Executive Summary:
SUHSD Systemic Instructional Review

Purpose

The purpose of a systemic instructional review is to help support a local educational agency (LEA) identify strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities (SWOT) in the implementation of instructional initiatives and practices. Data is collected through focus group interviews, individual interviews, observations of all aspects of the instructional program, artifact reviews, and data analysis. Stakeholders at multiple levels (students, parents, teachers, school site staff and administration, governance members, and district office leadership) are involved throughout the data collection process. The review culminates in recommendations that are designed to assist districts in creating coherence throughout the system by supporting a strong focus on instruction, developing collaborative cultures, enhancing deeper learning, and establishing accountability throughout the system. These recommendations should serve the district, county office of education, CCEE, and other team members to engage in continuous cycles of improvement, and should include a plan with priorities, actions, and progress monitoring data indicators. CCEE will share progress on the implementation of recommendations with the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and State Board of Education.

Data Collection

Data collection for this review began in mid-February 2020 and consisted of classroom observations, a comprehensive document review of instructional artifacts and policy documents, individual interviews, focus groups with multiple stakeholder groups, and site principal interviews. In this manner, CCEE staff were able to triangulate multiple data points in an effort to validate the collected data set and individual items. Over the course of five weeks, teams of CCEE staff members visited each of SUHSD's ten school sites as well as 130 classrooms, focusing on instruction in: 7th, 9th, and 11th grade ELA, ELD, math, co-taught classrooms (general education teachers working with a special education teacher), and individual studies classrooms that provide additional support for students with disabilities. In addition, some alternative education programs were observed. Plans to revisit the remainder of the district's alternative education programs were interrupted by the mid-March school closures across the state due to the COVID-19 pandemic. School closures also forced some remaining focus groups and individual interviews to be conducted via online meetings.

Prior to site visits, CCEE staff reviewed all documents submitted by SUHSD to support instructional efforts. Additional documents were added and reviewed during the period of classroom visits. Site visits were conducted by CCEE teams working in pairs and visits typically began with a 20-30 minute interview of principals, during which they were provided an opportunity to give a general overview of their schools, and to present their site's areas of instructional focus. Focus groups were conducted with all stakeholder groups including middle school students, high school students, parents, teachers, and school administrators. As previously stated, the teacher and the administrator focus groups were conducted in a virtual setting. In addition to principal interviews conducted during site visits, individual interviews were

conducted with the superintendent, board members, the associate superintendent, the assistant superintendent of human resources, the chief business officer, all directors, district instructional personnel, and union members.

Summary of Findings

Situated in Monterey County, in the heart of Central California's agricultural region, Salinas Union High School District consists of five comprehensive high schools, four middle schools, one independent study school, one alternative high school, ROP Center, and an adult school. The district's student enrollment is fed by seven area elementary school districts. The district enrollment is 15,818 students with 76% of the students qualifying for Free and Reduced Lunch, 10% SWD, 0.6% of students experiencing homelessness, and 21.5% English learners. It is led by a superintendent who has led the district for three years and has a rich history of experience at multiple levels within the district as well as outside the district.

While the SIR process began prior to school closures in mid-March 2020, instructional challenges of distance learning for all students need to be considered when reading this report. There are added levels of consideration that did not exist in the pre-COVID-19 world including: meeting the needs for digital equity for all students in terms of devices, internet access, and bandwidth; instructional design considerations that must now be met by all teachers for engaging students; and ensuring equitable inclusive practices for the district's ELs, SWDs, and youth experiencing homelessness, which are the district's triggering factors for the SIR process.

The SIR team has identified the following findings, which are reported in the form of identifying the district's overall strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities. These items will be discussed in detail in Section VII that addresses the 12 instructional components of the SIR.

Strengths
- The district has strong central and school site leadership committed to improving outcomes for students.
- The district has a strong central office which has laid out strong instructional structures for curriculum identification, common formative assessment development, and creation of curriculum maps.
- SUHSD has a strong collaborative culture and infrastructures, evidenced by Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs).
- SUHSD's core belief in collaboration is exemplified through the differentiated assistance work with the Monterey County Office of Education (MCOE), MTSS, and SEL using cycles of continuous improvement.
- The district has shown the ability to narrow its focus and develop an action plan through data analysis that led to improved outcomes in mathematics.

