San Rafael City Schools

EDUCATIONAL EQUITY AUDIT (EEA)

August 2019

The Education Trust—West

About The Education Trust–West

The Education Trust–West works for educational justice and the high academic achievement of all students at all levels, pre-K through college. We expose educational injustices and inequities that separate students of color, English learners, and low-income students from their peers, and we identify and advocate for the strategies that will forever close equity gaps.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In November 2018, San Rafael City Schools (SRCS) partnered with The Education Trust–West (ETW) and Marin Promise Partnership (MPP) to conduct an Educational Equity Audit (EEA) for the district. The purpose of the EEA is to closely analyze college and career readiness for SRCS students, with a focus on equitable access and success within schools, among schools, and among groups of students. Participation in the EEA is an essential component to the county-wide college and career readiness initiative coordinated by MPP — *Keeping Every Door Open: College and Career Readiness for Every Student.*

To conduct the Educational Equity Audit, ETW conducted interviews with district leaders and focus groups with administrators, students, parents, counselors, and teachers at each of the three high schools — San Rafael, Terra Linda, and Madrone. ETW also gathered survey data from 1,515 students, 362 parents, and 123 school staff members. Additionally, ETW, district, and community partner staff facilitated three community conversations with 85 family and community stakeholders who shared their ideas on ways to support students in becoming college and career ready.

ETW also conducted a transcript analysis for the Class of 2018 and reviewed artifacts such as master schedules, course catalogs, and budget documents.

Using those data, ETW identified ten categories and grouped key findings and recommendations into the following topics:

1. Course access and success
2. Curriculum and instruction
3. Student supports and interventions
4. School culture and climate
5. College and career readiness supports
6. Certificated staff diversity and professional learning
7. Community and family engagement
8. English learners (ELs) and students with disabilities
9. Alternative schools
10. Allocation of resources

This report includes key findings from ETW's data analysis, such as:

- There are significant gaps in enrollment and successful completion of the full a-g course sequence by gender, ethnicity, and income. Ethnicity is strongest predictor of a-g completion.

- English learners are significantly underrepresented in college preparatory and Advanced Placement courses.

- There are a lack of supports for English learners in content courses and insufficient professional learning opportunities focused on supporting English learners and students with disabilities in content courses.

- The district lacks a systemic way to regularly update families and students about students' progress towards meeting a-g and/or Career Technical Education (CTE) pathway requirements.

- The district's chronic absenteeism and suspension rates are higher than state and county average rates, with students of color and English learners disproportionately affected.

Key findings and recommendations included in this report will inform the Blueprint for Equity Action Planning process to occur during the 2019-20 school year.

We want to recognize and thank the district and school leadership, staff, families, and community members for their collective commitment to this EEA process.

RESUMEN EJECUTIVO

En noviembre de 2018, San Rafael City Schools (SRCS) se asoció con The Education Trust–West (ETW) y Marin Promise Partnership (MPP) a fin de realizar una Auditoría de Equidad Educacional (EEA, por su sigla en inglés) para el distrito. El propósito de la EEA es analizar minuciosamente la preparación de universidades y carreras para los estudiantes SRCS, con un enfoque en el acceso equitativo y el éxito dentro de las escuelas, entre las escuelas, y entre grupos de estudiantes. Participar en la EEA es un componente esencial de la iniciativa de preparación de universidades y carreras a nivel nacional coordinada por MPP — *Keeping Every Door Open: College and Career Readiness for Every Student (Mantener Todas las Puertas Abiertas: Preparación de Universidades y Carreras para Todo Estudiante).*

Con el objeto de realizar la Auditoría de Equidad Educacional, ETW sostuvo entrevistas con líderes del distrito y organizó grupos de enfoque con administradores, estudiantes, padres, consejeros y maestros en cada una de las tres escuelas secundarias: San Rafael, Terra Linda, y Madrone. ETW también recopiló datos de encuestas de 1,515 estudiantes, 362 padres, y 123 miembros del personal escolar. Adicionalmente, personal de ETW, del distrito, y de socios de la comunidad facilitaron tres conversaciones comunitarias con 85 familias y grupos de interés comunitarios que compartieron sus ideas sobre las maneras de apoyar a los estudiantes para prepararse para la universidad y para una carrera.

ETW también realizó un análisis del expediente académicos para la clase del 2018 y revisó artefactos tales como horarios maestros, catálogos de cursos, y documentos de presupuesto.

