



ANNUAL REPORT

2023-24

DOWNEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

11627 Brookshire Avenue, Downey, California 90241

FORWARD

The purpose of the Annual Report is to provide a summary of the activities of the past year and to make recommendations for future years. In addition to the Annual Report, the District publishes the School Accountability Report Cards (SARC) for each school. Both the Annual Report and the School Accountability Report Cards are made available to the public.

John A. Garcia, Jr., Ph.D.
Superintendent
Downey Unified School District

October 2024

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EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

Wayne Shannon, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent, Elementary
Roger Brossmer, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent, Secondary

Elementary Education **Jennifer Robbins, Director**

Apple Distinguished Schools and Technology Integration

Elementary is committed to developing students who possess the skills necessary to thrive as learners, demonstrate knowledge in creative ways, and communicate their ideas to a broader audience. Elementary continues to create dynamic and interactive learning environments for all students while transforming learning with meaningful technology integrated throughout all content areas. Age-appropriate digital fluency goals were created to integrate educational technology tools throughout our students' academic day in TK-5. These Digital Fluency Expectations embed International Society for Technology and Education (ISTE) standards and big ideas for each grade level. This resource has become a key tool that unifies all schools and grade levels in meaningful educational technology implementation.

The Digital Fluency expectations have helped to guide our work integrating creative tech components into lessons. Some examples of how students demonstrate creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration, skills needed in our everchanging dynamic world, are in making their thinking visible through the use of Book Creator, green screen, stop motion, Pixton, Clips, podcasting, iMovie, 3D design in Tinkercad, and more!

Coding is taught in grades TK through 5. Children use block coding to program a variety of robots, such as Dash and Sphero Bolts. In addition, ScratchJr and Scratch allow students to create projects, animations, and games. Students enjoy sharing their work as they develop computational thinking and 21st-century skills.

Each elementary school also has robotics clubs focusing on robotics and engineering for students interested in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics). Overall, the Robotics Clubs are an excellent opportunity for students to explore the exciting world of robotics and engineering while developing valuable skills for their future endeavors. 3rd-5th robotics culminates with a VEX IQ tournament in the spring. Our students also interact with Indi, Ozobots, Dash, Sphero Bolts, Tinkercad Design challenges, VEX GO, Littlebit Circuits, and are starting eSports at the elementary level.

Elementary Education is also excited to announce that we have eight schools either reapplying or applying to be Apple Distinguished Schools. Being designated as an Apple Distinguished School isn't merely a stroke of luck; it is the result of a rigorous process to foster continuous innovation within the educational institution. This year, we

had the privilege of seeing our original five schools—ORS, Lewis, RSG, Imperial, and Gauldin—reapplying alongside three new schools—Price, Ward, and Carpenter—demonstrating a commitment to this path of innovation.

Upon receiving the coveted invitation, the arduous application journey commences. This year, the culmination of our efforts was a three-minute video encapsulating the school's ethos of inspiration, imagination, and impactful learning experiences. To ensure the highest production quality, we enlisted the expertise of a professional video production company for filming and editing. Preparation for filming day was meticulous, with our Instructional Technology Coaches (ITCs) collaborating closely with each site team to tailor plans and scripts to highlight the unique strengths of each site. Through this collaborative effort, we aimed to showcase the diverse approaches to innovation and creativity within our school community, ultimately exemplifying the essence of an Apple Distinguished School.

District Tech Squad

Year two of the District Tech Squad has been instrumental in implementing ISTE standards for students. The goal of our district tech squad each year is to provide opportunities to build global collaborators as we unite our 13 elementary school site student leaders at meetings throughout the year. Students share highlights of the ways EdTech tools are being used on their campus with each other and then collaborate to learn new strategies to take back to their site. Throughout these meetings, students explored 3D designing with Tinkercad, programming Sphero Bolts, and programming Hopper drones in teams to take off, fly, and land on a designated target. This lesson series was designed to provide enriching opportunities for students to be empowered learners, innovative designers, computational thinkers, creative communicators, and global collaborators (ISTE Standards 1.1 and 1.4-1.7). Looking towards the future, we're excited to build upon our successes by continuing the District Tech Squad with student leaders at all 13 elementary sites.

Elementary Expo

Elementary Education hosted its third “Elementary Expo” to highlight and showcase all the amazing learning opportunities that exist for students in an effort to continue increasing enrollment. The event was held on February 7th at Doty Middle School. Over 400 people attended the event, and over 90 of them had zip codes outside of Downey.

Students, TK-5, were live and in action in replicas of learning environments. Learning opportunities that were showcased were math, language arts, robotics (VEX, Spheros, Indi, Little Bits, & Dash), music, PE, art, wellness, LEAP, Science Camp, programming, computer science, engineering, STEAMworks, innovative learning, Innovation Labs, GLAD, and more!

All 13 schools were represented to show our coherence and that we offer ALL programs at ALL schools. Each family that attended received a “swag bag” and brochure in both

English and Spanish. An enrollment table was also set up so families could enroll or apply for permits on the spot.

Innovation Labs

Elementary Innovation Labs are an extension of student learning, ensuring they receive a 21st-century education that empowers them to be college and career-ready, globally competitive, and citizens of strong character. This space is designed to enhance the learning that happens within the classroom and provides a space where our students can be creative. We have designed these spaces not only for our students to be able to use a variety of technologies, but we wanted to spark curiosity and give our students a space to explore and be creative in their learning. Our labs provide opportunities for our students to work on projects where they have choices when it comes to showing what they know and enables the engineering and design process to be brought to life.

In our Innovation Labs, our students are engaged in the engineering and design process. They can create a prototype of their design, test it out, iterate their design, print and test a new one, and learn to work and communicate as a team. They are also learning the foundational principles of computer programming through coding by writing block code to make their robots move.

Tools included in Innovation Labs are permanent green screens, Lego walls, robots (Dash & Dot, Sphero, Ozobots, Indi, etc.), ring lighting and iPad stands for video creation, collaborative whiteboard tables, 3D printers, VR headsets, and Logitech Crayons. Examples of learning experiences for students in the Innovation Labs include coding and programming, video creation, creating music with GarageBand, broadcasting, using recording studios for projects, and robotics.

The Innovation Lab is also a place where our students can explore, discover, engineer, design, and engage in innovative tasks that spark their curiosity. This space is all about opportunity, an opportunity for our students to develop their digital fluency, coding, and robotics skills.

Elementary Robotics

New, Generation 2 VEX IQ Competition kits were purchased for each site to implement into their Robotics Clubs. Coaches were given professional learning and ongoing support with their Robotics Clubs from September through April's Robolympics competition by our ITC/STEAM TOSA team. With the new Generation 2 VEX IQ kits, students and teachers learned how to create custom code to help their robots function better. Students were able to build, create, and iterate more complex robot builds to strategize for the Robolympics Competition.

The 5th annual Robolympics competition was highly successful and fiercely competitive. Warren High School's gym was packed on both sides as the community came out to support the competitors from each site. The games were challenging, and our students

were able to rise to that challenge with their diverse robot builds and creative game strategies. This year's winners were 3rd grade: Lewis, 4th grade: Alameda, and 5th grade: Alameda. The 5th grade final was especially exciting, with Alameda beating ORS by only 1 point! This competition continues to showcase the robust robotics pathways students have opportunities to be part of to develop their critical thinking, problem-solving, and engineering skills while working in collaborative teams.

The Robolymics first-place winners had the opportunity to visit NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in Pasadena, where tour guides showed them around the campus and explained the importance of robotics and the future of the USA's space program.

Meet the Masters

During the 23/24 school year, all students TK-5 had the opportunity to study 4 diverse art masters. Elementary TOSAs created an engaging series of lessons that supported problem-solving, creativity, and critical thinking.

For each artist, there were two pre-recorded lessons that teachers utilized to facilitate instruction at the time that works best for them. During the first lesson, students observed and discussed the work and life of an art master. During the second lesson, students created their own art masterpieces. The elements of art and the artists' individual styles and contributions to the art world were emphasized, and creativity was highly encouraged. The artists studied were Paul Cezanne, Henri Rousseau, Leonardo da Vinci, and Rembrandt.

Days of Design

Elementary students participated in three "Day of Design" engineering challenges during the school year. The purpose of these days is to have students participate in the engineering design process while showcasing their creativity and innovative thinking.

The book, materials, lesson plans, and creative extensions to enhance student learning were provided to all teachers. The first challenge was inspired by the story Mimic Makers. After learning about biomimicry, students used their supplies to build a nature-inspired invention. The second Day of Design challenge was inspired by the story Luna and Me. Students used their supplies to build a CA redwood tree and treehouse model. The final challenge was inspired by the book The Floating Field. Students were challenged to build a model of a sports field that floats. These Day of Design lesson opportunities continue to unite all of our elementary students in a shared design challenge where students are encouraged to think critically and creatively about how to solve a problem.

Dale Lostetter Carnival of Champions

This year was the 58th Annual DUSD Elementary Dale Lostetter Carnival of Champions Track and Field meet held at Warren High School. Each elementary school sends teams from 4th and 5th grade that compete in seven events: 50-Yard Dash, 100-Yard

Dash, Baskets in One Minute, Softball Throw for Distance, Standing Long Jump, Four-Member Team 400-Yard Relay, and 400-Yard Mixed Co-Ed Relay. All events except for the relays include two boys and two girls for each competition. The 400-Yard relay consists of four boys and four girls, and the Mixed relay consists of one boy and one girl from each grade. No child may participate in more than three events. The athletes/teams receive points for their placement in each event.

Teams practice for several months prior to the event. The event was an exciting day where families, students, and staff came together to support our elementary student-athletes. The event is made possible because of the community spirit and teamwork that supports it. Approximately 80 volunteers came together on the day of the Carnival to help monitor and facilitate events. This is such a fantastic DUSD community event. The top 3 placements for this year were Old River (1st place), Lewis (2nd place), and Price (3rd place).

Elementary PE

Elementary is proud to be able to provide PE instruction to every 4th and 5th grade student. This year, there were three PE teams, each consisting of two certificated teachers and two classified PE assistants. Each PE team rotates through the different schools to provide PE lessons for two 50-minute blocks of time twice a week. Students participate in lessons designed around the California PE Frameworks. The PE team also provided recess and lunch support to all sites to support structured play, including at our TK-3 sites. The PE team also promotes healthy habits, encourages and inspires students to lead active lifestyles, and supports our CC! Program.

Elementary Music

Elementary Education hired six certificated music teachers for the 23/24 school year. Our elementary music program aims to guide our students to develop skills that will inspire them to become lifelong learners through creativity and musical expression. Our music students learned to think critically, problem-solve, and work as a team and were encouraged to develop responsibility, discipline, and creativity. In elementary music, students learned about the four artistic processes: **performing, responding, creating, and connecting**. Students focused on singing, movement, playing instruments, improvising, composing, reading, and notating music.

The goals of the elementary music program are as follows:

- To align with the current National and California Art Standards for Music
- To clearly communicate what every student should know, understand, and be able to do in music at each grade level
- To provide a foundation and smooth **vertical transition** into secondary music education so students have a choice in the music genre they prefer.

Elementary Music Trajectory



Standard	TK/K	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade	4th Grade	5th Grade
Rhythmic Sense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore steady beat and rhythm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue exploration of steady beat and rhythm and explore basic rhythm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a steady beat Recognize and perform basic rhythms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a steady beat Recognize and perform more complex rhythms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a steady beat individually and as a group Continue to learn to read, write, and perform using more complex rhythms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a steady beat individually and as a group Recognize, describe and perform complex rhythm
Music Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore basic elements of music concepts such (high/low, slow/fast, loud/quiet) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the elements of music and recognize using proper terminology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize and describe elements of music using proper terminology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize and describe elements of music using proper terminology (beat, rhythm, melody, harmony, form, expression) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue exploration and recognition of the elements of music (beat, rhythm, melody, harmony, form, expression) using proper terminology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize, describe using proper terminology, and perform the elements of music (beat, rhythm, melody, harmony, form, expression)

Standard	TK/K	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade	4th Grade	5th Grade
Music Expression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn and perform age-appropriate songs using the voice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn and perform age-appropriate songs using voice and classroom instruments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn and perform Pentatonic songs, including rounds using voice and classroom instruments Connect music to everyday life, including personal culture. Explore and learn more about different instrument families and timbres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn and perform songs of varying tonalities (Major/Minor) using voice and classroom instruments Explore Improvisation with rhythms/ melodies and perform them on various classroom instruments Recognize and organize various instrument families and timbres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to learn and perform songs of different genres, cultures, and of varying tonalities using voice and classroom instruments Learn more musical techniques by singing, moving, and using classroom instruments. Continue to explore improvisation and creativity by singing, moving, and using classroom instruments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to learn and perform songs of different genres, cultures, and of varying tonalities Continue to learn more advanced musical techniques by singing, moving, and using classroom instruments. Continue to explore improvisation and creativity by singing, moving, and using classroom instruments Analyze the aesthetic value of musical decision making; of both the self and others.
Movement and Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpret musical sounds/songs using creativity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to explore music via creative movement 				

Elementary Music Trajectory



	TK/K	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade	4th Grade	5th Grade
Instruments by grade level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rhythm sticks • Percussion instruments-shakers, cowbells wood blocks, tambourines, tone blocks, triangles, hand drums, castanets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rhythm sticks • Percussion instruments-shakers, cowbells wood blocks, tambourines, tone blocks, triangles, hand drums, castanets • Boomwhackers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rhythm sticks • Percussion instruments-shakers, cowbells wood blocks, tambourines, tone blocks, triangles, hand drums, castanets • Boomwhackers • Handbells 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rhythm sticks • Percussion instruments-shakers, cowbells wood blocks, tambourines, tone blocks, triangles, hand drums, castanets • Boomwhackers • Handbells • Recorder (Beginner) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rhythm sticks • Percussion instruments-shakers, cowbells wood blocks, tambourines, tone blocks, triangles, hand drums, castanets • Boomwhackers • Handbells • Recorder (Beginner) • Recorder (Intermediate/Advanced) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rhythm sticks • Percussion instruments-shakers, cowbells wood blocks, tambourines, tone blocks, triangles, hand drums, castanets • Boomwhackers • Handbells • Recorder (Beginner) • Recorder (Advanced) • Ukulele

ELEMENTARY SEL CURRICULUM ADOPTION

Elementary educators began the implementation of RethinkEd for SEL instruction. This program offers ready-made, user-friendly lessons that can be utilized from TK-12. The lessons are also offered in Spanish, and the components of the lessons can be shared with parents for families to use at home. Our elementary SEL TOSA also worked with the company to design a scope and sequence of lessons tied to the Character Counts! Pillars to give teachers a roadmap of suggested lessons to teach each month.

The Elementary SEL TOSA provided extensive training on the RethinkEd SEL curriculum across all 13 elementary schools by December 2023. Training sessions were also conducted for CSTs, School Psychologists, and individual classrooms, along with opportunities for parent engagement and bi-weekly Zoom office hours. Since implementing the curriculum, 399 staff members accessed the platform, utilizing 9,840 resources with students.

Classroom lessons focused on essential topics like executive functioning, conflict resolution, and managing anxiety. Additionally, staff received professional development on various subjects, including restorative practices, trauma-informed practices, and using classroom wellness spaces. First-year teachers received monthly support covering topics from classroom management to student engagement.

Character Counts! training was provided to 88 elementary teachers, emphasizing the TEAM approach to character education. School Culture Team Meetings were held district-wide, facilitating the sharing of best practices and the completion of the PBIS Tiered Fidelity Inventory, attended by 130 educators across the district.

First Best Instruction

Elementary continues to focus on First Best Instruction (FBI) as a foundation for all we do in support of teachers and their instructional practices. These collective efforts help us ensure we are providing meaningful and engaging academic opportunities to our students. Elementary is relentless in our commitment to providing our students with relevant and rigorous first-best instruction built on the foundation of critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication.

Professional learning and support this year continued to be offered by our Elementary TOSAs. These included but were not limited to:

- Monthly New Teacher Academy
- TOSAs with grade level PLCs (over 230 meetings) to plan lessons, plan next steps, analyze work as well as individual teacher meetings (over 100)
- Modeled over 400 lessons in classrooms across the elementary sites
- PD for teachers (over 70 opportunities)
- Assisting with the structure, planning, and lesson creation in Innovation Labs
- Providing Innovation Lab PD to staff and IMTs
- Apple Distinguished School support
- Admin PD
- Weekly Tech Updates every Friday
- TTL and IMT Trainings
- Categorical Trainings
- Creating lessons for all grade levels in Math, ELA, art, and STEAM
- Creating/finding resources to support teachers for ELA, Math and Science
- Assessment design
- Supporting intervention at sites in ELA and Math
- Orientation meetings and PD for robotics coaches

STEAMworks

Elementary offered STEAMworks, a 19-day elementary summer academic program, at the close of this school year to continue student learning. This engaging and rigorous learning opportunity was provided to TK-4th grade students during the 2024 summer. Summer schools were hosted at five sites Gallatin, Gauldin, Lewis, Price, and Unsworth. All elementary schools fed into these four options, except for Lewis, which hosted GLAD students from Carpenter, Imperial, and Williams.

STEAMworks ran from June 11 through July 10 from 8:00-12:30, five days a week. The theme this year was “*Igniting the Olympic Spirit*”. TOSAs designed hands-on SEL, Read Aloud, math, art, and engineering lessons, as well as students receiving music and dance instruction. All students were invited and had the opportunity to attend STEAMworks. There were approximately 2,500 students who enrolled in STEAMworks.

Science Camp

Mary Edge-Guerra, in collaboration with principals and staff, organized an unforgettable science camp experience for 664 fifth-grade students from ten elementary schools at the Pali Institute in the San Bernardino Mountains. The students attended one of two sessions, from January 29-31 and January 31-February 2, where they engaged in three days of fun and educational activities.

Despite the snowy conditions, students participated in outdoor adventures like hikes, astronomy sessions, and a thrilling ropes course. The camp also provided unique, hands-on learning opportunities such as squid dissections and rocket building, which sparked curiosity and excitement about science. Alongside these activities, students enjoyed delicious meals and created lasting memories with friends in the scenic mountain environment.

To ensure every interested student could attend, the district covered transportation costs, Pali provided \$9,798 in scholarships, and DUSD Title I funds contributed an additional \$2,420. As a result, all students who wanted to participate were able to make the trip.

True Lasting Connections (TLC) Family Resource Center Program

TLC is an integral part of DUSD. This year, TLC assisted 1,038 students through district-wide referrals. TLC supported families with a variety of assistance, including counseling, crisis intervention, parenting, food, clothing, dental, glasses, bereavement counseling, drug and alcohol programs, health insurance enrollment, Thanksgiving dinners, Christmas gifts and dinners, backpacks and school supplies, special needs resources, suicide prevention, low-cost immunizations, adult education, childcare, utility assistance, homeless assistance, and child abuse prevention/intervention.

In addition, a total of \$160,273.63 was raised through donations, grants, and fundraisers this school year. The main fundraiser was the 12th Annual 5K for TLC, which had nearly 1,300 participants and raised over \$60,000. TLC also received in-kind contributions in the amount of \$24,993.60, with the two high schools raising and donating over \$42,000 combined.

Elementary Education Responsibilities

- Plan, design, coordinate, and/or provide differentiated professional development (PD) for elementary staff tied to the core curriculum and our district initiatives.
- Plan Elementary Principal Meetings including professional development and support for administrators.

- Direct the Elementary Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSA) Instructional Coach staff which consists of one ELA, one math, one STEAM TOSA, two ITCs, and one SEL TOSA.
- Support elementary administrators.
- Elementary VP Academy
- Oversee Elementary English Learner (Multilingual) Program
- Oversee Elementary Categorical Resource Teachers.
- Oversee Elementary PE Program.
- Oversee the elementary music program.
- Coordinate the Dale Lostetter Carnival of Champions.
- Oversee the Elementary Robotics Clubs/Program and Robolympics.
- Oversee instructional technology integration, including professional learning.
- Oversee the Elementary STEAMworks Summer Program.
- Oversee the District-Wide Elementary STEM Challenges (Day of Design)
- Serve as the District's CAASPP Coordinator for SBAC Tests in ELA and Math, for students in Grades 3-5, that are part of the CAASPP.
- Assist with the coordination of the GATE program 4th-5th Grade.
- Member of HRC Steering Committee.
- Administered and monitored budgets for Title II, Part A; Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) State Funds for specific line items.
- Provide District leadership and coordination for Improving Teacher Quality (ITQ - Title II). Also, provide leadership and assistance in working with the elementary schools for ITQ - Title II
- Monitor and review K-5 student retentions submitted by schools and/or parents; conference with parents appealing site decisions to retain/promote their child.
- Assist school sites in analyzing data to improve instruction.
- Stauffer Teacher and Principal Grants
- Rotary Recognizes Readers program
- Oversee TLC

Future Plans and Recommendations

- Implement eSports at all elementary schools.
- Continue to build professional learning opportunities for our teachers to help accelerate student learning.
- Continue to provide resources to support our teachers and administrators.
- Continue to build and support the ELA and Math units and provide teachers with the necessary resources.
- Support First Best Instruction and Professional Learning Communities.
- Continue to expand Apple Distinguished School recognition to final two schools.

- To best support our teachers, instructional coaches are a necessity. We need to continue to leverage our coaches' skills and support to further instruction at all sites.
- Continue to expand robotics clubs to primary grades across all sites.
- Continue to build an exemplary English Language Development (ELD) program across all sites.
- Continue to expand the Arts and music across Elementary sites.
- Expand the implementation of NGSS across all grade levels.

SECONDARY EDUCATION

Rani Bertsch, Ed.D., Director

GENERAL OVERVIEW

In 2023-2024, Secondary Education continued to promote academic success for middle and high school students by focusing on our District Vision that ALL students graduate with a 21st Century education that ensures they are college and career ready, globally competitive and citizens of strong character. Our vision directly aligns with our Board's Goal on Equity which emphasizes access and inclusion for ALL of our students.

The following Secondary Education initiatives and priorities support our District's Vision and Equity Goals:

Human Relations Council

The Human Relations Council's (HRC's) purpose is to develop an equity plan that supports and provides resources to improve our Downey Unified School District practices in acknowledging and addressing issues of safety, inequality, discrimination, accountability and systemic racism within our school system and community.

Our expansion of the HRC from 28 to 35 members to support our work with diverse representation at multiple sites, which also includes our district leadership, was key to building capacity. The HRC Steering Committee meets quarterly to discuss how to effectively engage our equity partners at the sites with our site representatives, and how to strengthen our communication and capacity at each school site with resources and support. Our HRC General Body also meets quarterly to engage in collaborative work to refine our communication plan, expand our site initiatives through highlighting our equity plan in action and spreading awareness about our purpose, goals, and steps as we continue to listen to the needs of our equity partners, and continuously work on expanding our work with all staff and families. The work of the larger HRC body includes sharing the creation of a draft equity plan and communication of the HRC's progress to our educational partners on our five equity goals through a district Equity Plan listening tour consisting of presentations and workshops. Please see our District Equity Plan Goals:

DUSD Equity Plan Goals	
Goal 1 Belonging	DUSD will implement practices addressing diversity, equity, justice and inclusion for all students, staff, and families.
Goal 2 Achievement	DUSD will establish learning structures and teaching practices that support and are inclusive of diverse learners as well as strengthen community partnerships.
Goal 3 Opportunities for Access	DUSD will continually identify underserved populations and implement targeted whole-child supports.
Goal 4 Accountability	DUSD will gather actionable data from student experiences and educational achievements with the purpose of establishing benchmarks and reporting on the District' status regarding diversity, equity, inclusion, and safety.
Goal 5 Transparency	DUSD will establish systems of accountability that create transparency for our District within our community.

