

PREPARING STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND SYSTEMS FOR THE FUTURE: TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE IN SANTA ANA

WEDNESDAY, MAY 3 AND THURSDAY, MAY 4
CENTURY HIGH SCHOOL
1401 SOUTH GRAND AVENUE
SANTA ANA, CA

MEETING AGENDA

DAY I: WEDNESDAY, MAY 3

- 8:30 am **Breakfast.** Light breakfast will be available in the Century High School library hallway.
- 9:00 am **Convene Meeting.** Joel Knudson will convene the meeting with opening remarks, introductions, and an overview of the agenda. Superintendent Jerry Almendarez will welcome the group to Santa Ana Unified School District (SAUSD).
- 9:45 am **Update from San José Unified School District.** Superintendent Nancy Albarrán will share an update on developments in her district since the Collaborative met there in February 2023.

SESSION I

Envisioning the Future of K-12 Education

A growing body of research and a community of thought leaders have begun to articulate the evolving demands for K-12 education. As environmental, technological, and geopolitical change reshapes the circumstances in which schools operate, education is more important than ever to prepare students for a new world and to combat disparities that threaten equitable access to opportunity and success. As school systems navigate their approaches to serving students in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, now is an opportune time to explore which aspects of the current approach to public education are critical to preserve as well as those that must change to best serve students and their communities.

Session Purposes: Identify the needs K-12 education must meet in the decades ahead. Consider aspects of the current approach that should be maintained and those that need to evolve.

- 9:55 am **Opening Presentation and/or Discussion.** Sabba Quidwai of Designing Schools will set the landscape for the upcoming decades of educational change by identifying key trends and emerging priorities, not only in public education but in the broader context in which our education systems sit.

10:25 am **Discussion about Implications for Education.** Having explored the conditions that are likely to characterize life in the decades ahead, meeting participants will sharpen their focus on the implications for K-12 education.

11:25 am **Break.**

SESSION II

Creating Shared Expectations for Student Success Today and Tomorrow

In SAUSD, a recently adopted graduate profile outlines eight aspirational characteristics of students who exit the district after successfully navigating the K-12 experience. District leaders see the profile as the primary driver of coherence for the district, reasoning that all improvement efforts should clearly and explicitly tie directly to the system's desired student outcomes. Although the graduate profile represented an important first step in articulating the district community's goals for its students, early implementation efforts revealed the need for greater clarity in order to achieve shared understanding and commitment across the system. This session will introduce the graduate profile and examine the ongoing ways in which district leaders are working to improve clarity and alignment.

Session Purposes: Build participant understanding of the SAUSD context, including efforts to develop and refine the district's graduate profile. Explore listening sessions as a means of fostering shared commitment to a vision for student success.

11:40 am **Orientation to the SAUSD Graduate Profile.** The session will begin with an overview of the SAUSD context, its history, and the decision to create the district's graduate profile. Participants in the creation of the profile will describe its components and the development process.

12:30 pm **Lunch.**

1:30 pm **Reflections on SAUSD Listening Sessions.** After early responses to the graduate profile revealed the need to strengthen clarity and understanding, district leaders have begun holding a series of listening sessions to better understand and respond to the perspectives of students and other stakeholders. Meeting participants will engage in discussion with staff who participated in these listening sessions in 2022-23 to better understand their experiences with the activity.

2:10 pm **Listening Session Simulation.** A group of SAUSD students will participate in an abbreviated listening session to illustrate what the sessions have entailed and provide a window into the experiences of students in the district. After hearing from students, participants will debrief about what they have observed.

3:25 pm **Break.**

SESSION III

Building Leadership Capacity to Meet Expectations for Student Success

To achieve the aspirations articulated in the graduate profile, SAUSD has focused intently on leadership development. Through partnerships with the Arbinger Institute and Learner Center Collaborative, the district has sought to build the capacity of central office leaders so that they can both understand and model the kinds of behaviors needed in the district. Those capacity building efforts are now extending to principals, both attempting to better understand principals' experiences and seeking to build the skills and mindsets needed to better serve educators and students at school sites. One key challenge in this effort is how to help change the mindsets of adults to both establish high expectations for all students and to adapt to the evolving needs and resources that shape opportunities for improvement.

Session Purposes: Highlight the knowledge, skills, and mindsets needed to fulfill the promises of SAUSD's graduate profile. Examine approaches to building leader capacity to do so.

- 3:40 pm **Overview of SAUSD Problem of Practice.** In their efforts to create system-wide clarity about and commitment to the graduate profile, district leaders have recognized that both central office and site administrators play critical roles. However, some leaders may espouse more traditional mindsets about leadership, and may have developed their own channels for securing support in a dysfunctional system that could counteract efforts to achieve consistency and alignment. District leaders will set the stage for ongoing discussion by outlining the strengths and opportunities for growth with respect to administrator capacity, as well as efforts to leverage tools like the single plan for student achievement (SPSA) to encourage coherence.
- 4:00 pm **Principal Panel.** A panel of principals will share their experiences with the development and implementation of the graduate profile in SAUSD. Remarks will include perspectives about historical approaches to addressing needs as administrators in the district, the coherence principals perceive around the graduate profile, and the degree to which they feel equipped to lead at their school sites.
- 4:45 pm **Summary and Reflection on the Day's Discussion.**
- 5:00 pm **Adjourn for the Day.**
- 6:00 pm **Reception Followed by Dinner** at Antonello Ristorante.

DAY 2: THURSDAY, MAY 4

- 8:30 am **Breakfast.** Light breakfast will be available in the Century High School library hallway.
- 9:00 am **Consultancies.** Building on perspectives shared by principals at the end of Day 1, participants will break into small groups to address key challenges related to building leadership capacity.

SESSION IV

Preparing School Districts for the Future of Education

To respond to and prepare for the evolving landscape of K-12 education, SAUSD is pursuing a cultural shift that prepares it to thrive moving into the future. District leaders are informing their thinking through a growing body of literature and through the “VUCA” frame adopted in the military—moving from volatility to vision, from uncertainty to understanding, from complexity to clarity, and from ambiguity to agility. Examples of the transitions the education system faces include both the known—for example, the increasing influence of artificial intelligence or the need to leverage social influence—and the unknown. This final session will explore ways in which district leaders can best model, encourage, and move their systems to enhance strategic foresight abilities.

Session Purposes: Consider ways in which school districts can anticipate, prepare for, and adapt to the conditions from which learners will enter the education space and the world for which they need to be equipped to thrive.

- 10:10 am **Orientation to Strategic Foresight.** SAUSD has introduced strategic foresight training as one way of building capacity among school leaders to prepare for and adapt to the evolving conditions of the school community and details of the schooling environment. Participants will consider ways in which this approach might support educators in their efforts to lead now and into the future.
- 11:50 am **Leading through Social Influence.** SAUSD district leaders aim to capitalize on widespread use of social media among students and community members by using it as a platform not only to evangelize the district’s good work but also to reinforce connections among student learning opportunities and the graduate profile. SAUSD representatives will share examples of this approach, including background on the district’s brand ambassador program.
- 12:25 pm **Lunch.**
- 1:00 pm **Social Media “Gallery Walk.”** Participants will explore the social media presence from a variety of district contexts, using these examples to frame a discussion of how schools and school systems can use social media as a mechanism for building understanding of and commitment toward district goals.
- 1:45 pm **Summary and Reflection on the Day’s Discussion.**
- 2:00 pm **Adjourn Meeting.**