



Where Great Things Happen  
**Every Day**



# Building Bright Futures

## SCUSD COMMITTED TO STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

by Mike Blount



Superintendent José L. Banda says the lifeblood that drives the mission of the district is ensuring educators and staff attend to the whole child.  
PHOTO COURTESY OF SCUSD

There is no one-size-fits-all solution to education. That's why Sacramento City Unified School District offers a vast variety of programs, from rigorous, traditional neighborhood schools at every grade level to innovative, interest-based programs housed on small campuses and within larger comprehensive schools. No matter what a child's individual needs and interests, there's a place for them at SCUSD.

Superintendent José L. Banda says the district's goal is to give every student at every school opportunities to succeed. Providing parents with choices helps SCUSD meet that goal, he says.

"No two learners are alike," Banda says. "Each student has talents, interests, skills and goals that are unique to him or her. We support this diversity by tailoring our approach for each child."

As part of the district's goal to meet every child's unique needs, SCUSD provides a wide variety of programs and specialized instruction.

"Some students thrive on busy campuses where there is a full array of activities to capture interests," Banda says. "Others flourish at smaller schools more singularly focused on one or two areas, like technology or the medical field."

We are proud to offer both options — and many others — to our families."

Whether it's a high school based around learning about a career in engineering or a program designed to immerse a student in a foreign language, there are many options for a child to find the place he or she fits in and be successful. No matter the unique focus of a school or program, a deep commitment to academic rigor is a common thread that unites all schools throughout the district. To help implement the new Common Core State Standards, the district provides many training opportunities to teachers and staff. Banda says the new standards are about getting kids engaged in learning, while asking them to think more critically about the answers.

"It's more about discovery than just learning content," Banda says. "We're getting students to come up with their own analysis and arrive at the solution. Bottom line, it's preparing students for college, career and life."

Banda adds that partnerships are another big component to ensuring student success at SCUSD schools. The district offers several ways for parents to become involved in their child's education,



PHOTO COURTESY OF SCUSD

"Bottom line, it's preparing students for college, career and life."

José L. Banda

Superintendent of Sacramento City Unified School District

including the Parent Teacher Home Visit Project, a pioneering program that sends teachers to visit students' homes to get to know families and discuss concerns. SCUSD also partners with universities and organizations in the community to provide better learning opportunities for its students.

"We want to engage all stakeholders to make us better and position us to provide for our children to learn," Banda says. "We want to give our students a pathway to a career that they might be interested in. In the end, it's all about giving students every opportunity so they can be successful."

## SCUSD BY THE NUMBERS

**10th**  
largest school district in the state

**76** schools comprise SCUSD, including **43** elementary schools, **12** high schools, **9** K-8 schools, **6** middle schools, **4** multiple grade schools and **2** adult schools

**42,485** students are enrolled in the district in grades K-12

**17%** increase in graduation rate in the last four years

More than **50k** meals are served in lunchrooms daily



**68%** of students receive a free or reduced-priced lunch



The district covers **70 sq. mi.** and **5.5 million sq. ft.** make up the total space of all facilities



**48** languages spoken across all schools

Emily Kapic and her triplets are thrilled with the parent-teacher partnerships and International Baccalaureate education at Caleb Greenwood Elementary School.  
PHOTO BY NATE ECKLER

# Laying the Foundation



## ELEMENTARY OFFERS STRONG FOUNDATION

Elementary education forms the base for a child's future. Sacramento City Unified School District ensures a well-rounded education that is specialized to meet the needs of every child by keeping their focus at the community level.

"We've got really great neighborhood schools to be the vital hubs in their area," Area Assistant Superintendent Mary Hardin Young says. "Each school reaches out to find out what the neighborhood [needs], and goes above and beyond to give a great education."

SCUSD offers innovative curriculum like the International Baccalaureate program at Caleb Greenwood and Waldorf-inspired programs at Alice Birney and A.M. Winn. They also teach technological literacy on laptops, and instill critical thinking and a love of learning by emphasizing student discussions in small groups rather than teacher-led lectures.

"Kids love working with kids. It means classrooms are noisier, more active," Hardin Young says. "They become the teacher themselves, asking questions, explaining their answers to others. It helps them to think outside of their ways of solving problems."

### PARENT-TEACHER PARTNERSHIP ENRICHES EDUCATION FOR TRIPLETS

by John Flynn

When Emily Kapic decided to send her triplets, Fletcher, Parker and Bailey, to Caleb Greenwood Elementary School, she invited the other students' parents to come over for a barbecue before school started to get to know them. She got some unexpected guests.

"All the kindergarten teachers wanted to come and the principal, too, just to meet the kids and the families," she says. "Things like that create a really unique environment at the school."

This parent-teacher engagement is a trademark of all schools in Sacramento City Unified School District. The partnership ensures that a child's education continues and is reinforced at home.

"Having a really strong relationship with our parents allows us to be ... purposeful in our communication with them," says Erin Hanson, principal at Caleb Greenwood. "The better I know a family, the easier it is for me to really problem-solve and find solutions that are right for that particular child."