Utilizando esos datos, ETW identificó diez categorías y agrupó los hallazgos clave y las recomendaciones en las siguientes áreas temáticas:

1. Acceso a cursos y éxito en ellos
2. Currículo e instrucción
3. Apoyos e intervenciones estudiantiles
4. Cultura y clima escolar
5. Apoyos de preparación para universidad y carrera
6. Diversidad del personal certificada y aprendizaje profesional
7. Compromiso comunitario y familiar
8. Estudiantes del idioma inglés (ELs) y los estudiantes con discapacidades
9. Escuelas alternativas
10. Asignación de recursos

Este reporte incluye hallazgos claves a partir del análisis de datos de ETW, tales como:

- Existen brechas significativas en inscripción y finalización exitosa de la secuencia completa de cursos de a-g por género, etnicidad, e ingresos. La etnicidad es el factor más sólido para predecir la probabilidad de completar los cursos a-g.

- Los estudiantes que aprenden inglés (EL, por su sigla en inglés) están significativamente subrepresentados en los cursos de preparación universitaria y los de colocación avanzada (AP, por su sigla en inglés).

- Faltan apoyos para los estudiantes EL en los cursos de contenidos. Adicionalmente, no hay suficiente oportunidades de aprendizaje profesional enfocadas en apoyar a los estudiantes EL y a estudiantes con discapacidades en cursos de contenidos.

- El distrito carece de una forma sistémica de actualizar periódicamente a familias y estudiantes sobre el progreso de los estudiantes para cumplir con los requisitos de proceso en cursos a-g y/o Educación para Carreras Técnicas (CTE).

- Las tasas de ausentismo y suspensión crónicas del distrito son superiores a las tasas promedio a nivel del condado y del estado, siendo los estudiantes de color y los estudiantes EL quienes se ven desproporcionadamente afectados.

Los hallazgos clave y las recomendaciones incluidas en este informe servirán de base para el proceso del Plan de Acción para Equidad (Blueprint, por su nombre en inglés) que se llevara a cabo durante el año escolar 2019-20.

Queremos reconocer y agradecer al liderazgo del distrito y las escuelas, al personal, a familias y a los miembros de la comunidad por su compromiso colectivo con este proceso EEA.

Key Findings and Recommendations

TOPIC 1: COURSE ACCESS AND SUCCESS

Equitable access to a well-rounded course of study helps prepare students for college and careers. The Education Trust–West, in partnership with School by Design, conducted a transcript analysis of the Class of 2018 to examine access to and success in college preparatory courses for all students. The transcript analysis highlights key areas for improvement as well as successes to learn from. The transcript analysis also provides a baseline for the development of the Blueprint for Equity Action Plan. Key findings and recommendations in this topic area should inform the development and implementation of actions that advance equitable access to and successful completion of courses which prepare all students to excel in college and career.

Key Findings	Recommendations
1. District-wide, 53% of students in the Class of 2018 were enrolled in the full a-g course sequence. *Data sources: Class of 2018 Transcript Analysis – Figure 6.*	1A. Adopt graduation and course placement policies to ensure that every student is enrolled in the full a-g course sequence with appropriate supports, which could include a combination of the following: differentiated teaching methods (including Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English), push-in supports, primary language supports, and simultaneous support classes.[1]
2. There are significant gaps in enrollment in and successful completion of the full a-g course sequence by gender, ethnicity, and income, with ethnicity as the strongest predictor of a-g completion rates. *A-G Completion Rates:* *By Gender: Female, 51%; Male 33%.* *By Ethnicity: White, 63%; Latinx, 27%.* *By Income: Not low-income, 61%; Low-income, 29%* *Data sources: Class of 2018 Transcript Analysis – Figures 8 and 17-22.*	2A. Establish monitoring systems that routinely update counselors, teachers, students, and parents on students' progress towards meeting a-g course requirements, and develop clear plans for effective interventions when students fall off-track.[2]
3. District-wide Advanced Placement (AP) enrollment is disproportionate to overall student enrollment, with male students, English learners, Latinx students, economically disadvantaged students, and students in Special Education being the most underrepresented. *Data sources: Class of 2018 Transcript Analysis – Figure 4.*	3A. Adopt and implement a district-wide equitable access policy for AP courses that includes clear and transparent outreach efforts to underrepresented groups, and enrollment processes that remove gatekeeping mechanisms.[3]