The Equity Plan is organized around four foundational themes: Belonging, Achievement, Opportunities for Access, and Transparency and Accountability. Within each theme, the equity goals include action steps, suggested strategies, persons responsible to meet the goals and measurable outcomes.

The Equity Plan details the district's plan of action toward achieving equity for all Downey Unified School District students. Our district's commitment to our students continues and we strive to:

- Create safe spaces for students to voice their concerns and seek support.
- Engage equity partners (students, staff, and families) in the process of developing and implementing the equity plan.
- Establish spaces for ongoing professional development for all staff.
- Establish progress monitoring protocols.

For the 2023-2024 school year, the HRC's progress continued to be aligned with our purpose. Our 35 HRC volunteer members supported our work with diverse representation at multiple sites, which also includes our district leadership, which is key to building capacity. Led by our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) TOSA, the HRC Steering Committee continued to meet quarterly to advise next steps for progress monitoring measurement, discuss how to effectively engage our equity partners at the sites with site representatives, and how to strengthen our communication at each school site with resources and support. Our HRC General Body also continued to meet quarterly to engage in collaborative work to refine our communication plan, expand our site initiatives through highlighting our equity plan in action and spreading awareness about our purpose, goals, celebrations of our progress, and next steps as we continue

to listen to the needs of our equity partners, and continuously expand our work with staff and families. The work of the larger HRC body includes sharing the creation of our equity plan draft, communicating the HRC's progress to our educational partners on our five equity goals through co-facilitating a district Equity Plan listening tour consisting of presentations and equity plan updates, and workshops with our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) TOSA, to gather input from our staff, students, and families.

Our HRC Body's work for the 2023-2024 school year focused on developing our board goal's progress monitoring systems in order to continuously measure the impact of our equity plan goals. Our work focused on *two main areas*: feedback and progress monitoring.

The consistent feedback from our HRC was to strengthen the communication at the site level and create systems of clear communication and transparency for our school sites. In response to this need, our HRC has co-created talking points at the end of every meeting to share a unified message and action steps. The HRC General Body also created customized HRC hubs of communication at the site level through our district portal Padlet online platform. As of May 2024, 90% of our sites have created a site hub for their HRC work, progress, and engagement to continue to be developed at each site. This alignment in communication and transparency, allows us to measure the progress of our HRC work at each site, and customize professional learning according to the site's needs. The support of our site administrators has been instrumental in supporting our HRC site volunteer representatives and providing them with the time, and space to share this resource with staff members.

The HRC Steering Committee also began the 2023-2024 school year with advising next steps to measure the progress of our equity plan goals through the data analysis of our Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) data from students, staff, and families. Upon reviewing the student data, site HRC representatives were able to examine and analyze the data and measure equity goal #1 focused on the foundational theme of belonging. The findings showcased that overall students did feel a sense of belonging at their sites with staff, and the area of growth is improving peer-to-peer student interactions and respect. We have also begun the process of analyzing the LCAP family and staff data in order to establish benchmarks for belonging for every group our district serves: students, families, and staff. We will continue this LCAP data analysis in 2024-2025 to set benchmarks and begin the development of a DUSD Equity Resource bank for our school sites.

As of May 2024, Dr. Villa has led multiple equity plan workshops with over 21 equity partners, which have engaged in providing input on the equity plan and/or equity goals and action steps, which include, but are not limited to the following groups:

- District site administrators
- School site staff
- Departments within our Special Education Department
- Our Parent Advisory Committee
- Our District English Language Advisory Committee
- Our classified staff
- The Superintendent's Student Advisory Committee (SSAC).

The continued feedback from these workshops is shared and highlighted with our HRC General Body and will be used to refine the equity plan draft as it is a living document.

In alignment with our equity goal implementation this school year, our DEI TOSA continued leading and facilitating our Cultural Proficiency professional learning cohort #5 training of seven sessions, which culminated with a fall showcase in December 2023 where sites developed their action projects to engage equity partners that further implement our equity goals as examples of equity in action. As of Fall 2023, 100% of school sites have had site representatives participate in Cultural Proficiency training and create a cultural proficiency project. Participants consistently provided positive feedback on the training with over 95% of participants rating the training as highly effective.

In the spring of 2024, DUSD formally adopted Ethnic Studies. In alignment with our Equity Goal #2 which focuses on establishing learning structures and teaching practices that support and are inclusive of diverse learners as well as strengthen community partnerships. Secondary Education in collaboration with site administrators led the development, training, pilot, and refinement of the Ethnic Studies course for high school freshmen at both of our comprehensive high schools.

Supporting professional learning, discussions around Equity is a Verb workshops for various groups, including site administrators, and Senior Instructional Assistants with the support of our Special Education Department were conducted in Spring of 2024. For a data snapshot of the equity plan implementation numbers, please see the table below:

SITE VISITS 145+	Admin Review Sessions 9	Human Relations Council 18
Equity Plan Input Sessions 21+	Ethnic Studies Staff Trained 6+	Cultural Proficiency Staff Trained 125

This upcoming year, we will continue to engage in data analysis based on the input received during the Equity Plan Listening Tour, LCAP, and use the voices of our equity partners to refine and revise our Equity Plan as it is a living document. Through this work, we have implemented equity in action throughout our school communities to capture our District's commitment to continuous improvement as we strive for more equitable practices in Downey Unified School District.

Through our Equity Plan Data, we acknowledge the work we have done in our schools, show gratitude to the commitment we have made as educators to continuously reflect through an equity lens, and be authentic in the ways we can move toward cultivating belonging for all of our DUSD community through eliciting feedback, and implementing our equity plan action steps.

INTERVENTION PROGRAM

Academic Intervention

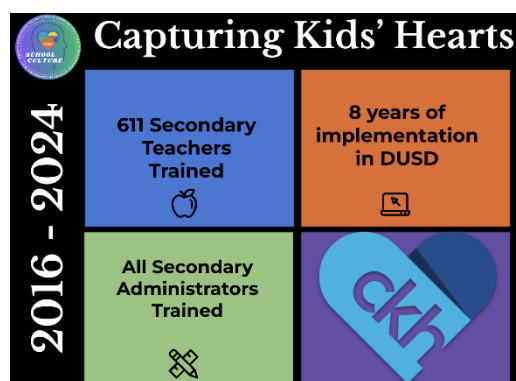
Secondary Education has continued the implementation of iReady. iReady is an online program for reading and mathematics that helps teachers determine a student's needs, personalize their learning, and monitor progress throughout the school year. iReady allows us to meet students exactly where they are and provides data to increase student's learning gains. iReady consists of two parts: Diagnostic and Personalized Instruction. Our focus last year was to provide training to our administrators and school leaders on how to understand, interpret, and use the data from the iReady diagnostics. We also worked with our PLCs in using the Personalized Instruction pathways that provide students with lessons based on their individual skill level and needs, allowing students to learn at their own pace that is just right for them. We will continue to work with middle school sites on the use of iReady. We also expanded iReady to specific subgroups of 9th-grade students so that interventions can be implemented during the summer and fall of their freshman year for those who need it.

The Secondary Education Department also piloted Math Facts Lab during our summer school program in an effort to help our students gain Math fact fluency. We plan to utilize Math Facts Lab in all of our 6th-grade math classes and support classes across the District.

To provide interventions during the school day, Stauffer, Sussman, and Doty Middle Schools and Warren High School have voted in a 7 (middle) and 8-period (WHS) block schedule respectively. The additional period allows for room in the schedule for intervention that supports students' social-emotional health by teaching coping skills, self-awareness, organizational skills and time management. There will also be intervention courses in math, English, and science.

Social Emotional Intervention

DUSD has continued to recognize the increased need for social-emotional learning (SEL) and mental health supports. We have made sure that our efforts in adding multiple resources and programs in place to meet those needs have been a priority. The Equity Plan provided a structured approach to ensuring a sense of belonging, student achievement, access for all to curriculum, transparency, and accountability. Our Secondary SEL Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) supported the variety of ways that we embed SEL at our school sites. We focused on attending professional development and on leading professional development for students, teachers, administrators, and parents. We have continued to offer programs and strategies from Capturing Kids' Hearts (CKH), Character Counts!, Positive Behavioral Instructions and Supports (PBIS), and Strengths Finder to offer a myriad of ways to model, teach, and practice social-emotional skills on our campuses.



We continued to offer CKH training to all of our new staff. As of now, we have trained 612 of our secondary teaching staff between 2016 and 2024. CKH strategies were consistently modeled with administration in order to strengthen the foundation of the program at all secondary school sites. Our Secondary Education SEL TOSA is responsible for following up with teachers and providing resources and support where needed.

In August 2023, a CKH leadership training session was provided to all Secondary administrators in order to align expectations and commonalities at all middle and high school campuses.

Inclusive practices (Co-teaching and push-in Models)

To support all students with our rigorous graduation requirements, our secondary sites have implemented an inclusion model that includes co-teaching and push-in support to give access to a-g courses to our general education and special education students. We just completed our sixth year of implementation of co-teaching with 114 teachers that have had 32 PD sessions, 100+ coaching sessions, 17 PD sessions for Senior Instructional Assistants (SIAs), 200 co-teaching course sections, and 6 PD sessions for our Language Other Than English (LOTE) teachers. The co-teachers were provided with professional development and coaching with Debra Herburger, our WestEd consultant, and our Assistant Principal on Special Assignment, Dr. Gladys Velazquez.

We continue to see the benefits of Inclusion in our a-g completion rates for students with disabilities increasing by almost 4% this year.

We will continue to work with our teachers and Senior Instructional Assistant (SIAs) teams to strengthen and support the push-in model. Starting this school year, with the intention of empowering and activating our most influential resources to refine our instructional support practices, Secondary Education will provide initial professional development as part of the onboarding process with DUSD's Classified HR. This professional development will initially target our newest SIAs and move forward with reaching all our existing classroom instructional assistants. The professional development will focus on understanding fundamental child/adolescent development, student emotional regulation, student motivation, engaging, and re-engaging practices to maximize student performance.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT (ELD)

For the 2023-2024 school year, a task force to support Multilingual Learners (ML) was created. The task force includes secondary education administrators, our Secondary Multilingual Learner Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA), and the Secondary Education Director. This task force's role is to serve as advocates, instructional leaders, and overseers of the Multilingual program at their respective sites. The ML task force aligns with DUSD's Equity Plan, particularly Goal 2: establishing learning structures and teaching practices that support and include diverse learners while strengthening community partnerships. The purpose of the ML task force is to address district-wide policies, practices, and goals to support Multilingual Learners.

The task force also supports DUSD's Designated English Language Development (ELD) program, focusing on increasing reclassification rates and English Learner (EL) proficiency levels, enhancing staff efficacy, supporting students' primary languages, and ensuring compliance monitoring for an effective ELD program.

Our ML TOSA, Dr. Sonia Coronel, provided professional development at all secondary schools, emphasizing the integration of English Language Development standards with Common Core subject standards. ELD teachers were trained on the English 3D curriculum, designed to boost students' language proficiency through research-based principles and practices that engage students with rigorous content.

In the last two years, our secondary schools have seen an increase in reclassification numbers, specifically the middle schools. The middle schools improved their reclassification rate from 20% to 30% and high schools improved from 13% to 15%. Contributing factors to this improvement include:

- Amendments to reclassification criteria (e.g., CAASPP or iReady scores) in the 2022-2023 school year.
- A 6th-grade Combined Studies class focused on ELD standards.

- Training for Special Education (SPED) case managers on identifying and reclassifying ML students through the IEP process.
- Adding 1-2 teachers to each secondary school's ELD team.
- Support from ELAC and DELAC, including parent education on the importance of reclassification.
- Transitioning the English 3D curriculum to an online platform, along with a year of coaching for ELD teachers.
- The establishment of the ML Task Force.

DUSD Reclassification Data			
	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Elementary	14%	11%	10%
Middle	6%	20%	30%
High	11%	13%	14%
Total	10%	13%	15%
CA State	6.90%	16.30%	15.90%

Our high reclassification rates give our ML students more opportunities for a-g courses at the high school. We have seen the impact of these factors with growth in our a-g completion of our ML students by over 2% this school year.

Expanded Summer Programs

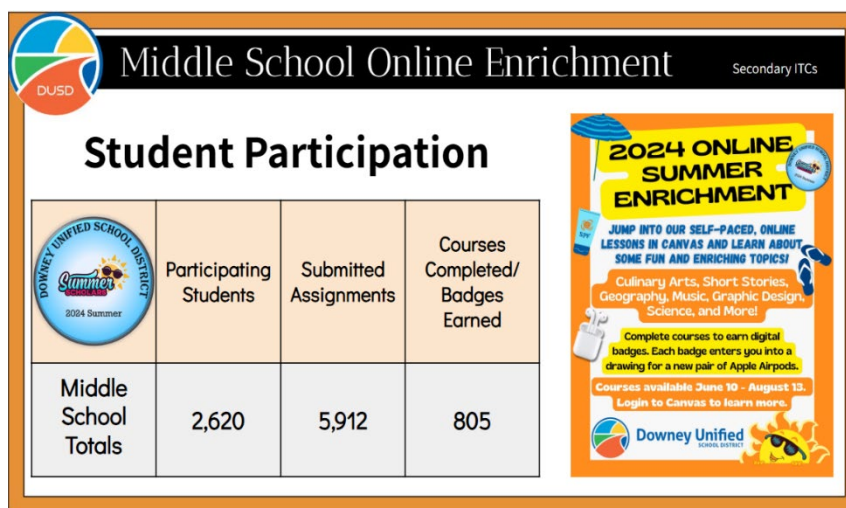
Middle School

Downey Unified offered an expanded summer school to include all secondary sites. We serviced approximately 1500 middle school students earning below a C in ELA and Math, and designated subgroups: McKinney/Vento, Foster Youth, English Learners and

Title I. Each student took 3 classes (ELA, Math, and Elective) 5-days per week with a focus on remediation.

All four middle schools offered summer school for 19 days. Fifth-grade students attended summer school at our middle school campuses to help them with the transition to a new school site.

In addition to our in-person summer school, Secondary Education also offered self-paced online elective courses that students could take and earn badges for completion. This summer, over 2,600 students took part in the courses. Some of the courses included Robotics, Culinary Arts, Drawing, Photograph and many more. Prizes are given to students who earn the most badges during the summer.



High School

The high school summer program focused on credit recovery, credit repair, and original credit running for 24 days. Our high school offerings expanded this year to include dual enrollment courses and Peak Performance, our partnership with Elite Academy. The high school summer school students recovered 26,407 credits this summer!

Technology Integration

The Secondary Education Department continues to train teachers on effective instructional practices through technology integration. On our fall, student-free professional development day, our department held TEACHFEST, a tech-teaching conference for all middle school teachers. Griffiths Middle School hosted the event which included approximately 200 DUSD teachers. Over 20 presenters from our middle schools shared best practices and new teaching tools as we rotated through three 40-

minute sessions. Overall, 30 sessions were available for teachers to choose from. Our TEACHFEST was very successful with 93% of attendees giving high ratings on the quality of the professional development day.

Our TEACHFEST set the stage for our continued work on technology integration professional development. We continue to have a robust partnership with Apple through their professional development team known as Apple Professional Learning (APL). As we began this school year, our Teacher Technology Leads (TTLs) were the only teachers that had received APL training. By the end of this school year, approximately 60% of our core middle school teachers have completed APL, a process that involves goal setting, planning, teaching, observing, and reflecting. Teachers were clustered in cohorts throughout the year to learn how to implement technology in the classroom, create and plan lessons that use technology, observe other teachers' use of technology integration, and receive coaching from our Secondary ITCs and Apple Consultant. The culmination of the cohort days included time for reflection on their lessons, planning for future lessons, and sharing best practices with their colleagues.

The Secondary ITCs and TTLs also continued working with our new teachers on earning an Apple Teacher certification with a total of 6 badges. We continue to have a 99% completion rate of our middle school teachers earning the Apple Teacher designation by May of 2024.

The Book Review Committee

Building on the foundational work that was done in past years, The Book Review Committee (BRC) continued to meet each semester for the 2023-2024 school year. Their scope of work included:

- Utilizing the novel approval protocol to discuss literature that is relevant for Downey USD's implementation of a Standards-based curriculum
- Recommending literature for Board approval

The BRC continues to be composed of representative English teachers and teacher librarians from DUSD's middle and high schools. Instructional Technology Coach, Joshua Roberson, facilitated a structured process wherein teachers in the classroom were able to submit requests for novels they would like to see taught, and committee members were able to read, discuss, deliberate and identify the appropriateness of selected novels.

Our BRC continues to review and recommend books for approval to the Board of Education that are reflective of our Equity Goals.

Social Studies Adoption

The High School Social Studies Adoption Committee, composed of 30 high school teachers, representing both comprehensive high schools with representation from Special Education, participated in a thorough Social Studies curriculum pilot and adoption process

Two vendors were carefully vetted for the Social Studies Curriculum Adoption Committee to review. The Committee heard presentations from vendors: Savvas and TCI. These vendors were chosen for their alignment to the History/Social Studies framework, their compliance with the FAIR Act, and their integration with district technology and priorities. The pilot took place in October & November 2023.

During the 1st week in December, the Social Studies Adoption Committee voted on the curriculum that best meets the needs of our students regarding diversity and inclusivity of learning materials that align with the California State Standards. There was a 32-0 vote for TCI from our committee members to adopt. Our focus for the upcoming year will be to train our high school teachers on using TCI as well as reinforcing the use of TCI with our middle school teachers.

Essential Standards

During the 2023-2024 school year, the secondary schools continued our work on essential standards and benchmark assessments. Each year the essential standards are reviewed and revised to reflect our current data. Every middle school PLC lead met several times with our ITCs to review essential standards and create benchmarks. The data from the benchmarks are analyzed in order to make decisions on targeted interventions and re-teaching of standards not met. The creation and administration of benchmark assessments continues to drive our work at the school sites and within PLCs.

Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA)

The Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) program in our secondary schools continues to thrive, providing students with a wide range of opportunities to explore and excel in various artistic disciplines. Schools with alternative bell schedules have expanded access to VAPA courses, leading to numerous accolades and achievements across our middle and high schools.

Middle Schools:

- **Doty Middle School:** Offers a comprehensive drama program from beginner to advanced levels and has an award-winning music program. The choir has

received top ratings at festivals, and a new Audio Arts Recording Club has been introduced.

- **Griffiths Middle School:** The band and choir have consistently achieved high ratings, including a Gold Rating at the CMEA State Band and Orchestra Festival. Their drama program has also been active, performing in various school events.
- **Stauffer Middle School:** The band has performed with Azusa Pacific University, hosted a Mariachi showcase, and received excellent ratings at various festivals. The Hispanic Music Ensemble stood out at the SoCal Mariachi Showcase, and their drama department successfully staged several musicals. The school also piloted a Musical Theatre Conservatory, offering free voice and dance lessons.
- **Sussman Middle School:** Engages students in various art contests and exhibitions, with notable success in the PTA Reflections Program and the ICAN Associates Art Contest. Their marching and jazz bands have performed in multiple parades and concerts, and the drama department staged a production of "Alice in Wonderland."

High Schools:

- **Columbus High School:** Hosts art fairs and guest speakers and has a thriving sewing club. A significant achievement was the art teacher, Miss LaMar, being selected for a national symposium based on her research on mindfulness and art.
- **Downey High School:** The Marching Band and Color Guard have achieved notable success, including performances at the SCSBOA Field Championships and SoFi Stadium. The choirs and jazz ensembles have won multiple awards, with individual students earning prestigious accolades such as the Downbeat magazine award.
- **Warren High School:** The school has seen its music and performance groups excel, including the Wind Ensemble's Unanimous Superior ratings and the Winter Guard's success at regional championships. The school has also expanded its arts program with events like the Arts Showcase and Pancakes and Performances.

Overall, the VAPA program's success across all schools highlights the district's commitment to providing equitable access to high-quality arts education, supported by new funding and the addition of a Secondary VAPA Coordinator. This comprehensive approach aims to ensure every student can thrive in the arts and participate meaningfully in modern society.

Summary

Equity and access will continue to be the foundation of our work as it will lead to increased wellness and achievement for ALL of our students. We look forward to the continued growth of innovation and resiliency of our students and staff this year by

focusing on our 3 Secondary Education Priorities under the umbrella of Equity: Excellence in Teaching and Learning, Student and Staff Wellness, and Shared Leadership

Recommendations for Future Planning

In 2024-2025, Secondary Education proposes to:

- Continue to partner with Apple on Apple Professional Learning (APL) to provide middle school teachers with the skills to learn effective instructional practices through technology integration. Begin the process of Apple Distinguished School for 1-2 of our middle schools.
- Begin training our 9th-grade teachers on technology integration with the roll-up of iPads at the high schools.
- Support Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in aligning essential standards for all core areas providing a guaranteed and viable curriculum to ensure equity for all students and monitor benchmark assessments.
- Implement Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) approaches that would continue to utilize PBIS and Capturing Kids Hearts (CKH) strategies. Complete training of all secondary teachers on CKH.
- Continue to support teachers in the implementation of our new digital curricula; ELA (StudySync) and Social Studies (TCI).
- Continue building capacity within our schools to provide Inclusive practices (co-teaching and push-in support) within our classrooms that will ensure success for all students in order to meet our rigorous DUSD graduation requirements.
- Continue to support the implementation of the equity plan and goals in improving our practices in acknowledging and addressing issues of safety, inequality, discrimination, accountability and systemic racism within our school system and community thus allowing for access for all students.
- Support the schools in the implementation of the ELD program in regard to the ELPAC testing, curriculum, instruction, scheduling of students, and Federal Program Monitoring (FPM). Support the ML Task Force to be able to focus resources, professional development, and insight to improve our achievement of Multilingual Learners.
- Support our Ethnic Studies teachers in the implementation of our new ninth-grade course in compliance with AB 101.

- Support the expansion of alternative bell schedules that provide students access to enrichment and intervention courses including extracurricular activities and athletics. These alternative schedules allow for schools to better meet students' social emotional needs, provide effective academic intervention, and offer enrichment opportunities.
- Focus on strengthening our Math pathways by creating a Secondary Math Committee that will ensure that our students are successful in meeting the mathematics a-g requirements.
- Continue to enhance Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) opportunities for students at all levels through the support of the new Secondary VAPA Coordinators' development of a comprehensive TK-12 strategic plan ensuring equitable access and fostering creativity and skill development.
- Begin the planning of a Personal Finance Course as outlined in AB2827 which commences with the graduation class of 2030-2031.

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

Dr. Allan Tyner, Director

General Overview

In the 2023-24 school year, the College and Career Readiness Department (CCR) supported Board Goals 4 and 7 and continued its implementation of CCR Program sustainability. This annual report summarizes the department's work.

Supporting Board Goal 4:

- Downey Unified will continue to leverage Career Technical Education (CTE) grant funds including the CTE Incentive Grant, K12 Strong Workforce Program, California Apprenticeship Initiative, and Perkins IV to continue building and enhancing high-priority, high-wage essential CTE pathways to increase Downey Unified's statewide presence as an innovative leader in CTE. We will continue to support students from kindergarten through 12th grade to further enrollment in CTE pathways, explore careers, and experience project-based and work-based learning programs.

The Downey Unified College and Career Readiness (CCR) Department applies best practices that strengthen sustainability through further development and implementation of essential pathway elements in the Elementary, Middle, and High School segments. In 2023-24, we secured \$1,351,857 in Career Technical Education Incentive Grant (CTEIG) funding from the California Department of Education (CDE) and secured \$195,066 in Federal Perkins funding. We were also awarded \$3,363,494 in Round 6-K12 Strong Workforce Program (K12 SWP) grants; and \$2,996,709 in Pre-

Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship grants from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office for Workforce and Economic Development. In addition, CCR received \$250,000 in Early College grant funding and \$200,000 in Dual Enrollment (CCAP) funds.

