

A Case Study of

San Ramon Valley Unified School District

Danville, California



LEARNING
2025

Student-Centered
Equity-Focused
Future-Driven
Education



An Introduction to the Learning 2025 Case Studies Series

AASA Learning 2025: Student-Centered, Equity-Focused, Future-Driven Education is a movement that calls for a holistic redesign of the public school system by 2025. This initiative is grounded in the foundational work of the AASA Learning 2025 National Commission, comprised of thought leaders in education, business, community, and philanthropy. The work of [AASA Learning 2025](#) is guided by the commission's report, *An American Imperative: A New Vision of Public Schools*.

As part of this initiative, AASA Learning 2025 demonstration systems are creating student-centered, equity-focused, and future-driven educational systems that serve ALL learners. This initiative is based on recurrent core redesign components, including: (1) **Culture:** Systems redesign must occur within an intentional and relationships-based culture that is Whole Learner Focused; dedicated to ensuring that No Learner Is Marginalized; and Future Driven, anticipating forthcoming changes in post-secondary and career landscapes to inform all decisions today. (2) **Social, Emotional, & Cognitive Growth:** Educational systems must address the strengths and needs of the Whole Learner, including physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development as a holistic component of educational transformation; and (3) **Resources:** Every learner must succeed and have equitable access to the educational resources and support services necessary to ensure their success.

To demonstrate the power and effectiveness of participating AASA Learning 2025 school districts, AASA is sharing with members of the educational community case studies showcasing exemplary school systems that are a part of this network. In this case study, you will learn about one of the highest performing school districts in California, San Ramon Valley Unified School District. Its systemic focus on deep learning and innovation as well as equity and the social-emotional well-being of students and staff is powerfully aligned with the vision, mission, and focus areas of the AASA Learning 2025 initiative.

As you will learn in this case study, San Ramon emphasizes a strategic planning process that stresses deep learning (reinforcing the student as the co-author of their own learning) and innovation (transforming traditional programs and practices into a true preparation of learners for post-secondary education and the 21st century world of work). As part of this commitment, the district is committed to creating the best possible learning environments in which students can thrive and succeed because they are safe, accepted, and supported. These organizational values are reinforced by the integration of social and emotional learning as a consistent Pre-K–12 priority area.

The district's work with AASA Learning 2025 includes the following:

1. a commitment to the Whole Learner
2. reinforcing anti-marginalization
3. ensuring that the learning organization and its students are future-driven
4. implementing a cognitive growth model with learners becoming co-authors of their own learning process (rather than passive recipients of information)
5. structural innovations, including:
 - a. sustaining a diverse educator pipeline
 - b. a systemic focus on the importance of early learning
 - c. technology-enhanced learning as a key accelerator
 - d. continuing involvement of the community in expressing their voice and contributing to educational decision making and problem solving.

A Profile of the San Ramon Unified School District



Located in the San Francisco Bay Area, San Ramon Valley Unified School District (SRVUSD) stands among the highest-achieving school districts in California. It serves approximately 30,000 students and encompasses the communities of Alamo, Blackhawk, Danville, Diablo, and San Ramon, as well as a small portion of the cities of Walnut Creek and Pleasanton.

This school district is a high-achieving system based on traditional measures. For example, its graduation rate exceeds 95%, and at least 75% of students score “above standard” on standardized assessments. It has been placed on the College Board’s Advanced Placement District Honor Roll every year since the program’s inception in 2011, which no

other school district has accomplished. SRVUSD is guided by its Board adopted Strategic Directions, which were approved during the 2021-2022 school year and emphasize deep learning and innovation, equity, and social emotional well being. Educators are committed to creating the best possible environments where students are able to thrive and succeed because they are safe, included, accepted, and supported.

Priority Goals Aligned with the AASA Learning 2025 Initiative

While the district has a strong foundation of academic excellence, it recognizes that many students still need support for their social and emotional well-being. Some learners find it challenging to handle the stress associated with the community’s high expectations. In order to address this issue, the district has added elementary counselors and social workers in order to support all students with the stress and depression they are experiencing.