4. District-wide, 42% of students passed all a-g subject areas (with a C or better). An additional 10% passed six of the seven a-g subject areas. Of the 10% who fell one subject area short, 50% fell short in English, 28% fell short in Math, and 11% fell short in Language Other than English. *Data sources: Class of 2018 Transcript Analysis – Figures 7 and 10.*	See recommendation 2A above.
5. English, Math, and Lab Science were the subject areas with the lowest completion rates (50% for English, 53% for Math, and 59% for Lab Science). Electives (81%) and Visual and Performing Arts (85%) had the highest completion rates. *Data sources: Class of 2018 Transcript Analysis – Figure 9.*	5A. Analyze current patterns in students' Math course-taking and achievement to develop Math pathways for all students that result in college and career readiness.[4] Policies to consider include: • Increase the high school graduation requirement to three years of Math[5] to align with California's state standards in mathematics and the minimum entrance requirements for California's public universities.[6] • Establish a-g-approved Math pathways to include more college preparatory courses with an application-based approach (such as Statistics).[7] • Study the unintended consequences of the 2-year Algebra and Geometry sequences and determine if there are more effective ways to support students' math learning while helping them to stay on track for a-g completion. 5B. Ensure that all students — including English learners[8] — have full access to four-years of English classes that are aligned with California's state standards for English/Language Arts and English Language Development, and are a-g approved.
6. Math was the subject area with the lowest access rate (enrolled in three years of a-g courses) for Latinx (40%), Redesignated (62%), economically disadvantaged (42%), and Special Education (28%) students. English was the subject area with the lowest access rate (enrolled in four years of a-g courses) for English learners (2%). Language Other than English (LOTE) was the subject area with the lowest access rate (enrolled in two years of same language) for White students (78%). *Data sources: Class of 2018 Transcript Analysis – Figures 17-22.*	See Recommendations 5A and 5B above. 6A. Partner with community colleges to help meet the demand for courses in LOTE. Ensure that community college courses are systematically included in students' high school academic records in order to obtain dual enrollment credit. 6B. Partner with the California World Language Project for support in expanding the district's World Language Program.[9]

7. For every student group, the largest gap between access (enrollment in required a-g courses) and success (passing a-g courses) was in English. *Data sources: Class of 2018 Transcript Analysis – Figures 17-22.*	7A. Examine grading practices to ensure that students have fair and ample opportunities to demonstrate mastery of course standards.[10] When specific standards are not met, provide students with opportunities to re-learn those standards using a variety of approaches, including personalized online learning, support classes during the school day, and opportunities before and after school. 7B. Examine instructional practices in all subjects — with a focus on English — to ensure that they are aligned with California's state standards and provide students with rigor, cognitive challenge, and opportunities to communicate using academic language.[11]

8. District-wide, 48% of students were "on-track" for a-g completion after 9th-grade. This percentage dropped to 42% after 10th-grade, to 32% after 11th-grade, and returned to 42% by the end of the 12th-grade. This trend held consistent across all student groups.
 	
Data sources: Class of 2018 Transcript Analysis – Figures 11a–11g.
	8A. Focus on 9th-grade success[12] using a combination of strategies, including:
	  • Ensuring a smooth transition from 8th- to 9th-grade through frequent dialogue between middle and high school counselors, teachers, administrators, and families.
	  • Offering summer bridge programs, with specific attention to students identified as needing additional support.
	  • Offering a College and Career Readiness course to address issues of socioemotional wellness as an essential component to college and career readiness.
	  • Building in academic tutorials during the school day.
	
	8B. Ensure that there are robust academic and socioemotional counseling supports in 9th through 12th-grade to ensure that students are staying on-track.

9. No student who received an "F" grade in English in 9th-grade was a-g eligible by the end of 12th-grade. *Data source: Class of 2018 Transcript Analysis – Figure 12.*	See Recommendation 8A above.
10. The vast majority (76%) of students in the Class of 2018 did not take a Career Technical Education (CTE) course. Only 9% completed a full CTE Pathway. *Data source: Class of 2018 Transcript Analysis – Figures 13 and 16.*	10A. Continue to develop CTE Pathways and ensure students access to the full sequence of courses.

TOPIC 2: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

High-quality curriculum and instruction are key to ensuring that all students have equitable access to meeting California's college- and career-ready standards. California's English Language Arts, English Language Development, mathematics, and science standards all require instructional shifts that emphasize greater focus on academic language, cognitive rigor, and critical thinking.[13] Districts and schools that effectively prepare traditionally underrepresented students for college also ensure that their instruction is responsive to their students' cultures and communities.[14] This means that they intentionally include students' knowledge, experiences, and backgrounds to inform pedagogy, while also meeting district and curricular requirements and expectations.[15]

