



Santa Barbara Unified
Every child, every chance, every day.

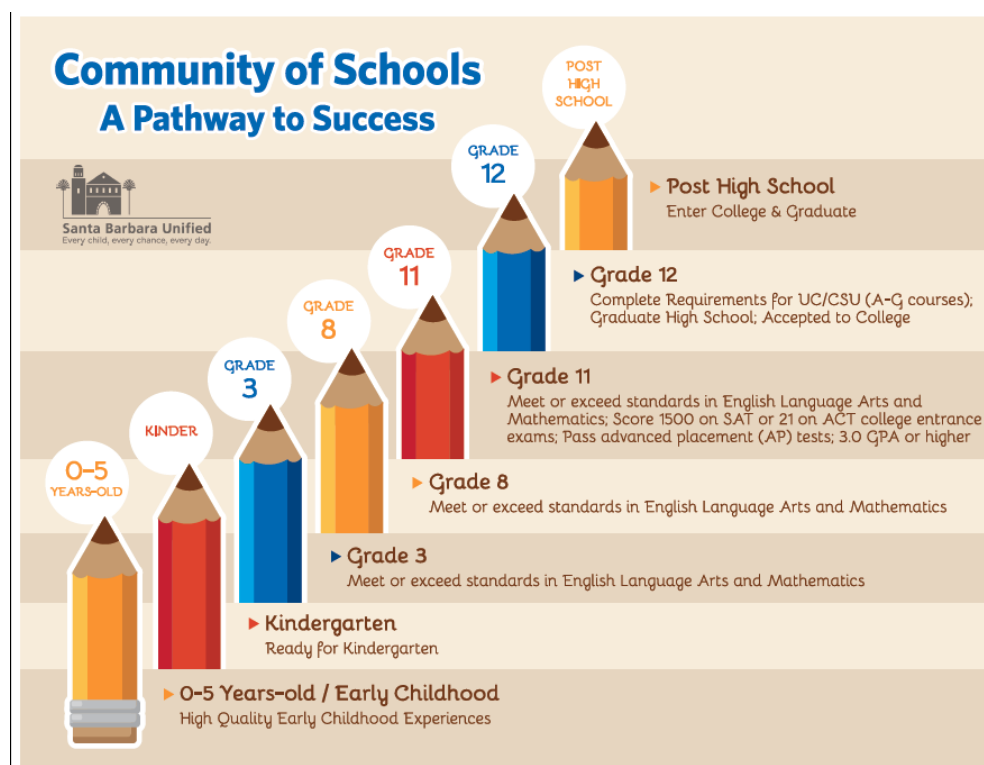
Community of Schools

A Pathway to Success

Santa Barbara Unified is focused on a vision, mission, and core values to close the achievement gap and do whatever it takes to improve all children's chance at success in school and life from birth to college graduation. Through an intentional private-public partnership between the Santa Barbara Unified schools and the philanthropic sector, as well as local colleges, businesses and stakeholders serving the community—children and their families are being supported.

The aim of the Santa Barbara Unified, **Community of Schools** (the Project) is to significantly change the educational trajectory of children who have not typically been afforded opportunities that result in school readiness, by providing them with a clear pathway and support to achieving their goals. The Community of Schools aligns with the goals of the school district's strategic plan with a greater focus on early childhood education, school readiness, family and community engagement, and college readiness. The pathway to student success identifies benchmarks and milestones to guide the Project (refer to Figure A).

Figure A. Community of Schools, Student Success Pathway



The Community of Schools strives to change outcomes for children by addressing the four comprehensive components of the Project plan: Early Childhood Education and Kindergarten Readiness; Parent Education, Engagement and Leadership; the Community School Model; and College Readiness. The plan incorporates continuous program improvement through evaluation and metric driven decision-making. The Community of Schools is supported through blended funding—including school district funds, partnerships with local community agencies and colleges, and private funds at approximately \$1.0 million to supplement key strategies and programming to meet the goals of the Project.

Theory of Change

If children are physically and emotionally healthy, have high quality learning experiences, are provided with clear pathways to achieve their goals, and live in communities that support school readiness—children will be successful in school, be prepared to enter the workforce, and will prosper.

Mission

Our mission is to ensure academic success for all children living in Santa Barbara. This will be accomplished by providing the students and their families with an integrated system of services and high quality education, engaging the community, and providing access to resources for a safe and positive environment at home and in the community from birth to college.

