

Network Overview & Vision

San Marcos Unified School District (SMUSD) serves nearly 19,000 students across San Marcos, Vista, Escondido, and Carlsbad. The district's Middle School Network—three comprehensive middle schools (*Woodland Park, San Marcos, San Elijo*) and two K–8 learning partners (*La Mirada Academy, Double Peak School*)—functions as a living system of redesign bridging elementary foundations with the district's high schools. Guided by SMUSD's Portrait of a Graduate, Strategic Promise, and Middle School Experience Pillars, the network is built around four design commitments: Grounded in Community & Connection, Personalized & Flexible, Co-Created through Shared Power, and Skills-Driven & Relevant.



Demonstration and Pilot Sites



Demonstration Site

Woodland Park Middle School: Lead demonstration site exemplifying career-connected courses such as Horticulture and Film & Media English, advisories, equity teams, and data-driven inquiry cycles.



Pilot Sites

- **San Marcos Middle School:** Personalized learning through small learning communities, interdisciplinary Model House Project, and career labs linking classroom inquiry with job-shadowing and local mentors.
- **San Elijo Middle School:** Equitable outcomes and measurable growth via Universal Design for Learning and Building Thinking Classrooms, culminating in a cross-disciplinary Science Ethics Fair.
- **La Mirada Academy & Double Peak School:** K–8 learning partners extending belonging, student discourse, and interdisciplinary learning downward to ensure 6–12 coherence.

Key Partners & Collaborators

National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE): Leadership development and system benchmarking.

Inflexion: Co-developer of the Instructional Playbook, translating Portrait competencies into observable classroom practice.

San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE): Professional learning in UDL, Restorative Practices, and leadership development; partner in SD9UP high-school redesign network.

Learner-Centered Collaborative (LCC): Coaches the superintendent and cabinet in learner-centered systems transformation and national communities of practice.

Partnerships with the **Stanford d.school and Design for Emergence** will guide the next phase of high school redesign, applying Design for Belonging principles to ensure human-centered, skills-driven continuity between middle and high school.



Higher Education Partners: CSU San Marcos, MiraCosta College, and Palomar College collaborate to expand dual enrollment, career-connected pathways, and educator development pipelines.

Community & Industry Partners: Boys & Girls Club of San Marcos, TruCare, and local industry partners provide wellness supports, mentoring, and real-world career exploration aligned to the district's Portrait of a Graduate.

Redesigned Learning Examples

Redesign Element	Current Strengths
Every Student is Known & Supported	Students experience a strong sense of belonging through advisory and SEL routines that help them feel seen, valued, and supported. Family calls, restorative circles, and student equity teams ensure that every learner is known by name, need, and strength.
Redesign Learning for Deeper Knowledge & Skills	Students are exposed to Career Exploration Labs and interest-based core courses that connect academic rigor to real-world relevance. Projects like the Model House and Science Ethics Fair challenge students to apply inquiry, ethics, and design thinking across disciplines.
Equitable Student-Centered Learning & Supports	Students learn in classrooms built for access, equity, and inclusion, where Universal Design for Learning, Building Thinking Classrooms, and co-teaching structures make learning personalized and engaging. Counselors, social workers, and community partners such as TruCare provide wraparound supports so every student can thrive.
Promote Measurable Growth in Student Engagement & Learning	Students take ownership of their learning through student-led conferences and digital portfolios that track growth in Portrait of a Graduate competencies and durable skills. Attendance, engagement, and belonging data become tools for reflection, helping students understand and improve their own progress.
Design Sustainable Structures to Maintain Impact Over Time	Students benefit from teachers who learn and lead together through embedded professional learning, coaching, and continuous improvement cycles. Redesign is sustained through LCAP integration, strategic partnerships, and district policies that align funding, grading practices, and anticipated revised graduation requirements to the Portrait of a Graduate.

Pilot Activity Highlights

-  **Quarterly Demonstration Visits:**
 SMUSD will host quarterly public learning visits at Woodland Park Middle School, with partner events at San Marcos and San Elijo. Each visit features classroom walk-throughs, student panels, family storytelling, and leadership debriefs highlighting the five redesign features in action.
-  **Public Learning Series & Digital Sharing:**
 A Redesign Coordinator will lead a public learning series documenting SMUSD's journey through videos, case studies, and a podcast. A digital platform will house redesign tools, stories, and professional learning artifacts accessible statewide.