Key Findings	Recommendations
1. The district's school board passed a resolution in support of the California English Learner Roadmap and Proposition 58. *Data sources: San Rafael City Schools Resolution 1819-25.*	1A. Seek out guidance, expertise, and resources from state-wide organizations (such as the California Association for Bilingual Education[16] and Californians Together[17]) connected with the California English Learner Roadmap to plan for and expand bilingual course offerings and a TK-12 dual immersion program.
2. The District's two-year Algebra I and Geometry sequences take students off-track for meeting a-g course requirements in Math.[18] *Data sources: Central Office Interviews, Math Department Interview, A-G Counseling Benchmarks for On Track/Off Track Determination.*	2A. Study the unintended consequences of the 2-year Algebra and Geometry sequences and implement course placement policies and practices to support students' math learning while helping them to stay on track for a-g completion.
3. There is a stated belief that grading practices are too subjective and inconsistent, leading to inequitable grade outcomes. *Data sources: Central Office Interviews.*	3A. Examine grading practices to ensure that students have fair and ample opportunities to demonstrate mastery of course standards.[19] When specific standards are not met, provide students with opportunities to re-learn those standards using a variety of approaches including personalized online learning, support classes during the school day, and opportunities before/after school.
4. The development of school master schedules does not clearly prioritize the needs of the students with the greatest academic needs. *Data sources: Central Office Interviews, Master Schedule Analysis, School Leader Interviews.*	4A. Engage site teams in analyzing how the master schedule is developed, with a particular focus on: • How adult and student needs are prioritized. • Which students have access to the most qualified teachers.[20] • How scheduling priorities (such as creating common planning time for teachers) can have unintended consequences for students. • How tracking or grouping in one subject area can impact students' overall schedules. • How to build in appropriate course options for students who enroll mid-year (newcomer students). To aid in the analysis, consult resources such as the College and Career Academy Support Network at UC Berkeley.[21]

Students thrive when they know that faculty and staff at their school care about them[22] *and* have high expectations for their success.[23] While access to high-quality courses is vital, monitoring students' progress in those courses and developing systems to ensure that interventions and supports are aligned with students' needs are equally important.

Key Findings	Recommendations
1. While online credit recovery is offered during the school day, there are concerns about the quality and effectiveness of the current program. *Data sources: Central Office Interviews.*	1A. The district should evaluate the effectiveness of the current credit recovery program and consider restructuring it to focus on the standards or proficiencies that a student has not yet mastered rather than repeating an entire course.
2. The district has implemented successful support programs such as Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) and an Advisory program at two schools. *Data sources: Master Schedule Analysis, School Leader Interviews, Student Focus Groups, Teacher Focus Groups, Central Office Interviews.*	2A. Consider ways to expand student success practices — such as AVID strategies — school-wide. Provide resources for Advisory teachers to ensure that the program helps build positive relationships between adults and students and helps nurture student wellness. [24]
3. While students expressed feeling varying levels of academic support from counselors, some expressed that counselors are more easily accessible to higher performing students and that some lack an understanding of students' lives outside of school. *Data sources: Student Focus Groups, Student Survey.*	3A. Explore alternative counseling models and partnerships[25] to provide greater student access to socioemotional, academic, and college- and career-counseling services, especially in 9th- and 10th-grade.
4. There is a lack of bilingual student support staff for tutoring, counseling, and in school libraries. *Data sources: Counselor Focus Group, Family Focus Groups, School Support Staff Focus Groups, Student Surveys.*	4A. Prioritize the hiring of bilingual staff at all levels to provide a more welcoming and inclusive school culture for non-English speaking students and families. 4B. Provide opportunities for current staff members to learn Spanish (or other languages spoken by district families).

TOPIC 4: SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE

Helping students build college-going identities requires that districts and schools deliberately take steps to understand and value the cultures of students, families, and communities that they serve. By considering the assets students bring to schools (particularly underrepresented students of color, low-income students, and English learners) and refraining from deficit viewpoints, districts and schools can help students navigate their college and career pathway.[26] Using a culturally sustaining pedagogy to foster a strong sense of community that embraces cultural pluralism[27] has been associated with higher levels of college and career preparation rates for traditionally underrepresented groups. In contrast to assimilation, a school culture rooted in humanizing practices honors and respects the history, experiences, and perspective of students and makes them a fundamental part of students' educational experiences.[28]

Key Findings	Recommendations
1. The District's 2017-18 chronic absenteeism rate (18.1%) is higher than the county's rate for grades 9-12 (16.3%) and the state's rate for grades 9-12 (15.6%). The district's chronic absenteeism rate for English learners (28%), is slightly higher than the county rate (27.5%) and higher than the state rate (23%). Similarly, the district's absenteeism rate for students in Special Education (30.7%), is higher than the county rate (28.4%) and state rate (25.6%). *Data sources: California Department of Education, Dataquest Attendance Report.*	1A. Conduct empathy interviews with families whose students are chronically absent to identify trends and understand the root causes of chronic absenteeism. 1B. Prioritize efforts to ensure that students who are chronically absent — or those who are at-risk of becoming chronically absent — have a trusting relationship with at least one adult on campus. 1C. Activate representative teams of student leaders to develop and implement campaigns to ensure that school campuses are welcoming and safe, and help students understand the importance of positive school attendance.[29]
2. On the 2018 California School Dashboard, the District scored in the orange category for suspensions, with 6.2% of students having been suspended at least one time. There are six student groups for which the district scored in the red (lowest performance). They are: *African American students (10.3%),* *English learners (14.5%),* *Latinx students (8.4%),* *Homeless (10.5%),* *Socioeconomically disadvantaged (8.7%)* *Students with disabilities (11%)* *Data sources: 2018 California School Dashboard, San Rafael City High Schools.*	2A. Prioritize efforts to nurture positive relationships between students and adults on campus, as well as support strong family and community engagement. 2B. Provide curricular resources for the Advisory course that support teachers' efforts to create caring teacher-student relationships and help students and teachers develop self-management and conflict resolution strategies. 2C. Eliminate disproportionate and discriminatory student discipline by providing training on implicit bias and asset-based youth development for all teachers and administrators, school resource officers, and other staff who interact with students.[30] 2D. Build upon the restorative practices work already in place at Davidson Middle School to develop practices that are appropriate for each high school community, in collaboration with students, parents, school and district staff, and community partners.