Vision

We envision children who are prepared to enter school ready to learn and be successful, healthy students throughout their academic journey and as adults.

Overarching Goal

Our primary goal is to significantly increase the percentage of students from Santa Barbara Unified who enter kindergarten ready to learn and are ultimately prepared for college and a career.

Historical Context

The Santa Barbara Unified, Community of Schools project began its development as a community-based approach in the Santa Barbara Westside community in 2009 and has evolved in its leadership, scope, and community engagement through six years of staggered implementation and development of the birth to college and career pathway. Santa Barbara Unified (SBUSD) has collaborated with local agencies to implement a coordinated network for the delivery of resources for children and families from low-income backgrounds. In its earlier iteration, the Community of Schools was formerly THRIVE Westside, the Westside Project, and the Harding Early Years Program.

Timeline:

- **In 2009-2010**, the James S. Bower Foundation funded the development of a place-based, birth to age 5 initiative —the **Harding Early Years Program (HEYP)**, which was modeled after the Harlem Children’s Zone and the local Carpinteria Children’s Project at Main. The HEYP developmental framework included four comprehensive components: high-quality learning, social-emotional competence, health and wellbeing, and family support/strengthening.
- **In 2010-2011**, the **HEYP** comprehensive components and programs were launched for implementation. The project was rebranded as the **Westside Project** to include Santa Barbara Westside neighborhood schools: **McKinley Elementary School** joined and launched the early childhood AVANCE Parent Education Program. **La Cumbre Junior High School** initiated the Westside Tutoring and Evening Program to include onsite family education, workforce development programs, and access to academic supports and resources for children from the Westside neighborhood.

- **In 2011-2012, San Marcos High School** joined the Project as a partner to help complete the 0-5 through grade 12 continuum. La Cumbre Junior High and San Marcos High began providing inter-school services and resources towards college readiness and launched the Program for Effective Access to College (PEAC, formerly the Posse Program). The SBUSD Westside Project joined the county-wide school readiness initiative – THRIVE and rebranded as **THRIVE Westside**.
- **In 2012-2013, Santa Barbara Unified launched the new strategic plan** with a greater focus on early care and education, family and community engagement, and college readiness. Based on best practice and the research conducted through the Westside Project, SBUSD implemented a seamless pathway to student success with identified benchmarks and milestones from early childhood to grade 12 (refer to Figure A).
- **In 2014-2015**, SBUSD extended the Project strategies and supports to include Santa Barbara Eastside neighborhood schools and replicated best practice and greater articulation. At this time, SBUSD also ended the partnership with THRIVE. Therefore, the THRIVE Westside project was re-branded as the “**Community of Schools**” to embrace the mission of the Project as a community of neighborhood schools working together, as well as local schools collaborating closely with the community to support school readiness. The philanthropic sector and community partners have recognized the Community of Schools as a brand, which has also increased the fundraising potential.