- There are on-going and consistent structures for building teacher capacity such as PLCs, Summer Institute, New Teacher Onboarding, EL/Newcomer Professional learning, etc.
- The district recognizes the need to differentiate supports for varied populations offering personnel, such as an EL Specialist at each school site, and structural supports, such as Wellness Centers, co-teaching, or Migrant Education supports, etc.

Weaknesses

- There is a discrepancy in the intended practices or curriculum called out by the district (such as co-teaching, use of Constructing Meaning, and gradual release of responsibility) and the implementation of such practices. These discrepancies exist from school to school and within schools.
- Though tools and structures have been set in place for accountability of practice implementation, or cycles of improvement, they are not adhered to on a consistent basis. Some schools have successfully implemented the structures and have seen positive outcomes as a result, whereas others have not implemented them, which is reflected in student outcomes.
- Data sets are consistently provided to site leaders. However, their usage to inform practice is not implemented district wide. Some schools utilize data systematically, after each learning block to guide differentiation and next steps; whereas others' use is perfunctory and does not inform differentiated instruction or interventions.
- When quantitative and qualitative data (such as school visits) reveal a need for improvement and alignment in practices, there is a lack of clarity regarding recommendations made by visiting district experts. This clarity pertains to the perception of the recommendations made by directors being optional.
- While the PLC structure offers on-going and consistent opportunities for teacher collaboration, additional time within the workday is needed for in-depth collaboration within schools and across schools.
- While there are clear learning opportunities for paraprofessionals, additional opportunities within the bell structure would benefit capacity building and coherence throughout the system.

Opportunities

- There is an opportunity to build on district-wide practices existing during "CST times," of establishing learning goals for each instructional period, reviewing data based on such goals, and determining next steps based on results of data analysis. In other words, establishing cycles of improvement with clear accountabilities.
- Build on Peter DeWitt's leadership coaching by providing district coaches that will expand on the work and provide on-going opportunities for reflection and revision of strategies.
- The research on inclusive practices in schools has demonstrated positive outcomes for students with disabilities. The district's commitment to implementing inclusive practices should be celebrated. However, it needs to deepen local school sites' common

understanding of inclusive practices, co-teaching and support for students with disabilities, with clarity of strategy and goal setting.

- Re-clarify the role of teacher voice in decision-making for district-wide decisions such as: processes for selecting supplemental and core materials to recognize and utilize the expertise from practitioners in selecting and implementing curriculum that meets students diverse needs. It should be understood by all parties that there are times when the teachers' role is advisory and times when they participate in a consensus-making process. Teacher representatives, e.g., department chairs, involved in such work have a responsibility to communicate their role in decision-making with their school sites.
- Expand work with MCOE to continue the implementation of LEA Self-Assessment and other initiatives to have continuity of the work and take advantage of the resources the partnership with the county provides.
- Expand work with MCOE to build articulation pathways with SUHSD's elementary feeder districts, especially in supporting transition to middle and high school for ELs, SWDs, and students experiencing homelessness. Examples would be common criteria for reclassification of ELs by feeder districts and for the identification of students experiencing homelessness.
- Utilize data to differentiate support to schools to ensure equity based on student numbers by demographic.
- Expand the capacity of school leaders to lead the analysis of data, lead the work of continuous cycles of improvement with internal and external accountability markers to ensure coherence and accountability, with data-based decision-making for intervention.
- Utilizing the resources of MCOE, collaborate in professional learning with districts serving similar student populations who are achieving positive student outcomes.
- There is an opportunity to build the governing board's knowledge and understanding of district instructional initiatives and goals, and progress towards such goals on a regular basis.

Threats
- Due to COVID-19, there is limited data about student achievement. One possible way to address this might be to consider administering the Smarter Balanced Interim Comprehensive Assessments (ICAs) to serve as a diagnostic.
- The district is affected by the turnover rate in personnel, particularly special education teachers and paraprofessionals. This inconsistency requires on-going capacity building and development of common understanding.
- There is a need for a clearer focus on the instructional strategy for attaining student outcomes and for a common understanding of district practices that are tight and loose that will get SUHSD there. The what, why, and how the district overall, as well as individual schools, will be held accountable needs to be clearly articulated.

- Though there has been improvement in acquiring data from feeder districts, solid, consistent structures for such data collection would benefit student articulation and placement.
- There is a need to improve homeless identification in order to best service students, whether it be academically or with social and emotional support.