Districtwide Articulation and Dual Enrollment

While there were no increases in dual enrollment for the CTE programs this year, we increased by 5 articulation agreements, which gives students credit by exam in the high school courses.

Articulation agreements were added for DHS CTE courses: Graphic Design II, Automotive Engines, and Machining and Forming II. The articulation agreements added for WHS courses were for Machining and Forming II and Plastics Composites Fabrication & Injection Molding.

We continue to offer dual enrollment in the Alternative Vehicles pathway at Downey High School.

Commercial Lab Additions

The current status of commercial lab additions includes the following:

- Warren HS added desktop mills for the Machining and Forming pathway, a video wall for the AV pathway, and a trailer for the Construction pathway.
- Downey HS added desktop mills for the Machining and Forming pathway and a polar plunge to the Sports Medicine pathway.

All labs are operational and are used by students and teachers.

Match Requirements for CTE Grant Funding

Some grants, including the K12 Strong Workforce Program (SWP) and CTE Incentive Grant (CTEIG), require match funds at a ratio of 2:1. These matching funds incentivize school districts and community colleges to invest from their base budgets in the development, support, and expansion of K–14 CTE programs aligned with regional workforce needs. Most match funds come from LCAP Line 9. Any monies spent from the district's general fund that contribute wholly or in part to CTE pathways or programs count as a match. For example, non-duplicated teacher and counselor salaries and benefits, travel and fees for competitions such as SkillsUSA, and CTE classroom equipment and supplies. Funds from the Perkins grant, the California Apprentice Initiative grants (Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship), and other donations are all acceptable as match funds. Non-allowable match funds include concurrent CTEIG or K12 SWP grant funds and the Public School Facilities Bond (Prop 51).

LCAP-funded Programs (Serves as Match)

LCAP and Stauffer Foundation Grant funding continued to support registration fees, travel expenses, and competition-related supplies for students and teachers participating in:

- Femineers
- eSports (partial)
- VEX
- SkillsUSA
- FIRST Robotics

The Femineer Program: During the 2023-24 school year, DUSD continued to develop and maintain a robust Femineer program with 260 students participating between the middle and high school programs. This is an increase of 15 students from last year. We are proud to report that DUSD was able to have an in-person Femineer Gala this year with 260 students showcasing their work. The Gala included three alumni who presented to parents and students serving as an example of what our students can be.

eSports: The eSports student engagement program is in its 6th year with financial support from resources outside of grant funding. The Valorant Downey Unified eSports High School Tournament was held at the Downey Civic Theater on December 6, 2023.

Robotics Competition: In the 2023-24 several hundred secondary students participated in Robotics Programs this year. With the generous funding from the Stauffer Grant, Warren High School was able to fund and develop their inaugural First Robotics team. Robotics teams at the middle and high schools continue to flourish and dominate in local, state, and international competitions. We had multiple teams across the District qualify for championships and travel outside the state to compete. Griffiths, Stauffer and Sussman qualified for and competed in the Vex Robotics World Championship in Dallas and Sussman traveled to the Vex Robotics U.S. Open in Iowa. Downey and Warren qualified and competed at the First Robotics World Championship in Dallas We look forward to additional opportunities for students to demonstrate their robotics skills and competitive ambitions next school year.

Skills USA: The CCR Department supported nearly 1500 Columbus, Downey, and Warren High School students with California SkillsUSA memberships. The regional competition included 277 students; medalists included: 15 gold, 17 silver and 19 bronze. At the state level, 155 students competed resulting in 9 gold, 7 silver and 5 bronze. In addition, 42 competed at the 2024 National Championships in Atlanta, Georgia, resulting in students earning 2 gold medals and 1 bronze.

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

This year focused on assessing pathways needs and financial sustainability.

CURRENT CTE PATHWAYS

DHS Pathways	WHS Pathways	Multiple Sites
Alternative Fuels	Audiovisual Technologies	Advanced Manufacturing
Automotive Technologies	Biotechnology	Game Programming
Dance	Film/Video Production	Makeup Artistry
Education	Culinary Arts	Welding
Engineering Design	Mechatronics	
Food Science, Dietetics, and Nutrition	Plastics	
Graphic Design	Construction	
Multimedia Video Production		
Sports Medicine		
Digital Photography		



California Apprenticeship Initiative

DUSD received two pre-apprenticeships and one apprenticeship grant. These funds can count as a District match for other CTE grants.

Pre-Apprenticeship

- With this funding, DUSD summer interns will now be eligible to be state-certificated pre-apprentices.

Apprenticeship

- Pre-apprentices will be eligible to apply to be Apprentices and receive hands-on training in a real work environment, learn directly from experienced professionals, acquire practical skills, develop a deep understanding of their chosen field or trade, and gain valuable work experience.
- Apprentices can earn a wage while working and receiving on-the-job training.
- Apprentices will be registered through the California Division of Apprenticeship Standards and will be state-certified upon demonstration of skills attainment.

Internship Transition to Pre- Apprenticeship

The Downey MADE Internship program evolved from in-person to all-virtual and is now a hybrid. Downey and Warren held day-long conferences that qualified students as pre-apprentices. These pre-apprentice days involved workshops titled: Social Justice in the

Workplace, Planning your Financial Future (Building a Personal Budget), Leadership is a Choice, and Pitching with Purpose. Columbus had 2 students participate, Downey had 332 students participate and Warren had 104 students participate.

The chart below indicates Years of Downey MADE with number of participants and style of experience.

Yr. 9 - 2024	Yr. 8 - 2023	Yr. 7 - 2022	Yr. 6 - 2021	Yr. 5 - 2020	Yr. 4 - 2019	Yr. 3 - 2018	Yr. 2 - 2017	Yr. 1 - 2016
199	158	200	175	180	115	80	35	31
Hybrid	Hybrid	Virtual			In Person			

Interns/Apprentices take part in a real-world hiring process with resumes and interviews and are then placed with industry professionals across a range of industry sectors, including an in-person experience with the College and Career Readiness Department.

College Admissions Academy

In the Summer/Fall of 2024, the College Admissions Academy was offered to all 199 MADE Ready Summer Internship students meeting UC admissions guidelines. A total of 30 Downey Unified seniors participated in the College Admissions Academy.

CCR Data Collection

CCR conducts student surveys to identify, collect, track, analyze, and report on student-level data outcome measures. As of June 6, 2024, 1,604 seniors (out of 1,960) completed the 2024 Senior Survey (completion rate by school: Columbus HS = 7; Downey HS = 858; Warren HS = 739). Students respond to questions related to high school activities and post-secondary plans. Information collected from the survey, (personal emails and phone numbers) allows for multi-year follow-up opportunities. This data collection aims to inform the types of support offered to students to better attain college and career success.

Supporting Board Goal 7:

- Downey Unified will increase the four-year college eligibility rate to 70% as measured by CSU/UC A-G completion rates for all students with an emphasis on unduplicated students who are classified as (Multi-Language Learners, eligible for a free or reduced-price meal or are foster youth). We will continue to develop our co-teaching and inclusion practices to support students who will benefit from this collaborative approach to high-quality instruction and intervention support.

Collaborative efforts have been made to increase the four-year college eligibility rate. We have conducted extensive data analysis throughout the year to monitor student progress as measured by A-G completion rates. Please see the data below.

	2024			2023		
	Regular HS Diploma Graduates	Graduates Meeting UC/CSU Requirements	%	Regular HS Diploma Graduates	Graduates Meeting UC/CSU Requirements	%
All Students	1877	985	52.48 %	1930	1029	53.32 %
Comprehensive HS Only	1685	985	58.46 %	1705	1018	59.71 %
Comprehensive HS Only - No FY, SWD, no EL	1376	896	65.12 %	1414	952	67.33 %
Students with Disabilities	227	47	20.70 %	254	38	14.96 %
Multilingual Learners	189	45	23.81 %	185	40	21.62 %
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	1607	788	49.04 %	1622	791	48.77 %
Foster Youth	17	5	29.41 %	17	2	11.76 %

Our overall A-G eligibility rate which includes the comprehensive sites and Columbus, slightly decreased this year, however, our A-G eligibility rates increased for every subgroup. We have worked on targeting support for our Multilingual Learners (ML) and special education students who have historically underachieved on this measure. For more information on our Secondary Multilingual learners and co-teaching and inclusion practices, please see Secondary Education's Annual Review section.

Continued Focus on Increasing A-G Eligibility Rates

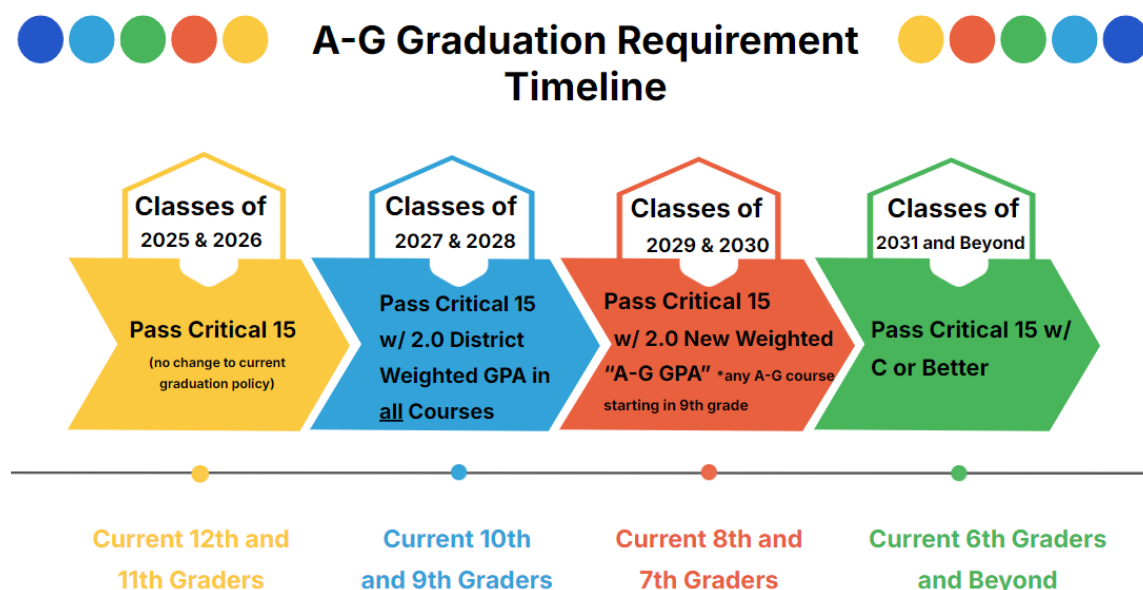
In the fall of the 2023-2024 school year, the College and Career Readiness Department partnered with administrators in multiple Secondary Principals' meetings to thoroughly analyze and review A-G completion data, course completion data, and site survey data with feedback from administrators, counselors and teachers on the roadblocks to meeting A-G requirements. As well, a newly reformed A-G Committee with site and District representatives from elementary, middle and high school segments was created. After thorough analysis, the collective input from these collaborative teams was that a revised graduation requirement timeline was necessary for the Class of 2027 and beyond. If we relied on our current district-wide A-G completion rates, that would only allow 53% of students to graduate. Other California districts who have adopted the A-G requirements as their graduation requirements have implemented scaffolds to ensure

equitable opportunities for all students to meet these standards. Our data showed that DUSD's graduation rate would significantly decrease if we held to the original A-G implementation timeline.

At the January 17, 2024 Board Meeting, the revised A-G Graduation Timeline was approved. The approved proposal included shifting the full implementation of the A-G graduation requirements with students completing required A-G coursework with a C or better from the Class of 2027 to the Class of 2031.

Incremental increases in rigor were built into the proposed revision. Commencing with the Class of 2027, students will be expected to pass the Critical 15 and maintain a 2.0 weighted GPA average in all their high school courses. Then building upon that rigor, students in the Class of 2029 will be expected to pass the Critical 15 and maintain a 2.0 weighted GPA average in all their A-G courses. Finally, with the Class of 2031, students will be expected to pass the Critical 15 courses with a C or better.

The graphic below reflects the revisions to the A-G timeline that the Board Approval enacted.



With this revised timeline in place, the College and Career Readiness Department in partnership with the A-G Committee and Educational Services, will continue working toward increasing the District's A-G completion rates through:

- Professional development opportunities to improve A-G completion rates
- Development and implementation of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), Student Study Teams (SST) and research based instructional strategies across the district
- Expansion and refinement of Inclusive Practices
- Reforming Essential Standards, Benchmarks, and Grading Practices

- Instituting more flexible credit-repair and recovery opportunities for students who received a D or F in A-G courses
- Expanding access to A-G courses
- Reviewing current waiver process
- Researching alternatives to demonstrating college and career proficiency
- Informing school sites and educational partners of progress and plan
- Developing a communication plan for families and students of the revised A-G graduation requirement timeline

As we move forward in the 2024-2025 school year, the A-G Committee will continue to monitor students' A-G status and work on building cohesively articulated TK-12 systems of support so our students can meet the rigor built into the A-G graduation requirements. Due to the long-lasting impact of the global pandemic along with the ongoing individualized needs of subpopulations, the revised A-G Graduation Requirement Timeline will meet the various interests, needs, and strengths of our students while maintaining rigor and continuing to strive towards meeting the Vision of Downey Unified School District.

CCR Programs to Support College Readiness

Advanced Placement (AP)

In the 2023-2024 school year 1,625 students from our two comprehensive high schools took Advanced Placement exams. A total of 2,933 AP tests were completed. At Downey High 1,291 tests were taken with a pass rate of 73%. At Warren High 1,642 tests were taken with a pass rate of 43%. These students scored a 3 or higher on their AP exams, giving them the opportunity for college credit depending on which institution they attend. For the upcoming year, we are excited to announce the introduction of two new Advanced Placement (AP) courses for our high school students: AP African American Studies and AP World History. These courses are designed to expand our students' knowledge and understanding of diverse historical perspectives, offering them the opportunity to engage deeply with critical subjects that will enhance their academic growth and cultural awareness. AP exams can play a significant role in demonstrating a student's academic abilities and their commitment to challenging coursework. Generally, colleges and universities view AP courses and exams favorably, as they show that students have taken rigorous classes and are prepared for the demands of higher education.

College Equity and Access Support Programs

In the 2023-24 school year, the District-wide goals for AVID included: supporting sites in sustaining the implementation of the AVID program through focusing on their site team goals, collecting evidence and school data throughout the school year, making informed decisions while continuously using the coaching and certification instrument to self-assess throughout the year.

- At each site, AVID Teams attended and provided Professional Learning opportunities to support equity and instruction throughout the school.
- Launching our first AVID Excel elective course at Stauffer Middle School to change the trajectory of long-term English language learners.
- All six secondary sites and two elementary schools, Lewis Elementary and Old River Elementary, attended the AVID Summer Institute for professional development to create SMART goals for their sites for the upcoming school year.
- Supported program coordinators and site administrators through monthly District-led meetings.
- Supported each site through a robust District-led tutor training and recruitment program on a weekly basis.
- Identified additional support for the AVID program through the budget and needs assessment process.
- In our secondary AVID programs, enrollment increased from 1,515 total student enrollment in 2022-2023 to 1,661 total student enrollment in 2023-2024. We have an additional 503 students from Old River Elementary and 132 fifth graders from Lewis Elementary who will learn AVID strategies this upcoming school year.
- AVID sites successfully completed certification processes and requirements.
- This Summer, we had an AVID ELD course available for our students at all secondary sites. Students from this class had an opportunity to visit a different college campus on a weekly basis.
- All of our AVID secondary school sites focus on four school-wide domains: Instruction, Systems, Leadership, and Culture to provide a rigorous college-going environment throughout the schools for college and career awareness.

College and Career Centers

At both Downey and Warren High Schools, the CCR Department provides the vision, direction, and financial support to Downey Unified College and Career Centers. In the 2023-24 school year, the College and Career Centers continued their work of supporting students in gaining access to financial support, work experience, and required skills identification. The centers are tasked with processing the increase in dual enrollment offerings.

Dual Enrollment

Dual enrollment is a program that allows high school students to take college-level courses and earn credits simultaneously. We increased our dual enrollment offerings from 20 sections in 2022-23 to 55 in 2023-24. Our Early College program completed its first year, with 60 students at DHS and WHS. Each year a new cohort of 60 freshmen students will start the program.

Counseling and Guidance Support

The CCR Department facilitates PLC work with middle and high school counselors in DUSD with the purposes of: (1) currency in professional practice, (2) analyze college and career access data trends in an effort to increase college and career access and preparation eligibility, (3) facilitate coherence and clarity in communication between site and district levels. Highlights include:

- Continued implementation and established District support of middle and high school counseling teams through secondary combined counselor quarterly meetings with job-embedded professional development.
- Continued focus on increasing A-G completion rate for all students, with an emphasis on our Multilingual Learner, Special Education, and Foster Youth subgroups.
- Partner with CaliforniaColleges.edu, California's official college and career planning platform. CCGI resources include lessons and tools for students to learn more about careers, colleges, and financial aid. The resources also allow students to monitor their A-G progress and to launch college and financial aid applications directly from the platform.
- Partner with UC Compass (formerly Transcript Evaluation Service), a program providing California districts with A-G completion data, policy insights, and strategic planning support to improve student access to California's public colleges.
- Partner with National Student Clearinghouse in order to examine College Participation and Persistence data. This metric allows Downey a measurement tool for analyzing long-term success in student preparation for colleges and universities.
- Partner with Parchment in order to support digital transfer of education documents to post-secondary institutions.

Librarians

In the 2023-24 school year, the CCR Department facilitated the secondary librarians in their work as an intra-district PLC. Within the scope of work, secondary librarians expanded their work in the areas of digital instruction, outreach, and support for students and staff.

- An additional LCAP funding line has been created for extended library center access to include before school, snack, lunch, and after school as deemed necessary and practicable at each school site.
- Resources are equitable among sites based on per capita needs based on grade level. There have been updates on hardware and software, print and non-print collections.
- Software subscriptions to Gale Database, OverDrive, and NoodleTools have been renewed to support curricular goals and to promote personal inquiry.
- Support is provided to librarians to have up-to-date resources in a variety of established and emerging formats to support multiple literacies.

- Ensuring that school library services are available 24/7 to students and staff through databases, ebooks, subscriptions, software, website development and release time to support training and development.
- Supporting libraries with movable, comfortable and varied furniture to foster group work and individual seating to promote personal inquiry.

CCR Recommendations

- Continue to analyze our A-G completion data to develop strategies for increasing our eligibility rate
- Develop district-wide A-G tracking tools within student and parent portals to monitor ongoing A-G completion progress
- Support sites in implementing flexible credit repair opportunities during the school year to increase A-G eligibility
- Continue support for College Access initiatives including FAFSA, Dream Act, and college application completion
- Maintain AVID support to provide college-going growth trends
- Continue to strengthen TK-12 articulation with an emphasis in A-G eligibility and CTE completion
- Improve the quality of implementation of CTE pathways and programs through intentional adherence to the CDE CTE Guiding Policy Principles and the Essential Elements of a High-Quality College and Career Pathway
- Submit and secure CTEIG, K12 Strong Workforce, Golden State Pathways, and Apprenticeship funding
- Expand articulation and dual enrollment agreements to support and increase students earning college credit
- Expand pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship opportunities for students and connect them to our pathways
- Expand support for elementary and middle school participation in CTE events

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Rebekah Ruswick, Ed.D., Director

General Overview

The Special Education Department serves and supports 3600 students with special needs, ranging from age 3 to 22, spanning across all 20 District campuses. The Special Education Department proudly maintained full staffing levels throughout the year for all special education teachers, school psychologists, clinical school therapists, speech pathologists and speech assistants, adapted physical education teachers, occupational therapists, physical therapists, behavior specialists, etc. ensuring that all programs could operate effectively without disruption. This stability has been crucial in providing consistent and high-quality support to our students.

Innovative Programs and Services

- **Adult Transition Interns at Alameda Early Childhood:** We introduced Downey Adult Transition Student Interns to support our early childhood programs, enhancing transition planning for our adult students with disabilities who are interested in learning more about early childhood education.
- **SST Process Revised District-Wide:** The Student Study Team (SST) process has been revised district-wide, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of how we address student needs and coordinate interventions.
- **Lower Numbers in Non-Public Schools and Residential Treatment Centers:** This year saw a historic low in the number of students placed in non-public schools and residential treatment centers, indicating our districts' growing ability to meet diverse needs internally.
- **Re-Established Multi-Disciplinary District-Wide Psychiatric Crisis Team:** A multi-disciplinary psychiatric crisis team was re-established to provide comprehensive support during psychiatric emergencies. An interdisciplinary group of school psychologists, clinical school therapists, and school counselors were trained in the PREPARE Crisis Response Model created by the National Association of School Psychologists.
- **Revised Crisis Protocols and Risk Assessment Procedures:** Updated protocols and procedures for crisis management and risk assessment were introduced to enhance our response capabilities to threats and risks.
- **Doubling Medi-Cal Reimbursement Dollars:** We achieved a significant increase in Medi-Cal reimbursement dollars, doubling the amount from previous years.
- **Articulation Norms for Early Childhood through Grade 5:** Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) established new articulation norms for the English Language to better support language development from early childhood through grade 5.

Staff Development

- **Non-Violent Crisis Intervention:** Over 300 staff members were trained in Non-Violent Crisis Intervention, equipping them with skills to both proactively address and manage crises effectively and safely.
- **Behavior Management Training:** Two intensive 5-week, 10-hour training courses on Behavior Management 101 and 102 were offered to over 140 instructional assistants, enhancing their skills in managing classroom behavior.
- **Play Therapy for the Neurodivergent Population:** Psychologists, CSTs, and administrators received specialized training on play therapy tailored to neurodivergent students.
- **RETHINK SEL Curriculum Training:** Psychologists and CSTs were trained on the RETHINK SEL curriculum, aimed at enhancing social-emotional learning practices for all elementary students.
- **ADOS-2 Training:** Psychologists participated in training on the ADOS-2 (Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule-2) and nuanced presentations of ASD in girls, improving diagnostic accuracy and support.

- **BRIDGE Authorizations:** Numerous teachers obtained their CTC BRIDGE authorizations, a certification that supports the implementation of effective instructional strategies for diverse learners.
- **Brigance and WIAT-4:** Teachers revisited the implementation of the Brigance assessment tool, and continued WIAT-4 (Wechsler Individual Achievement Test) implementation was supported across the district.
- **Mental Health for Families:** CSTs delivered a 4-part series on mental health for families, offering valuable resources and support to parents and guardians.

Events and Recognitions

- **Second Annual Sensory Friendly Fall Festival:** Our second annual Sensory Friendly Fall Festival was a resounding success, providing a welcoming environment for families of students with sensory sensitivities.
- **Unified Sports Expansion:** Unified Sports programs expanded across the district, promoting inclusive athletic opportunities, including the annual WHS Unified Track Meet in April.
- **Mobile Coffee Initiatives:** The “All DAT Coffee” and “WHS Cave Crew” mobile coffee services continued to engage and support our community.
- **Skills USA Achievements:** Three DHS students with IEPs medaled at the Skills USA State Championships and competed at the national level in Atlanta. Edwin Padilla earned gold for Employment Applications, and Gabriela Govea received silver.
- **Camp for Champs:** We re-established the Camp for Champs, providing a specialized summer camp experience for students with special needs to assist them in learning essential sports skills.
- **Professional Achievements:** Lead SLP Summer Puskas joined the CTC Committee for SLP Licensure & Credentialing, contributing to state-wide professional standards. Sussan DeMatta, ORS Special Education Teacher, was cited in "Rethinking Disability and Mathematics" by Rachel Lambert.
- **CSBA Golden Bell Award:** Downey Unified won the CSBA Golden Bell Award for "Secondary Co-Teaching & Inclusive Practices," recognizing our innovative approaches to inclusive education. Award Details
- **ACSA Leadership Magazine Publication:** Dr. Bertsch and Dr. Ruswick were featured in the ACSA Leadership Magazine in the Spring of 2024, highlighting DUSD's co-teaching program.

