



Human Relations Council and Superintendent's Student Advisory Committee UPDATE

Dr. Rani Bertsch
Dr. Cassandra Villa

Tuesday, June 24, 2025

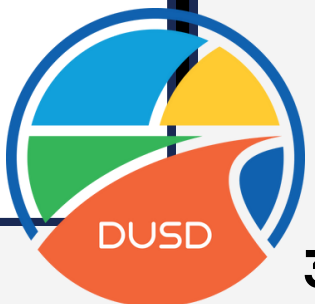
Grounding in Our DUSD Vision

All students graduate with a 21st Century education that ensures they are college and career ready, globally competitive, and citizens of strong character.



DUSD BOARD GOAL #6 2024-2025

Staff will implement and assess all components of Downey Unified's *Equity Plan* to ensure our District continues to build on and enhance our practices in acknowledging and addressing issues of *diversity, equity and inclusion*. We will use *progress monitoring benchmarks* which will support our effort to *create accountable and transparent systems* to improve organizational practices that will ensure all students are *college and career-ready, globally competitive, and citizens of strong character*.



HRC Members 2024-2025

Dr. John Garcia* - Superintendent
Dr. Alyda Mir* - Asst. Superintendent
Dr. Rani Bertsch* - Director of Sec. Ed
Dr. Jennifer Robbins* - Director of Elem.
Ashley Catanzano* - Public Relations
Dr. Connie Quintero* - Principal SMS new
Dr. Michael Williams* - Principal Rio Hondo
Adrian Quintero* - Asst. Principal DHS
Dr. Golden Fowler* - Asst. Principal DHS
Jenny Mojarro* - Asst Principal WHS new
Jim Mogan* - DEA
Jeanetta Wolfe* - WHS Teacher
Cesar Armendariz* - DHS Teacher
Melissa Minahan* - Lewis Teacher
Dr. Cassandra Villa* - DEI TOSA



Jasmine Romero-Cruz - Unsworth ES new*
Sussan DeMatta - Old River ES
Lizzette Mendoza - Carpenter ES
Susana Serrato - Rio San Gabriel ES
Dr. Morgan Evans - Rio Hondo
Vanessa Caro - Gauldin ES
Janet Munoz - Price ES
Sara Rowe - Gallatin ES
Dr. Natalie Kacou - VP, Gallatin ES
Vanessa Martin - Alameda ES
Alex Rocha - Ward ES new*
Candice Sandoval - Williams ES new*
Esther Jeong - Sussman MS
Arlene Baltazar - Stauffer MS
Sarah Clarke - Griffiths MS
Lourdes Martinez - CHS/Woodruff/DAT
Edward Lara - WHS
Santy Agranowitz - DO, program administrator
Natalia Agranowitz - Doty MS new*
Chris Membribes - Asst. Principal WHS
Dr. Nadia Garcia - LOTE Coordinator new*
Dr. Sonia Coronel - Sec. ML TOSA

HRC Members 2024-2025



HRC Reps are Champions for *Equity*.

- They work with site admin regularly to monitor and document the progress and implementation of our equity plan work.
- They update their site HRC Communication Padlet.
- They share updates to staff.
- They co-lead professional learning or presentations at their sites/programs.
- They are ***volunteers*** and have a passion for our continued equity work district wide.
- They help **build** and **sustain** systems for future HRC reps/work.