Consequently, SRVUSD is choosing to emphasize two major AASA Learning 2025 priority goals: Social Emotional Learning as well as the Cognitive Growth Model. Like most other districts in the United States, after the pandemic staff found that students needed additional supports in these two areas in order to succeed in school and beyond.

While emphasizing these two areas, the district is also doing a tremendous amount of work on the Whole Learner, Anti-Marginalization, and Being Data Driven. For example, by focusing on the intersection of deep learning, social emotional well-being and equity, the district’s goal is to support staff in understanding the importance of addressing the needs of the whole learner (including social-emotional, physical, cognitive, and academic growth and development). In addition, much of the district’s equity professional development has focused on listening to all of the voices in the community—not just the ones who step forward first. The goal is to partner with all members of the SRVUSD community, making a special effort to reach the individuals and groups who have typically been marginalized.





Progress Monitoring Using Data-Driven Evidence

San Ramon Valley Unified School District uses multiple forms of evidence to demonstrate growth in its identified Learning 2025 redesign components. The [district dashboard](#) highlights some of the data collected to measure growth. These data sources include instructional walk-throughs and standardized testing data in English Language Arts and Mathematics.

Also, the district administers the California Healthy Kids Survey data to monitor the progress of the Whole Learner, including social, emotional, and physical growth and development. SRVUSD monitors its employee pipeline effectiveness using hiring/recruitment information. In addition, academic and social emotional screeners, given three times a year, allow district staff to monitor student progress and the effectiveness of efforts to intervene with students.

For the first time in its history, SRVUSD now has both academic and social emotional screener assessments. These are given three times a year to all students. The information from these screeners is used to create effective Tier 1, 2 and 3 intervention supports. The district's goal, however, is to not only strengthen site-specific interventions but also to develop a systemic approach to implementing and sustaining a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS).

Using a Systems Approach to Achieve AASA Learning 2025 Identified Goals and Performance Targets

SRVUSD has hired 36 liaisons assigned to specific sites but working under the direction of district leadership. These liaisons have been instrumental in developing a more consistent approach to implementing key interventions, supporting collaborative teams in using the academic and social-emotional screener and other sources of data more effectively, and promoting the use of evidence-based interventions. In order to develop effective interventions, liaisons (in conjunction with other teacher leaders) have developed District-Wide Essential Standards (DWES). These standards are the cornerstone of instructional decision making and addressing the needs of the Whole Learner.

The district has also created a Data District Dashboard to communicate progress toward the goals contained in its strategic plan and to guide its work during the 2022–2023 school year.



This dashboard contains 16 different indicators on systemic performance, each of which contains a baseline measurement and a target goal. This dashboard is an important tool that will hold staff accountable for the academic and social emotional progress of students.

The Curriculum and Instruction Team has also [created a professional development plan](#) for all sixteen indicators. Contained in the plan are very specific strategies, processes, and programs that we are being used to achieve identified AASA Learning 2025 goals. District staff members are also in the process of developing a learner profile that will become the “North Star” to guide much of the decision-making process involving classroom instruction and progress monitoring.

Promoting Anti-Marginalization and Personalization

As stated previously, SRVUSD has both academic and social emotional well-being screeners for all students. Data from these screeners is analyzed and used to create and implement tiered site-based interventions. This year, the district has also instituted Common Learning Time (CLT) across all sites in order for staff to have built-in time to provide these small group or 1:1 interventions.

Staff members are collaborating on the creation of a Profile of a Learner in order to further guide this work. Through conversations with parents, families, and community stakeholders, the district has concluded that both the community and staff prioritize many of the “soft skills” required of students to thrive in today’s world. By emphasizing such competencies as communication, interpersonal, and self-regulation skills, the district is striving to broaden the definition of success for all students and focus on the whole student’s well-being.