Recommendations

As a result of data analysis, interviews and school visits certain themes have emerged for the SUSHD. These themes, **Clarity and Coherence, Accountability,** and **Communication** cut across SIR components and refer to the work being done by the district around Fullan and Quinn's (2016) Coherence Framework. **Clarity** speaks to a common understanding, and **Coherence** refers to "what is in the minds and actions of people individually and especially collectively" (p. 14). **Accountability** is both internal and external. "If you want effective accountability, you need to develop conditions that maximize internal accountability—conditions that increase the likelihood that people will be accountable to themselves and to the group. Second, you need to frame and reinforce internal accountability with external accountability —standards, expectations, transparent data, and selective interventions" (p. 111). For the purpose of this report, **Communication** is a two-way process. Clear communication occurs in a multi-modal manner, from the district to the stakeholders. There is an opportunity for stakeholders to demonstrate their understanding through their actions and their communication to the district. There are structures in place for the district to check for understanding.

The following table represents the SIR recommendations by instructional component. Action steps and implementation timelines to meet these recommendations will be developed collaboratively with the SUHSD.

This June 2020 SIR report has been updated with smaller and granular actions totaling 43 recommendations/actions. CCEE determined that this would ensure SUHSD progress on implementing the SIR recommendations/actions could be more accurately measured, including the gathering of evidence. CCEE engaged in the process of examining the original recommendations and determining the smaller steps needed to accomplish the original recommendations. Consideration of the current work at SUHSD related to instruction was taken in the development of the updated SIR recommendations/action. CCEE reviewed the recommendations with SUHSD leadership as a part of the process to ensure accuracy and clarity. [May, 2021]

To access the full Salinas Union High School District SIR Report along with the actions listed by themes, click here.

Recommendations by Instructional Component
Component 1: Culture, Planning, and Coherence

1A	Re-clarify the district's overall achievement goals by developing and implementing a concise instructional framework and plan that create coherence, clarity, and focus for district and school sites. The framework and plan: 1) Establish outcomes for students to attain (e.g., Literacy, Graduation). 2) Align to the district's vision, mission, and goals. 3) Integrate and connect to other district plans (e.g., Master Plan for English Learners) and initiatives (MTSS and SEL). 4) Set expectations for implementation of evidenced based instructional processes, e.g., SUHSD's currently selected strategies such as co-teaching, Constructing Meaning (CM), and Gradual Release of Responsibility. 5) Are grounded in using cycles of inquiry, e.g., Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA). 6) Specify district and school site processes (MTSS) and structures to monitor framework/plan implementation, and goal attainment. 7) Clarify role and responsibilities of cabinet members towards the implementation and support of the plan. 8) Focus on the diversity of students and their needs (e.g. English learners, students with disabilities, and students experiencing homelessness).
1B	Clarify and share structures of support for the policies, instructional program options, practices, assessments, and services included in the 2021 adopted Master Plan for English Learners and how these align with the California Department of Education English Learner Road Map principles.
1C	Set expectations that existing working groups (Instruction Council [IC], school site Instruction Leadership Teams [ILTs], Professional Learning Communities [PLCs]) use data to engage in continuous improvement practices and processes using a minimum of four short inquiry cycles, e.g., Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) per year.
1D	Ensure that all central office and school sites use a multi tiered approach to support schools, students, and resources (e.g., tiering schools for need) in a manner that supports inclusive practices in the classroom and for students.
1E	Expand the 2020-2021 middle to high school articulation practices to include feeder districts in order to ensure placement, program, and services to incoming English learners, students with disabilities, and students experiencing homelessness (HY).