Community Engagement

- **October 2023:** We showcased student art from Downey Adult Transition at Downey's Dia De Los Muertos Festival, celebrating our students' creativity and cultural contributions.
- **December 2023:** Participated in the City of Downey Parks & Recreation Craft Night, engaging the community in creative activities.
- **March 2024:** Hosted the SELPA Annual Parent Conference, providing valuable information and resources for families of students with special needs.

- **April 2024:** Participated in the City of Downey Parks & Recreation Special Needs Resource & Awareness Fair, promoting awareness and access to resources.
- **Special Needs Story Time:** Participated in the Downey City Library's "Special Needs Story Time," offering an inclusive literary experience for our community.

Litigation and Dispute Resolution

We have observed a decline in litigation cases and an increase in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), reflecting our commitment to resolving issues collaboratively and effectively.

This year has been marked by significant achievements and advancements in the Downey Unified School District's Special Education Department. Our continued focus on innovative programming, staff training, and community involvement underscores our dedication to providing exceptional support and opportunities for all students. We look forward to building on these successes and further enhancing our services in the coming year.

STUDENT SERVICES

**Robert Jagielski, Ed.D., Senior Director
Student Safety, Wellness, and Engagement**

General Overview

Downey Unified is committed to each student's safety, wellness, and engagement. The Student Services Department is a multi-functional team of highly trained and dedicated individuals who place student social-emotional needs and academic achievement as our top priority. We operate under the belief that "Without Safety, Nothing Else Matters". Our goal is to provide specialized services necessary for each student to meet his or her academic potential, which strongly reflects the District's Shared Values and supports the Vision of having ALL students graduate with a 21st Century education that ensures they are college and career ready, globally competitive, and citizens of strong character.

Student Services personnel oversee the administration, coordination, and implementation of programs that comply with compulsory education laws related to enrollment, registration, and attendance. Additionally, the district assists with serious discipline cases by facilitating Behavior Review and Intervention Team (BRIT) meetings to develop and implement plans that provide students with the resources needed to keep them on track with coursework/credits. Furthermore, the student services staff

coordinates permits/transfers, emergency preparedness drills, school culture/climate activities, comprehensive school safety plans, and 504 plans.

Student Services team members help resolve complicated and serious situations in need of attention involving physical and mental health, campus safety, discipline, and alternative programs. We also act as liaisons to a wide array of community agencies that are involved with child welfare, attendance, and after-school programs. The coordination of these services, with other agencies as partners, helps to facilitate a productive and positive environment for all educational partners. A description of the programs and services along with a statistical summary of associated data for the 2023-24 school year follows.

Student Programs, Services, and Whole Child Support

DUSD has a comprehensive student support system in place that includes School Culture Teams at each campus. Character Counts!, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS), and Social-Emotional Learning with a focus on student wellness and targeted mental health supports are key to our success. Every program (PBIS, WEB, Link Crew, PVWH, AVID, Capturing Kids' Hearts, etc.) is implemented to meet the identified social-emotional, behavioral, and academic needs of the Whole Child and does so under the umbrella of CHARACTER COUNTS! in order to focus, align, strengthen, and increase the impact of our efforts.

SCHOOL CULTURE TEAMS (CHARACTER COUNTS!, PBIS, SEL)

School Culture Teams were introduced this year to focus our district-wide efforts on creating great environments for students to thrive. Since “culture” can simply be defined as “a way of life”, then “school culture” is “a way of life at school.”

The logo shown below was created to show what School Culture in Downey Unified is based upon. The head and heart in the center represents our mission to ensure all students and staff feel supported and know they are cared for. The outer circle from top right, going clockwise are the following: **CHARACTER COUNTS!, STRENGTH, PBIS, EQUITY, BELONGING, RETHINKED, CAPTURING KIDS' HEARTS.**



In order to streamline our district initiatives of Character Counts! (CC!), Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), and Social Emotional Learning (SEL), we rebranded our school PBIS Teams as School Culture Teams. In doing this, sites were able to embrace all of the previously mentioned relationship-building initiatives in a way that best fits each campus.

The one-page document to the right was created to explain the mission of our newly formed School Culture Teams and define what they do.

With the shifting from PBIS Teams to School Culture Teams we asked that each school site take the opportunity to revisit the membership of their teams. With all the retirements last year and new people in different positions, each school looked at their

membership and provided opportunities for people to either move onto or off the teams based on their passion and interest in this type of work. It has been very exciting to see the teams gel and positively move our initiatives forward in the best way.

OUR MISSION

We are dedicated to partnering with our students to build a better future for themselves and our school communities. Our goal is to ensure students:

- Feel Safe & Connected
- Know They Are Valued
- Have Opportunities for Academic and Emotional Success

School Culture Teams

A school site leadership team of educators who share an authentic passion for advocating for our students.

The ultimate outcome is to enhance the social-emotional and character competencies of our site communities, as well as academic success of each student. Our teams will implement the tools below to enhance school culture.

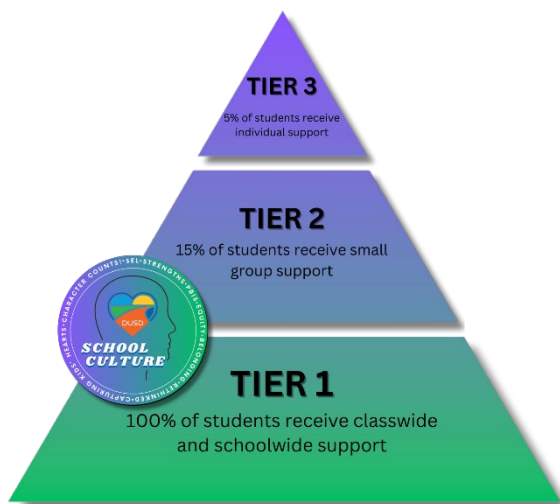
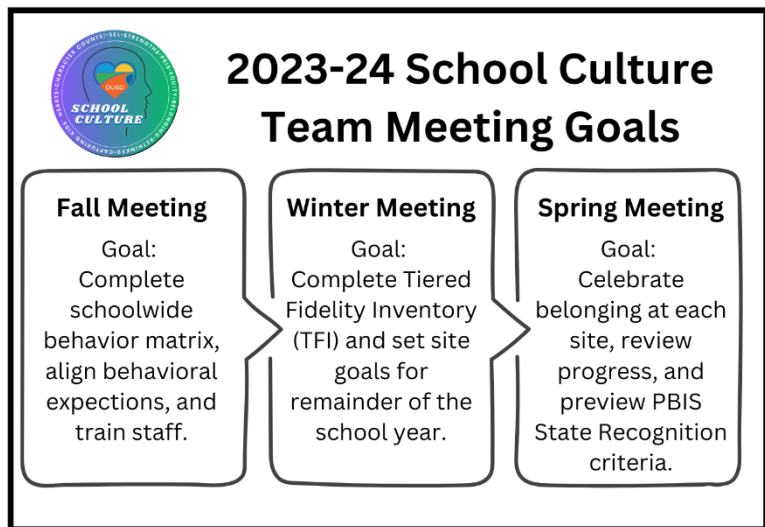
- Character Counts!
- SEL Strategies
- PBIS
- SEL Curriculum
- Capturing Kids' Hearts
- Strengths
- Academic Content
- Athletics and Activities

POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS (PBIS)

We held three district-wide School Culture Team Meetings in which teams at all schools shared best practices, celebrated school culture successes, and completed the PBIS Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI -The purpose is to provide an efficient measure of the extent to which school personnel are applying the core features of PBIS strategies.)

These meetings were facilitated by our newly appointed Elementary SEL TOSA, our Secondary SEL TOSA, our Senior Director of Student

Safety, Wellness, and Engagement, and our Student Services Program Administrator.



This year's focus was to implement strategies that enhance a sense of belonging for both students and staff and to ensure that schoolwide expectations were agreed upon and displayed at each campus. We continued last year's work of implementing Tier 1 supports with fidelity as we work toward applying for PBIS California State Recognition in the next school year and moving forward with Tiers 2 and 3 work.

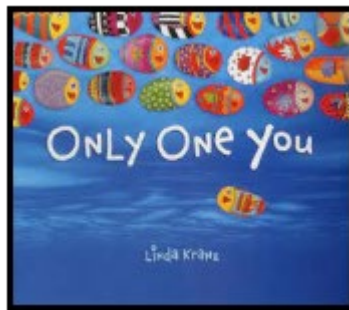
Per-pupil funding to support PBIS teams has remained constant at each site to support and improve their positive behavior rewards systems. Our schools hosted assemblies, celebrations, dances, raffle drawings, student stores, family dinner nights, and much more.

CHARACTER COUNTS!

We have been diligent about embedding the values and lessons shared via Character Counts! with activities and events districtwide. We continue to utilize the six pillars to model and teach character so that our students grow up to be positive and productive citizens who have marketable social-emotional skills (soft skills). We consider these skills to be necessary to thrive in any and all life experiences both in school and out especially as they explore and choose a career.

We have continued the national week-long Character Counts! celebration in the fall to increase awareness of each pillar and how we define them. As a district, we engaged every one of our school sites by providing “CC! Grateful Grams” given to every teacher. A “Grateful Gram” is a note of affirmation so that teachers can recognize their students for displaying great character. All sites posted Grateful Grams to showcase the good things and great students on our campuses. As these grams were shared with families and the community we received a lot of positive feedback and encouragement regarding this activity. Character Counts! is celebrated year-long in a variety of ways.

In the spring/second semester, each campus schedules a site-designated Character Counts! Week. Each site celebrates this CC! week with a variety of events and activities. Since January 2020, elementary sites have celebrated this second CC! week by choosing a book with a powerful message of character and a week-long celebration is then built around the chosen text. Last year’s selected text is *Only One You* by Linda Kranz. The text focuses on how we can each help to make the world a better place. A hardcover copy of the book was ordered for each elementary school teacher and administrator. In addition, a folder of resources was shared with each site that includes sample lesson ideas and activities that tie to the themes in the book.



Our collaboration with staff from the Character Counts! global headquarters is stronger than ever. We continue to work closely with them to ensure that we are using the most resources as our student and site needs evolve.

We are purposeful in ensuring Character Counts! remains a priority which is why the district continues to provide specific funding to support Character Counts! activities including celebration weeks, lessons, and student recognition. This year, our schools received the following additional amounts to support their efforts:

- Elementary schools, \$2,000 each
- Middle Schools, Columbus/WAS, Pace, and Downey Adult School, \$3,000 each
- Downey and Warren High, \$5,200 each

We are proud that Character Counts! serves as a main resource of character education within DUSD and look forward to continuing to be successful in modeling, teaching, and living the six pillars of character.

Working closely with the staff from the new CHARACTER COUNTS! global headquarters, which is now housed on the campus of Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, the plan was and continues to be effectively carried out. As a global initiative that transforms lives and strengthens communities, Pursuing Victory With Honor, CHARACTER COUNTS! and the six pillars assist us in fulfilling our district's vision through character development.

CC! TRAININGS - CHARACTER COUNTS! AND PURSUING VICTORY WITH HONOR

Character Counts! Training sessions were also offered in winter and spring to elementary teachers who had not yet had the opportunity to attend. The training reviews the TEAM approach to character education:

- **T**each children that their character counts
- **E**nforce the Six Pillars of Character
- **A**dvocate character
- **M**odel good behavior

Winter Options - Friday, January 12, 2024 (AM and PM session)

Spring Options - Friday, May 10, 2024 (AM and PM session)

A total of 88 DUSD elementary teachers attended the Character Counts! workshops.

In order to fulfill the Board Goal of having all DUSD coaches attend a **Pursuing Victory With Honor** training every two years, we offered Winter and Spring options to provide maximum opportunities for all coaches to attend. Both middle school and high school coaches completed one of the 4-hour live, in-person training sessions at our Pace Center. Participants engage in breakout groups, work with colleagues, and leave the workshop with ideas and strategies for implementing CHARACTER COUNTS! on their team.

Winter Option 1 - Thursday, January 11, 2024

Winter Option 2 - Saturday, January 13, 2024

Spring Option 1 - Thursday, May 9, 2024

Spring Option 2 - Saturday, May 11, 2024

A total of 182 DUSD secondary coaches attended the PVWH workshops.

ELEMENTARY SEL CURRICULUM ADOPTION

Downey Unified committed to piloting two SEL Curriculums at the elementary level during the 2022-2023 school year. We started by reviewing three venerable programs after months of research. A team of teachers and staff willing to pilot programs was formed with the help of a program specialist and an elementary principal. After meeting

with three different companies, two programs were chosen to pilot: RethinkEd and Sown to Grow.

Upon the completion of the pilots, teachers nearly unanimously voted for RethinkEd. This program offers ready-made, user-friendly lessons that can be utilized from TK-12. The lessons are also offered in Spanish and components of the lessons can be shared with parents for families to use at home. Our elementary SEL TOSA also worked with the company to design a scope and sequence of lessons, tied to the Character Counts! pillars, to give teachers a roadmap of suggested lessons to teach each month. The RethinkEd SEL curriculum was board approved on October 3, 2023.

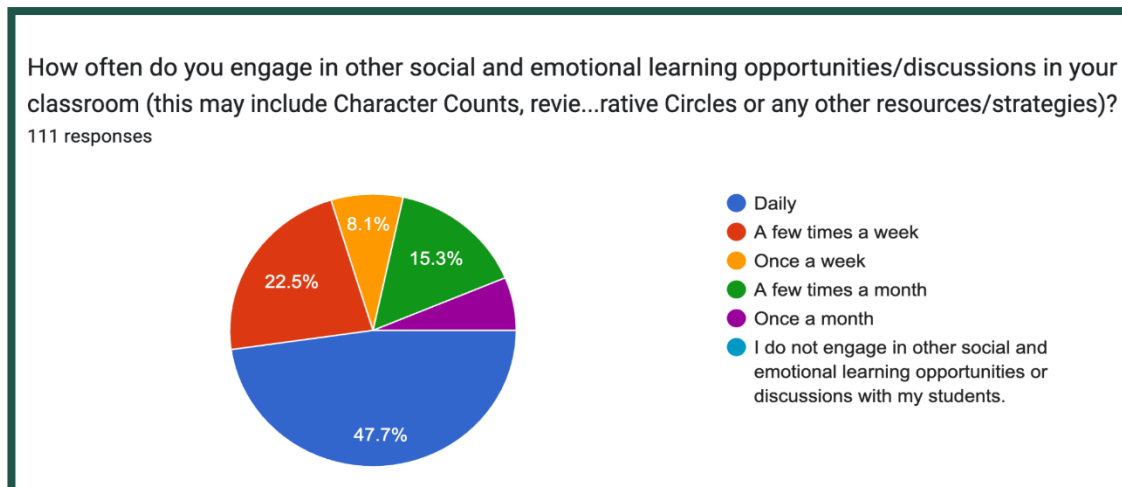
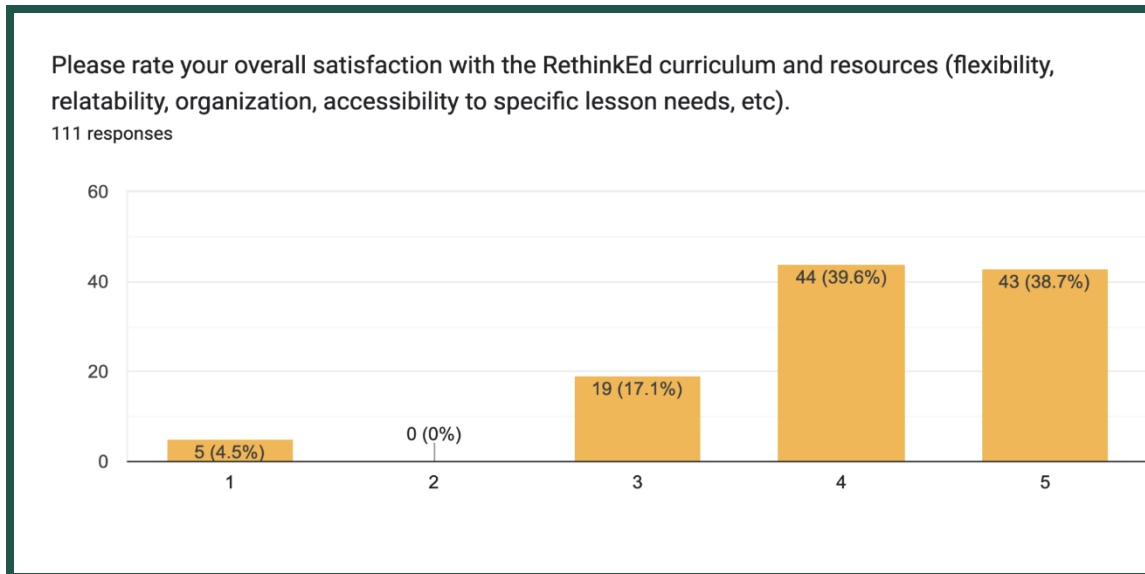
The elementary SEL TOSA began providing the following training opportunities:

- All 13 elementary schools trained on the RethinkEd SEL curriculum platform by December 2023
- CSTs and School Psychologists trained on RethinkEd resources pertinent to their scope of practice
- Individual classroom training and lesson support
- Parent and family training opportunities (Coffee with the Principal, ELAC, Parent Ed)
- Bi-weekly SEL Office Hours on Zoom (October-May)
- Reminder emails with links to the scope and sequence lessons sent twice/month
- Elementary administrators provided with staff login and usage reports (March-May)
- Elementary administrators provided with a document of restorative practices with links to relevant RethinkEd lessons to utilize when misbehavior occurs

Since the adoption of the RethinkEd SEL curriculum, a total of 399 staff members have accessed the platform and an astounding 9,840 resources have been utilized with our students.

RethinkEd also provides monthly newsletters to elementary teachers highlighting key components of the program. They also continue to meet with our elementary SEL TOSA monthly to discuss feedback from staff and to help design additional resources that support the SEL work happening in our classrooms.

Elementary teachers were asked to provide feedback on the RethinkEd SEL curriculum in late January 2023.



An additional survey is currently being compiled to garner feedback from elementary teachers about the training opportunities they would like to have available for the 2024-2025 school year.

Staff Training for Mental Health

DUSD has been proactive in looking for a combination of programs and supports to train staff to help our students and families address mental health issues. Nearly every employee of Downey Unified completed mental health first aid training at the start of the school year.

A few years ago, CDE was charged with selecting a vendor who could provide an evidence-based online training program that aligned with AB 2246, Pupil Suicide Prevention Policy. The CDE was also responsible for selecting a county office of

education to be the lead on this initiative and make the training available to all school districts in the state. The San Diego COE was chosen as the lead educational agency and LivingWorks was selected as the vendor.

We again collaborated with LivingWorks and created an individual DUSD online portal in order to track the progress of both classified and certificated staff as they completed the training at the start of the last two school years. The integrated training taught staff how to identify suicidal or at-risk behavior among students and their peers. During this 90-minute online interactive training module, staff learns to recognize when students and/or peers are at risk and connect them with the appropriate support personnel and/or agency.

During the 2023-24 school year, nearly two thousand certificated and classified employees have completed the mental health first aid training.

Additional School Resources and Mental Health Supports

With a lot more students in need of mental health supports, we strengthened our existing partnerships with local community agencies to offer outpatient counseling as needed to our over 22,000 TK-12th grade students across the district.

DUSD increased the hours of services provided by Pacific Clinics, Community Family Guidance Center (CFGC), and Jewish Family and Children's Services (JFCS) of Long Beach to support students with school-based counseling and/or outpatient counseling services.

The goal was to address specific behaviors through therapeutic interventions that increase student functioning within an educational setting to reduce symptoms and restore or maintain levels of functioning consistent with requirements of learning, development, independent living, and enhanced self-sufficiency.

- CFGC is a referral counseling agency for students at all grade levels with Medi-Cal. CFGC specializes in children's mental health treatment and provides comprehensive short-term prevention and early intervention, such as non-intensive and intensive program services. For 2023-24, CFGC Clinicians provided individual school-based counseling to over 200 DUSD students through referrals from staff, and outside agencies, including DCFS.
- JFCS again provided services at all school sites and TLC. Through small group or individual counseling, JFCS provided services to over 250 students. Each elementary school received an average of 4 hours of individual and group counseling services per week; middle schools 7 hours and high schools 16 hours. This equated to 133 weekly face-to-face clinical service hours for a total of 31 weeks.
- Pacific Clinics continues to be a supporting partner with counseling referrals, and it supports our seven Wellness Centers. At each secondary site, Pacific Clinics has assigned a full-time licensed clinician who carries an average caseload of 25 students each. At are two large comprehensive high schools they assigned two

clinicians and for our middle schools, there were two clinicians to support these four sites. Pacific Clinics provided the following mental health services to students and families who qualified for Medi-Cal services:

- Mental health services for youth and their families
- Individual school-based counseling sessions
- Family counseling for program participants, and
- Peer groups.

Clinical School Therapists (CST)

Our twenty-two DUSD-hired, full-time Clinical School Therapists (CSTs) entered their second year of existence even stronger than before as they worked to ensure the most intensive social-emotional needs of our students were met. All of our CSTs are licensed in either clinical social work, marriage and family therapy or clinical counseling. All Clinical School Therapists have Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) credentials. The support provided by our CSTs includes individual and group counseling services, administering biopsychosocial assessments, conducting risk assessments, responding to psychiatric emergencies, and collaborating with various groups to assist our school sites proactively to prevent greater levels of need. Thousands of students have received individual counseling support and numerous community agency referrals have been made over the course of the school year.

Wellness Centers

After opening the previous school year and providing a full year of services, our Wellness Centers at the secondary schools and Wellness Spaces at each elementary school took services to the next level during the 2023-24 school year. These centers/spaces embody the whole child approach and provide and connect students with support and resources, free of judgment. They are a safe space that students utilize to cool down, talk to someone when they may be in need, access resources, and attend scheduled counseling appointments. Additionally, these spaces have been utilized to host numerous site-specific therapy groups and all together, have assisted in normalizing emotional well-being on our campuses.

These school Wellness Centers and Spaces are a powerful and impactful investment in the health and academic potential of children and adolescents. They provide access to caring adults and services such as primary care, counseling, mentoring, and peer-to-peer support.

Every program mentioned above describes a part of our comprehensive student support system that upholds the belief that “Our kids deserve the best.”

Student Attendance Rates

The following chart shows the 2023-24 school year attendance rates for all student programs at each school site. The rates also included the previous two years which

show an improvement in attendance due to the support of attendance teams and attendance recovery efforts such as Saturday School, SART, SARB and home visits.

<u>School</u>	<u>2021-22</u>	<u>2022-23</u>	<u>2023-24</u>
Alameda	89.16	90.75	92.73
Carpenter	91.27	92.93	94.90
Gallatin	91.66	92.47	93.34
Gauldin	89.55	91.06	93.15
Imperial	88.37	89.85	92.75
Lewis	90.08	91.54	93.57
Price	92.05	92.84	94.63
ORS	90.49	91.92	93.87
Rio Hondo	90.54	91.36	92.36
RSG	90.26	91.32	93.90
Unsworth	91.73	92.01	93.19
Ward	88.64	90.10	92.89
Williams	89.23	89.34	92.01
Online Elementary	88.44	90.49	93.29
Doty MS	90.65	93.43	94.18
Griffiths MS	90.56	93.46	94.21
Mary Stauffer MS	88.50	93.33	93.08
Sussman MS	82.90	92.07	92.94
Downey HS	89.05	92.49	93.63
Warren HS	88.31	92.52	93.21
Downey VA	90.30	87.31	Elite
Columbus HS	86.20	85.35	89.82
Woodruff Academy	88.66	80.57	80.49

Suspensions from School

The total number of students who were suspended during the 2023-24 school year was 953. This was a decrease of 175 students from the 2022-23 school year.

