22 to support school leaders in planning the next school year

Managed and distributed 10.6 million face masks and shields, 36,145 gallons of hand sanitizer, and 7,045 thermometers to districts and schools during the school year

### MAY

Helped 98% of local school districts reopen for in-person learning as of May 2021



SDCOE's proactive approach in mobilizing technical assistance, partnerships, and data enabled the [County Office of Education] to provide timely and actionable support for districts to resume in-person instruction. [SDCOE] was quick to develop several comprehensive, actionable resources, which later became exemplars for the state. While San Diego faced a number of challenges in its reopening process, the county's example shows how close collaboration with educators and public health workers can contribute to safe school reopening. – Learning Policy Institute, 2021

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# ALL STUDENTS DESERVE A WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION

SDCOE served more than 3,000 unaccompanied minors for four months through the *Futuro Brillante* program at the San Diego Convention Center. The program ended in summer 2021 when all of the students were placed in safe environments.

Employees from departments across SDCOE supported the program directly through teaching, creating curriculum, and developing innovative learning opportunities, and indirectly through planning and operations, material deliveries, technical needs, translation, and human resources.

"This was a 'we' process. There were so many people involved. That was one of the takeaways that I'm taking with me is just how we all came together with a beautiful and wonderful opportunity to help young people. That's our mission at SDCOE – to support and nurture students. This embodies our mission, and this embodies what we do as an organization," said

Roberto Carrillo, a principal in SDCOE's Juvenile Court and Community Schools who served as site administrator of the *Futuro Brillante* program.

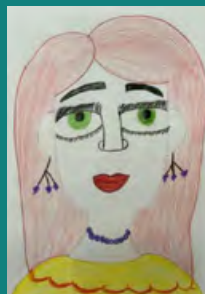
Employees said they felt honored to have the opportunity to support the students temporarily in the care of the San Diego community through the federal government's operations at the Convention Center.

"I saw our staff doing their magic with passion and love – welcoming students, making those connections, building those relationships, and having those students walk out in laughter... and just be kids again," shared SDCOE teacher Inez Ruiloba.



**THIS WAS A 'WE' PROCESS.**

- Principal Roberto Carrillo



# INTERNSHIP PROGRAM *Encourages* NEW SPECIAL EDUCATORS

An internship program offered by the SDCOE Teacher Effectiveness and Preparation team this year supported 55 people in 24 school districts in San Diego County to earn their teaching credential while working in the classroom.

The Education Specialist Intern Program in the Human Resource Services division is specifically for people seeking to earn a special education credential, which is especially important because schools often have a difficult time filling those positions. Participants in the two-year program work full-time as teachers in local school districts while taking classes at night to earn their credential.

"The intern route is a rigorous pathway to the teaching credential," said Dr. Conni Campbell, intern program coordinator with the Teacher Effectiveness and Preparation team. "Everyone is giving support as interns concurrently learn their craft and deliver daily instruction to students."

That support includes employment resources, goal setting, classroom observation, and site mentorship.

SDCOE's Teacher Effectiveness and Preparation department provides programs that address pre-service preparation, advanced teacher credentials and authorizations, and professional learning for educators that are responsive to district, teacher, student, and community needs.



**EVERYONE IS GIVING  
SUPPORT AS INTERNS  
CONCURRENTLY LEARN  
THEIR CRAFT AND  
DELIVER DAILY  
INSTRUCTION TO  
STUDENTS.**

- Dr. Conni Campbell,  
intern program coordinator





# CHARTER SCHOOL TEAM *Grows* TO SUPPORT SCHOOL LEADERS

The number of charter schools that SDCOE directly oversees grew from one just a few years ago to 11 by the end of the 2020-21 school year, which means the need for support continues to increase. That's where SDCOE's Charter School Services team comes in.

The department is focused on updating and improving oversight for the schools chartered through SDCOE. They also support charter schools across the county and the districts that provide oversight.

"We're looking at where there might be gaps and where we can be a resource," Charter School Services Senior Director Kristin Armatis said.

The team's services include technical assistance, professional development, networking, and providing various resources to help them understand the laws about charter schools. They have partnered with SDCOE's legal team to host regular webinars about topics such as the Brown Act, special education laws, and public records requests.

By developing best practices for supporting the charter schools overseen by SDCOE, the team is able to share that expertise with districts throughout the county.