Strong connections help students achieve greater success. At Caleb Greenwood, the International Baccalaureate program enhances the

Common Core curriculum by emphasizing the practical application of what has been learned.

"The school is sharpening my kids' inner character as well as their mind. For me, that's equally as valuable."

Emily Kapic  
Parent of triplets at Caleb Greenwood

"We are just wild about [the IB Program]," Kapic says. "It's connecting what you learn inside the classroom with what happens outside the classroom. One day, we were out exploring some vernal pools, and my kids found these tadpoles. And one of my kids picks one up and says, 'Oh look, Mommy, it's the life cycle.'"

The triplets would collect other tadpoles in various stages of develop-

ment and organize them by how near they were to becoming a frog. When they returned to school, they told their teacher about the discovery and were invited to give a presentation in front of the whole class. They were rewarded for their self-motivated learning and got an early chance to develop their public speaking.

"We're not just teaching subjects, we're teaching them how to be in the world," Principal Hanson says. "Our intent is to create really mindful, purposeful, good citizens in the end."

Weekly lessons might feature training in attentive listening as part of the focus on social-emotional learning. Students can then apply what they've learned in their personal interactions throughout the week. Kapic is delighted with the effect the school has had on her children.

"They love school, and they love learning," she says. "The world is changing. I want to grow smart children, but I also want to grow children that are kind and compassionate, can communicate, and are interested in the world around them. And that's the foundation they're getting at school."

Kaia Miller has found a home at California Middle School, excelling in her studies, winning a soccer championship and earning a leadership role.  
PHOTO BY CHARLES GUNN

# A Place to Grow

▶ STUDENT FLOURISHES AS A SCHOLAR, ATHLETE AND CITIZEN

by John Flynn

Last year, Kaia Miller came to California Middle School not knowing anyone. This year as an eighth-grader, she's on the school's leadership committee, brainstorming orientation activities and themes for upcoming spirit rallies.

"The principal, [Andrea] Egan, ensured everyone was very helpful in acclimating Kaia as a new student to Cal," says Kaia's mom, Beth Miller. "They always answered all of my questions and were very welcoming to Kaia."

"I like doing things for my school," adds Kaia. Last year, she played center-forward on the soccer team that would win the league championship. Beth works in Midtown, but the Millers live and play club soccer in Elk Grove. And though Kaia was the only girl from her club on the Cal squad, she fit in just fine.

"Everyone got along together," Kaia says. "My coaches were really good because if you didn't understand a play then they would help you through it."

The lessons didn't just stay on the pitch. One of Kaia's coaches had majored in kinesiology in college and shared experiences with the girls when they were learning anatomy in their classes.

"My favorite subject is probably science," says Kaia. "I liked learning about the body. We had projects where we had to take clay and build structures in the body."

Kaia's other favorite subject was an English class

where her teacher cultivated an engaging atmosphere centering around relevant, captivating material.

"My favorite teacher was my language arts teacher," she says. "We had a lot of fun there. We read a book called 'The Watsons Go to Birmingham' and that was a really good book."

"The Watsons Go to Birmingham" is a Newbery award-winning historical fiction novel centering around the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham Alabama in 1963, giving the children context for modern day civil rights movements. It's one of many subjects that have inspired Kaia — she often talks through the day's lesson with her mom on the way from school to soccer practice.

"It's always nice when she 'gets it' and is happy to share what she did in class," Beth says.

She adds that Kaia's teachers help keep her motivated by giving her lots of encouragement and praise for what she's doing well.

But Cal is devoted to more than just sporting and academic excellence. The school's three-pronged motto encourages students to be safe, show integrity and be considerate, aiming to develop students into conscientious young adults.

"That's one of the big things for the school," Beth says. "They want all the students and teachers to do the right thing when no one is watching. It creates good people."



"I like doing things for my school."

Kaia Miller  
California Middle School student



**MIDDLE SCHOOL THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE**

Sacramento City Unified School District offers exciting, rigorous programs designed to help middle school students thrive.

**CHOICE BETWEEN TRADITIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL OR K-8:** Some students thrive at a traditional middle school, where students get a preview of a typical high school experience. Others prefer a K-8 setting that allows an easier transition to the fast pace of high school.

**SPORTS:** All Sacramento City Unified middle school students have the opportunity to play on competitive sports teams. Whether it's soccer, softball, basketball, golf or another sport, athletics

help keep tweens healthy and active and prepare young athletes for participation in high school athletics.

**ARTS AND MEDIA:** Through partnerships with the Sacramento Theatre Company and the Sacramento Educational Cable Consortium, students have the opportunity to perform in high-quality drama productions or on digital media production teams.

**SUMMER OF SERVICE (SOS):** Seven-week program where seventh- and eighth-grade students address community issues and concerns through volunteering.

**SPEECH AND DEBATE:** Students can hone their public oration, research and writing skills by participating in a competitive debate program, preparing them to join SCUSD's nationally ranked high school debaters.

**FIRST LEGO LEAGUE ROBOTICS:** Teams of up to 10 children work with two coaches to learn the fundamentals of competitive robotics and compete in weekend tournaments, learning the fun and excitement of science and technology.