1F	Engage with feeder district leadership teams (DLTs) to ensure common local practices and procedures (e.g., once a semester check in on transfers) that provide direction, guidance, and oversight in the identification and support of students experiencing homelessness.
Component 2: Curriculum, Learning, and Support	
2A	Clarify the curriculum to implement a Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) approach to align and allocate resources for instructional decision-making and support based on students' and school's needs, which will result in improved outcomes for specified populations: English learners, students with disabilities, and students experiencing homelessness. This should be included in the instructional framework and plan.
2B	Align decision making on curriculum and supplemental materials or resources to data analysis resulting from using cycles of inquiry, e.g., Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) with a special focus on English learners, students with disabilities, and students experiencing homelessness.
Component 3: Instructional Practice and Strategies	
3A	Narrow down the focus of existing classroom walkthrough tools utilizing a common instrument, such as the district's existing Gradual Release of Responsibility/Constructing Meaning (GRR/CM) rubric. (For example: identify one element from the GRR/CM rubric that correlates with "teacher clarity" to observe while walking classrooms and leads to improved academic outcomes for English learners, students with disabilities, and students experiencing homelessness). Utilize data resulting from walkthroughs to inform scheduled inquiry cycles (e.g., PDSA) four times a year. Reach common agreement on which walkthroughs or data collection require feedback to teachers. Additional data that may be analyzed regarding the common understanding and implementation of district wide instructional practices may be: 1) lesson plans, 2) minutes from Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings, and 3) focus of teacher evaluation cycles.
3B	Include in the instructional framework and plan the clear instructional practices that should be reflected in each and every SUHSD classroom (e.g., select co-teaching strategies, Constructing Meaning, and Gradual Release of Responsibility) including expanding student goal setting and reflection as a common practice for students to support student agency and ownership.
3C	Support implementation of MTSS and inclusive practices, utilize instructional support and intensive support staff to provide in class interventions and supports resulting from decisions made during cycles of inquiry (e.g., PDSA) or data analysis.
3D	Set the expectations and outcomes for existing Professional Learning Communities and school site Instructional Leadership teams, so that participating administrators and teachers of all student groups, e.g., English learners, students with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, and foster youth engage in collaborative planning for instruction.

3E	Implement specific and differentiated academic interventions for students with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, and English learners by typologies (Long Term English Learners [LTELs], Newcomers, etc.) during Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III instruction.
3F	Expand Individual Studies Course utilized in middle school addressing: math, English, and Executive Functioning to the high school, as part of implementing specific and differentiated interventions for students with disabilities, including English learners with disabilities.
Component 4: Social and Emotional	
4A	Expand professional learning opportunities for educators to build their capacity to support students experiencing homelessness academically, socially, and emotionally, including using interventions and enrichment.
4B	Ensure that social, emotional, and behavioral instruction and assessment strategies and processes are used that promote resilience in foster youth and students experiencing homelessness and assess students' skills such as motivation, social adaptability, and interpretive abilities.
Component 5: Assessment and Accountability	
5A	Establish a schedule to implement district wide, standards-aligned common assessments that will be used for Cycles of Inquiry to measure impact on student learning, particularly for impacted groups: English learners, students with disabilities, and students experiencing homelessness.
5B	Determine academic assessment tools and data points that will be utilized to monitor the growth for English learners, students with disabilities, and students experiencing homelessness, to ensure students are receiving differentiated, coordinated, and coherent support to improve in learning.
5C	Lead existing working groups (e.g., Instructional Council, Instructional Leadership Teams, Professional Learning Communities) through the use of cycles of inquiry that include both short-term and long-term data (e.g., process improvements, student outcomes, multiple years) from a student information system and assessment data to measure growth for all students, with particular focus on English learners, students with disabilities, and students experiencing homelessness. Utilize such data to make instructional decisions at the student, classroom, school and district level (e.g., strategies to continue implementing based on data, district initiatives to undertake or dismiss, asking the group, "How does this xxxx align with/and support our focus? How will we know that a change is actually an improvement?").
5D	Implement intentional time for the superintendent, associate superintendent, and directors to engage with teachers and principals to utilize cycles of inquiry, e.g., Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) with a focus on English learners, students with disabilities, and students experiencing homelessness to learn, digest, analyze, problem-solve, and plan

	for instruction that results in improved outcomes for academics, behavior, and social and emotional (e.g., Professional Learning Communities, Monterey County Office of Education's Professional Learning Network, etc.).
5E	Utilize the district Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) decision rules during cycles of inquiry, e.g., Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) utilized by Professional Learning Communities and Instructional Leadership Teams to determine entrance and exit criteria for students needing intensified instruction and intervention.
Component 6: Student and Family Engagement	
6A	Create a common definition of: 1) two-way communication, 2) meaningful two-way communication, and 3) success in two-way communication, that result in deeper understanding and support by all stakeholders of academic, social-emotional and behavioral goals and outcomes for students.
6B	Continue to foster student voice and agency utilizing existing structures (Leadership, Student Council, AVID, student led conferences, student goal setting) to promote two-way communication.
6C	Utilize structures at the district and school site level that provide regular two-way communication and engagement opportunities for staff (Instructional Leadership Teams, Professional Learning Communities, surveys) and parents and community (DELAC, parent conferences, surveys, texts) to support student learning and achievement.
Component 7: School-based Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs)	
7A	Create written expectations for the Instructional Leadership Teams' roles, responsibilities, and team membership.
7B	Empower Instructional Leadership Teams to facilitate the use of data resulting from formative assessments, district common assessments, and summative assessments to design Tier I, Tier I, and Tier III instruction, differentiation, and intervention based on diverse students group's needs: English learners, students with disabilities, and students experiencing homelessness.
Component 8: Administrative Coaching and Leadership	
8A	Employ targeted coaching practices, e.g., the ongoing work with Peter DeWitt, at the site level to support implementation of effective differentiated/targeted strategies agreed upon during cycles of inquiry, e.g., Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA).
8B	Clarify roles of directors, coaches, English learner specialists, department chairs, teachers involved in district committees, etc. and how they are expected to support the district's outcomes, priorities, and accountabilities. Directors' roles include spending extensive amounts of time in schools observing instruction in both general and special education settings and providing strength-based and actionable feedback to site