The chart below shows a comparison of total student suspensions and total days of suspension over the last five years:

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Student Suspensions</u>	<u>Change From Previous Year</u>
2023-24	953	-175
2022-23	1,128	+109
2021-22	1,019	+1,006
2020-21	13	-790
2019-20	803	-230

The total number of suspension days for the 2023-24 school year decreased by 265 days to 2,248 compared to the previous school year.

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Suspension Days</u>	<u>Change From Previous Year</u>
2023-24	2,248	-265
2022-23	2,513	+212
2021-22	2,301	+2,275
2020-21	26	-1,538
2019-20	1,564	-414

Behavior Review and Intervention Team (BRIT) Referrals

Students who were in violation of Board Policies and the Education Code related to serious discipline matters were referred to Student Services for a BRIT meeting. During the 2023-24 school year, 131 BRIT meetings were held in comparison to 118 in the previous year. Meetings always included the student, parents/guardians, school site administrators, Student Services Program Administrator, the Senior Director of Student Safety, Wellness and Engagement, and other support personnel, as needed. During the meetings, the facts related to each incident were reviewed and a success plan was created by those in attendance to best support the student's needs.

Two (2) of the BRIT meetings led to a referral for expulsion this year, resulting in the student being expelled for violations of Ed Code 48915.

Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Intervention Agreements

AOD agreements have been used with students who violated Education Code 48900 (c, d, or j), which pertains to incidents involving Alcohol and Other Drugs. The chart below shows a comparison of the total students who entered an AOD agreement over three years:

<u>School Year</u>	<u>AODs</u>	<u>Change from Previous Year</u>	<u>Percentage-Change from Previous Year</u>
2023-24	63	-26	-29%
2022-23	89	-14	-15%
2021-22	103	+103	+1003%

The AOD intervention holds the student accountable for their actions while allowing them to get help, correct their behavior, make better choices, and complete their education.

Permits

For the 2023-24 school year, records indicate that 3,062 students were on an Inter-District permit from other school districts, while 274 Downey Unified residents applied for permits to attend schools in other districts. The following chart reflects the historical trends over the last four years.

School Year	Total Students Enrolled to DUSD on Inter-district Permit	Students ENTERING DUSD	Students LEAVING DUSD	Difference
2023-24	3,058	540	169	+371
2022-23	2,794	834	270	+564
2021-22	2,580	755	314	+441
2020-21	2,376	647	241	+406

Peak Enrollment

The monthly enrollment reports for 2023-24 filed with Student Services indicated that a peak enrollment of 22,362 was recorded during Month 4 on December 1, 2023, which was an increase of 71 students compared to the previous school year's peak enrollment of 22,291.

Child Abuse Reports

The state mandate of reporting suspected child abuse cases to appropriate authorities resulted in 10 reported cases during the 2023-24 school year, compared to 10 for the 2022-23, and a total of 16 for the 2021-22 school year.

Independent Study Program

During the 2023-24 school year, the Independent Study Long-Term Program provided education for 70 students.

The Independent Study Short-Term Program provided education for 233 students.

Student Services Program Specialists

During 2023-2024, our Foster Youth and McKinney-Vento Advocacy Specialists provided the following to the identified students and families:

- Ensured educational records were obtained from prior schools to determine appropriate placements (i.e., special education, GATE, core classes)

- Identified and met with middle and high school-aged Foster/McKinney-Vento students to identify barriers, provide appropriate interventions, identify academic, post-secondary college and career goals, and personal goals
- Participated in a variety of meetings (Individualized Educational Program, Student Study Team, parent conference, monthly contact with a social worker, meeting at social services, etc.)
- Established an MOU with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to ensure that transportation options were available for Foster Youth to stay in compliance with the School of Origin Mandate under the 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).
- Held Best Interest Determination (BID) when students moved (in compliance with state mandates) to determine the best school option
- Leveraged LCAP funds to pay for the utilization of Hop Skip Drive when students had to move and were displaced outside of our district to ensure continuity of school placement.
- Provided students in our program with backpacks, PPE, school supplies, laundry and food gift cards as well as hygiene products during a basic needs drive-thru event in August 2024 at PACE and throughout the school year as needed
- Utilized ARP funds to coordinate “Kohl’s Clothing Day,” where each student was able to purchase \$150 worth of clothing. Also used gift cards during the year for students in need
- Planned and supervised 40 students on an educational experience at Disneyland in March 2024
- Provided attendance incentives (gift cards to In N Out and Chick Fil A) to students to encourage positive school attendance and the utilization of Saturday School
- Utilized Title One Funding to provide gas to families to enable them to get their children to school
- To address academic struggles, one-on-one tutoring was provided by Professional Tutors of America
- Provided support to 12th-grade students in need of filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Also ensured KINGAP and foster youth applied for the Chafee Grant and other financial aid-based funds for college and career training.
- Connected students to community college/university Extended Opportunity Programs and Services, foster youth liaison, and support programs
- Worked closely with LACOE’s Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program to develop systems to enhance services for our foster youth county-wide as well as acquire school supplies for our students
- Utilized support from LACOE’s Homeless Education Program by attending monthly seminars on data, new legislation, best practices, and other pertinent news relevant to providing support to our families under the McKinney-Vento program

10-20 Club

Ronnie Fernandez is the President of the 10-20 Club and is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. Julie Garcia serves as the Director of Operations.

The 10-20 Club provides 4-week Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) programs, 4-week parent support groups and a variety of mental wellness programs for Middle School and High School students. The 10-20 Club provided the following programs and services for the 2023-2024 school year:

- Mental Wellness Program for High School Students
 - Cross Fit
 - Art
 - Personal and Professional Development
- Mental Wellness Programs for Middle School Students
 - Diversion Classes
 - Art
 - Fundamentals of Boxing
- Alcohol and Other Drugs
 - 4 Week Student AOD Program
 - 4 Week Parent Support Program

Health Appraisals and Services

Due to California school closures, mandated screening requirements by the state were modified and/or completed as needed.

- **State Mandated Hearing and Vision Screenings**
Hearing tests were performed on 7,716 students in Grades TK-12 & SDC, and 206 students referred by school staff. Vision screenings were performed on 7,869 students in Grades TK-12 and 1,464 students referred by school staff.
- **State Mandated Scoliosis Screening**
No longer done, not mandated.
- **Contagious Diseases**
There were 625 cases of Pediculosis (Lice).
- **Immunization Review and Compliance with State Immunization Requirements**
Reviewed 4,541 immunizations in Grades TK-12 and reviewed 1,581 students advancing from 6th to 7th grade for Varicella and T-dap immunization cards for verification on students entering 7th grade.
- **Employee In-Service Training**
Provided training to 425 staff members on education policy, medication administration, and strategies on how to recognize and respond to asthma incidents, diabetes, seizures, and head injuries. Gave instruction on the use of the Epi-pen for severe allergic reactions (Anaphylaxis) and provided professional development on immunization requirements for school entry. Provided 2,080 educational pamphlets to school sites and families and were available for questions/concerns regarding Blood-Borne Pathogens to all employees in the district (required by occupational safety and hazard authority).

TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Chris Nezzar, Chief Technology Officer

General Overview

The Technology and Information Systems Department comprises the Technology Department, the Student Information Systems Department (SIS), and administrative support. Though the two departments differ in tasks, they work seamlessly to support our staff and students with everything technology-related. They handle a wide range of services that includes the student information system, email, state reporting, federal reporting, telephones, fire alarms, closed circuit television systems, paging, classroom voice reinforcement, classroom audiovisual systems, and many other systems that are integral to our classrooms' everyday activities. The departments work closely with principals, teachers, and other departments to provide the resources, data, and tools to help everyone achieve our District Vision. Our goal is to enable teachers and administrators to provide a 21st Century education that ensures our students are college and career ready, globally competitive, and citizens of strong character.

The Technology and Information Systems Department consists of the following departments and personnel:

Technology and Information Systems

- Chief Technology Officer
- Senior Secretary
- Assistant Director

Student Information Systems Department

- Student Information Systems Manager
- Three Student Information Systems Operators
- Database Administrator

Technology Department

- Two Network Administrators
- Two Assistant Network Administrators
- Programmer Analyst
- Two Network Specialists
- Nine Computer/Network Support Technicians
- Three Maintenance Electronics Technicians

Projects, Programs and Accomplishments

The 2022-23 school year was all about looking ahead and preparing for the next technology refresh cycle. The focus of the 2021-22 school year was supporting our teachers, administrators, and staff in their return to in-person instruction. Downey Unified continues to be recognized as a leader in integrating technology into teaching and learning. Supporting a high-performing organization requires constant improvement in the Technology Department to ensure our teachers and students have the support they need to continue to innovate and grow.

The Technology and Information Systems Department staff continued to support our more than two thousand employees, twenty-three thousand students, and thirty-eight thousand parents and guardians. One lasting effect of the pandemic is that the Technology Department now provides support to students not only on campus but at home. This includes supporting parents in their efforts to help their children. It is a great reflection of the District's commitment to our families that the Technology and Information Systems Department has been given the resources to accomplish this vital work.

What We Support

Technology use in Downey Unified has significantly expanded over the past few years. At the start of the 2022-2023 school year, the Technology Department was supporting an immense quantity of technology devices in the classrooms, including:

- 14,218 Student iPads in grades K-8
- 7,844 Student Chromebooks, Windows, and Apple laptops in grades 9-12
- 2,791 Staff computers and tablets
- Teacher voice reinforcement in every classroom
- Projectors / wireless display devices in every classroom
- Wireless access points in every classroom

In addition to classroom technology hardware, a few of the widespread software applications in use in our classrooms are:

- Q, our student information system by Aequitas
- Microsoft Office 365 for every staff member and student
- Google G-Suite applications for every staff member and student
- Apple Classroom for all teachers and students TK-8
- Canvas LMS for all teachers and students 6-12
- Remind App for student and parent communication with teachers

We also support hundreds of grade-level and subject-specific applications in collaboration with our Instructional Technology Coaches.

This is only a look at what we have in the classrooms. We also support fire alarms, telephones, public address systems and audio visual for events at school sites. Hopefully, it gives a sense of the scale at which we operate.

Work Orders

The Technology Department closed five thousand seven hundred and seventy work orders this year. Two years ago, we had over fourteen hundred open work orders at the end of the school year. Last year we had a little less than four hundred. This year we ended the school year with only two hundred open work orders. We average about one hundred new work orders a week so that represents a tremendous reduction. The Technology management team continues to work with our team to identify additional ways we can be more efficient. Our most significant gain this year was by implementing a new software system developed by our in-house programmer analyst, the Conveniently Assimilated Technology Support System or CATSS. This system greatly helps our technicians on the help desk by bringing together information from our user management system, inventory system, mobile device management system, network management system and student information system into one convenient application. Before CATSS a technician would have to log in to each of these systems separately to gather all the information needed to determine the appropriate steps to resolve an issue. The CATSS system also allows our technicians to perform many tasks that would have previously required escalation to the network administration team, significantly reducing the time to resolve issues.

Middle School Transition to Apple Computers

This year we transitioned all our middle school staff to Apple MacBook Air computers to capitalize on the synergy between the student iPads and teacher devices. With half of our middle school teacher devices up for replacement this year we decided that it would be best to replace all the staff Windows laptops with Apple laptops. We could then use the Windows devices that were still in good condition for other staff as needed. Every teacher already has an iPad and with an Apple laptop teachers could seamlessly share content between the two devices. This would also allow for greater collaboration between students and teachers using Apple-only technologies like Airdrop for sharing files and Airplay for showing their screens on the classroom projectors and displays. With this transition, we also upgraded or added an Apple TV to every classroom projector and display to allow teachers and students to mirror their screens to these devices. As part of this transition, all our teachers completed the Apple Teacher certification process so that they would know how to take advantage of the features now available to them. This combination of the newest hardware and staff training made for a smooth transition and laid the foundation for continued professional growth.

Technology Refresh Planning

This was an exciting year as we wrapped up our research and planning for a complete technology refresh in the coming years. The Technology Department has been exploring options for the phone system replacement for several years, cameras for fifteen months, and network equipment for almost a year. The upgrade to the paging equipment came through our conversations with Cisco and it makes the most sense to

incorporate that into this overall project for cost effectiveness. Each category of equipment went through a rigorous evaluation process to ensure it was the best fit for our needs.

For the network equipment, we started in September of 2022 and researched the options available. In October we narrowed the vendor list to Extreme, Cisco and Aruba. In November and December, we met with each of the vendors multiple times and determined which equipment would meet our needs. We then requested evaluation equipment from each vendor and installed the equipment at various locations in the District so we could determine the ease of setup, capacity and use of the management platform. After having the equipment installed for a few weeks we met with the vendors' training teams to share our findings and learn more about detailed configuration and how to better use their management platforms. In February of 2023, we narrowed the selection to either Extreme Networks or Cisco Meraki, so we brought them both back for a final debrief to answer any final questions we had. After this extensive evaluation, we decided that Cisco Meraki would best meet our needs.

Looking for a replacement for our phone system has been an ongoing process for several years. However, with the critical role phones play in communicating in emergencies we must be sure the solution is reliable, easy to manage and meets regulatory requirements in a way that is not cumbersome. All modern phone systems use voice-over IP, which means that they use our existing network equipment to transmit phone calls instead of the traditional dedicated wiring of our old system. During our modernization projects at the middle schools, we upgraded the phone wiring in anticipation of this eventual move but should still upgrade the elementary and high schools during implementation. At the time, this was not reasonable unless we were also performing a planned network upgrade.

In September of 2022, as we were looking at the network refresh, we decided it was time to also plan for a migration to a voice-over IP phone system. We researched vendors in this area. After conferring with other chief technology officers and technology directors we determined that Teams, Zoom and WebEx were the only true contenders for our needs. Since we had already ruled out Microsoft Teams and Zoom, we reached out to Cisco to investigate WebEx. Over the next six months, we met with Cisco, installed evaluation phones in Technology and Student Information Systems and determined that the Cisco WebEx solution was reliable, easy to manage and met all regulatory requirements. This was also confirmed by peers in other school districts when we reached out for feedback. They were also the only vendor that provided telecommunication services to replace our Frontier Communication lines. All at the lowest cost of any of the vendors. This was a true win-win for us.

The camera system selection process was very much like the selection process for the network equipment. We started in the Spring of 2022 evaluating vendors and narrowed it down to Cisco Meraki, Motorola Solutions and Ava. Ava was purchased by Motorola during our evaluation period but remained a separate entity. We met with each vendor to get a demonstration of their camera management platform and see their camera offerings. We started evaluating equipment from the vendors in April of 2022 and

continued through September of 2022. Since we knew that Cisco Meraki was also a contender for our network refresh, we held off deciding until we decided on our network vendor. After seeing the integration of the Meraki management platform with both the wired, wireless and cameras it was an easy decision to select Meraki cameras for our solution.

Online Enrollment and Registration

Enrollment is a one-time process for families new to the District, where they provide all their initial information and required documents. Registration is when families update contact information, emergency cards, and other information required to be updated annually. Once again, this year, all schools had families complete the registration process online.

Our Student Information Systems (SIS) Department implemented a new process this year and it was a significant improvement over previous years' online registration. In previous years, each school site managed the registration process individually. This worked great when registration was in person, but with the transition to online registration, we recognized that the process needed to be more centralized.

This year the timeline, communication, and reporting were coordinated through Student Information Systems and the Public Information Officer. The school sites were still greatly involved in the process as registering almost twenty-three thousand students takes everyone working together. Having one timeline allowed the Student Information Systems department to send out reminders to all families and allowed our Public Information Officer to use social media to encourage families to register early. This year we had over ninety-seven percent of students registered on the first day of school, which was almost twenty percent more than last year.

This was also the first year that we opened our enrollment and registration help center here at the District Office. From July 5th through the opening of school offices we had a dedicated phone number for parents to call for support and walk-in support available Monday through Friday at the District Office. This was a tremendous help for families during the summer when they would otherwise have to wait until schools opened. It also helped reduce the number of calls to schools right when they opened, which helped them focus on getting ready for the start of school.

The new process was a resounding success. We continue to learn and make adjustments and look forward to another successful registration next year.

Student Information Systems

Our Student Information Systems Department (SIS) continues to do an amazing job supporting administration, teachers, and students in the use of Q, our student information system. Their work behind the scenes ensures that our online systems have the data they need to support our teachers and students in their use of technology

in teaching and learning. They support our office staff in all aspects of the student information system and teachers with attendance and the gradebook. They answer almost daily requests for reports and data to allow our staff to make informed decisions on how to best support our students.

This year saw a significant update to Q with the Q 4.0 release. This brought a new user experience and added several enhancements that our SIS staff had requested. One of the most useful updates was to make our Parent and Student portal websites, where parents complete registration, more mobile-friendly. This is important since over sixty percent of our families use a mobile device to complete registration. Another feature added that we had requested was the Q Forms module which will make collecting information from our families much easier. Our programmer analyst and database administrator had extended the built-in functionality to meet our needs, but Q Forms takes this even further without the need for us to maintain the solution.

In addition to all the support SIS provided to school sites, the SIS Department continued with the tremendous amount of work behind the scenes to help our District and schools run smoothly. Their work in CALPADs ensures we receive the funding we are entitled to; students can access online resources, and we meet all the state and federal data collection requirements. The Department continues to work closely with Educational Services, Certificated Human Resources, and Financial Services to ensure the accuracy of State data collection. Keeping up-to-date and accurate counts of English learners, socio-economically disadvantaged, and foster youth is vital to receiving the funding needed to address the unique needs of each group.

Observations and Recommendations

The Technology and Information Systems Department will continue to focus on how to better support our teachers, students, and families now that technology tools are embedded in every class. As we plan for next year, the expertise in SIS will continue to guide what is possible for scheduling, reporting, and identifying students' needs. We have been looking for a data analytics platform to provide real-time reporting to our administrators and hope to have a system fully implemented next year.

As with years past we will continue to stay the course in improving each department's Hedgehog Concept with a slight shift for our network administrator team. At the heart of the Hedgehog Concept is "what we can be the best at in the world." These concepts align with our focus of supporting teachers, students, and families wherever they are now more than ever. Our network administrator team was previously focused on proactive support, solving problems before our users are affected, but this has shifted this year to put more focus into the security of our online systems. While it is never possible to be completely secure, we must continually improve our system's security. This builds on the previous goal of providing proactive support as many of the principles of security also focus on monitoring and proactive measures to keep systems up to date and detecting problems before they are exploited. Our other teams will continue to work in the following areas: technical support staff will continue to focus on solving problems

on the first call or visit and Student Information Systems will continue to focus on making student data available for decision-making. Each of these areas is aligned with the District's Vision and Mission Statement and builds on the Shared Values of Downey Unified.

This year we continued to experience some infrastructure challenges. Power outages continued to be an issue this year. Many of the systems we had in place to handle power outages were not adequate. Our school leadership was amazing and successfully navigated the loss of power. With our technology refresh this year we will be able to address those issues.

The technology refresh project is going to be an all-encompassing endeavor as everyone in the department will need to help manage the migration and learn new systems along the way so that all our students have the infrastructure they need to become college and career ready, globally competitive and citizens of strong character.

BUSINESS SERVICES

Robert McEntire, Ed.D., Associate Superintendent

General Overview and Accomplishments

The Business Office is responsible for directing and overseeing five functional departments, including Facilities & Planning, Financial Services, Food Services, Maintenance, Operations and Transportation Services, and Purchasing & Warehouse.

The team endeavors to provide leadership and technical expertise to improve the educational experience for students and the lives of staff dedicated to said students.

The Business Office's primary focus for 2023-24 centered on meeting board goals eight and nine. Additionally, the operational focus is centered on ensuring long-term fiscal solvency, providing professional development and sustainability, using district facilities, planning capital projects, and efficiently managing district resources.

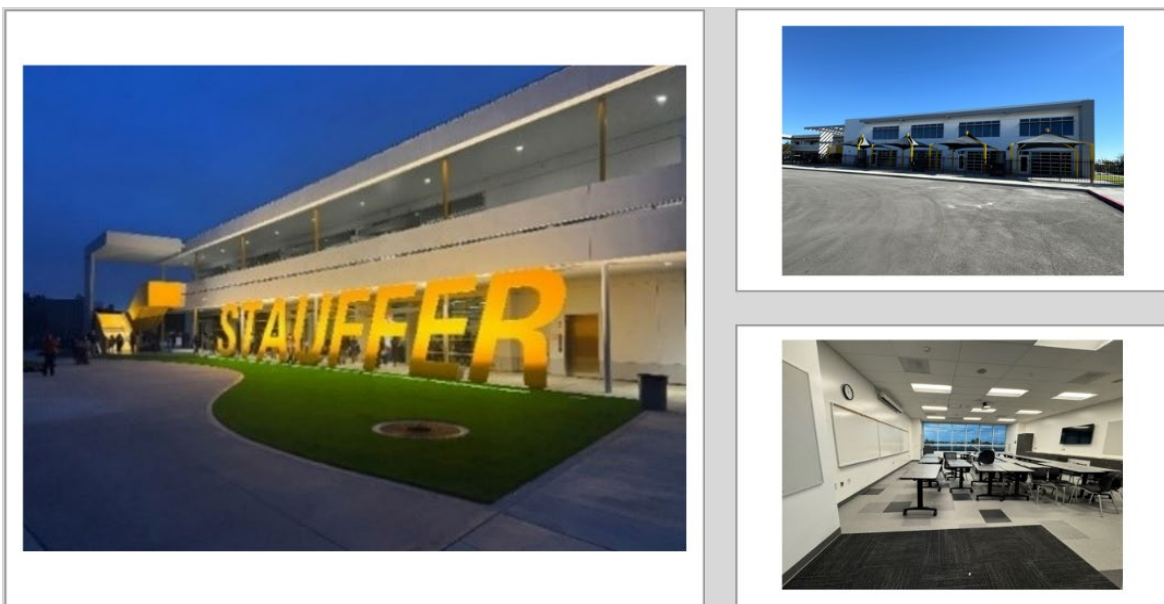
BOARD GOALS

Leadership requires a true "north star," and the Downey Board of Education continues to provide directional clarity through their action, support, and their chosen chief executive, Dr. John Garcia. As a department, the board goals frame all decisions, planning, and action for the year. Some require direct action, and those actions are detailed below. Some are intertwined in how we conduct ourselves daily. This section of the report is focused on direct action board goals.

Goal 8: Downey Unified will complete the construction of the Stauffer Two-Story Classroom Building. Obtain DSA approval on solar energy projects at all secondary sites and the district office location. Start architectural design of the first phase of the new Measure K Bond Program to include Imperial, Carpenter, Rio Hondo, and Rio San Gabriel Elementary Schools. Continue to supplement the Measure K Bond in the implementation of the Facilities Master Plan, by pursuing multiple funding sources such as state funding, the expansion of feasible energy projects and implementing solar at the elementary sites.