For more information about middle school programs in SCUSD, visit [www.scusd.edu](http://www.scusd.edu).

Ethan Foell says the music program at Rosemont High School captivated his interest.  
PHOTO BY NATE ECKLER

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“It’s not enough just to show up. You put in the work and it will pay off.”

Ethan Foell  
Senior at Rosemont High School

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## HIGH SCHOOL FEATURES

# Putting in **the Effort**

STUDENT SEES HARD WORK PAY OFF AS HE CONSIDERS COLLEGE

by Mark Lore

Ethan Foell is in his final year at Rosemont High School. The 17-year-old is so prepared for college that he could very well begin taking courses during his senior year if he chooses.

“That is a big decision I’m still deliberating,” Ethan says. “Each door will get me to where I’m going, just through a different path.”

Ethan is a sharp, well-spoken young man, who has found that in addition to his own hard work, the mentors and resources at Rosemont have helped in giving him plenty of paths to choose from as he looks ahead to college and future careers. He says his family has also been a strong source of encouragement.

“I’ve been working pretty hard since my freshman year,” Ethan says. “I have four older siblings, so there was a lot to look up to. They showed me the value of working hard to prepare for college.”

Ethan hit the ground running, becoming Rally MC his freshman year, which involved organizing school rallies on a committee and speaking in front of 2,000 students. He also became student body vice president his junior year.

But it’s Rosemont’s music program that really grabbed Ethan, who joined orchestra and band his freshman year.

“One of the most compelling reasons I went to Rosemont was that the music program was so strong,” says Ethan, who still plays cello and tenor drum in the programs.

You’d think that would be enough to keep him busy, but Ethan says time management might be one of the biggest skills he’s been able to hone in his three years at Rosemont. In addition to classes and extracurricular programs, Ethan participates at his church at 6:15 a.m. each morning before school, which he says is like having nine class periods a day. He was also an assistant teen leader for the Summer of Service program, which helps middle school students prepare for the rigors of high school.

All this has Ethan positioned for success after high school. He has so many attractive options, in fact, that he’s still in the process of deciding which to take. He can start taking college courses during the year, or he can go part-time and work to save up for college. Ethan says he may also go abroad for two years on behalf of his church.

These are good problems to have. Ethan proved it to himself, with some help along the way.

“You get what you put in, which is what my parents and mentors taught me,” he says. “It’s not enough just to show up. You put in the work and it will pay off.”

The programs available to high school students through SCUSD are as varied as they are important in preparing students for college and beyond.

Area Assistant Superintendent Chad Sweitzer points out some of the district’s signature Linked Learning career pathway programs like construction and design, science and engineering, and global studies. There are also plenty of sports (cheer, rugby, tennis) and arts programs (drama, orchestra, marching band), which are unique to each school.

Sweitzer says there are also some 75 extracurricular clubs that are unique to each school, ranging from ping pong and badminton to more academic clubs like the National Scholarship Federation and the National Honor Society.

All of these programs, Sweitzer says, are the building blocks for a bright future.

“I think all of these programs are great attractions to our schools that help students become more well-rounded.”

# Simply **the Best**

by Kate Gonzales

## ▶ SCUSD OFFERS HIGH ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL STUDENTS

Students who attend one of Sacramento City Unified School District's 76 schools are equipped for success. That's because SCUSD has a range of academic offerings that steer students toward excellence.

"It's all about every child being college- and career-ready," says Dr. Iris Taylor, Interim Chief Academic Officer of SCUSD. "We believe different students need different things and they will thrive in different settings."

From kindergarten through graduation, SCUSD offers a variety of programs to equip students with the tools to thrive in the 21st century, Taylor says.

### College Preparatory Programs

SCUSD has several rigorous college preparatory programs aimed at readying graduates for the challenge of a two- or four-year university.

"We want kids engaged in a thinking curriculum that is really pushing on those critical thinking [skills] ... and being the drivers of their learning," says Taylor.

### International Baccalaureate

The district has three schools that offer International Baccalaureate programs — Caleb Greenwood Elementary School, Kit Carson International Baccalaureate Candidate School and Luther Burbank High School. The IB program is a rigorous, project-based approach that aims to produce passionate, thoughtful learners. Studies show students who graduate from IB programs maintain high GPAs when they go on to four-year universities. IB is one of the fastest-growing educational programs in the world and is accessible to students in kindergarten through high school at SCUSD.

### HISP

The Humanities and International Studies Program (HISP) is a rigorous honors program at C.K. McClatchy High School, which gives students a unique global perspective on learning and understanding that will prepare them for college and the jobs of the future.

### PACE

PACE (Program in America and California Explorations) is a small, criteria-based program at John F. Kennedy High School. The advanced academics program focuses on English and history, particularly California history, government and literature. The goal of the program is to prepare students to succeed at competitive four-year colleges.



Rosemont High School students participate in an interactive math lesson using individual whiteboards.  
PHOTO BY NATE ECKLER

### LEAD

Leadership and Enrichment through Academic Development (LEAD) at Rosemont High School is an advanced program that prepares graduates to be successful post-secondary students and competitive workers in an evolving global economy. Students have the opportunity to earn more than a year's worth of college credit and exemption from entry-level college courses through the successful completion of as many as nine Advanced Placement classes/exams.