	leaders, after agreeing which types of classroom walkthroughs require data collection and feedback to teachers.
8C	Use consistent leadership coaching and mentoring, e.g., the ongoing work with Peter DeWitt, to provide principals the opportunity to reflect on, monitor, adjust, and increase effectiveness of their roles in strengthening instructional practices to address the needs of diverse learners.
	Component 9: Professional Learning and Coaching
9A	Create a one-year written comprehensive professional learning plan (PL) and coaching plan based on best practices for improving effective instruction for veteran and new principals, teachers, and staff (classified and certificated) and ensure there are clear expectations for implementation and monitoring. The goal would be to expand these into multi-year plans.
9B	Ensure that the vision, principles, and components (e.g., Assessment and Program Placement, Program Options, Access to Core, English Language Development, etc.) of the newly adopted 2021 Master Plan for English learners are part of the district's comprehensive professional learning plan (PL).
9C	Provide continued professional learning on: 1) assessment literacy, 2) data analysis, 3) facilitation of Professional Learning Communities, 4) high-leverage instructional strategies for teaching English learners, 5) co-teaching best practices, 6) inclusive practices, and 7) using cycles of inquiry, e.g., Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) with a particular focus on English learners, students with disabilities, and students experiencing homelessness.
9D	Ensure that each school site has a data-driven professional development plan that is intentional and differentiated for the needs of the teaching staff and its student population.
	Component 10: Data Management and Use of Student Information Systems
10A	Continue to provide data through the district's SIS that supports and aligns with the district's assessments, timelines, and accountabilities. Some data that might be included are: reports from common assessments by student groups and standards/clusters, and Renaissance performance reports by student groups, grades, etc.
10B	Utilize Student Information System and observational data at calendared cycles of inquiry to monitor improved academic outcomes for targeted populations.
10C	Partner with schools within and outside the district to learn, identify practices, or receive feedback on implemented practices that support targeted populations and have proven to increase student outcomes.
	Component 11: District and Leadership Capacity

11A	Establish and implement how student learning will be monitored by different levels and by leadership, to determine support for schools and student groups and to coach and support staff responsible for student learning at a minimum of four-calendared times a year. Utilize existing HR protocols, such as the evaluation process, in the monitoring (e.g., superintendent - principals; associate superintendent - directors; directors - coaches/specialists; principals-teachers).
11B	Establish clear and coherent calendars, structures, reflective/monitoring processes and academic targets that align with the district's commitment to the advancement of all students.
11C	Develop a Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) structure to support and monitor the implementation of the instructional framework and plan. At the central office, ensure that differentiated support is provided for all schools and departments, that the support connects to other district plans and initiatives, and that is grounded in continuous improvement practices (e.g., PDSA) and processes.
11D	Regularly meet as a District Leadership Team to provide direction, guidance, differentiated support, and oversight to clarify roles of directors, coaches, English learner specialists, department chairs, teachers involved in district committees, etc. and how they are expected to support the district's outcomes, priorities, and accountabilities.
11E	Provide professional learning and coaching opportunities to school leaders on inclusive practices, including co-teaching.
Component 12: Governance and Support with Instruction	
12A	Share with the Governing Board at a minimum of four times a year on the progress of the instructional plan and student achievement including the SIR actions, how they are informing the district's priorities, and how student outcomes are being impacted (e.g., presentations and communications).
12B	Ensure policies that are adopted are in alignment with addressing school improvement and attaining student outcomes in particular the needs of English learners, students with disabilities, and students experiencing homelessness.