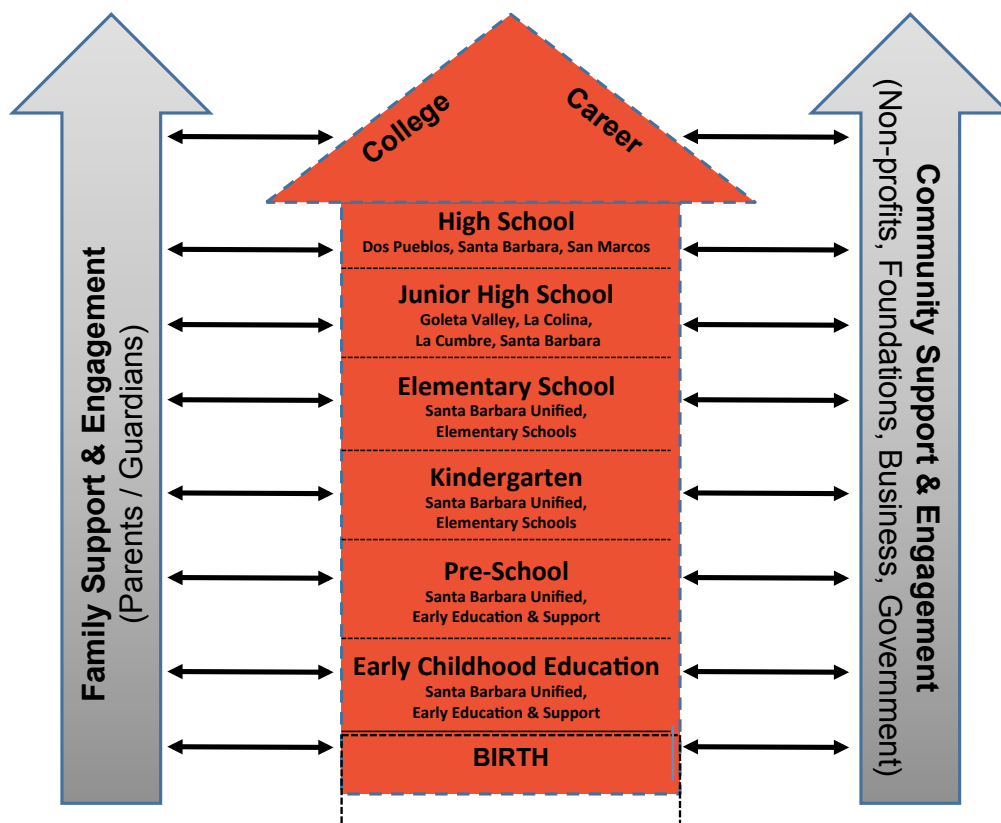
The multi-phased development of the Community of Schools plan has allowed the Project to roll out incrementally strategies and systems necessary for the development of a birth to college and career collaborative. The programmatic strategies that have been selected and implemented at each of the phases have developed as a comprehensive building block system across the partner schools. By concentrating on developing evidence-based programs starting at birth, parents and children are provided with a solid path from birth through school age. Needs assessment data, input from families and community, and lessons learned from the HEYP and the Westside Project have guided the development of the primary strategies. Working with these central pieces of the puzzle—children, families, schools, and partners bring together the resources to help children enter school ready to learn and continue to thrive.

Community of Schools- Partnership Structure

Within the partnership pathway (Figure B), the schools align services and resources to target the different developmental needs, having always, the child and the family at the center. Key coordinated services include school-based strategies and activities aligned with health and safety programs, family support, and social services. The goal is to foster strong links across programs to smooth transitions and guarantee that programs are continuous and effective. Such endeavor can be accomplished when schools collaborate with key partners such as parents and caregivers, non-profits and community agencies, and local businesses and government—to pair education with wraparound services.

Figure B shows an illustration of the relationship between the schools, birth to 5/early childhood through grade 12 and the partnership structure with the community and key partners. The “entry into the schools” is through the early childhood focus.

Figure B. Community of Schools- Integrated Pathway & Partnership Structure



Early Childhood Education and Kindergarten Readiness

Santa Barbara Unified is committed to a comprehensive system of early childhood education opportunities for children entering the school district. By enhancing early childhood instructional support serviced in targeted neighborhoods, we believe we can change the academic trajectory for our most at-risk students and also increase the grade-level mastery and college readiness of our entire school district. Through a strategic action plan and vital community partnerships—the elementary schools receive coordinated, inter-school services and share resources as they relate to Kindergarten Readiness. The proposed strategies and activities for the Project supplement and complement existing strategies and services at each school site. The strategies ensure articulation and coordination between early childhood teachers/staff (Pre-Kindergarten to grade 2) and utilize the SBUSD database and information system. Santa Barbara Unified has also piloted an infant-toddler center with oversight by the Office of Early Education and Support.

Parent Engagement, Education & Leadership

Santa Barbara Unified has partnered with parent and local parent engagement providers to develop a **pathway to parent-family success** by ensuring parents have access to parent education, engagement and leadership opportunities at their neighborhood schools. The plan is to offer parent education programming

that addresses every level of a child’s socio-emotional, cognitive, and academic development from pre-birth to grade 12. The goal is for children to enter school ready to learn, for student’s progress to be sustained throughout their educational pathway from Kindergarten to high school graduation, and for families to stay actively engaged and serve as a strong support for their child’s learning and development.

Community School Model

The Santa Barbara Unified strategic plan supports community schools as a strategy for integrating existing school and community resources to remove barriers to learning and ensure that more students graduate from high school ready for college and a career. Community schools stay open after the bell rings and provide a range of services to students and their families—from afterschool programs and tutoring, to health and social services, and adult education. A wide body of research shows that this strategy improves student achievement, increases graduation rates, promotes family involvement in schools, and maximizes scarce local resources.