### West Campus

West Campus High School is a college preparatory school serving academically motivated students who reside in the culturally and economically diverse neighborhoods of Sacramento in an extremely safe and secure learning environment. The synergy of excellent students, enthusiastic and well-trained faculty, and caring and supportive parents has created and sustained a unique community of learners. West Campus is a California Distinguished School and a Blue Ribbon School.

### Specialty Programs

To prepare students for the 21st century, SCUSD schools promote innovation and creativity through the arts and hands-on learning.

### Waldorf-Inspired High School

Developed by Rudolf Steiner at the beginning of the 20th century, Waldorf education is a complete approach to learning — "head, heart and hands" — that addresses each child as an individual with innate talents and abilities. The district has three Waldorf-inspired schools: A.M. Winn Waldorf-Inspired, Alice Birney Waldorf-Inspired Methods and George Washington Carver School of Arts and Science High School.

### STEAM

Science, technology, engineering, the arts and math come together to provide a well-rounded education. David Lubin Elementary School is transitioning to a STEAM model.

### WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY

Washington Elementary School was one of seven chronically under-enrolled SCUSD elementary schools closed in 2012. With downtown neighborhoods booming, it will reopen in the fall of 2016.

"SCUSD is committed to serving every child and [we] believe that every child should be challenged to thrive educationally," says Taylor.

And the district delivers the tools to make that possible.

*For more information on the academic offerings in SCUSD, visit [www.scusd.edu](http://www.scusd.edu).*

# Real World Connections

## LINKED LEARNING PATHWAYS CONNECT CURRICULUM TO CAREER

In a rapidly changing global economy, a high school diploma is only the first step toward creating a successful and productive life. One innovative way Sacramento City Unified School District is helping students be better prepared for the future is to offer an array of career- and interest-themed paths through Linked Learning. Funded in part by the James Irvine Foundation and designed to meet the immediate and future needs of students, Linked Learning is an initiative to teach students through hands-on, real-world projects that relate to a student's chosen area of interest, such as engineering, design or medicine.

Linked Learning at SCUSD consists of four major components: challenging academics that prepare students for post-secondary training, hands-on learning with 21st century skills, work-based learning experiences and personalized support.

When paired with opportunities to experience curriculum hands-on in a professional work environment, learning in a classroom becomes more meaningful and relevant to students.

SCUSD offers a variety of Linked Learning pathways allowing students to follow their interests, discover new passions and see the real-world application of what they're learning in the classroom every day. Students can choose from innovative small high schools designed around a single career pathway, or select a pathway academy within the larger comprehensive high schools.

### SMALL HIGH SCHOOLS

- Future doctors, nurses, health advocates and more get ahead at **Arthur A. Benjamin Health Professions High School**. Students take four years of math and medical science in addition to medical-focused biology, chemistry, physics and English. [www.hphsjaguars.com](http://www.hphsjaguars.com)
- Students get hands-on experience designing, building, experimenting, computer coding and real-world problem-solving starting in seventh grade at the **School of Engineering and Sciences**. [www.seshs.org](http://www.seshs.org)
- Creativity meets intelligence in the **Design Pathway at Sacramento New Technology High School**, where the motto is, "We design thinkers." [newtech.scusd.edu](http://newtech.scusd.edu)

- Future world-changers can get their start at the public Waldorf high school **George Washington Carver School of Arts and Science**, focusing on a **social and environmental justice** career pathway. [www.carverartsandscience.org](http://www.carverartsandscience.org)
- Students **customize** their education around their own unique interests at **The MET Sacramento**. Students are mentored through internships twice a week by local professionals in a variety of fields. [www.metsacramento.org](http://www.metsacramento.org)

### ACADEMIES

#### Hiram W. Johnson High School

[www.hiramjohnson.net](http://www.hiramjohnson.net)

- The **Health and Medical Services Pathway** connects students to a promising future in health care.
- At the **Johnson Corporate Business Academy**, budding entrepreneurs learn the skills to take care of business.
- The **Law Academy** helps prepare students for careers in law, criminal justice and law enforcement.

#### John F. Kennedy High School

[www.jfk.scusd.edu](http://www.jfk.scusd.edu)

- The **Manufacturing and Design Pathway** offers hands-on experience in architectural design, automotive physics and manufacturing.
- Students gain specialized training in the field of law enforcement at the **Criminal Justice Academy**.

#### C.K. McClatchy High School

[www.mcclatchyhs.net](http://www.mcclatchyhs.net)

- The **Law and Public Policy Academy** offers instruction on the legal system, forensics, mock trials and debates.
- The **Criminal Justice Academy**, a partnership with the Sacramento Police Department, helps prepare future law enforcement officers.

#### Rosemont High School

[rosemont.scusd.edu](http://rosemont.scusd.edu)

- The kitchen feels like home to students in **The Green Academy — Culinary Arts** program, which



PHOTOS COURTESY OF SCUSD

includes farm-to-fork components in environmental science and urban agriculture.