**WE'RE LOOKING AT WHERE THERE MIGHT BE GAPS AND WHERE WE CAN BE A RESOURCE.**

- Kristin Armatis, charter school services senior director

# QUICK FACTS/ BY THE NUMBERS

## 400

5,000 educators attended  
400 live Innovative Digital  
Learning webinars



## 1,400

attendees at the virtual  
Equity Conference:  
Equity is Love in Action

## 24,441

followers @SanDiegoCOE on  
social media channels



## \$605,837

grant obtained to create  
career experience labs  
at SDCOE's new facility  
in Linda Vista



**3,895** students and teachers  
participated live in **work-based  
learning** activities

**1,000** new **phones** installed across 25  
SDCOE sites to increase efficiency

**10,000** **wireless internet hotspots**  
purchased, activated, and distributed  
to 53 school districts and charter  
schools

**34** pages and 15 attachments in the  
**COVID-19 Business Services FAQ**  
document for local educational  
agencies

**38,950** **users** of K-12 units of study  
created by SDCOE curriculum and  
instruction experts

**3** **school counselors** honored for their  
support of all students with annual  
award

**36** **parents** of children in the  
SDCOE Migrant Education program  
participated in the San Diego Sheriff's  
Spanish language academy

**800** **backpacks** with school supplies  
provided to JCCS and Friendship  
School students



# QUICK FACTS/ BY THE NUMBERS



**450** attendees at the annual Dual Language Conference hosted in partnership with San Diego State University

**844** teacher projects supporting students learning in person and virtually funded through SDG&E and DonorsChoose partnership

**532** media inquiries and requests for information submitted to SDCOE Communications team

**58** Cuyamaca Outdoor School Home Edition videos to support students in distance learning

**29,720** meals distributed to JCCS and Friendship School students

**539** participants in virtual tobacco prevention and education efforts for students

**32** schools/organizations participated in Friday Night Live and Club Live

**616** designated subjects/Career Technical Education credentials were issued across 68 districts and 41 counties



**85**



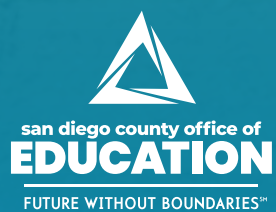
# ENROLLMENT BY DISTRICT



Alpine Union	<b>1,532</b>
Bonsall Unified	<b>2,164</b>
Borrego Springs Unified	<b>3,088</b>
Cajon Valley Union	<b>16,732</b>
Cardiff	<b>632</b>
Carlsbad Unified	<b>10,863</b>
Chula Vista Elementary	<b>29,478</b>
Coronado Unified	<b>2,608</b>
Dehesa	<b>9,921</b>
Del Mar Union	<b>3,853</b>
Encinitas Union	<b>4,918</b>
Escondido Union	<b>17,944</b>
Escondido Union High	<b>9,483</b>
Fallbrook Union Elementary	<b>4,756</b>
Fallbrook Union High	<b>2,155</b>
Grossmont Union High	<b>22,021</b>
Jamul-Dulzura Union Elementary	<b>742</b>
Julian Union Elementary	<b>1,842</b>
Julian Union High	<b>106</b>
La Mesa-Spring Valley	<b>11,525</b>
Lakeside Union	<b>5,077</b>
Lemon Grove	<b>3,160</b>

Mountain Empire Unified	<b>4,064</b>
National	<b>5,152</b>
Oceanside Unified	<b>18,984</b>
Poway Unified	<b>35,663</b>
Ramona City Unified	<b>5,070</b>
Rancho Santa Fe	<b>547</b>
San Diego County Office of Education	<b>6,962</b>
San Diego Unified	<b>118,523</b>
San Dieguito Union High	<b>13,001</b>
San Marcos Unified	<b>19,894</b>
San Pasqual Union	<b>501</b>
San Ysidro	<b>4,419</b>
Santee	<b>6,482</b>
Solana Beach	<b>2,720</b>
South Bay Union	<b>6,446</b>
Spencer Valley	<b>3,883</b>
Sweetwater Union High	<b>38,602</b>
Vallecitos	<b>187</b>
Valley Center-Pauma Unified	<b>3,865</b>
Vista Unified	<b>22,910</b>
Warner Unified	<b>2,428</b>
Statewide benefit charter schools	<b>5,165</b>

*\*District totals include district-authorized charter school enrollment*



@SanDiegoCOE

San Diego County  
Superintendent of Schools  
**Dr. Paul Gothold**

San Diego County Board of Education  
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