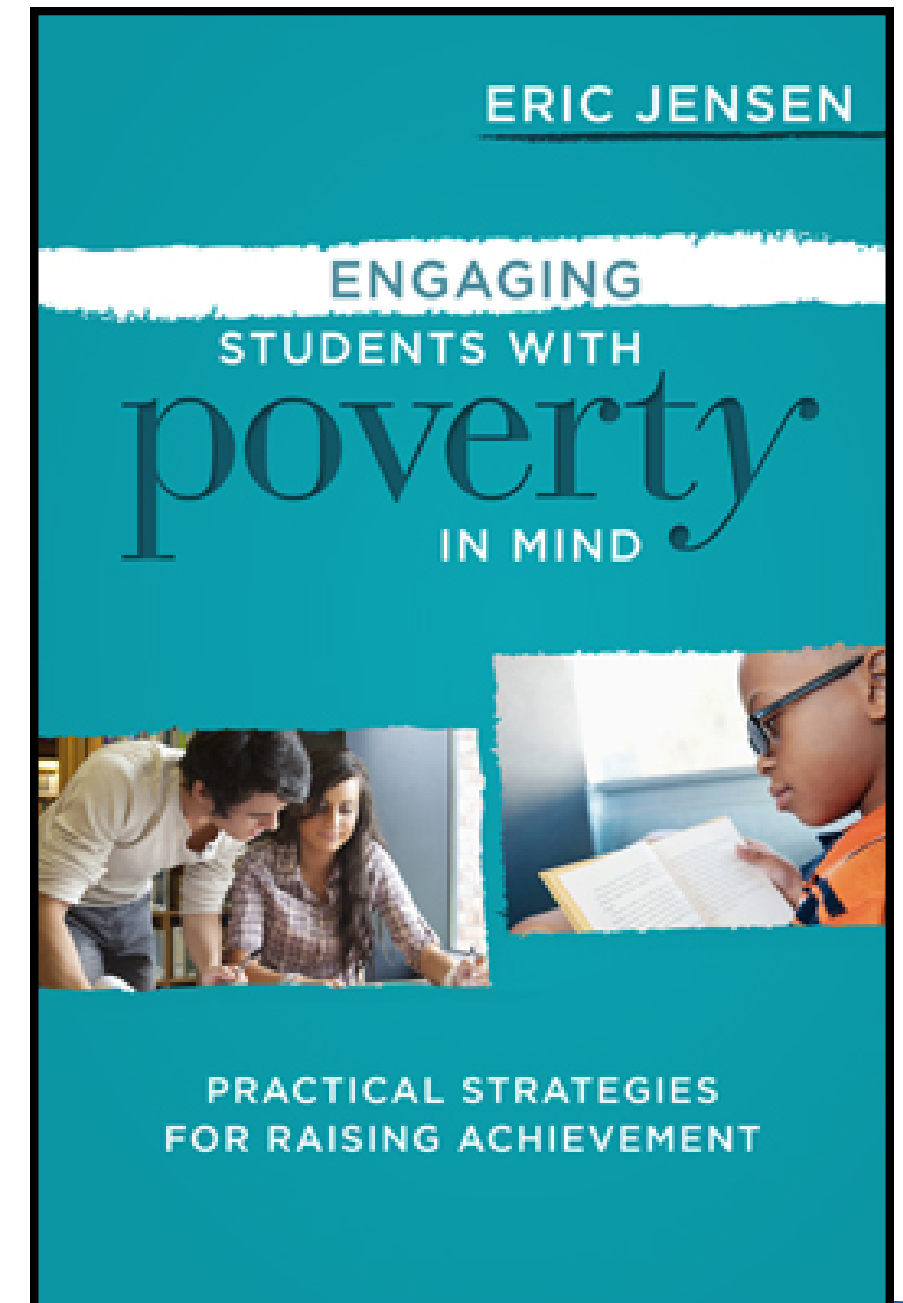
DUSD Equity Plan Goals & Progress Highlights

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 <u>supports</u> .
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.