3. There is a stated belief that some adults on school campuses have deficit viewpoints and express lower expectations for students of color and English learners. *Data sources: Central Office Interviews, Student Focus Groups.*	3A. Intentionally recruit and support diverse team members[31] who consistently demonstrate caring, demanding, and asset-based belief systems for all students, and who are courageous in addressing how implicit bias manifests in everyday acts of microaggression. 3B. Normalize discussions and vocabulary about identity, bias, privilege, and race, while always providing concrete examples of how these concepts manifest in classrooms, schools, and workplaces. Establish team cultures that create safe places for people to challenge deficit viewpoints in a constructive, open manner.
4. While students expressed feeling varying levels of academic support from teachers, several expressed that teachers lack an understanding of Latinx students' culture and lives outside of school. *Data sources: Student Focus Groups, Student Survey.*	4A. Prioritize the creation of structured opportunities for building positive relationships between adults and students, and building school cultures that intentionally listen to and value students' voices.[32]

TOPIC 5: COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS SUPPORTS

Economically disadvantaged students and students of color benefit greatly when school administrators, faculty, and staff promote high expectations.[33] However, educators are more likely to have lower educational expectations of these students than their economically advantaged and White peers.[34] As a result, low-income students and students of color are less likely to be enrolled in college preparatory coursework, resulting in lower levels of persistence and success in college.[35] In a 2019 study, The Education Trust—West found common practices among districts and schools with the best a-g completion for low-income students and students of color: they implemented equitable course placement policies and intentionally focused leadership responsibilities on a-g access and completion.[36]

Key Findings	Recommendations
1. The district lacks a systemic way for families and students to be regularly updated about students' progress towards meeting a-g and/or Career Technical Education (CTE) pathway requirements. In a survey of parents, 37% responded that their school notifies them when their student is struggling or falling behind. *Data sources: Student Focus Groups, Parent Surveys.*	1A. Utilize existing tools such as Aeries, progress reports, and report cards to provide timely and regular communication to parents and students about their progress towards meeting a-g and CTE requirements. Develop systems to trigger access to interventions and support services when students are deemed to be off-track or at risk for falling off-track.
2. The district has a good relationship with College of Marin, which offers dual enrollment courses on the high school campuses. However, district policies about which college courses can be taken for dual credit serve as a deterrent from students taking additional college courses and/or from reporting those courses to their school. *Data sources: Central Office Interviews, Student Focus Group.*	2A. Consider revisions to dual enrollment policies to ensure that students can choose from the broadest set of available courses to meet a-g course requirements and become academically ready for college level coursework. Ensure that students' credits are entered into Aeries to accurately capture a-g completion rates on their transcripts.
3. CTE, ROP, and applied math and science courses provide students with rigorous and relevant learning opportunities. However, 76% of students in the Class of 2018 never took a CTE course. *Data sources: Master Schedule Analysis, Class of 2018 Transcript Analysis – Figure 13, School Leader Interviews, Teacher Focus Groups.*	3A. Build out access to more complete CTE Pathways for all three high schools to provide students with more diverse options for college and career preparation.
4. Various stakeholders expressed that college and career readiness has been too narrowly focused on preparation for a four-year college. *Data sources: Counselor Focus Group, Community Conversation, Student Focus Group.*	4A. Strive to establish the expectation that all students should have the opportunity to pursue all post-secondary options — including a four-year university, a two-year college, or a career pathway, while highlighting the career and economic benefits of obtaining a four-year degree. Ensure that students and families have the knowledge and skills to make informed decisions that are aligned with the particular goals of each student.