Stauffer Middle School

The Stauffer Middle School two-story classroom building project was completed in the Fall of 2023, allowing staff and students to move in at the beginning of the Spring semester of 2024. Immediately after commissioning, facilities team members walked the site with the Deputy Superintendent. They informally surveyed staff and students about their feelings regarding the new building and what it means to their educational experience. The common themes from those conversations were, “This is way better than I expected,” and “I feel like I am in a college class.” Minor punch list items (minor corrections) were completed in the Spring of 2024. Now that the site has operated with the new building for a semester, operational experience has better informed some of the choices made in design. For example, the courtyard at the northeastern portion of the new building by the northern stairwell lacks a fence between the classrooms and the parking lot. The classrooms in this area serve the District’s students with the highest needs, thus necessitating the addition of gating for this outdoor space for student safety. The parking lot behind the new building also lacks a walk-through between the rows, forcing stakeholders to walk around rows of cars or through flower beds. These two projects are in process and will be corrected in late summer or early fall, demonstrating our institution’s proactive approach to problem-solving and commitment to stakeholder safety and convenience.



DSA Approval on Solar Energy Projects at all Secondary Sites

Phase one solar energy projects have all been developed, and site locations have been selected. The projects are put into three groups. Group one includes the District Office and Columbus and Downey High Schools. Group two includes Stauffer, Sussman, and Griffiths Middle schools. Group three includes Doty Middle School and Warren High School. Group one projects are DSA-approved. Group two projects have been submitted for DSA review, while group three projects are in the final stages of architectural development before being submitted to DSA at the end of summer. Installation work will be phased between September 2024 and March 2025, starting with the District Office and Columbus High School in September. The anticipated impact on parking at each site is high, so the goal in starting with the District Office and CHS is to take lessons learned from these projects and use that knowledge to benefit the other school sites by minimizing impact.

While the team is proud of the progress made on the solar projects across the District, it is important to recognize that the District has had to put its partner Luminace on notice more than a couple of times for missing deadlines and failing to keep their commitments to DUSD. This has caused delays in the construction, which we originally wanted to start at the beginning of summer. Delays have also trickled into phase 2 project planning, to the point that some sites could be in jeopardy of losing out on participation in NEM 2.0. The savings from participation in NEM 2.0 is how we justify the cost of installing the solar panels.

Start Architectural Design of the First Phase of the Measure K Bond Program

The architectural design of the first phase of the Measure K bond program includes four elementary schools Carpenter, Imperial, Rio Hondo, and Rio San Gabriel. Enrollment projections and program development played a significant role in determining the correct number of classrooms needed on each site for long-term planning. Carpenter and Imperial projected growth, requiring more classrooms than identified in the Facilities Master Plan, thus increasing the cost of the work needed at those sites.

In October 2023, the facilities team conducted a board study session to review site design plans with the Board and community. The designs were well-received, and modifications from board comments were incorporated into the plan. Some changes included adding back doors or connecting rooms, fencing for Imperial since it is off a busy street, and better marketing/signage for Rio Hondo. All projects have progressed through the design development stage necessary to obtain cost estimates from the architects and contractors. Then, the team worked with in-house staff, cabinet, architects, and builders to value engineer options to mitigate the cost of the plans. This included completing two model classrooms, one at Imperial and one at Rio Hondo. This activity causes a 50% reduction in planned costs for that construction portion.

Additionally, a board subcommittee, cabinet, and facilities team visited several schools in southern California where alternative building options from traditional buildings were

employed to see if savings could be achieved. This resulted in standardizing all future Elementary TK-K compounds using CUUBE buildings. This change should accelerate construction for 35 classrooms early in the 2024-25 school year.

Pursue Multiple Funding Sources

Phase II Facilities Master Plan was completed by staff and accepted by the Board. In November 2022, Measure K was passed by the community, providing \$504 million to implement Phase II of the facilities master plan. Outstanding needs remaining in the facility master plan exceed the bond authorized by the community, resulting in the need to pursue additional outside funding sources.

School Facilities Program Funding

The District had a prior relationship with a firm that assisted in pursuing state-matching funds from the School Facilities Program (SFP) for modernization and completion of new construction work. However, that firm did not share DUSD's sense of urgency in pursuing these dollars, so staff conducted a market analysis for partners in this space and chose King Consulting. In the 2023-24 school year, King Consulting helped the District successfully receive \$27 million in middle school projects this year and an additional \$58 million in elementary school projects spread annually through 2030. This is an increase of \$38 million over the previously estimated amount due the District with the prior partner.

CalSHAPE Grant

The District applied for and received \$3,579,439.24 through a planning grant from the CalSHAPE Ventilation Program to replace carbon monoxide detectors, HVAC maintenance, and filter replacement.

Goal 9: Downey Unified will maintain the strong fiscal position that our District has achieved through the deliberate management and strategic oversight of funding realities. The District will also continue to use and refine the 2023-24 Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and additional one-time state grants to implement the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP). This, combined with other Federal/State resources and one-time COVID-19 funds, will provide students with supplemental support to enable them to reach their full potential.

Maintaining Fiscal Excellence and Achieving Educational Goals at Downey Unified

Downey Unified School District has successfully upheld its fiscal solid position through deliberate management and strategic funding oversight. The Business and Financial Services Departments are dedicated to maintaining this fiscal excellence while implementing the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) to provide the best service and support to students, staff, and the community.

Effective Use of COVID-19 and One-time Funds

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the District received significant one-time funding. The business and fiscal teams collaborated with instructional staff to develop a multi-year spending plan for these funds, ensuring compliance with Federal and state guidelines. These funds have supported student learning recovery and achievement, with all expenditures audited and found compliant by both external and state auditors. The remaining funds will continue to be utilized through the 2024-25 and 2025-26 school years.

Successful Negotiations and Settlements

In the 2023-24 fiscal year, Downey Unified successfully negotiated agreements with all bargaining groups, resulting in a 5% salary increase for employees. The necessary reports were filed, and retroactive payroll checks were issued promptly, demonstrating efficient and effective fiscal management.

Strategic Retirement Incentive

Employees were offered a retirement incentive, which led to significant participation and successful implementation. This initiative, facilitated by the Business and Financial Services team, underscores the District's strategic approach to maintaining a strong fiscal position while supporting staff transitions.

Positive Budget Certifications

Throughout the 2023-24 fiscal year, the District consistently filed "Positive" certifications, affirming its ability to maintain required reserves and projected expenditures for the current and subsequent two years. This was achieved while balancing the tremendous student and capital expenditures needed to start large-scale projects, including the CISCO network upgrade project.

Comprehensive LCAP and Budget Planning

The Business and Fiscal Services team has worked closely with instructional departments to develop and report on the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) and budget for the 2024-25 school year. This collaborative effort ensures that the District's financial planning aligns with its educational goals. New best-in-class development tools were created to achieve this heightened level of collaboration that will streamline similar work in years to come.

Business Enhancement System Transformation (BEST) Project

The District has made significant progress in implementing the new integrated financial and human resources system, BEST, in collaboration with the Los Angeles County

Office of Education (LACOE). This project aims to replace outdated systems, with full implementation expected by April 2025. A new work group was recently formed to ensure a smooth transition through the project's final phase (HR/Payroll).

Purchasing Programs (Amazon & Travel)

The District launched an expanded purchasing option through Amazon Business that will result in substantial cost and time savings for school sites and departments. Additionally, implementing the travel program through the California Department of General Services will provide greater access and cost savings to the many groups the District sends around the world to expand educational offerings and demonstrate the fantastic accomplishments of our students.

OPERATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Through Dr. Garcia's leadership, the Board's direction also provides a fantastic framework for the Business Office's daily work. This framework is cross-functional in that it is used across greater segments of operations or all departments in the unit. For 2023-24, these included financial stewardship (strengthening the plan and increasing literacy), professional development for performance and sustainability, facilities use, innovative procurement, and capital project planning.

Financial Leadership

- **Strategic Financial Planning:** the Business Office led the development of an expenditure plan that aligns with the board's long-term fiscal goals while meeting the legal requirements of each funding source. This plan meticulously accounted for using one-time funding sources, ensuring compliance with federal and state regulations while safeguarding the District's ability to maintain service levels above the baseline for the three-year budget period (2023-24 to 2025-26). Cross-departmental meetings as an opportunity to increase financial literacy was an embedded plan throughout the year. This activity will be more explicit and overt in the coming year.

Professional Development and Succession Planning

- **Staff Development Initiatives:** Recognizing the importance of sustainable leadership, the Business team prioritized identifying and training rising stars within each department. This included targeted training initiatives to ensure staff readiness for future leadership roles. Specific training highlights include expanding Financial Analyst roles within Financial Services to support LCAP programs better, increasing driver-trainers within the Transportation Department, and specialized training for new hires in the Purchasing Department.

- **Succession Planning:** Significant efforts were made to include professional development goals in evaluating all satisfactory or above-rated employees, ensuring a focused approach to career growth and leadership continuity. The early retirement

incentive led to considerable staff reassignments, mainly in Financial Services and Facilities, requiring substantial support and adaptation.

Facilities Use Leadership

- **Operational Excellence:** Dr. Zegarra's full-time oversight of the District's facilities use program brought higher professionalism and efficiency. Through strategic marketing and process improvements, we saw a nearly three-fold increase in facility utilization by community programs, significantly boosting revenue.

Innovative Procurement and Project Support

- **Complex Project Management:** the Business Office was crucial in supporting the procurement and funding plan for the district-wide CISCO project. This involved extensive collaboration with legal, internal and external stakeholders to ensure the project met all funding requirements, including eligibility for e-rate funding.

Capital Project Planning

- **Leadership in Project Coordination:** the Business Office provided leadership across dozens of capital projects, from sound and lighting upgrades at high school stadiums to installing new turf at Downey High School. The involvement of the Business Office helped ensure that these projects were completed efficiently and aligned with District priorities.

These accomplishments demonstrate the Business Office's commitment to fiscal responsibility, strategic resource management, and developing a capable and forward-looking team centered on student success. We will continue to build on these successes to meet the district's evolving needs.

Executive Summary of Functional Areas and Accomplishments Under the Business Office

Under the direction of the Business Office, several key departments have successfully achieved significant milestones during the 2023-24 fiscal year. Below is a sampling of significant accomplishments from each functional area, with greater detail provided in each department's report.

Financial Services

- **Fiscal Solvency and Strategic Planning:** Developed an expenditure plan ensuring long-term fiscal solvency, aligning with the board's goals. This plan effectively utilized one-time funding sources and maintained service levels for the district above the baseline, ensuring no funds were returned to state or federal entities.

- **Salary Negotiations:** Successfully negotiated a 5% salary increase for all employees by leveraging an 8.22% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA).

- **Implementation of BEST System:** Continued the integration of the BEST financial and human resources system, streamlining operations and planning for the complete transition by April 2025.

- **Bond Management:** Managed Measure "O" and Measure "K" bonds, supporting significant school construction projects and financial reporting.

- **Administrative Responsibilities:** Provided critical fiscal oversight and support for special education programs and other district initiatives.

Facilities Planning and Development

- **Capital Projects:** Managed numerous capital projects, including classroom renovations, gym and cafeteria upgrades, and the installation of new HVAC systems across various schools. Projects like the Downey High School Stadium Speaker Upgrade and Warren High School Fire Science Portable Relocation were particularly noteworthy.

- **Future Planning:** Continued collaboration with district leadership to implement the Facilities Master Plan, focusing on energy conservation and efficient use of Measure K funds.

Maintenance, Operations, and Transportation (MOT)

- **Operational Efficiency:** Closed over 6,257 work orders district-wide, including the installation of SALTO entry systems and support for major district events.

- **Environmental Compliance:** Ensured compliance with city, county, and state regulations, including annual hazardous materials reporting and the installation of storm drains at multiple elementary schools.

- **Transportation Achievements:** Expanded the fleet with new electric buses and maintained efficient operations with an average of 633 students transported daily.

Food Services

- **Increased Participation:** Achieved a 5% increase in lunch participation and a 13% increase in breakfast participation, surpassing national trends. The department also managed the successful implementation of the California Universal Meals Program.

- **Facility Upgrades:** Installed branded remote food service kiosks and upgraded serving line equipment to improve meal accessibility and presentation across schools.

- **Staff Development:** Implemented new onboarding processes and provided professional development opportunities, which were crucial in addressing staffing challenges.

Purchasing and Warehouse

- **Procurement Efficiency:** Processed 6,559 purchase orders and 792 contracts, managing over \$107 million in procurement. The department successfully introduced new initiatives such as an Amazon on-line direct order program.

- **Warehouse Management:** Maintained high accuracy in inventory management, with over 5741 warehouse stock orders processed and significant improvements in records and surplus equipment management.

- **Project Support:** Provided extensive support for district-wide projects, including bids and contracts for major construction and facilities upgrades.

FACILITIES PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT **Annie Aung, Director**

General Overview

The Facilities Planning and Development Department includes a Director, a Facilities Support Technician, a Budget/Financial Analyst, a Facilities System Coordinator, and a Construction Coordinator. We are responsible for managing the Measure K Bond funds and projects and using other funding sources. We perform work on all twenty-two District sites, including the District Office.

Below, you will find a list of projects completed during the 2023-24 school year and many in development. We continue to work on communicating with all sites and other departments to ensure that all needs and requests are being addressed as we plan and execute our projects.

Projects, Programs, and Accomplishments

Projects completed in 2023-24:

- Carpenter Elementary School Temporary Drop-Off Fix
- Gauldin Elementary School Audio Enhancement throughout the school
- Doty & Sussman Middle Schools Food Science Classrooms
- Doty, Griffiths and Sussman Middle Schools Lunch Shelters
- Doty Middle School Two Story Graphics Lighting
- Stauffer Middle School Gym & Two-Story Classroom Building
- Stauffer Middle School Trench Drain at Administration Building
- Downey High School Wood Router Dust Collector Installation
- Downey and Warren High Schools Classroom Modifications for Advanced Manufacturing Program

- Warren High School Baseball Field Irrigation & Scoreboard
- Warren High School Classroom Modifications for Plastics Program

Projects currently in construction or bidding:

- Carpenter and Rio San Gabriel Elementary School Classroom Renovation – bidding
- Lewis Elementary School DHH Portable Relocation – in construction
- Lewis Elementary School Campus Wide Fire Alarm Upgrade – in construction
- Pace Education Center Kitchen Renovation – bidding
- Pace Education Center Asphalt & Parking Lot Expansion – bidding
- Pace Education Center Portable Relocation – bidding
- Sussman Middle School Food Service Renovation – bidding
- Ward Elementary School Kitchen Service Line – in construction
- Downey High School RJOTC Portable Relocation – in construction
- Downey High School Stadium Light Retrofit – in construction
- Downey High School Stadium Speaker Upgrade – in construction
- Warren High School Fire Science Portable Relocation – in construction
- Warren High School Stadium Light Retrofit – in construction
- Warren High School Stadium Speaker Upgrade – in construction
- Various Schools HVAC Repairs, CO2 Monitors, & Filter Replacement – in construction

Projects Waiting Plan Approval in DSA:

- Solar – Phase 1 on Middle School, High School, and District Office

Future Planning

The Facilities Planning and Development Department will continue to work with District leadership; Maintenance, Operations and Transportation Services; Technology and Information Systems; and our sites to provide the highest quality service, as stated in the updated Facilities Master Plan. We will continue to work on communicating well with all involved parties to resolve any issues and develop a solution as quickly as possible. We will continue to work together to provide a safe environment for the students and staff of the Downey Unified School District. We will continue working with our Energy Conservation partners to move forward with Energy Savings Projects. Using Measure K and all available funding sources, we plan to continue to provide successful and efficient projects for the students, staff, and community we serve.

FINANCIAL SERVICES
Michael Martinez, Senior Director, Budget and Finance

General Overview

The Financial Services Department includes the functions of accounts payable, accounts receivable, payroll, voluntary deductions, budget, and general accounting.

The State economy continued strong through the 2023-24 fiscal year. As a result of the strong economy, the District received additional one-time funding for various Instructional Programs and Learning Recovery. These additional resources allowed the District to continue supporting many valuable and innovative programs for our students and trainings for our teachers and support staff. Providing a “quality” education to all students supports our District Vision that all Downey Unified students graduate with a 21st Century education, are college and career ready, globally competitive, and citizens of strong character.

Due to the complexity of changing rules and reporting requirements at the Federal, State, and County levels, keeping our staff well-informed was a priority. All employees attended a variety of Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) training sessions. Senior staff members attended staff development sessions offered by the California Association of School Business Officials and School Services of California.

Current Year Accomplishments

Below are a few highlights from the Financial Services Department for 2023-24. Our mission is to provide the best service and support possible to the District in an efficient, transparent, and cost-effective manner in all areas of payroll and accounting, budget and finance, fringe benefits and voluntary deductions. Our goal is to provide the best customer service to our peers, students, community, and all stakeholders.

As a result of the strong economy, the District received additional one-time funding. The Department worked with all educational partners to develop a spending plan for a period of five years. This funding came with significant compliance requirements, and the Department played a critical role in ensuring that these funds were spent within established Federal guidelines while supporting student learning and achievement. All funds spent during the fiscal year will be audited by the District’s external auditors and State auditors during the next Federal Program Monitoring (FPM). The department was proactive in preparing sufficient supporting documentation to comply with fiscal oversight requirements.

In 2023-24, the District was able to negotiate with all bargaining units. Together, the District, the Downey Education Association Teachers’ Union and the California School Employees’ Association Unit I and Unit II negotiated a 5% increase for 2023-24 in

salaries for all employees. The 2023-24 settlement was based upon consideration of the District receiving 8.22% COLA.

In November 2014, Downey residents passed the Measure “O” schools’ construction bond in the amount of \$248 million. The proceeds from the first sale of bonds in the amount of \$50 million were deposited with the District in October 2015. A second issuance of \$135 million was deposited in February 2019, followed by a third and final issuance of \$63 million, which was deposited in May 2021. During the year, the Department continued to provide financial reporting and project updates to the Citizens’ Bond Oversight Committee for the remainder of these funds.

In November 2022, Downey residents passed the Measure “K” schools’ construction bond in the amount of \$504 million. The proceeds from the first sale of bonds in the amount of \$125 million were deposited with the District in June 2023. During the year, the Department worked closely with the Facilities Department to establish the proper accounting structure to spend these funds over the next couple of years.

In 2023-24, the District continued with the implementation of the integrated financial and human resources system known as BEST. This collaborative project with LACOE was intended to replace both the existing accounting system, PeopleSoft, and the Human Resources System (HRS), which have been in existence for over 20 years. The financial part of the system has been implemented and the planning and training to implement the HRS system started during the year, with a projected implementation date of April 2025.

In the 2023-24 school year, the Department continued to provide Administrative Unit responsibilities for all Special Education students educated by the Downey-Montebello Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA). The Financial Services Department worked closely with our Special Education Department to provide training and support regarding budget and finance.

In the 2023-24 school year, the Department continued to work with the Downey Foundation for Educational Opportunities (DFEO) to administer the After School Program (ASES) and the Expanded Learning Opportunities Program (ELOP).

The District’s Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) is a collaborative effort of several educational groups within the district and community, which includes administrators, staff members, students, parents, the community, and our Board members, who reviewed the 2023-24 LCAP throughout the school year. Financial Services worked closely with administrators and other educational staff to ensure proper administration of the LCAP for the benefit of our students. Meetings with the various educational partners were held to discuss progress and revisions to the LCAP. Financial Services continued to work with administrators to provide fiscal guidance.

In 2023-24, the district filed “Positive” certifications in all interim reports, stating that the District can maintain the required reserves and the projected expenditures for the current and subsequent two years.

In 2023-24, the Financial Services staff processed 11,353 vendor payment checks for approximately \$204,490,285. The Department also processed 62,037 payroll checks for approximately \$337,590,946. In addition, the Department issued 3,785 W2 tax forms.

Future Planning

In 2024-25, the Department plans to continue working with all the educational partners to finalize spending plans and file the corresponding quarterly reports for the remaining one-time funding. Tentatively, this process will continue over the next three years.

In 2025-26, the district, along with LACOE, will continue with the implementation and integration of BEST's human resources system. The current HRS systems and other third-party accounting and finance programs will be eliminated. Users will continue to be trained until full implementation is potentially completed by the end of the 2025-26 fiscal year.

The ever-increasing complexity of compliance and reporting requirements of school district finances necessitates the retention of highly qualified employees, adequate staffing, and professional competency. Financial Services staff members will attend training sessions pertinent to their positions. Senior staff members will be encouraged to attend appropriate off-site offerings that will enhance their on-the-job knowledge. Attending LACOE, California Association of School Business Officials and School Services of California sponsored training sessions is always a priority. The department will continue to implement a system of cross-training for all staff within the same job classification.

The District's LCAP supports the mission of the District and, more specifically, the goals of the District. There are requirements to monitor and revise the LCAP, as necessary, to remain in compliance with LCFF, the District's LCAP and its educational partners. In 2024-25, Financial Services will continue to work closely with the Educational Services Department to ensure the LCAP is implemented and funded as planned at both the department and site levels.

In conclusion, the Financial Services staff anticipates and looks forward to another productive and successful school year.

FOOD SERVICES
Marc Milton, Director

General Overview

<u>Department Statistics</u>	<u>2022-23</u>	<u>2023-24</u>	<u>Change</u>
Total lunches	2,404,940	2,521,702	4.9%
Total breakfasts	1,136,023	1,281,490	12.8%
Total CACFP At-Risk after-school snacks and suppers (combined)	275,106	289,068	5.1%
Unduplicated Pupil Count (UPC)	73.1%	73.1%	-----
Average daily a la carte sales	\$3,097	\$3,060	(1.1%)
Total sites	20	20	-----
Budget-Total Revenues	\$20,618,907	\$24,252,115	17.6%
Enrollment (DUSD & County Students)	22,301	22,222	-----
Catering Revenues	\$51,313	\$43,416	(15.4%)

The 2023/2024 school year saw the continuation of California's Universal Meals Program, AB 130, which mandates that each public school student be offered one free breakfast and lunch every school day. This program is subject to budget appropriation and given the current conditions of the Governor's budget, the continued funding of this program highlights the legislature's commitment to ensuring access to food for students at school. AB 130 also requires high-poverty schools to participate in a federal meal provision. A high-poverty school is defined as one that meets the minimum eligibility requirements to participate in the federal Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). All DUSD schools meet that requirement, and as a result, it was determined that the Food Services Department would participate in Provision 2. This provision allows the department to establish a base year of eligibility for students based on a meal application. The eligibility established from that effort stays with the student during the provision cycle, which is 4 years (3 years, plus the base year), eliminating the need to collect meal applications in the non-base years. By taking this approach, families will be less confused about why we were required to collect meal applications when meals are free for all students. School Year 2023/2024 was our base year, which means that the next meal application collection process will take place in School Year 2027/2028 unless conditions or regulations change.

These regulations supporting student access to meals translated into positive participation and budgetary results for the department. On a national level, participation in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) was down 5.2% in 2023/2024, however, California was one of 7 states to see an increase in NSLP participation (+3.8%) over the previous year (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/data-research/data-visualization/child-nutrition->

[dashboard](#)). DUSD Food Services surpassed these benchmarks and produced an increase of nearly 5% in lunch participation compared to the prior year and an impressive increase of almost 13% in breakfast participation versus the 2022/2023 school year. Also, participation in the At-Risk Afterschool Meals component of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) increased by over 5%. This program provides meal supplements to students enrolled in enrichment activities after school and during holiday breaks and is operated in collaboration with DFEO and the YMCA.

The catering program experienced a decline of over 15% due to the vacancy created by the retirement of the long-standing Supervisor Operations Specialist, Nora Ortiz at the end of the 2022/2023 school year. This vacancy prevented the department from providing most catering services for the first half of the 2023/2024 school year while the position was filled, followed by the replacement, Sandra Velazquez, assimilating into her new role.