As suggested previously, the district focuses on deep learning (reinforcing rigor and inquiry) and innovation (encouraging students and staff to exercise creative thinking and problem solving in addressing academic and organizational problems). The district’s focus on equity and social emotional well-being reinforces equitable learning environments that focus on the development and achievement of the Whole Learner. In turn, these deep learning experiences will create more equitable environments that support students’ social emotional well-being and focus on student choice and voice in the educational process.

Promoting a Diverse Educator Pipeline

This school district has worked to create a more diverse workforce. It has greatly expanded the colleges and universities where Human Resources liaisons recruit staff. For the first time ever, they are asking individuals who leave the district to complete an exit survey. This survey has provided valuable information on why people leave and has prompted discussions and actions on how district staff can ameliorate these issues.





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Providing All Students Access to High Quality Early Learning Experiences

The 2022–2023 school year is the first year the district has implemented a transitional kindergarten (TK) at all elementary sites. All four year olds in the district will have access to TK by the 2025–2026 school year. In 2022–2023 the district also implemented the State of California Expanded Learning Opportunities Program (ELOP). This after-school care serves all unduplicated pupils and is provided as a result of funding from the State. There is also an infant and pre-school program provided at all elementary sites.

Using Technology as a “Force Multiplier”

Starting in the 2020–2021 school year, all students have a technological device for use in the classroom or at home. This process represents a commitment to equity and excellence and is part of the district’s dedication to promoting the achievement of the Whole Learner. Additionally, staff members receive ongoing support and professional learning to align virtual and non-virtual learning environments and experiences.

Engaging All Members of the Community

SRVUSD established the [Access to Excellence \(a2e\)](#) initiative in February 2022. Its goal is to celebrate what schools mean to students, families, and the community—and to provide opportunities for all members of the community to support and partner with SRVUSD. This active engagement of the community and the forums and discussions extending from it provide feedback that leads to improvement. The district tagline is “Success Reimagined.” By reengaging community with their community schools, the district is striving to reimagine success every day.

Suggested Guide Questions

1. Leaders of the San Ramon Valley Unified School District emphasize the high levels of academic achievement evident in the school system. In your opinion, why did the district educational leaders elect to become a part of the AASA Learning 2025 initiative?
2. A major theme in this case study is SRVUSD's deep commitment to social and emotional learning as a key component of its transformation efforts. To what extent do you agree that this component is especially critical these days and is essential to educational transformation?
3. Two key recurrent themes emerge in this case study: e.g., deep learning and innovation. What is "deep learning"? What are specific ways that SRVUSD is attempting to reinforce it?
4. Innovation is a key component of educational transformation. What are key examples of innovation highlighted in the SRVUSD case study?
5. In your opinion, why is social and emotional learning a recurrent theme and area of emphasis in this case study? To what extent has your district experienced similar issues to the ones presented by the leaders of SRVUSD to justify this emphasis?
6. Progress monitoring and the use of data are key components of determining the impact of the district's participation in AASA Learning 2025. To what extent does the range of data used by the district capture the "value add" of the programs it is implementing? Are there suggestions for additional data you might recommend to district leaders?
7. Coherence and alignment involving the written, taught, and assessed curricula are major areas of focus for SRVUSD. How is the district working to address the alignment of the teaching-learning-assessment process with key performance standards?
8. What is the role of the Learner Profile referenced in the case study? How are you using a similar profile in your school or district?
9. SRVUSD is emphasizing multiple Learning Accelerators (as defined by the AASA Learning 2025 initiative). How are the district's diverse educator pipeline, early childhood programs, focus on technology, and community partnerships contributing to the transformation of this district?
10. What is your reaction to the concluding statement presented by Superintendent John Malloy: "While we are a high-achieving school district on almost all traditional measures, we are trying to expand our definition of success. Our goal is to have all students thrive in school—in ways that are defined by them and not us or society. By expanding this definition of success, our goal is that all students have the social emotional, well-being, and academic skills to succeed in post-academic endeavors."





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