HRC & Equity Plan Updates

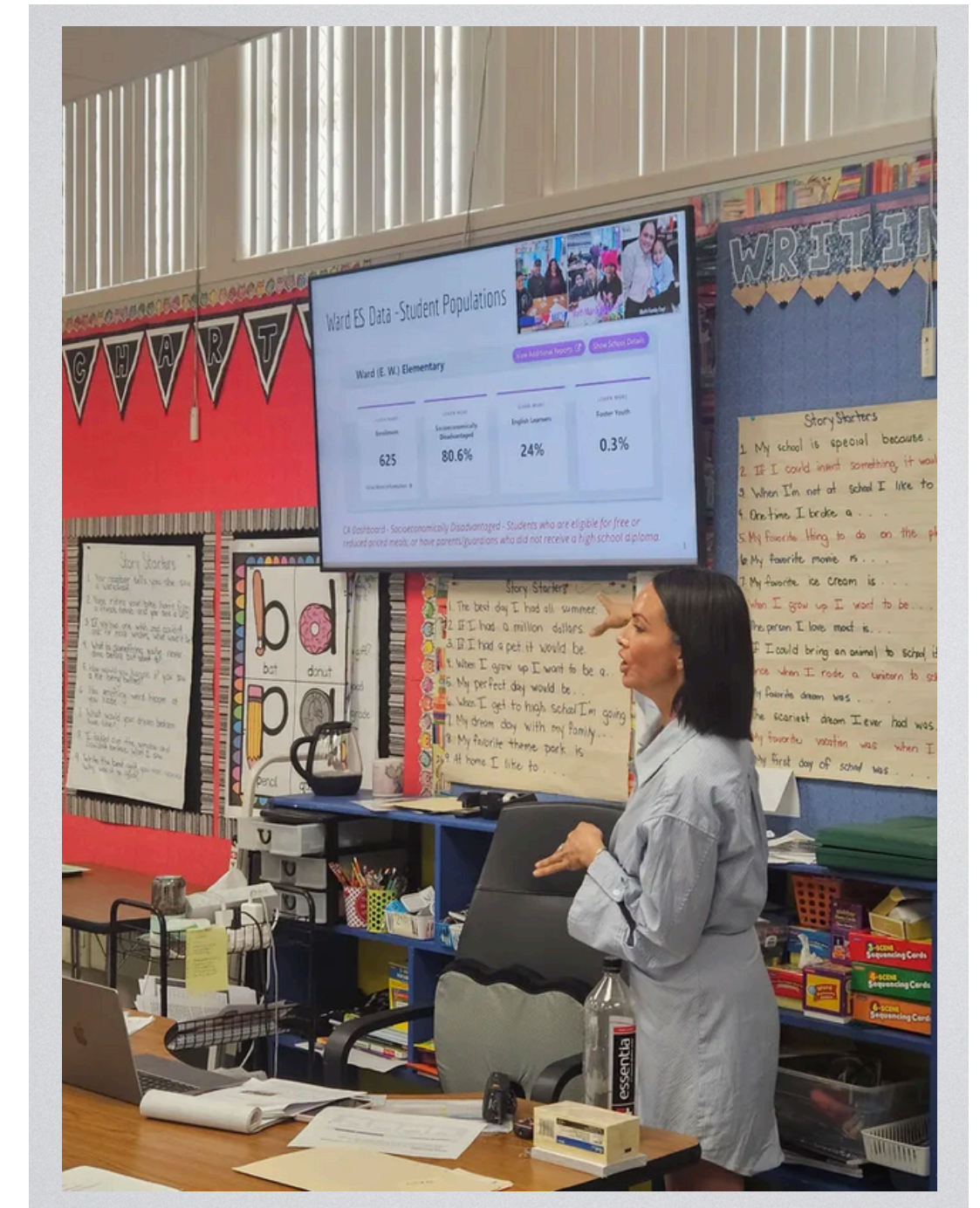
- **100%** of sites have *HRC Padlets* to communicate equity plan implementation updates to sites.
- [Eric Jensen Professional Learning book study](#) - Eric Jensen's Teaching with Poverty & Equity in Mind ongoing.
- Established benchmarks for our *Board Goal #6* to continue improve in our areas of growth through data collection & analysis.
- *HRC Subcommittee* was developed and collected data for developing a resource bank for multicultural and heritage celebration resources based on input gathered from HRC reps, PAC, and DELAC.
- *Building capacity of our HRC reps* with our continued communication protocols after our quarterly meetings.