- Solving the world's energy needs in the 21st century is the main problem motivating students in the **Energy, Science and Engineering Academy**.

*Find out more about SCUSD's Linked Learning career pathways. Visit [www.scusd.edu/linkedlearning](http://www.scusd.edu/linkedlearning).*

Shannon Bliss teaches fifth- and sixth-grade students at Hollywood Park Elementary School. Bliss says she enjoys working in the district because she gets to work with a diverse student body.

PHOTO BY NATE ECKLER



“It really feels like a community. I love working here.”

Shannon Bliss  
Fifth- and sixth-grade teacher at  
Hollywood Park Elementary School



## EXCELLENT TEACHERS

Sacramento City Unified School District has amazing teachers who are passionate about what they do. Teachers for SCUSD work closely with each other to discuss best practices and are enthusiastic about their students. Here are some other reasons why SCUSD educators are excellent:

- Regular professional development to learn about teaching strategies
- New teachers supported by veteran teachers in the district
- Training on new technology and how to implement it into classrooms
- Excellent relationships with parents fostered through open communication and engagement opportunities

# Creating a **Love** of Learning

▶ SCUSD TEACHER HAS A PASSION FOR EDUCATION

by Mike Blount

**D**uring her senior year in high school, Shannon Bliss took an English class that changed her life. Even though the class was early in the morning, she couldn't wait to go each day.

“The teacher, Mr. Ford, would read us Shakespeare and use different voices,” Bliss says. “He'd read poetry and use different accents. The way he approached teaching was dramatic and creative. You could tell he was passionate about what he was doing. That's what inspired me to become a teacher.”

After she graduated college, Bliss took a job as a teacher in the Sacramento City Unified School District, where she has taught for the last 18 years. Though she started out teaching kindergarten, Bliss was excited when she got to teach fifth and sixth grade. Aside from the fact that they get her

jokes, Bliss says she really enjoys creating a love of learning in her students.

“Two years ago, I had a group of kids for a few years in a row,” Bliss says. “We were reading a Percy Jackson novel about mythology. Even though the kids I had were very smart, they didn't like to read. That book changed everything. They became so engrossed they didn't want to stop reading! I was so happy they found a book that will, hopefully, keep them interested in reading down the road.”

Bliss, like her inspiration Mr. Ford, uses a variety of teaching tools and strategies. She might have students work together to learn from each other or assign a project that allows each student to be creative. Though the veteran teacher has a few tricks up her sleeve to keep her students engaged, she appreciates the district's profes-

sional development days, where she learns how to use new technology and teaching tools in the classroom.

She also learns a lot from her fellow teachers.

“I feel really strongly about collaborating with other teachers,” Bliss says. “You can gain a lot from your colleagues by hearing about things that worked and didn't work.”

Bliss says she's enjoyed working in SCUSD for the last 18 years and looks forward to many more years in the district.

“What's really nice about Hollywood Park Elementary School is it's a small neighborhood school,” Bliss says. “You get the small town feeling with the support of a large school district. It really feels like a community. I love working here.”





PHOTOS COURTESY OF SCUSD

# Educating the Whole Child

▶ SCUSD GOES BEYOND TEXTBOOK EDUCATION

by John Flynn

Not everything can be taught in a conventional classroom. SCUSD cultivates the whole child with a broad range of innovative programs.

## A Strong Start

The earlier children develop basic skills, the better they perform in school. That's why SCUSD offers half-day to full-day preschool programming for any child under 5 from a family that qualifies by income or need. With a personalized approach, children will have the literacy and numeracy skills they need to excel.

"We work as an arm of the school district with kindergarten teachers to make that transition smooth and to have a clear understanding about what children should be able to do," says Tammy Sanchez, Coordinator of Child Development.

Parents can also take advantage of the Early Kinder program at eight district locations. Early Kinder, or transitional kindergarten, offers the first year of a two-year kindergarten experience for children who turn age 5 in the fall. The program provides an additional year of preparation with a credentialed teacher so students can enter kindergarten with stronger academic, social and emotional skills needed for future academic success.

## Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

Nobody works alone. Students need to learn how to collaborate, listen and share if they are going to apply their classroom lessons out in the real world. The district is systematically implementing strategies for teaching social skills to students.

"[SEL] forms the foundation for everything that we do. Not just

education, but life," says Mai Xi Lee, Director of Social-Emotional Learning. "These are skill sets that, as human beings, we need to have to be better friends, students and people."

## Extracurricular Activities

Though teams like the C.K. McClatchy High School girl's basketball squad have won state championships, extracurriculars are about far more than glory.

"It teaches them discipline, leadership and gives them a sense of connectivity to their high school," says Area Assistant Superintendent Chad Sweitzer. "They build great relationships with their teammates and with their coaches — for some students that's an extra adult who cares for them."

For students who are creatively inclined, the district schools have vibrant visual and performing arts programs as well as flourishing robotics programs.

"I've seen very quiet, shy kids building several-thousand-dollar machines and learning to operate them," Sweitzer says. "They can come out of their shell and be a leader in this field that they potentially want to go into."