The increased meal participation did impact the a la carte program where revenue decreased by just over 1%. This is an acceptable result of students eating a more nutritious, complete meal for free rather than spending their money on snack foods. Also, because of the staffing challenges that persisted in the 2023/2024 school year, opportunities to purchase a la carte items were more limited for students. When a site was short-staffed for the day, employees who were usually assigned to a la carte points of sale were reassigned to locations where reimbursable meals were served so students had the same access to a more nutritious complete reimbursable meal rather than purchasing snack food items.

Challenges associated with labor and staff attendance continued to present regular tests for the department in 2023/2024. As has been the trend in the years following the pandemic, the school year began with fewer vacancies than the year before, however, turnover rates and high absenteeism continued to strain operations. The department has experienced a staff turnover rate of over 12% in each of the past two school years, which translates to a total of forty-four people resigning or being released over that same period. Also, there were almost 6,400 total absences reported in the department during the 2023/2024 school year. This dynamic demanded daily adjustments and ongoing flexibility to meet the needs of students. Department staff exceeded expectations given those circumstances and met the challenges every day to ensure that our students had access to meals, so they were nourished and ready to learn. The increases in reimbursable meal participation in all programs is a direct result of these efforts and is a point of pride for department staff.

In response to these new labor realities, the department implemented an onboarding process for new employees to support learning and engagement in the food service programs offered to students. Also, specific sites and individuals who are best equipped to train new staff were identified to ensure probationary employees have the best opportunity to learn and grow appropriately in their positions. Additionally, through a collaborative approach with CSEA Unit I, department job descriptions were updated and

aligned, and compensation increases were implemented for almost every position in the department to maintain competitiveness in recruiting and support retention.

The supply chain for food has stabilized over the past year and with the implementation of AB 130, California provided additional one-time funding to food service departments across the state to improve access to meals and feature more freshly prepared items that are minimally processed and of higher nutritional quality for students. These Kitchen Infrastructure and Training (KIT) funds must be spent by June 30, 2025, and have less restrictive uses than the usual federal funds generally used in the food service programs. These expiring funds were leveraged to focus on consistency and quality of product and visually appealing food presentations by establishing a consultant contract with a chef, purchasing equipment, and making facility improvements that provide the best possible food service experience for our students.

In addition to the increases in participation, other various one-time federal and state funding sources contributed to the revenue increase. Each resource has its requirements, but most must be spent by the end of the 2024/2025 school year. Downey USD Food Services was awarded more than over \$1.2M in Supply Chain Assistance (SCA) funds, and over \$500k in School Food Best Practices (SFBP) funding. These funds must be used for food purchases to sustain providing students with more freshly prepared items and higher quality meals.

Some highlights included:

1. Successful completion of the CDE Provision 2 meal application base year audit with no findings.
2. Created permanent full-time positions in the Warehouse (Warehouse Worker) and Classified Human Resources (Sr. Personnel Technician) to directly support Food Services. Also, created a Budget/Financial Analyst position for the department to improve and streamline financial processes.
3. Installation of custom designed, branded remote food service kiosks at Doty, Griffiths, Stauffer, and Sussman to increase access to meals for students in different areas of campuses.
4. Upgraded serving line equipment at Ward, Price, Lewis, and Rio San Gabriel to improve efficiency and visual appeal of food for students.
5. Engaged with the Superintendent's Student Advisory Committee (SSAC) to educate our student leaders about the Food Services Department and collect feedback on ways we can better meet their needs. As a result from this collaboration, nutritional and ingredient information has been added to online menus so parents and students can better understand what is being served in the program.

6. Implemented innovative point of sale approaches at various elementary sites to accommodate the high numbers of students participating in the meal program and the school bell schedule. Multiple (up to 4) point of sale terminals are available for students to enter ID numbers to support shorter wait times in line.
7. Continued support of the LEAP early childhood program by providing delivery of daily hot lunches for enrolled children.
8. Established Memorandum of Understandings with CSEA Unit I to formalize staff uniform standards and to continue compensation to staff who volunteer to work during non-school days in support of the DFEO ELOP.

Staff Development

The department continued with the online professional development learning platform where multiple bilingual resources and trainings are available for staff to access anytime. This professional development program satisfies the USDA requirement for ongoing training of Food Services staff and provides practical information directly related to school food service that can be used in daily operations.

Formal Progressive Discipline and Having Difficult Conversations training was provided to Food Service Supervisors in collaboration with Classified Human Resources to increase knowledge of discipline processes and provide resources on how to best address employee performance issues.

Department administrators and staff attended a variety of conferences and professional development trainings throughout the year, including:

- Southern California School Nutrition Association Supervisory Chapter 1 Meetings: 9/22/2023, 12/15/2023, 1/26/2024, 3/1/2024, 5/10/2024
- California School Nutrition Association Annual Conference: October 2023
- Super Co-Op training: December 2023
- School Services of California Governor's Budget Workshop: January 2024
- CDE Procurement Workshop: May 2024
- Bi-monthly CDE Nutrition Services Division School Nutrition Town Hall meetings

Future Planning

All California public school students will continue to be offered one breakfast and one lunch at no cost every school day, regardless of whether they are in the Free, Reduced, or Paid eligibility status.

Collaborate with the Facilities Department to maximize the use of KIT and Food Service funds in modernizing elementary schools under Measure K.

Utilize one-time funding to expand exposure of local produce offerings to students and improve the variety of daily fruit and vegetable choices.

Continue our work with the chef consultant to improve quality, consistency, and variety of menu offerings.

Provide professional growth opportunities for department staff by offering after-hour workshops focusing on skills that will support promotion and overall job performance. Topics will include ServSafe Food Handler certification, school kitchen leadership, and tips on how to promote within the department.

Continue our collaboration with the Downey Foundation for Educational Opportunities (DFEO) after-school program to find ways to improve the quality and variety of foods served to kids.

Continue to upgrade cooking equipment and facilities across the district to support freshly prepared meals and improve access to meals for students.

Continue and improve on efforts in onboarding and training to improve retention and staff attendance.

MAINTENANCE, OPERATIONS AND TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

John Shook, Director

GENERAL OVERVIEW

The Maintenance, Operations, and Transportation Departments include bus drivers, custodial, grounds, floor crew and maintenance workers. We encompass a team of over 150 employees and maintain 22 sites, including the Gallegos Administration Center.

All Departments continue to work on communicating with sites and each other to ensure that all needs and requests are being addressed in a timely manner. The Maintenance, Operations, and Transportation offices work diligently to ensure compliance with all city, county, and state policies. The Williams Law inspections are performed annually at all school sites, underground fuel storage permits are continuously issued because of proper and safe usage, and hazardous materials annual reporting to the City of Downey Fire Department is always verified and accepted, among other reporting requirements.

PROJECTS, PROGRAMS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Maintenance

- District-wide – closure of 6,257 work orders
- District-wide - continued installation of SALTO entry systems for all upgraded and remodeled school sites
- District-wide - provide tables, chairs, stages, risers, carnival booths, etc. for district events at all 23 sites year-around
- District-wide – set up of stages and chairs for district events including: awards ceremonies, promotion ceremonies, graduation ceremonies, pin ceremonies, district appreciation breakfast and lunches
- District-wide – handling of all surplus furniture items from each site, including the distribution of surplus items from the Alameda Warehouse as needed at each site year-round
- District-wide – patching and repair of asphalt, concrete and roof leaks
- District-wide – classroom, furniture and teacher moves
- District-wide – repair of wrought iron, chain link fencing and automated gate systems
- District-wide - hung banners and signs up at each site, both in the interior and exterior of school site buildings
- District-wide – upgrade of the Carrier iVu software as well as installation on a new server.
- District-wide – provided support to facilities for the CalShape surveys
- District-wide – transported all the lighting and sound equipment and play props for all the plays district-wide for Jeff Toussing.
- District Office – repaint the interior of offices of rooms 206, 207 and 222
- District Office – installation of new LED retrofit lighting in the Financial Service and Human Resource offices
- District Office – modernization of the District Office Human Resources and Financial Services offices – HVAC and electrical
- Columbus High School –complete refurbishment of classrooms; installation of new flooring, ceiling tiles and paint in rooms F43, F50, F51, F52
- Downey High School – X building HVAC replacement assistance
- Downey High School – create and install occupancy signs for Fire Department compliance in all locker rooms
- Warren High School – create and install occupancy signs for Fire Department compliance in all locker rooms
- Warren High School – installation of wall padding panels and padded floor for cool down room S3
- Warren High School – capacitor replacements for various buildings
- Warren High School remodel of the wrestling portable for girls' flag football
- Doty Middle School – create and install occupancy signs for Fire Department compliance in all locker rooms
- Doty Middle School – installation of new flooring for the fitness room next to the boys' locker room

- Griffiths Middle School – Thunderbird Café counter and service window upgrade
- Griffiths Middle School – replacement of exterior doors
- Griffiths Middle School – reframe and install a new window in the main office
- Griffiths Middle School – create and install occupancy signs for Fire Department compliance in all locker rooms
- Stauffer Middle School – fabricate and install cabinets for the records room
- Stauffer Middle School – installation of wall padding panels for cool down rooms at Stauffer rooms 60 and 61 and
- Stauffer Middle School – create and install occupancy signs for Fire Department compliance in all locker rooms
- Sussman Middle School – installation of new exhaust fan for Boys locker room, shower area
- Sussman Middle School – create and install occupancy signs for Fire Department compliance in all locker rooms
- Carpenter Elementary School – retrofit exterior lighting to LED
- Carpenter Elementary School – replacement of student restroom exhaust fans
- Gallatin Elementary School – emergency response to the accident that occurred; cleaned up all debris and set up temporary fence panels to secure campus
- Gallatin Elementary School – fabricate and install cabinets in the principal's office
- Lewis Elementary School – install new power for food service serving lines
- PACE Training Center – removal and replacement of doors
- Price Elementary School – replacement of student restroom exhaust fans
- Rio San Gabriel Elementary School – installation of wall padding panels for cool-down room
- Rio San Gabriel Elementary School – install new power for food service serving lines
- Various Sites –coil cleaning for preventative maintenance
- Williams Elementary School – install new power for food service serving lines

Operations

General Operations:

- Gym floor recoats for all Middle Schools and High Schools
- Power washed both high school stadiums
- Completed district-wide tree trimming over the summer

Custodial

- Custodians and utility workers continue to work diligently keeping our campuses clean, safe, and secure
- Work with site administration and district office personnel to complete work orders, special requests, and other activities throughout the school year (Back-to-School Night, promotions, open house, graduations, among others)

- Custodians and Utility Workers completed ASCIP trainings on Asbestos Awareness, Bloodborne Pathogens, Fire Safety, Heat Stress, IIPP, PPE and Ladder Safety.
- Thorough summer cleaning took place at all school campuses and District Office and completed on 8/2/24
- Custodians thoroughly inspected classrooms, restrooms, and administration offices to comply with Williams Legislation
- Pest Control: Spray Specialist actively addresses the various pest-related issues and ensures the newest methods are used, complying with all regulatory agencies
- Pest Control: The Integrated Pest Management Program has increased the use of organic or green pesticides that contain natural oils
- Pest Control: The Integrated Pest Management Program has adopted the use of steam machines for chemical-free weed control; Spray Specialist is trained and experienced with this method
- Purchased new portable carpet extractor, carpet fans and dehumidifier for the Floor Maintenance Workers

Irrigation

- Completed the following ASCIP trainings: Asbestos Awareness, Bloodborne Pathogens, Fire Safety, Heat Stress, IIPP, PPE and Ladder Safety
- Installed a new storm drain at Unsworth Elementary near the cafeteria
- Installed new storm drain at Old River Elementary
- Adjust and install new sprinkler heads for Doty Field renovation
- Ongoing inspection of landscape irrigation at new construction sites to observe and learn the modern systems and ensure district standards are being met
- Repaired damage to irrigation systems caused by construction projects throughout the district.

Grounds

- Completed field renovation at Doty Middle School during summer
- Completed the following ASCIP trainings: Pesticide Handler Training, Asbestos Awareness, Bloodborne Pathogens, Fire Safety, Heat Stress, IIPP, PPE and Ladder Safety
- Filled in playgrounds with new wood chips at Gallatin Elementary, Rio San Gabriel Elementary, Old River Elementary, Unsworth Elementary, Rio Hondo Elementary, Imperial Elementary and Price Elementary
- Continually servicing all district sites by mowing grass, weed whipping, and clean-ups
- Maintaining landscape, overgrowth trimming, cleaning up debris, planting new greenery and flowering plants to showcase the cleanliness and modern look of all school sites.

- Continued to complete work orders with special requests, such as preparation for graduations, promotions, open house, back to school night, and many others throughout the year.

Transportation

- Our current fleet consists of 40 buses 23 of which are CNG buses, 4 electric buses, and the remaining are a combination of gasoline and diesel.
- A total of 186,917 miles were traveled in a CNG bus out of a grand total of 265,336 from the start of 7/1/2023 to 6/30/2024.
- An average of 633 students were transported on a school bus every day – this count includes special needs students with transportation requests on their IEP. An average of 98 students were transported daily for athletic teams.
- In January 2024 we received our 4th electric school bus, Bus #22.
- The Transportation Yard got a new slurry and stripe done in June 2024.
- We had 1 mechanic retire after 19 years with the department.
- The Transportation Department applied for the School Bus Grant, ZESBI (Zero Emission School Bus Infrastructure Project) to replace up to 4 of our older school bus models on the fleet.

MOT Department

Contracted Works:

- Downey High School interior hallway and classroom painting in R, S, and Y buildings
- Downey High School interior hallway paint, J building
- Downey High School artificial turf install in the quad DG areas
- Warren High School track repairs
- Warren High School slurry and stripe – north lot and basketball courts
- Warren High School baseball field bullpen turf installation
- Columbus High School replacement and coatings, all buildings
- Woodruff Academy flooring and paint in rooms N1 and N2
- Sussman Middle School cafeteria flooring replacement
- Sussman Middle School room 41 rehab – flooring, wall removal and paint
- Stauffer Middle School canopy roof replacement
- Stauffer Middle School canopy breezeway paint
- Stauffer Middle School softball field synthetic turf replacement and outfield hydroseed and leveling
- Alameda Elementary School site wide exterior patch and paint
- Alameda Elementary School restrooms, interior patch and paint
- Gauldin Elementary School playground equipment paint
- Gauldin Elementary School slurry and stripe of the playground, parking lot and bus lanes
- Gauldin Elementary School asphalt remove and replace and new v-gutter install
- Williams Elementary School concrete addition near the lunch shelter

White Fleet Acquisitions

- 2024 Ford Explorer XLT (Maintenance)

Personnel

- Retirees:
 - Aurelio Arevalo, Equipment Mechanic
- New Employees
 - None
- Promotions
 - Herberth Baldelomar, Senior Secretary – Replacing Cristina Ascencio
 - Jeffrey Corbet, Maintenance Glazier – Replacing Gregory Edge
 - James Walton, Grounds Team Lead – Replacing Donald Valdez
 - Cristian Hernandez, Floor Maintenance Worker – Replacing Noe Miranda
 - Pedro Cruz, Lead Equipment Mechanic – Replacing Jose Castellanos
- Filled/New Positions
 - Maintenance
 - Senior Secretary (1) – Replacing Cristina Ascencio
 - Glazier (1) – Replacing Gregory Edge
 - Operations
 - B Shift Custodians (21)
 - Bus Drivers (1)

FUTURE PLANNING

The Maintenance, Operations, and Transportation Services Department is committed to providing the best quality service we can in the timeliest manner. We will continue to work on communicating with all involved parties to resolve issues that arise and provide a solution as rapidly as possible. We are working with energy conservation partners to reduce our overall energy consumption. Furthermore, we are continually looking for ways to reduce our carbon footprint through outside funding and grant opportunities that can benefit the District and will continue to collaborate closely with the Facilities Department in all upcoming school renovation and modernization projects. We strive to ensure our schools get all the repairs and upgrades they deserve, creating a modern and comfortable learning environment for all Downey Unified students.

PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSE
Darren Purseglove, C.P.M.
Interim Director, Purchasing and Warehouse

General Overview

The Purchasing and Warehouse Department continues to work through challenges encountered at the end of the 2022-23 fiscal year. Ms. Portia Mina, CPSM, CPPO, CPPB, hired as my replacement, made the decision to retire effective July 5, 2024. Her qualifications, as well as her experience as a procurement professional, will be difficult to replace. In the meantime, I was excited for the opportunity to come out of retirement and reconnect with District staff as a substitute to fill in while the District works through the process of hiring a replacement. Although I have enjoyed the life of a retiree, I have appreciated the warm welcome back and will continue to provide my assistance in the Department for as long as is needed.

The Purchasing and Warehouse Department processed 6,559 purchase orders during the 2023-24 fiscal year for an annual total of \$107,465,301.27. The Warehouse processed 5,741 warehouse stock requests totaling \$1,292,657.50, including food service deliveries to school sites. Bids were created, published, and processed, and contracts were awarded for various projects, materials, equipment, and services, including frozen processed chicken products, land surveying services, maintenance and painting services, roof replacements, paging and audio services, audio-visual upgrades, and renovations to food service areas.

The Department also processed approximately 792 contracts and agreements for a wide range of services.

Projects, Programs, and Accomplishments

Purchasing

The Purchasing Office processed 6,559 purchase orders and 792 contracts and agreements during the year. Orders and agreements varied from construction and facilities work to basic equipment and supply items for schools and offices, food and food service equipment and supplies, technology items, maintenance equipment and supplies, vehicles, specialized consultants for K-12 and Special Education services, as well as materials, services and supplies for Federally funded programs.

The Department also let to bid, got Board approval for, and awarded and issued contracts against 34 bids, 2 requests for qualifications, 1 request for proposals, and 9 requests for qualifications and proposals.

The Department continues to provide support through the State of California travel program for increasing staff and student travel needs. This program provides better control and oversight of District-related travel expenses at discounted costs. The State continues to improve on the use of the program and provides periodic trainings and updates to District staff involved with the program.

Administrative Regulation (AR) 6363 was changed at the beginning of the fiscal year increasing the amount of reimbursement for personal expenditures from \$300.00 to \$600.00. This change is in line with increases in supply costs and provides some flexibility for teachers and staff members to make small purchases for classroom needs.

In addition, the Department also worked closely with Amazon to develop and implement an on-line direct order program for small, incidental items that can be ordered by school site staff and delivered directly to school sites. It is anticipated that this will give schools greater ordering flexibility while reducing the amount of direct expenses incurred by school staff for those types of items.

The position of Assistant Buyer was re-evaluated, and the decision was made to replace the position with a Senior Secretary. Adriana Garcia, Office Manager, Rio San Gabriel Elementary School, was interviewed and hired to take on the position in April of 2024. She will work with the Director and purchasing staff to develop the position and related responsibilities.

Warehouse

The Warehouse completed its fifth inventory under the new BEST system through the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE). Again, the ending inventory was well within acceptable standards and ended with an overage of less than 1% (99% accuracy).

The Warehouse continues to introduce new employees to the team as a result of retirements and promotions to other departments. Rodolfo Galvan, Warehouse Worker, was hired to replace Rosendo Lujan, who retired in 2023. Mitchell Garcia, Warehouse Worker, was hired to replace Kevin Quinones, who was promoted to Network Support Technician in Technology and Information Systems. Felix Gonzalez, Warehouse Worker, transferred from the Operations Department and is replacing Erick Crisostomo, who was promoted to Instructional Media Technician at Sussman Middle School. We welcome the newcomers and wish those who have left us the best in their new endeavors.

A new Warehouse Worker position was added to assist the Food Services Department with the pick-up and delivery of cafeteria supplies; food and equipment items between school sites, the Warehouse and the Food Services office; assisting cafeterias with storing and organizing items in kitchens, freezers, refrigerators and storerooms; and unpacking, dating and placing items on designated shelves, tables, racks and carts. In

addition, the Warehouse has modified its hours to accommodate Food Services needs and will be operating from 6:30 am to 3:00 pm.

Katrina Juarez-Lorenzetti, Intermediate Clerical Assistant, has taken over the responsibility of purchasing all non-food Warehouse stock inventory items, providing better monitoring of warehouse stock levels and quicker response time to stock shortages.

In addition to processing over 5,741 warehouse stock orders for schools and offices during the year, the Warehouse received and processed approximately 6,242 orders for delivery to schools and offices throughout the District. The mailroom processed over 170,000 pieces of metered mail.

Records/Inventory

The Records/Inventory area successfully shredded 150 64-gallon containers full of paper records from various departments, including Financial Services, Special Education, the Superintendent's Office, Student Services, Purchasing, and Human Resources. In addition, 50 64-gallon containers from Columbus High School were shredded. A State of California piggyback contract was used to work with a document scanning company (Sy Tech Solutions, Elk Grove), to scan permanent records from Special Education, Financial Services, and Classified and Certificated Human Resources Departments, preserving the integrity of the documents indefinitely and eliminating the need for space to store paper records.

Surplus equipment items determined to be obsolete and no longer of use to the District continue to be scheduled for pick up from the Alameda Warehouse by an auction company during the year. There has been improvement in repurposing furniture items between school sites, reducing the costs of purchasing new furniture. The recently created electronic equipment transfer form has simplified the process for removing and transferring surplus items from and to schools and offices.

Future Planning

Items for future planning include the following:

- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Amazon on-line order system.
- Purchase and receive a new electric stand-up forklift for the Warehouse.
- Collaborate with the M.O.T. Department on specifications for the purchase of a new stake bed truck with a forklift attachment for special school site deliveries.
- Develop a new organization chart for the Purchasing Department, to include a Senior Buyer and Contract Analyst position.
- Work with the Los Angeles County Office of Education to correct deficiencies in the warehouse stock backorder system.
- Develop how-to process videos and/or tutorials for purchasing procedures and processes and add to the Purchasing Department web page.

- Request quotes and purchase a new mail machine to replace the current outdated one.