TOPIC 6: CERTIFICIATED STAFF DIVERSITY AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Having a diverse and qualified staff is essential to providing students with meaningful access to rigorous and supportive learning environments. There is a growing body of research that shows that all students, not just students of color, benefit from having at least one teacher of color.[37] In addition, teachers of color who share the same race as their students tend to set higher expectations of them than other teachers[38] and improve the reported school experience for students of color.[39] In addition, schools staffed by leaders and teachers of color expose students to positive role models and help counteract negative stereotypes that misrepresent people of color.[40]

Due to the significant shift in teaching and learning that college- and career-ready standards call for, educator professional learning must also shift significantly for effective implementation. High-quality professional learning focuses on teacher knowledge, attitudes and beliefs, and instructional practice. The combination of changing teachers' mindsets and instructional practices is the engine behind improved student achievement.[41] Research-based recommendations for professional learning structures that lead to improved student achievement include: 1) teacher collaboration supported by strong principal leadership;[42] 2) sustained, high-quality professional learning opportunities for networks of educators focused on developing practice through extended institutes, collective inquiry, action research to solve complex problems of practice, and coaching; and 3) flexible structures within the teaching day and year that provide time for teachers to participate in collegial planning and job-embedded professional learning opportunities.[43]

Key Findings	Recommendations
1. There is no clearly articulated district-wide strategy for professional learning at the secondary level. *Data sources: Central Office Interviews, Teacher Focus Groups, Instructional Leadership Team Focus Groups.*	1A. Develop a plan for professional learning that is based on student needs, as identified by data, and driven by a clearly articulated vision and set of goals. The plan should identify the high-priority topics as well as the structures and processes through which professional learning will be facilitated, sustained, monitored, and evaluated.[44] 1B. Clarify the roles of department chairs, instructional coaches, and school administrators in relation to instructional leadership and professional learning to ensure that all teachers have the opportunity for meaningful collaboration, feedback, and coaching. 1C. Assess the extent to which current professional learning initiatives are aligned to the highest needs and identified goals. Revise professional offerings as needed to ensure that professional learning resources are being allocated effectively and equitably.
2. There is an identified need for general education teachers to learn instructional strategies for serving students with disabilities. *Data sources: Central Office Interviews, Teacher Focus Groups.*	2A. Ensure that general education teachers receive professional learning and ongoing support to adequately meet the needs of students with disabilities in all courses. Build time into collaboration schedules for Special Education teachers to collaborate with subject area teachers.

3. Equity-focused initiatives such as Courageous Conversations and the National Equity Project leadership coaching have been positive first steps, but have not yet resulted in systemic changes at the secondary level. The P-3 Initiative is regarded as highly effective, but learnings from this engagement do not appear to have been applied to the secondary level. *Data sources: Central Office Interviews.*	3A. Support site-based leaders in developing an inclusive, culturally responsive, and sustaining instructional vision in collaboration with department leaders and instructional coaches. Support interested stakeholders in forming diverse and inclusive Equity Teams at each site to help translate theory into action. 3B. Leverage learnings from the P-3 Initiative to see how practices and strategies can be applied PK-12. Work with the Marin County Office of Education and other county districts in the initiative to share promising practices.
4. Non-certificated staff do not have many opportunities for collaboration or professional learning. *Data sources: Central Office Interviews, Support Staff Focus Group.*	4A. Work with non-certificated staff to develop professional learning plans that are aligned with the priorities and needs of the school and/or department in which they work. Support the implementation of the plans, leveraging collaboration with colleagues as an additional resource where appropriate (such as practicing conversational Spanish with colleagues to better communicate with students and families).
5. District certificated staff are predominantly White (86%), while the student population is predominantly non-White (65%). *Data sources: Student enrollment and Staffing Data (CDE).*	5A. Develop a plan to recruit and retain teachers, counselors, and administrators of color, which includes strategies addressing: • The added value of teachers of color on student learning outcomes.[45] • The development of a local pipeline of teachers. • Professional learning opportunities designed for educators of color.

TOPIC 7: COMMUNITY AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

The value of parental and familial participation for improving students' college readiness is well documented in research.[46] The manner in which schools engage parents is reflective of the values and culture of the school as well as school leaders' underlying beliefs about families' contribution to the school community and learning environment. It is essential for school leaders to establish a culture that truly values the opinions and cultures of its families, supported by processes and structures to facilitate family engagement.[47]

In addition to nurturing positive relationships and collaboration with families, thriving schools also forge meaningful partnerships with community-based organizations, businesses, and higher education institutions to support students in college and career preparation.[48] Most importantly, districts and schools can accomplish goals in partnership that would otherwise be difficult or impossible on their own. For example, some districts partner with organizations to support students and their families to complete the FAFSA or Dream Act applications, or to provide parent engagement programs. Students also greatly benefit when districts partner with local colleges and universities to offer support services along with dual-enrollment opportunities. Industry partners help students prepare for future careers through Career Technical Education (CTE) course partnerships, internships, and employment.[49]