## Special Education

SCUSD ensures that all students get the education they need. The district offers a full continuum of services ranging from a few hours of tutoring to improve reading comprehension to entirely separate special-education classes led by multiple teachers for students with greater need for support. With programs in every school, up to 6,700 students each year are given a boost by this supplemental teaching.

"We provide appropriate services to allow children to access their educational environment," says Becky Bryant, Director of Special Education. "Our goal is very specific: to even the playing field for students with disabilities."

## Expanded Learning

Every day of the school year, the after-school Expanded Learning program serves 14,000 students at 61 sites. The program provides academic support, personalized educational activities, nutritious meals and enrichment activities like dance, art, health and wellness, and athletics, extending the school day to 6 p.m.

"Our parents rely on the program," says Coordinator Monroe Howard. "We have a lot of working parents, some working multiple jobs, and without the program, many really would struggle to find safe, supportive environments for their young people."

Expanded Learning opportunities are also offered during the summer. During the Summer of Service program, students choose issues that affect their communities, such as drug abuse, suicide and racism. With the help of credentialed teachers, the students raise awareness by performing spoken word and sharing personal experiences in sleek social media campaigns.

"The activities that our Expanded Learning programs do are based on empowering young people," Howard says. "We're encouraging our young people to become agents of change within their community, letting them know they do have opportunities to come up with viable solutions through the power of their own voice."

"These are skill sets that, as human beings, we need to have to be better friends, students and people."

Mai Xi Lee  
Director of Social-Emotional Learning

# Finding the Perfect Fit

by Edgar Sanchez

**PARENT EXERCISES POWERS OF CHOICE AND ENGAGEMENT TO INCREASE STUDENTS' SUCCESS**

As a single mom working full time, Susana Bravo hasn't always had as much time as she'd like to be involved in the education of her two children. But she's still always found the time to make education a top priority.

"I couldn't be at the schools, so I would phone the teachers to ask how my daughter and son were doing," Bravo says. "I would phone every other day, to ask if there was a problem."

Bravo was also actively involved in choosing the right school for her children's unique needs. SCUSD offers schools of all sizes and styles, designed to target the diverse needs of students.

For Bravo's children, Lizzet and Ian, the right fit was Edward Kemble Elementary's Dual Language Immersion Program. All courses, ranging from history to science, are taught in both Spanish and English from first through third grade.



Susana Bravo has been actively involved in the education of her children, Lizzet and Ian, both in choosing the unique school program that best fit their needs, and by partnering with educators through the district's Family and Community Engagement Office.

PHOTO BY CHARLES GUNN

**Parents and schools can partner to help each unique student in the district be successful.**

Bravo appreciates the opportunity her children have had to become fluent and literate in both languages. The program allowed her kids to honor and preserve their personal heritage, while also providing future advantages.

"Bilingual persons have greater opportunities in life," Bravo says.

The children polished their command of both languages at Cesar Chavez Intermediate School, which offers grades four through six. Instruction in the school's Dual Language Enrichment Program is provided half in English, half in Spanish.

Today, Bravo continues to be an active participant in her children's education. She has been a frequent visitor to their schools — and others — since 2012, when back pain forced her to stop working. Bravo took advantage of the district's Leadership for Parents training, which offered her the opportunity to increase her partnership and engagement with her children's educators.

Now she meets often with educators to discuss not only her children's needs, but those of all district students. Her

work is supported by the district's Family and Community Engagement Office, which empowers parents to become advocates for positive change in the schools.

This summer, Bravo spoke to about 100 district teachers and administrators about her experiences.

"I was nervous when I spoke," she says.

But her point got through. Her key message: Educators must support programs that increase parental involvement in academia, from kindergarten on.

By taking advantage of choices in education and the opportunities the district offers for engagement, parents and schools can partner to help each unique student find success.

Bravo's investments in her own children's education so far have certainly paid off. In September, Lizzet, 13, began her second year at Rosa Parks K-8 School as an eighth-grader, and her brother Ian, 12, became a seventh-grader there. Both have great ambitions — Ian yearns to be a lawyer, while Lizzet seeks to be an FBI agent. And from where Bravo's sitting, the future looks bright.



**OPEN ENROLLMENT  
LETS YOU  
CHOOSE  
YOUR SCHOOL**

Open Enrollment is an opportunity for students who reside permanently within SCUSD's boundaries to apply online for enrollment in schools and programs beyond their neighborhood school. Parents can pick the environment that they feel will best fit their family's needs from an online directory of open schools in the district.

"We want to make sure that our students feel comfortable [and] find the right match to

support them in their growth areas, and help them accelerate in their skilled areas," says Area Assistant Superintendent Mary Hardin Young.

Families can apply to open-enroll in other neighborhood schools that have space available. Or they can apply to enroll in schools without attendance boundaries, such as Health Professions High School or Leonardo da Vinci eK-8 School. Families can also apply to honors

programs and district charter schools.

Open Enrollment typically takes place in January, while a flexible appeal program allows requests for transfers throughout the year.