Equity Plan Progress Monitoring

Highlights

- Expansion of *PD to Classified Groups*
 - **Spring 2025** - DFEO Training on HRC & Equity in DUSD to 200 participants.
 - **SIA Training** - Belonging & Culturally Responsive Teaching
- **Continuing PD with our District Leaders**
 - **6** Professional Learning Sessions with our district administrators for the 2024-2025 school year.
 - **Book Study** - Eric Jensen's *Engaging Students with Poverty in Mind*
 - Administrators are taking the **Jensen work back to their sites**, making an impact with their staff, and planning for the 2025-2026 year.
 - Administrators provided feedback at **every PD session** on areas of strength, improvement, and needs for follow up sessions.
 - **Over 90%** of administrators rated the professional learning *effective or highly effective*.



Cultural Proficiency

Updates

- All current Community Schools FACES & Liaisons trained in Cultural Proficiency.
- Over **75+ participants** in phase 2 of project implementation.
- Over **135+ participants** trained in Cultural Proficiency to date.

Highlights

- Community Night
- Math Mania
- Student Advisory Committees
- Cultural, Identity, and Heritage celebrations



Ethnic Studies

- Over **2,200** students have taken Ethnic Studies to date.
- **Quarterly PD** for teachers at DHS & WHS.
- Project based, student centered, rigorous.

Highlights

- *Spring 2025* - Invited by ***The Getty*** to provide input on their curated resources they are developing based on our exemplary curriculum.
- Consistent ***high satisfaction rates*** from ***students*** since the beginning of the course with over **87%** satisfaction or above rating.
- Infusing ***AVID strategies*** such as focused note taking and Socratic Seminars.



“... I learned a lot about different cultures, identities, and histories that I didn’t know before. The lessons were meaningful and made me think more deeply about the world and my place in it. I also liked how we were encouraged to share our own thoughts and experiences.”

- *Jazell Serrano, DUSD student*

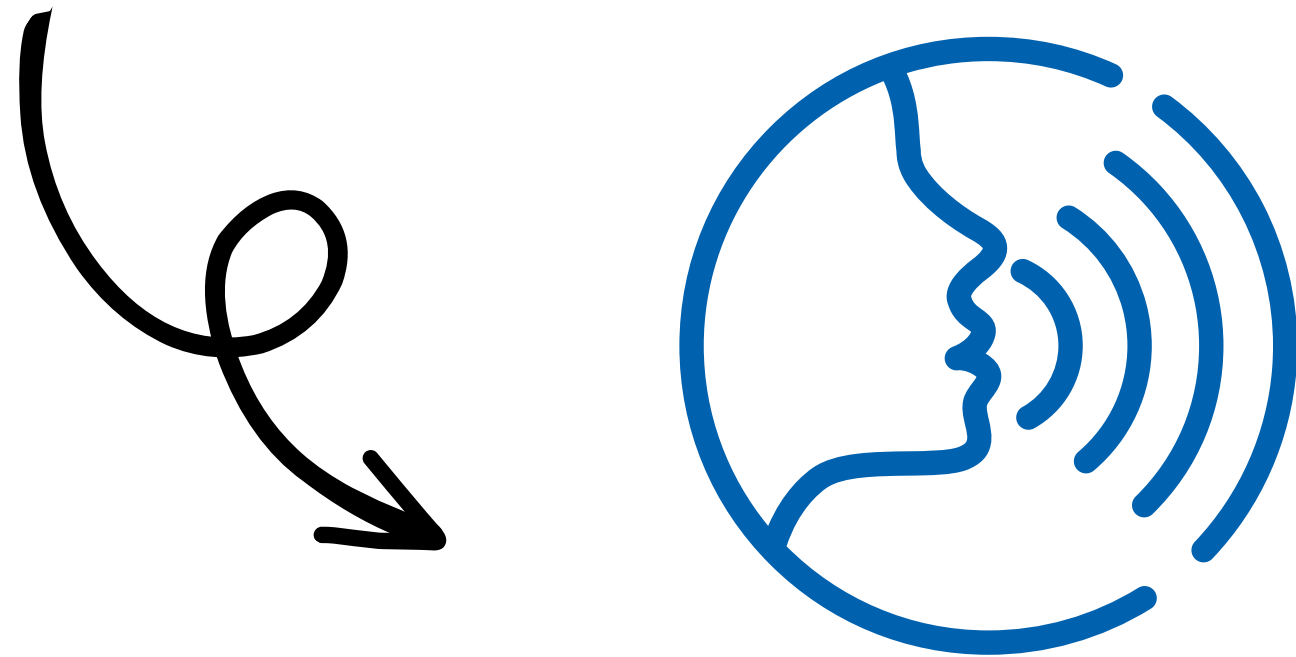
Next Steps: Where Are We Going?