Bids and RFPs for the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year

Bids

1. Bid #23/24-01 – Frozen Processed Chicken Products
2. Bid #23/24-03 – Student Motorcoach Transportation
3. Bid #23/24-04 – Food Service Line – Ward Elementary School
4. Bid #23/24-05 – Gauldin Elementary EPIC Paging & Audio
5. Bid #23/24-06 – iPad Repair Services
6. Bid #23/24-10 – Custodial Supplies
7. Bid #23/24-11 – Apple Computer Products & Services
8. Bid #23/24-12 – Downey and Warren HS Exterior Stadium Panel Replacement
9. Bid #23/24-14 – Downey and Warren HS Stadium LED Retrofit Installation Service
10. Bid #23/24-15 – Warren High School Gym A/V Upgrade
11. Bid #23/24-16 – Columbus Roof Project
12. Bid #23/24-17 – Alameda Bathrooms, Downey Adult School Admin. Sussman MS Doors and Warren HS Doors Painting Project
13. Bid #23/24-18 – Stauffer Middle School Canopy Roof Replacement Project
14. Bid #23/24-19 – Stauffer MS Canopy Ceiling Paint and Columbus HS Building D, E, F & G Ceiling Tile Repair and Paint Project
15. Bid #23/24-20 – CAT6Cabling for IP Phones
16. Bid #23/24-21 – Food Service Pre-Made Pizza Products
17. Bid #23/24-23 – Stauffer Middle School Softball Synthetic Field
18. Bid #23/24-24 – Tree Trimming Services
19. Bid #23/24-25 – Various Elementary Sites TK/K Fence Line Bollards
20. Bid #23/24-26 – Refrigerated Box Truck
21. Bid #23/24-27 – Downey and Warren High School Musco Stadium Lighting Retrofit
22. Bid #23/24-28 – Various Sites Playground and/or Parking Lot Slurry and Stripe
23. Bid #23/24-29 – Ward Elementary School Food Service Line
24. Bid #23/24-30 – Alameda Exterior Paint Project
25. Bid #23/24-31 – Downey HS RSY Interior Painting & J Building Patch and Paint Interior Hallway
26. Bid #23/24-32 – Maintenance of HVAC Systems and Installation of CO2 Monitors and HVAC Filters
27. Bid #23/24-33 – Sussman MS Food Services Renovation
28. Bid #23/24-34 – Maintenance of HVAC Systems and Installation of CO2 Monitors and HVAC Filters (rebid)
29. Bid #23/24-35 – Lewis Elementary School Demo Existing Portable, Concrete Foundations and Set New Portables
30. Bid #23/24-36 – Lewis Elementary School Campus-Wide Fire Alarm Upgrade
31. Bid #23/24-37 – STM Goods DUX Keyboard iPad Case
32. Bid #23/24-38 – Warren High Field Speaker Upgrade

33. Bid #23/24-39 – Downey High Field Speaker Upgrade
34. Bid #23/24-40 – Sussman MS Food Service Renovation (rebid)

Request for Proposals

1. RFP #2023/2024-13 – Data Transmission Services and Internet Access

Requests for Qualifications and Proposals

1. RFQ/P #2023/2024-01 – Underground Investigation & Mapping Services
2. RFQ/P #2023/2024-02 – Full Land Surveying Services
3. RFQ/P #2023/2024-03 – Hazardous Materials Surveying Services
4. RFQ/P #2023/2024-05 – Geological Testing Services
5. RFQ/P #2023/2024-06 – LLB Services – Modernization/New Construction – Carpenter
6. RFQ/P #2023/2024-07 – LLB Services – Modernization/New Construction – Imperial
7. RFQ/P #2023/2024-08 – LLB Services – Modernization/New Construction – Rio Hondo
8. RFQ/P #2023/2024-09 – LLB Services – Modernization/New Construction – Rio San Gabriel
9. RFQ/P #2023/2024-22 – Real Estate Marketing and Brokerage Services for Real Property

Recap of Yearly Statistics

<u>Fund</u>	<u>Total P.O. Amount</u>
1. General Fund #01.0	\$ 77,737,702.00
2. SELP Admin. Unit Fund #01.1	\$ 324,875.18
3. SELPA DHH Fund #01.2	\$ 4,070,294.72
4. Adult School Fund #11.0	\$ 767,567.12
5. Cafeteria Fund #13.0	\$ 9,759,091.39
6. Deferred Maintenance Fund #14.0	\$ 4,153,289.94
7. Bond Measure "O" Fund #21.0	\$ 5,012,940.00
8. Capital Facilities Fund #25.0	\$ 376,477.00
9. Special Reserve for Capital Outlay Fund #40.0	\$ 1,855,971.53
10. Special Reserve – Technology Fund #40.2	\$ 314,322.89
11. Workers' Comp./Self-Ins. Fund #67.0-2	\$ 3,092,769.50
Total Purchase Orders Issued:	6,559
Total Warehouse Stock Requests Issued:	5,741
Contracts/Agreements Issued:	792

<u>Year</u>	<u>Purchase Orders</u>	<u>P.O. Amounts</u>
2013-14	5,221	\$ 47,209,855.38
2014-15	5,806	\$ 52,467,907.55
2015-16	6,742	\$ 67,531,524.51
2016-17	6,765	\$ 69,167,649.86
2017-18	6,688	\$ 97,541,604.86
2018-19	6,292	\$ 112,152,764.91
2019-20	5,748	\$ 102,021,140.54
2020-21	2,652	\$ 217,906,948.70
2021-22	6,697	\$ 195,506,394.03
2022-23	7,384	\$ 191,719,158.90
2023-24	6,559	\$ 107,465,301.27

CERTIFICATED HUMAN RESOURCES
Alyda R. Mir, Assistant Superintendent

General Overview

In the 2023-24 school year, we hired a total of 154 certificated employees, which included general education, IB, and Dual language educators, special education, school nurses, clinical school therapists, speech and language pathologists, and elementary music teachers, as well as coordinators and administrators.

Ongoing Developments

1. Facilitated, in partnership with over 30 different universities. This includes making sure that all Memorandums of Understanding with the universities are in place, communicating with the principals/assistant principals to find and confirm the placements, informing the university advisor of the placement confirmation/ information and the invoicing, Board reporting, and tracking of all master teachers' stipends from the university.
2. Completed numerous Public Records Requests along with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, LACOE, Bureau of Labor Statistics, School Services J-90 and Department of Defense reports/surveys.
3. Received 9 Early Retirement Insurance Petitions and 95 Insurance Continuance Petition requests from retired certificated employees.
4. 21 resignations for a variety of reasons such as relocation, childcare, promotions in other districts, and changing professions.

5. Completed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title II, Part A: Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High-Quality Teachers and Principals audit.
6. Completed the Equitable Distribution Monitoring System Data Collection report.
7. Completed the annual J-90 Report.
8. Updated the Annual Notification Employee Handbook and Substitute Handbook.
9. Updated and implemented certificated evaluations through the Informed K12 online platform.
10. Updated board policy and administrative regulations.
11. Created a new process to collect and maintain TB records for all staff.
12. Develop weekly meetings with DEA President to ensure collaboration and open communication.

Meetings and Workshops Attended

1. DUSD Personnel Commission and Board of Education meetings.
2. May Revise workshop, Governor's Budget Workshop.
3. Facilitated DUSD's Employee Benefits Committee (EBC) meetings.
4. Trained and implemented the new certificated staff evaluations and met with all site and district administrators to facilitate using the new evaluation system through Informed K12.
5. Instructional Cabinet, Extended Cabinet, and all administrator meetings and activities.
6. End-of-the-year graduations, promotions, and award ceremonies for DHS, WHS, and CHS.
7. Attend DWK monthly Educational Law collaborative meetings.
8. The Assistant Director and Personnel Technician attended the Credential Counselors and Analysts of California (CCAC) training in Sacramento.
9. Assistant Director attended and completed ACSA personnel academy.
10. Attend the ACSA Women's Leadership Breakfast and Conference
11. Supported and trained the new Assistant Director of HR and created a dual Director position to cover both HR and Instructional Programs for Mr. Browning for the 2024-25 school year.
12. Mentoring Mr. Browning through his doctoral program.
13. Successfully defended and earned my Ph.D. from Claremont Graduate University.

Substitutes

1. Filled 14,813 teacher absences, which was a decrease of 11 absences from the previous year.
2. Recruited and processed 120 new substitutes to add to the District's substitute pool and maintained the daily rate of \$200/day and \$230/long-term rate. Maintaining the rate attracted and retained more substitutes.
3. Processed 325 reassurance letters (Day-to-Day Substitute Contracts) for returning substitute teachers.

Employment Opportunities

1. Successfully filled all vacant positions with highly qualified candidates.
2. Provided training and updated the certificated substitute handbook.
3. Processed Summer School Credit Recover/Extended School Year teaching applications and site administrators for all summer school sites. STEAMworks was offered at 5 Elementary sites including a Dual Immersion site and Elementary ESY at Alameda. Secondary summer schools offered credit recovery, enrichment, and ESY at all secondary sites, including all four middle schools and all three high schools.
4. Partnered with Claremont Graduate University to apply for and receive a Teacher Residency Grant from the California Teacher Commission to provide a living wage (\$37,000 per year) for select student teachers in special education classrooms as they work on obtaining their preliminary credential. DUSD will benefit from an increased pool of effective special education teacher candidates to fill future open positions.

Other Human Resources Projects

1. Facilitated the necessary paperwork for certificated employees to receive their required TB vaccination through the Wellness Clinic to satisfy the California Education Code Section 49406 and Health and Safety Code Sections 121525-121555.
2. TOSA Strengths Coach, Anna Beth Fishman, trained certificated, classified, and supervisors on the beginning level Strengths. All new staff were trained prior to the school year beginning. Two Strengths Champion level cohorts were offered throughout the year, as well as Anna Beth provided CliftonStrengths activities at SSAC, Combined Principal Meetings, and Leadership Meetings for all administrators and Leadership Academy participants.
3. Completed all onboarding documents on Informed K-12 for certificated personnel.
4. Completed all temporary and probationary contracts on Informed K12.
5. Facilitated a joint certificated and classified Leadership Academy with approximately 74 employees who successfully completed the program.
6. Offered two progressive discipline trainings with DWK for all management staff.
7. Proceed with electronic document storage and retrieval to reduce paper storage of employee personnel files.
8. Create and design a new work area for the human resource wing.
9. Added two new positions Risk Manager and Benefits Technician.
10. Wellness TOSA, Jim Mogan, visited all sites to discuss Mental, Physical and Financial Wellness opportunities to all certificated and classified staff.

Recommendations for Future Planning

- Seniority list updated and revised to establish an up-to-date list.
- Work collaboratively with Classified HR and Finance Departments to implement HCM/BEST.

- Work with SIS and Chris Nezzar to create a more efficient system for all certificated staff to be embedded in the Q Student Information System to facilitate an online teacher interface to maintain seniority and teacher records more accurately and efficiently. Working to eliminate PAPI, and transition to PORT, created by SIS.
- Provide additional two progressive discipline training for all new management employees.
- Continue the implementation of StrengthsFinder through multiple training opportunities in partnership with DEA, including:
 - Leadership Team Meetings
 - Certificated and Classified Employees
 - DEA E-Board and site representatives
 - CSEA Unit I and II negotiation teams
 - Categorical Resource Teachers
- Continue training on the new Strengths-Based Evaluations to incorporate Strengths into the evaluation forms.
- Work with administrators and staff to inform them of the TIP program and assist administrators seeking assistance with TIP coaches, as well as introduce the process of working with the TIP TOSAs Chris Bowen and Vonnie Casalegno.
- Work with the Employee Benefits Committee in finding ways to provide high-quality health care that is financially beneficial to employees and the district.
- Roadshow to all school sites and departments with the new Benefits Technician partnering with the TOSA of Staff Wellness, Jim Mogan, to boost the use of the DUSD Wellness Clinic and provide physical, emotional, and financial awareness to all staff.
- Find more services and opportunities to provide to our employees regarding health and welfare benefits, especially by incorporating activities and events through the Wellness Clinic.
- Continue training and establishing an investigation team for UPC and Title IX complaints.
- Provide the opportunity for Credential/Personnel technicians to attend the Credential Counselors and Analysts of California in Sacramento, CA.
- Ensure collaboration and communication continue amongst the unions to provide a productive and collaborative negotiation atmosphere.
- Decorate the HR wing to feel inviting and welcoming to all staff.
- Host more STRS and PERS workshops for employees.
- Provide wellness incentives for all employees to “Know their Numbers” and increase the utilization of the Wellness Clinic.
- Provide Social Emotional support sessions for all district employees through Connect, Flow, Grow by Lynn Jimenez.
- Successfully negotiate with all three units to provide a historic salary increase.
- Created and implemented a Workplace Violence Prevention Plan and training module for all employees in accordance with SB 553.

Wellness Clinic Data and Usage

The DUSD Wellness Clinic (located at 11480 Brookshire Ave., Suite 301) utilization increased by 25% from August 2022 to July 2024 and 43% from January 2024 to June 2024. The chart below contains the monthly utilization breakdown:

DUSD Wellness Clinic Utilization

Month	2022-23	2023-24
Aug	125	92
Sept	79	117
Oct	113	154
Nov	140	139
Dec	157	152
Jan	67	150
Feb	109	163
March	110	122
April	99	122
May	151	215
June	121	180
July	87	113
Total	1,358	1,692

CLASSIFIED HUMAN RESOURCES

**Prepared by Ceylida Lopez, Secretary to the Personnel Commission and
Director, Classified Human Resources**

This is the 58th annual report of the Personnel Commission to the Board of Education, covering the period July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024, in conformance with Education Code Section 45266, which states in part:

“The personnel director shall be responsible to the commission for carrying out all procedures in the administration of the classified personnel in conformity with this article and the rules of the commission . . . He or she shall also act as secretary of the commission and shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, an annual report which shall be sent by the commission to the governing board. . .”

MERIT SYSTEM AND PERSONNEL COMMISSION

As one of approximately 100 merit system districts in California, encompassing approximately 60% of all classified employees, Downey Unified School District is committed to the goal of fair and equitable employment practices in the administration of the classified personnel program. An effective merit system operation ensures fairness and equality in school district employee selection processes. The members of the Downey Unified School District Personnel Commission serve as an oversight board over the mandated functions outlined in the California Education Code. Each of the three members is appointed to the Commission by a different method. Ms. Angelita Rademaker is the appointee of the classified bargaining unit with the greatest number of represented employees, which is C.S.E.A. Chapter 248 (Unit I). Ms. Rademaker has been serving on the Personnel Commission since December 2013. Mr. John Kennedy is the appointee of the Governing Board. Mr. Kennedy has been with the Personnel Commission since December 2008. Ms. Dianne Lumsdaine is the joint appointee of the other two Personnel Commissioners. Ms. Lumsdaine has been serving on the Personnel Commission since May 1994. Ms. Lumsdaine serves as Chair, and Mr. Kennedy serves as Vice-Chair. The Commission held a total of 12 meetings this year.

The five principles of the merit system are 1) Employment and promotion on the basis of merit as shown by competitive examination; 2) encouragement of career service in the classified service; 3) ensuring like pay for like service; 4) prohibition of discrimination in employment; and 5) impartial hearing of appeals from disciplinary actions.

MISSION, BELIEFS AND ETHICS

The Personnel Commission has formally articulated the mission, beliefs and ethics of the classified human resources activities of the District, in support of the educational mission of the District.

Mission Statement

“The Mission of the Personnel Commission of the Downey Unified School District is to ensure that, in support of the excellent education of the students of this District and through an effective and efficient merit system of employment, employees in the classified service are well-qualified, properly classified and paid, treated fairly, and are hired through processes that are objective and free from favoritism in compliance with federal and state laws.”

Beliefs Statement

“We, the Personnel Commissioners and staff of the Personnel Commission of the Downey Unified School District shall honor and support the goals of the Board of Education;

We will enrich the educational program of this District by recruiting and providing to the District the most qualified classified employees possible;

We will strive to ensure diversity in the candidates available for selection, recognizing that equal employment opportunity is a keystone of the merit system principles, and a diverse workplace is important in fostering strong relationships among people of different cultures; and

We will fulfill our responsibility to the constituencies we serve (students, parents, community, District) to provide the best possible, caring service.”

Ethics Statement

“We will implement the merit system with a blind eye to any particular group, reinforcing the principle that favoritism shall not enter into any decisions made by staff or the Personnel Commission;

We will safeguard the public confidence in the integrity of the merit system and public service by making all decisions impartially, free from prejudice or conflicts of interest, and use our positions to advance public interest, not for personal gain;

We will ensure the efficiency of the classified service through well-defined, impartial processes in recruiting, testing, selecting, promoting, and retaining qualified employees;

We will conduct all business openly so the public can make informed judgments and hold commissioners and staff accountable;

We will honor and respect democratic principles; observe the letter and spirit of the law, carry out in good faith all rules and regulations of the Personnel Commission and policies and administrative regulations of the Board of Education in the mutual interest of the employees, students, and the community we serve; and

We will treat all persons fairly, with respect and dignity; we will honor our responsibilities by behaving in a trustworthy and responsible manner; and we will conduct ourselves ethically and, in a manner, befitting public officials, and public employees at all times.”

PERSONNEL COMMISSION STAFF AND ACTIVITIES

All functions related to administering the personnel program for classified employees are performed in the Personnel Commission/Classified Human Resources office. Serving the classified staff human resources needs of the District are Ceylida J. Lopez, Director; Maria Carbajal, Supervising Personnel Analyst; Sandra Carbajal, Senior Secretary; Senior Personnel Technicians: Alison Arroyave, Lesley Bojorquez, Joshua Castellanos, Jasmin Fornelli, and Luis Rangel. The team has continued to be innovative during the examination process to ensure the quantity and quality of the eligibility lists. Staff continues their dedication to meeting the needs of the District and providing excellent customer service.

Classification of Positions

During this reporting period, the Board of Education established 56 new positions. The Personnel Commission "classified" these positions, which included:

Budget/Financial Analyst (1)
Custodian (6)
Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Specialist (1)
Food Service Assistant (1)
Intermediate Clerical Assistant (1)
Lead Food Service Assistant (1)
Senior Accounting Assistant (1)
Senior Instructional Assistant (2)
Senior Instructional Assistant – Behavior (24)
Senior Instructional Assistant – Medical (6)
Senior Secretary (1)
Speech-Language Pathology Assistant (3)
Student Supervision Assistant (5)
Translator/Interpreter (1)
Warehouse Worker (1)
Warehouse Worker Limited-Term (1)

Six classification descriptions were revised:

Adult School Registrar
Elementary Campus Assistant
Food Service Assistant
Food Service Assistant II
Lead Food Service Assistant
Senior Instructional Assistant
Translator/Interpreter

Five new classifications were established:

Benefits Technician
Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Specialist
Risk Manager
Strength and Conditioning Coach
Student/Support Services Technician

Two positions were reclassified. One position at Pace Education Center from School Office Manager to Senior Clerical Assistant. One position in the Student/Support Services department from Senior Clerical Assistant to the new classification of Student/Support Services Technician.

One classification had a title change from Student Supervision Assistant to Elementary Campus Assistant.

Recruitment & Testing

Classified Human Resources is committed to supporting the District's goal of hiring the best staff. One of Downey's Shared Values is "Best Staff and High Standards," and the department has worked to demonstrate this value. The goal of continuously providing highly qualified candidates for the eligibility list remains complex. As we navigate the current workforce landscape, several challenges have emerged, particularly in areas requiring specialized skills. Additionally, there is increased competition across industries, leading to higher compensation expectations and increased turnover in areas such as Food Services, Maintenance and Operations, and Special Education. However, our candidate pools remain large in other areas, creating strong competition. This year we received approximately 9,127 applications for our recruitments, which is a 35% increase from the 2022-23 school year (6,752). Approximately 6,243 candidates went through our examination process which resulted in 75 eligibility lists.

Eligibility Lists Established & Certified

Seventy-five eligibility lists were established this year with 898 candidates eligible for employment. The eligibility lists were for:

ASB Accounting Technician
Assistant Director, Facilities Planning and Development
Assistant Network Administrator
Attendance/Records Clerk (2)
Budget/Financial Analyst
Bus Driver
Campus Security Assistant
College and Career Technician
Computer/Network Support Technician
Custodian
Database Administrator
Director, Facilities Planning and Development
Director, Purchasing and Warehouse
Elementary Campus Assistant
Facilities Construction Coordinator
Facilities Support Technician
Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Specialist
Floor Maintenance Worker
Food Service Assistant (2)
Food Service Assistant II
Food Service Supervisor III
Food Service Supervisor/Operations Specialist
Grounds Team Leader

Instructional Assistant-Massage Therapy
Intermediate Clerical Assistant (2)
Intermediate School Office Manager
Lead Computer/Network Support Technician
Lead Equipment Mechanic
Lead Food Service Assistant
Maintenance Electronics Technician
Maintenance Glazier
Payroll Supervisor
Payroll Technician
School Office Manager
Secretary
Senior Accounting Assistant
Senior Clerical Assistant
Senior Director, Facilities Planning and Development
Senior Instructional Assistant (3)
Senior Instructional Assistant – Behavior (13)
Senior Instructional Assistant – Medical (7)
Senior Instructional Assistant – Sign Language
Senior Personnel Technician
Senior Secretary
Sign Language Interpreter
Student Supervision Assistant (2)
Supervising Personnel Analyst
Translator/Interpreter
Utility Worker
Warehouse Worker (2)

Salary Changes

In order to ensure the District is in line, yet competitive, with similar districts in the local market and to appropriately maintain internal alignment within our own salary schedule structure, eight salary changes were made for Food Service Assistant, Food Service Assistant II, Lead Food Service Assistant, Food Service Supervisor I, Food Service Supervisor II, Food Service Supervisor III, Food Service Supervisor/Operations Specialist, and Food Service Operations Coordinator.

Assignment Transactions

The Commission staff is tasked to ensure that assignment transactions of all classified and unclassified staff are in compliance with Education Code provisions, Personnel Commission Rules and Regulations, collective bargaining agreements, and District policies and procedures. In total, there were 2,584 assignment transactions completed by staff in the 2023-24 school year, which is a 14% increase from the 2022-23 school year (2,267).

HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Classified Human Resources is dedicated to supporting the District's objective of hiring the best staff. To ensure our recruitment and selection processes are fair and effective, we have conducted a comprehensive review of our current testing tools. This review aimed to assess the validity and relevance of the tools for the specific job classifications for which they are used. We evaluated the content to ensure it aligns with job requirements and determined whether the tools accurately reflect the skills and competencies needed for success in the job roles. Based on our findings, we are currently revamping the tests by updating the content, improving fairness and inclusivity, and incorporating new technologies where appropriate. Our goal is to enhance the effectiveness of our selection tools in collaboration with hiring managers and subject matter experts. We are confident that these improvements will result in a more robust and effective recruitment process, ensuring we select the most highly qualified candidates for our District.

Our staff participated in the Southeast LA County Regional Job Fair. This event provided an invaluable opportunity for our District to connect with a diverse pool of potential candidates, showcase the benefits of joining our team, and address any staffing needs for the school year. The job fair allowed our staff to meet and engage with a wide range of candidates, including recent graduates and experienced support staff. This face-to-face interaction assisted in attracting high-quality applicants who may not otherwise consider our District. We met and handed out job postings to over 1,000 potential applicants. We will continue to seek opportunities to network and build beneficial partnerships and collaborations that support our District's hiring needs, as well as represent and meet qualified applicants in our community.

Our Service Pin and Retirement Ceremony was held on May 22, 2024, at Stauffer Middle School. It was a heartfelt celebration of the dedication and hard work of our current employees and retiring staff. The event was made possible by all who contributed their time, resources, and support.

We honored eleven retirees who have collectively dedicated 223 years of service to our District. Retirees present received a certificate of appreciation recognizing their invaluable contributions to our District and students. In addition, 136 employees were recognized for their years of service ranging from 5-35 years, equaling a combined total of 1,775 years of service to our students and community.

The Professional Growth Saturday Workshop took place on Saturday, March 16, 2024, at Downey Adult School, with 41 attendees. It was an all-day event where participants earned credit towards their professional growth program. This year's keynote presenter, Anna Beth Fishman, a Certified Gallup Clifton Strengths Coach, conducted the Gallup Strengths Training. This provided a unique opportunity for staff to uncover their individual talents and gain insights into their strengths. The Classified Professional Growth program is overseen by a committee comprising representatives from management and the classified service. Committee members also earn credit for their

time and service. The success of the event was made possible by the hard work and commitment of the committee members, who include Rosie Abrego (Senior School Office Manager), Ashley Cook (Senior Instructional Assistant), Jose Belmonte (Lead Computer/Network Support Technician), Karla Flores (Food Service Supervisor II), Jonathan Madrid (Maintenance Painter), Maria Carbajal (Supervising Personnel Analyst), and Darryl Browning (Director, Innovative Ed. Programs).

2024-25 GOALS OF THE PERSONNEL COMMISSION AND CLASSIFIED HUMAN RESOURCES DIVISION

1. Continue our work within the guidelines of the California Education Code, Board Policies and Administrative Regulations, and Personnel Commission Rules and Regulations of the Classified Service and state and federal laws, and review and streamline classified human resources internal and external processes to maximize efficiencies to best serve the stakeholders of the Downey Unified School District Personnel Commission and Classified Human Resources.
2. Work collaboratively with school administrators, staff, employees and applicants in recruitment, classification, salary recommendations and employee relations.
3. Continue to work with stakeholders to recognize and appreciate the work of classified employees.
4. Develop and improve recruitment and selection processes to hire the most qualified candidates for the District.
5. Develop new hire onboarding and orientation programs.
6. Continue developing training and preparation workshops for classified employees to work towards promotion.