"Students aren't going to learn unless they're in a safe and culturally appropriate setting for them," Hardin Young says. "We want the parent to feel comfortable with the setting as well."



# Notable Alumni



## FORMER SCUSD STUDENTS WHO HAVE CHANGED THE WORLD

**S**acramento City Unified School District graduates are successful in every field you can imagine. Many have gone on to be leaders in their chosen profession. Some have even changed the world. Here are six notable alumni who have graduated from SCUSD:



PHOTO COURTESY OF DUNG LE

### Dr. Dung Le and Dr. Phuoc Le

Siblings who excelled at Sac City schools more than two decades ago are now making an impact locally and globally.

Dr. Dung Thi Le knew from age 10 she wanted to be a doctor, while her brother, Dr. Phuoc Van Le, set his sights on the medical field in community college. Growing up, they faced no shortage of challenges: They were Vietnamese refugees raised by a hardworking single mother of four. They persevered in large part because of their teachers at Fern Bacon Middle School and Luther Burbank High School, who encouraged them to aim high.

“I had a lot of teachers who motivated me and pushed me hard and told me I could be whatever I wanted, and I believed them,” says Dung, Burbank class of ’93. “I owe a lot to the Sacramento school system.”

Dung went on to study at University of California Berkeley and Ross University School of Medicine, and works as an urgent care physician at Sutter Health’s Elk Grove Urgent Care Clinic.

Phuoc, class of ’94, also credits SCUSD with giving him a strong start.

“The [math and science] academy at Burbank was ... a nurturing environment for achievement,” he says. Participating in competitions like the academic decathlon helped

him and other students see their potential to excel.

“It was an opportunity for us to realize that we actually could compete against other schools that were private,” he says.

Since graduating, Phuoc has earned degrees and trained at Dartmouth and Stanford Medical School. Now an associate clinical professor at University of California, San Francisco, Phuoc has worked with nongovernmental organizations to provide equitable health care in Rwanda, Lesotho, Malawi and Haiti.

Today, both siblings are committed to helping young people pursue careers in medicine. Phuoc is on the board of the Nisei Student Relocation Commemorative Fund, which awards scholarships to American high school students from war-torn Southeast Asian countries.

Dung gives back directly to the school that gave so much to her. She mentors four Burbank High students each year, driving them from campus to her Elk Grove urgent care center to provide real-world experience in the medical field.

“You don’t have to change a thousand people,” Dung says. “You just have to help change one person.”

### Dr. Cornel West

PHOTO COURTESY OF CORNEL WEST

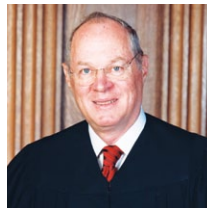


Philosopher. Activist. Best-selling author. These are just a few of the names that have been given to Dr.

Cornel West. West graduated from John F. Kennedy High School. He completed his undergraduate education at Harvard University and earned a Ph.D. at Princeton University in 1980. He has published several books about race relations in the United States and frequently appears as a media commentator on political and social issues.

### Justice Anthony Kennedy

PHOTO COURTESY OF ANTHONY KENNEDY



Anthony McLeod Kennedy has served as a justice of the United States Supreme Court since

1988. Kennedy graduated from C.K. McClatchy High School. He then earned degrees from Stanford University and Harvard University. Kennedy has authored the majority opinion in several landmark cases, including *Obergefell v. Hodges*, which guaranteed same-sex couples the right to marry across the nation.

### Anthony Sadler

PHOTO COURTESY OF ANTHONY SADLER



“Hometown Hero” Anthony Sadler made international news as one of three American men who

thwarted a terrorist attack on a Paris-bound train in August 2015. Sadler, 23, grew up in Sacramento and played basketball at Rosemont High School, where he graduated in 2010. He is currently in his fourth year at California State University, Sacramento, studying kinesiology and athletic training.

### Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye

PHOTO COURTESY OF TANI CANTIL-SAKAUYE



California Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye was raised in Sacramento and graduated in 1977 from C.K.

McClatchy High School. She attended Sacramento City College and went on to earn her bachelor’s and law degrees from UC Davis. She was sworn in as chief justice of the state in January 2011, becoming the second woman and the first Asian-Filipina American to serve in the state’s highest judicial office.