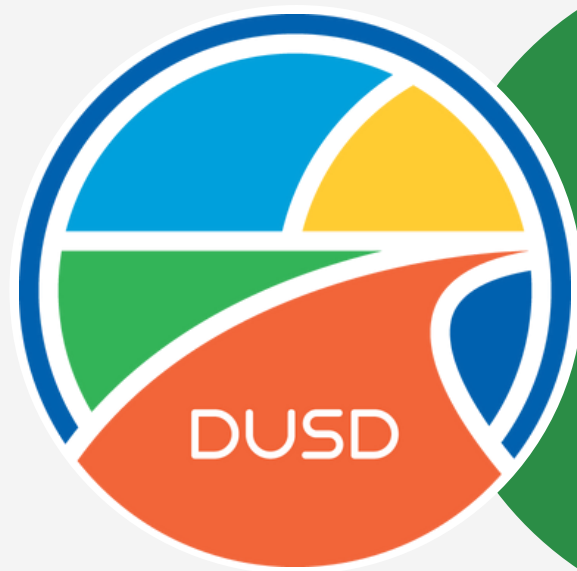
JUNE 2025 - ONGOING

- Professional learning continued for our educational partners.
- Continue to build capacity of HRC reps.
- Use data collection to create metrics for improvement.
- Continue to build our Equity Resource Bank.
- Continue equity plan progress monitoring.