Key Findings	Recommendations
1. Parents shared that it is challenging to communicate directly with teachers and counselors, other than at Back to School Night. They expressed that some teachers use email, but not all families have access to email or the internet (including in the Canal neighborhood where internet service is not reliable). *Data sources: Family Focus Groups (English and Spanish).*	1A. Allow parents/guardians to select their preferred form of communication for the most important notifications, including email, text, or regular U.S. mail. 1B. Work with counselors and teachers to establish baseline norms, expectations, and practices for communication with families that are inclusive of families without internet access.
2. Multiple community partners such as Canal Alliance, Huckleberry, and 10,000 Degrees provide valuable services and support to district students and staff. *Data sources: District Office Interviews, Counselor Focus Groups, Community Conversations.*	3A. Work with community partners and the Marin County Office of Education to support the coordination of community programs and resources to ensure that services are allocated equitably and efficiently.
3. Members of the district community would like to see more opportunities with local businesses and organizations for career preparation. *Data sources: Community Conversations.*	4A. Seek community partner and business support to provide more career preparation opportunities for all students, such as internships and career/trade information sessions.
4. Community members and families expressed a desire for the English-speaking and Spanish-speaking communities to have more opportunities to engage with each other. *Data sources: Family Focus Groups, Central Office Interviews.*	5A. Work with DELAC and PTA leaders to find ways to bring the community together around common goals. Conduct some meetings together, with the primary language alternating between English and Spanish (with translation services provided). 5B. Conduct family meetings at community centers, such as the Canal Alliance, to make meetings more accessible to all families and to facilitate engagement.

TOPIC 8: ENGLISH LEARNERS AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities and English learners often face additional barriers to becoming college and career ready, including being precluded from enrolling in college preparatory courses and social isolation on school campuses. However, in 2018 the California Assembly signed AB 2735 into law, which prohibits a district from denying an English learner access to the "standard instructional program," including college preparatory courses.[50]

Districts and schools that have higher college preparation rates for students with disabilities and English learners have systems in place to ensure that they understand the particular learning experiences of these students and implement specific practices aimed at increasing their sense of belonging, pathways to college and career, access to college preparatory coursework, and in-school interventions to support their success.[51]

Key Findings	Recommendations
1. There is a lack of a district-wide dedicated role to lead and coordinate services for English learners. *Data sources: Central Office Interviews.*	1A. Prioritize the recruitment and selection of a qualified English learner coordinator who can communicate with English learner families.
2. There is a lack of strategic alignment on how best to serve English learners TK-12, including a differentiated approach for serving long-term English learners and newcomer English learners at the secondary level. In addition, there is no district-wide system for monitoring students after reclassification. *Data sources: Central Office Interviews, Teacher Focus Groups.*	2A. Ensure that the district English Learner Master Plan effectively differentiates the courses and services by English learner typology (long-term English learner, newcomers with limited or interrupted formal education, normatively developing English learners, etc.) and outlines clearly defined pathways for all English learners to advance towards reclassification while simultaneously having access to the full curriculum. 2B. Develop district-wide expectations of growth and achievement for English Learners: by length of time in program and by proficiency levels. Implement a system to observe and monitor student progress toward reclassification and for at least four years after reclassification.[52]
3. Content teachers at the high school level need better supports, strategies, and coaching to serve English learners in their classes. *Data sources: Central Office Interviews, Teacher Focus Groups.*	3A. Ensure meaningful access to the full curriculum for English learners, including access to a-g courses, Honors, and Advanced Placement courses using multiple strategies, including: • Clustered placement of long-term English learners and newcomer English learners in heterogeneous and rigorous grade-level content classes (including Honors, a-g) mixed with English proficient students and taught with differentiated instructional strategies. • Explicit language and literacy development across the curriculum. • Native speaker classes (articulated sequence through Advanced Placement levels). • Professional development (including coaching and collaborative time for Professional Learning Communities) for teachers and administrators in understanding the needs of English Learners, research-based program models, and strategies for implementation.

4. The new Adult Education program serves newcomer students who age out of the high school program with a pathway to earn a high school diploma. *Data sources: Central Office Interviews.*	4A. Develop a Newcomer Center at San Rafael High School with bilingual content classes, English development classes, social-emotional supports, and life skills to assist in students' transition to the United States. Efforts should be made to intentionally welcome, learn about, and learn from newcomer students as valuable members of the school community.[53]
5. Special Education students require more supports in general education classes and teachers need training and support to better serve them. *Data sources: Teacher Focus Group, Counselor Focus Groups, Central Office Interviews.*	5A. Continue to provide expanded access to standards-based courses for students with disabilities that have sufficient supports, including the use of assistive technology, paraprofessionals, and co-teaching models. Support co-teaching teams with common planning time and coaching. 5B. Facilitate increased collaboration between Special Education and General Education teachers.
6. The district's 2017-18 graduation rate for English learners (37.5%) was lower than the county rate for English learners (51.1%) and significantly lower than the state rate for English learners (67.9%). *Data sources: 2017-18 Four Year Cohort Graduation Rate Report (Dataquest).*	6A. Identify or hire bilingual counselors to specialize in providing counseling services for English learners to ensure appropriate English Language Development services, equitable access in college preparatory courses, push-in supports to ensure meaningful access to the core curriculum, and positive progress toward graduation and college and career preparation. These counselors should monitor students' progress towards reclassification and continue to monitor students' progress after reclassification.

