

MOVING THE NEEDLE IN MATHEMATICS: PROMOTING INSTRUCTIONAL QUALITY IN SANTA CLARA

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26 AND THURSDAY, MARCH 27

SANTA CLARA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

GUADALUPE HALL AT SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY

3RD FLOOR CONFERENCE SERVICES

455 EL CAMINO REAL

SANTA CLARA, CA 95050

MEETING AGENDA

DAY 1: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26

- 8:30 am **Breakfast.** Light breakfast will be available on the 3rd floor (Conference Services).
- 9:00 am **Convene Meeting.** Joel Knudson will convene the meeting with opening remarks, introductions, and an overview of the agenda. Superintendent Gary Waddell will welcome the group to Santa Clara Unified School District.

SESSION I

Supporting a Vision for High Quality Instruction in Alignment with the California Mathematics Framework

California recently adopted a new framework for mathematics in K-12 education, which aims to provide guidance and support to educators and education systems in promoting high-quality mathematics instruction. Consistent with the vision articulated in the framework, Santa Clara Unified School District (SCUSD) is moving away from reliance on traditional procedural instruction in mathematics and toward more inquiry-based, student-centered instructional methods. The goal is to foster improved learning for all students while addressing historical inequities in opportunity. Our first session will set the stage for this transformation through an exploration of the California Mathematics Framework and strategies that districts might employ to implement its aims.

Session Purpose: Orient participants to the California Mathematics Framework.

- 10:00 am **The California Mathematics Framework.** We will begin our exploration of high-quality teaching and learning in mathematics with an orientation to the recently adopted state framework and ways in which it can support efforts to improve instruction.

10:25 am **Bringing the Framework to Life.** Participants will engage in a jigsaw built around the five components of equitable and engaging instruction to more deeply understand what an inquiry-based approach to teaching mathematics entails and how it differs from more traditional instructional approaches.

11:20 am **Break.**

SESSION II

Designing Mathematics Pathways to Promote More Equitable, High-Quality Instruction

Traditional approaches to teaching mathematics at the secondary level often group students by skill level, but these different tracks are subject to bias, reinforce stereotypes, and close doors to higher-level mathematics learning opportunities for many students. In SCUSD, new policies on course design and placement have sought to disrupt disparities in access while also igniting efforts to foster more productive classroom learning experiences. Meanwhile, departures from familiar instructional practices can contribute to discomfort and even backlash among teachers, parents, and other members of the community. Attention to the implementation process and the communication strategies that surround it are therefore critical to the successes of new approaches. This session will explore high-leverage strategies shifting instructional quality, including the messaging and supports that can enable them to take hold.

Session Purposes: Orient participants to the SCUSD context. Explore strategies and lessons learned associated with pursuing new course sequencing and placement policies in mathematics, including communication strategies that can help facilitate the change process.

11:30 am **A Vision for Mathematics Instruction in Santa Clara.** District leaders from Santa Clara will provide contextual information about the district, its vision for teaching and learning in mathematics, and ways in which the Framework is part of its efforts.

12:30 pm **Lunch.**

SESSION III

Supporting Educators to Shift Mindsets and Practices

The evolution toward more inquiry-based approaches to teaching and learning often requires teachers and leaders to shift long-established practices and mindsets. This kind of change calls for educators to understand what a different approach to instruction entails and why it is important, as well as to cultivate a skillset to teach in new ways—often letting go of previous beliefs. Supports from the central office and at school sites are critical if teachers are to embrace change and grow to meet new expectations. This session will explore some of the opportunities and challenges associated with building teacher capacity and the ways in which districts can best prepare and respond in order to successfully pursue a vision of high-quality math instruction.

Session Purposes: Examine teachers' perspectives on the instructional shifts asked of them. Consider district-level resources and supports necessary to guide this shift.

- 1:30 pm **Experiential Lesson Activity.** To better understand the instructional shifts underway in Santa Clara and what they require of teachers and students, participants will experience a lesson delivered with a discovery-based pedagogical approach.
- 2:30 pm **Teacher Panel.** Secondary teachers from Santa Clara USD will join the group to share their experiences with the shifts underway in mathematics instruction.
- 3:15 pm **Break.**
- 3:30 pm **Small Group Consultancies.** Participants will meet in small groups to address key challenges associated with building educator capacity to engage in high-quality instructional practices.
- 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 Puesto.

DAY 2: THURSDAY, MARCH 27

8:30 am **Breakfast.** Light breakfast will be available on the 3rd floor (Conference Services).

SESSION IV

Differentiating Instruction Through Multi-Tiered Student Supports

In classrooms that feature wider ranges in students' skill levels, teachers may not be equipped to effectively differentiate instruction or support students who have not yet mastered course content. SCUSD discontinued a practice of providing an extra math support class as an elective for failing students when it did not produce changes in student performance and created the perception among students that the additional course was punitive rather than helpful. This session will explore how best to develop a robust multi-tiered system of support that effectively diagnoses student learning needs, then addresses all students' learning needs without limiting access to elective courses or reverting to homogenous classrooms.

Session Purposes: Consider key challenges and promising practices associated with effective differentiation and intervention in heterogeneously grouped classrooms.

9:00 am **Student Perspectives.** Students from Santa Clara USD will join the group to share their experiences with a new approach to mathematics instruction in the district.

10:05 am **Approaches to Intervention.** Participants will explore approaches to supporting students who do not attain standards mastery early on, especially in heterogeneously grouped classrooms.

11:00 am **Break.**

SESSION V

Pursuing Quality and Coherence Through Materials Adoption

Later this year, the California State Board of Education plans to release a list of approved instructional materials aligned with the California Mathematics Framework. It will then be up to districts to select their curricular materials from that curated list. Unfortunately, local adoption processes vary significantly in quality and coherence. In many cases, they are insufficiently aligned to and supportive of a systemwide vision for high-quality mathematics instruction. More specifically, the connections between any considered curriculum, the existing instructional capacity in the district, and the available forms of professional learning may be weak or nonexistent. The meeting will conclude with a consideration of how districts can approach materials adoption in a way that builds on progress already underway in districts while promoting strong instructional practice.

Session Purpose: Explore ways in which districts can leverage the materials adoption and implementation process as a vehicle to pursue instructional quality and coherence.

- 11:15 am **Instructional Materials Adoption Processes.** Participants will explore ways in which districts can approach the selection and use of instructional materials to promote quality, coherence, and consistency in efforts to improve teaching and learning.
- 12:00 pm **Lunch.**
- 12:45 pm **Conditions to Support High-Quality Materials Adoption and Use.** Local adoption processes take place within a shared California state context as well as a marketplace in which textbook publishers operate in response to various business incentives. We will close the meeting with a discussion of opportunities to strengthen the adoption and implementation of high-quality instructional materials.
- 1:45 pm **Summary and Reflection on the Day's Discussion.**
- 2:00 pm **Adjourn Meeting.**