Listening Tour - Our Why



Student Voice

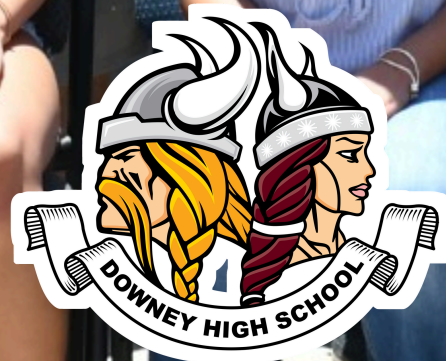


SUPERINTENDENT'S
STUDENT
ADVISORY
COMMITTEE

Amplifying Student Voices in Downey Unified

Collaborate • Learn • Share
Make an Impact

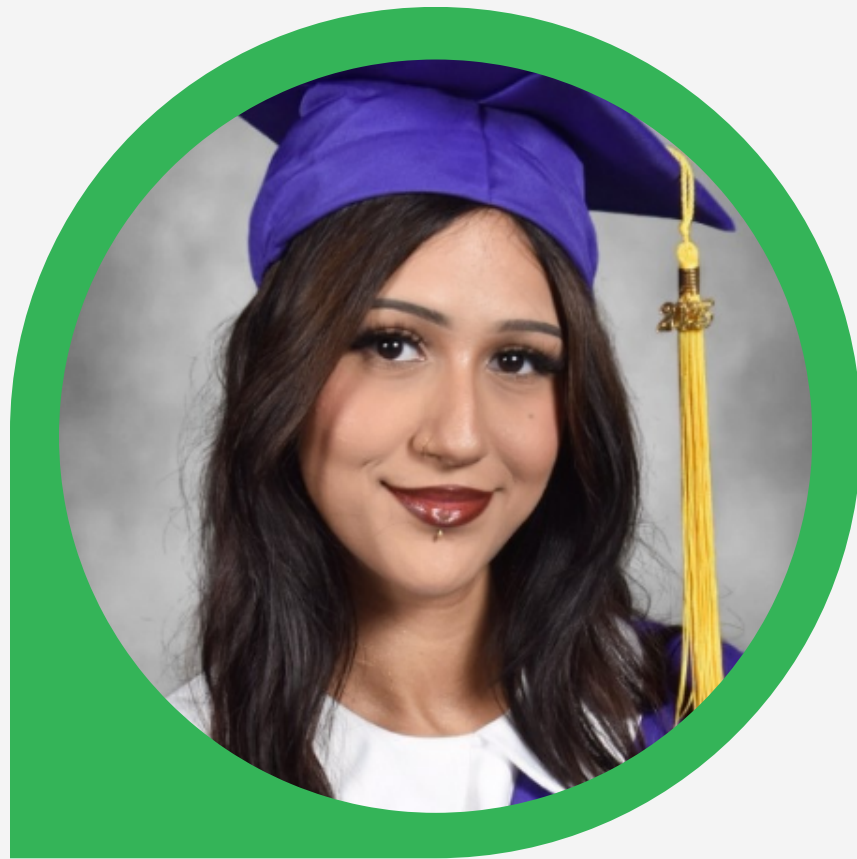




**SUPERINTENDENT'S
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Amplifying Student Voices in Downey Unified

Member Speakers



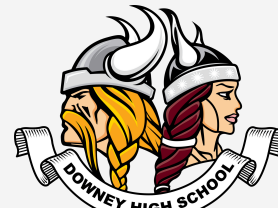
Irie Boyle
C/o 2025
Columbus HS



Melissa Canchola
C/o 2025
Warren HS



Ayden Murillo
C/o 2025
Downey HS



By the Numbers

2021

Year Est.

36

Meetings

66^{*}

Members

*Unique Members over 3 years



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Amplifying Student Voices in Downey Unified

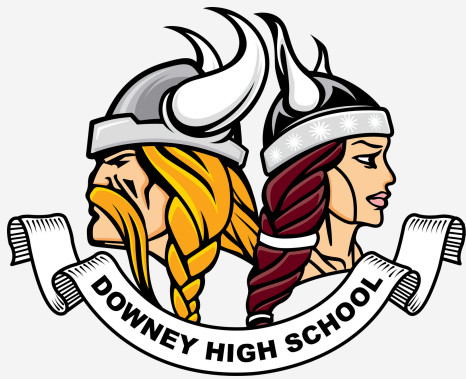
SSAC Membership



2024 - 2025 School Year

31
members

Columbus:	2	Seniors:	17
Downey:	14	Juniors:	5
Warren:	15	Sophomores:	9



NEWLY RECRUITED CLASS



2025 - 2026 School Year

27
members

Columbus: 2 (2*)

Downey: 12 (5*)

Warren: 13 (6*)

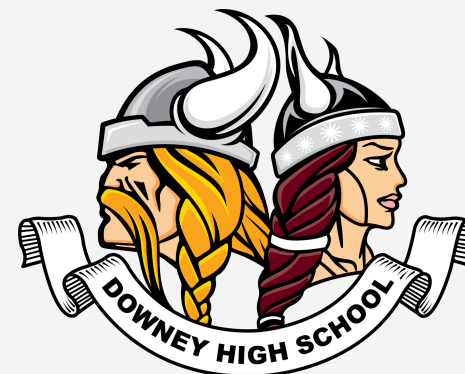
Seniors: 5 (0*)

Juniors: 15 (6*)

Sophomores: 7 (7*)