The Westside Evening Program at La Cumbre Junior High and the Franklin Elementary School Service Center serve families from the Santa Barbara Westside and Eastside communities. The community school model is a systemic strategy that directly responds to the need for family-school-community connections as part of the efforts to help increase school achievement. Both schools stay open until 7:00pm and operate the Family Resource and Tutoring Centers, Monday – Thursday to provides free dinner to youth and access to a broad range of complementary supports for children and families in the community, with the goal of fostering family engagement, providing networks of support, improving student learning, and reducing barriers to families overall success.

The Westside Evening Program is entering year 6 of implementation in the Fall 2016 and the Franklin Service Center is entering year 2 of implementation. Approximately 1,600 community members make use of the Westside Evening Program services monthly, and at least 40% of the students at La Cumbre stay on campus afterschool doing homework, attending tutoring, in the theater arts program, school library, playing sports, learning healthy cooking, and in the science or computer labs. Activities for students include academic tutorial by credentialed teachers for high level classes such Honors and advanced placement (AP) classes, library services (there is no library on the Westside), peer mentoring, access to computer lab, science lab, and sports activities. The services and classes available during the afterschool and evening program are open to the entire Westside community at no cost. In general, most adult participants of the Evening Programs are enrolled in a class per week and those with children under five utilize the free childcare services onsite. Participants with school-aged children typically drop their children off at the library where students of all ages have access to tutors, technology, and library resources. Both Evening Programs host the PEAC Tutoring Center for high school students from 5:00pm-7:00pm.

College & Career Readiness

Research shows that preparing students to enter college ready begins earlier than high school and should be intentional. Often times, students perform well and are high achievers in elementary and middle school—but begin to “fall through the cracks” once they transition to high school. In order to help close the achievement gap and change the trajectory of underrepresented students locally, Santa Barbara Unified is providing inter-school services to support college readiness for first generation college-bound students from historically underrepresented backgrounds.

The goal of the Santa Barbara Unified- Program for Effective Access to College (PEAC) is to increase the high school and college graduation rate of low-income underrepresented students—starting with the San Marcos High School graduating class of 2015 matriculating from La Cumbre Junior High. Due to the success of the college readiness strategies, the school district has scaled-up and replicated the supports at Santa Barbara Junior High and Santa Barbara High School with the first 9th grade cohort in the Fall 2015 and the first 9th grade cohort in 2016 at Dos Pueblos High and articulation with La Colina Junior High and Goleta Valley Junior High. Underrepresented students at these schools, while high achieving, face serious cultural and economic barriers on the path to college. Such challenges include no peer support in high level classes, low parent education levels, lack of academic role models, lack of academic and social supports, lack of English language support and limited resources in the home. PEAC is a philosophy that all children deserve access and opportunity, and that schools need to make those systemic changes. PEAC provides academic and social supports that will guarantee students graduate from high school and are prepared for four-year college entry.

PEAC begins with students identified in 7th grade based on benchmarks identified on the SBUSD Student Success Pathway (refer to Figure 1). In order to qualify to enter PEAC in high school, by the end of 8th grade, the students must be proficient in Math, proficient in grade level English Language Arts, good test scores, high grades, good citizenship and parent participation. The outcomes of PEAC are to ensure that students: maintain a 3.0 academic grade point average (GPA) or higher; are enrolled in Honors and Advanced Placement classes (AP); complete requirements for UC/CSU (A-G courses); and attend college.

The purpose of PEAC is to provide academic and social supports that will guarantee students graduate from high school and are prepared for 4-year college entry. PEAC is tied to benchmarks based on the Community of Schools, Student Success Pathway. The following shows the challenges students face and the PEAC strategies to help close the achievement gap.

PEAC student challenges and strategies to support students

Student Challenges

- Lack of English language support &/or limited academic resources at home and in the community
- Low parent education levels/years of schooling
- Lack of peer support in high level classes
- Lack of tutorial support for high level classes
- Lack of academic role models

Strategies

- Students are in cohorts of 6 – 10 for English, Math, Science, Social Science classes
- Students receive priority scheduling into Honors and Advanced Placement classes
- Enrollment in AVID (Advancement through Individual Determination) all 4 years of high school
- 7th and 9th grade Summer Bridge
- Academic Counselor dedicated to PEAC students
- PEAC Mentors: Graduates of the high school they are serving, were enrolled in AVID, and are presently enrolled at a local college
- Access to the tutoring center afterschool and in the evenings at La Cumbre Jr. High Evening Program, Franklin Elementary School Service Center, and Goleta Tutoring Center
- Access to parent education and engagement opportunities at their child's school