TOPIC 9: ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS

In the Class of 2018, 7% of students attended Madrone High School (MHS). While traditional school accountability measures are not always appropriate to apply to continuation schools — which often have different goal than traditional high schools — it is nonetheless important to focus on the extent to which all district students, including those served in alternative settings, are being prepared for successful transitions to college and career pathways.

Key Findings	Recommendations
1. MHS does not offer English Language Development courses, although 24% of MHS students were classified as English learners in 2018-19. *Data sources: School Leader Interview, Counselor Focus Group, School Enrollment Data (Dataquest).*	1A. Ensure that English learners at MHS have access to English Language Development courses and access to standards-based content courses with appropriate instructional strategies that provide meaningful access to the standards-aligned curriculum.
2. No courses at MHS are a-g approved, limiting college options for students after graduation. *Data sources: Counselor Focus Group, School Leader Interview, University of California Approved Course List.*	2A. Submit course descriptions to the University of California for approval as a-g courses — especially in English and Math — so that MHS students have increased access to rigorous courses and more postsecondary options.
3. There are a lack of elective course options for MHS students, causing them to sometimes repeat classes just to earn credits. *Data sources: Family Focus Group, Student Focus Group, Teacher Focus Group, School Leader Interview.*	3A. Provide students with access to the courses they need to graduate and to become college and career ready using a variety of options, including: • Adding additional course offerings at MHS. • Allowing MHS students to take courses at the other district high schools. • Expanding the number of courses offered by College of Marin at MHS or San Rafael High School. • Helping students enroll in and successfully complete classes at a community college.
4. The MHS referral process has been revised to convene a committee from the referring school and MHS, providing greater clarity and articulation to the transfer process. *Data sources: Central Office Interview, School Leader Interview.*	4A. Ensure that families are informed of all district resources and programs for which their children are eligible. Provide clear and transparent information about eligibility criteria and the transfer process while holding student well-being and success as priorities.

TOPIC 10: ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

Under the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), districts are called to strategically use funds to ensure that all students have equitable access to standards-based coursework, high quality-instruction, and the supports they need to be successful, with a particular goal of increasing and improving services for low-income students, English learners, and foster youth.[54] Districts who have been successful in increasing college-going rates for students of color and low-income students have allocated resources to ensure that courses are a-g approved, provided additional academic counseling for students and their families, and addressed the social-emotional needs of students.

Key Findings	Recommendations
1. There are significant disparities between the PTA and booster clubs' fundraising capacities for different school sites and programs, leading to disparities in services and/or programs paid for with these funds. *Data sources: Central Office Interviews.*	1A. Engage PTA and booster club leaders in discussion around resource equity to develop strategies to ensure equitable access to services and programs.[55]
2. Budget Committee representatives do not reflect the racial or economic diversity of the district community. *Data sources: Central Office Interviews.*	2A. Establish a board policy to ensure to that district budget and oversight committees reflect the full diversity of the district community. Conduct outreach to achieve proportional representation based on ethnicity, economic status, and neighborhood. Ensure that all committee meetings are accessible to a broad range of participants by conducting bilingual meetings, providing childcare, establishing meeting times that accommodate work schedules, and rotating meeting locations.
3. It is unclear if all staff allocation formulas are based on the needs of the student groups identified in LCFF — English learners, low-income students, and foster youth. They appear to be calculated on a per school or per total student enrollment basis. *Data sources: Central Office Interviews, Budget Analysis.*	3A. Consider revising all staff allocation formulas to account for student need as defined by LCFF, establishing clear transparency into this process. 3B. Establish internal audit systems to ensure that targeted funds are used to improve and expand services for the students for which they were intended.

Conclusion

The Educational Equity Audit is intended to serve as a catalyst for advancing SRCS's efforts and initiatives to understand and address opportunity and achievement gaps among district students. The findings and recommendations drawn from this audit can inform the development of concrete changes in policies and practices that will transform which courses students take and how their success is supported. Equally important is the collective reflection on underlying beliefs about students and educators' expectations of what students can achieve.

In Phase Two — Blueprint for Equity Action Planning process — ETW will work with SRCS to facilitate opportunities for a diverse group of district stakeholders to simultaneously reflect on implicit biases and beliefs while they develop and commit to bold, yet achievable actions. ETW looks forward to working alongside the district to sharpen its focus on equity and to continue to advocate for all SRCS students.

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