* Indicates new members

13 newly recruited member as of 25-26; 14 are returning members



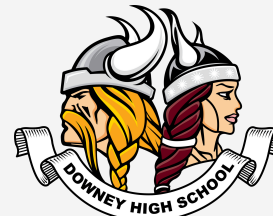
Topics Discussed

Year 4

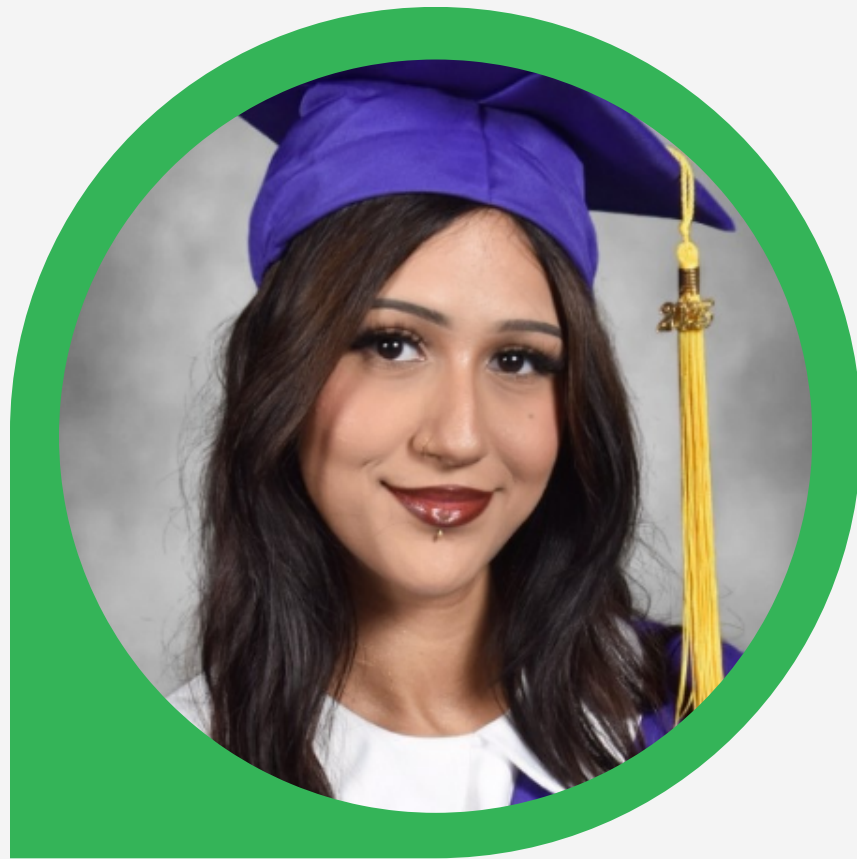
2024-2025



- District Funding
- Student Voice
- Visual and Performing Arts Strategic Plan
- Addressing Vaping and Restroom Access
- Hiring and Retaining the Best Teachers
- A-G Requirements
- Clifton's Strengths
- Mental Health and Wellness Centers



Member Speakers



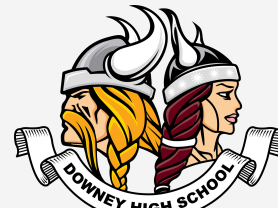
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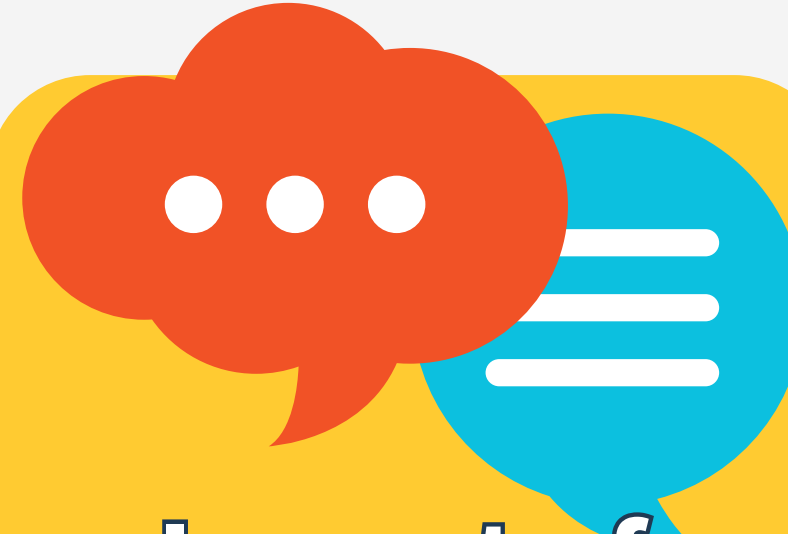
Member Share Out