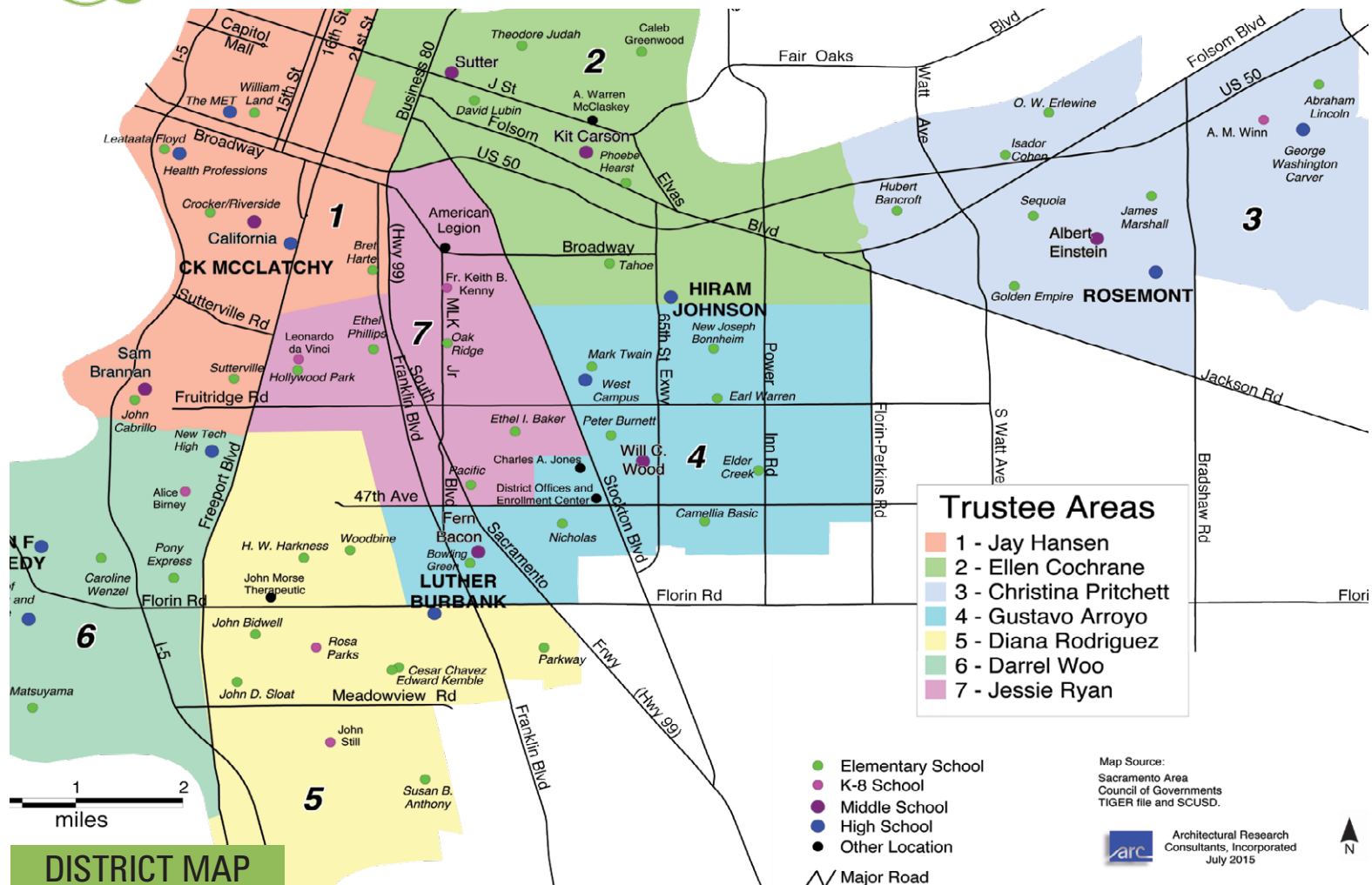
# Helping Students Find a Path

At Sacramento City Unified School District, teachers and staff are committed to helping each student be prepared for college, career and life. The district offers a variety of programs, from rigorous, traditional neighborhood schools at every grade level to innovative, interest-based programs housed on

small campuses within larger comprehensive schools. Partnerships are also a big component in ensuring student success at SCUSD schools. The district offers several opportunities for parents to become involved in their child's education. Let SCUSD help your child find his or her path today.



For more information on SCUSD and how to enroll your child, visit [www.scusd.edu](http://www.scusd.edu).



Enroll at SCUSD Today!

## ENROLLMENT FAQs

### How can I enroll my child?

SCUSD's Enrollment Center offers "one-stop" convenience, allowing families with students attending different schools to complete enrollment at one location. The Enrollment Center also provides translation services, English Language Development testing, immunization services, RT bus passes and enrollment transfers. Located at 5601 47th Ave., Sacramento, CA 95824. Call 916-643-2400 or visit [www.scusd.edu/enrollmentcenter](http://www.scusd.edu/enrollmentcenter) for more information.

### What do I need to enroll my child?

- You'll need to bring the following documents:
- Parent/guardian's photo ID
  - Residency verification (EX: mortgage, property tax bill, utility bill or rental/lease agreement)
  - Child's immunization record
  - Child's proof of birth (county-issued birth certificate or passport)
  - Guardianship/custody papers (if applicable)

### Can my child attend a SCUSD school outside of our neighborhood?

SCUSD offers two (elementary and secondary) online Open Enrollment periods for parents who reside within district boundaries and wish to enroll their child in a school or program beyond their neighborhood school. Open Enrollment typically begins in late January and continues until early March. There are also walk-in application dates for interested parents.

### We live outside the district. Can my child attend a SCUSD school?

Yes. Students who live outside SCUSD boundaries and wish to transfer to a Sacramento City Unified school or program should contact their district of residence and file an inter-district transfer. Transfers must first be approved by the resident district.

Map Source:  
Sacramento Area  
Council of Governments  
TIGER file and SCUSD.

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