**Introduce
yourself!**



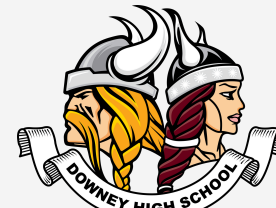
**Why did you
join the SSAC?**



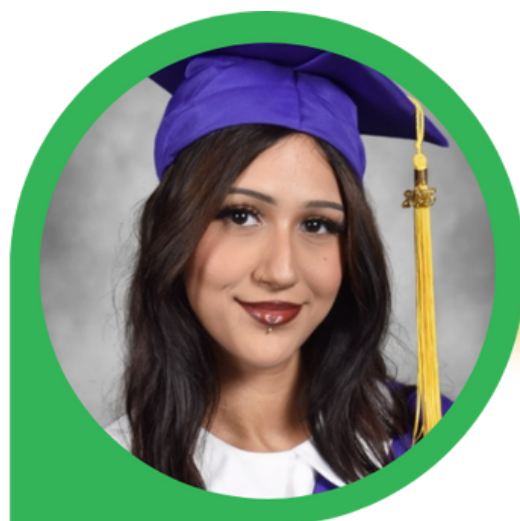
**Impact of
the SSAC**



**What would be your
advice to your
younger self?**



Topics Discussed



Irie Boyle
C/o 2025
Columbus HS

OVERCOMING BARRIERS USING STRENGTHS

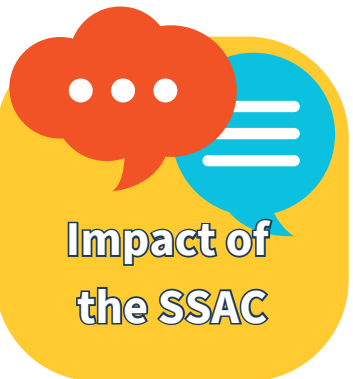
Ideation | Strategic | Individualization | Connectedness | Arranger



Introduce
yourself!



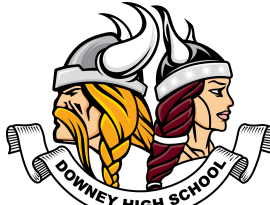
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Impact of
the SSAC



What would be your
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younger self?SAC



Topics Discussed



Melissa Canchola
C/o 2025
Warren HS

STUDENT VOICE

Achiever | **Focus** | **Context** | **Competition** | **Restorative**



**Introduce
yourself!**



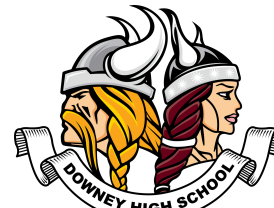
**Why did you
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**Impact of
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**What would be your
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**SUPERINTENDENT'S
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Amplifying Student Voices in Downey Unified

Topics Discussed



Ayden Murillo
C/o 2025
Downey IS

A-G REQUIREMENTS

Context | Analytical | Restorative | Achiever | Discipline





Introduce yourself!



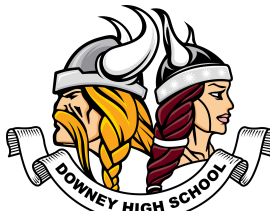
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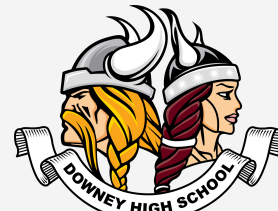
Impact of the SSAC



What would be your advice to your younger self?



Questions?



A Message to Dr. Garcia from the SSAC

