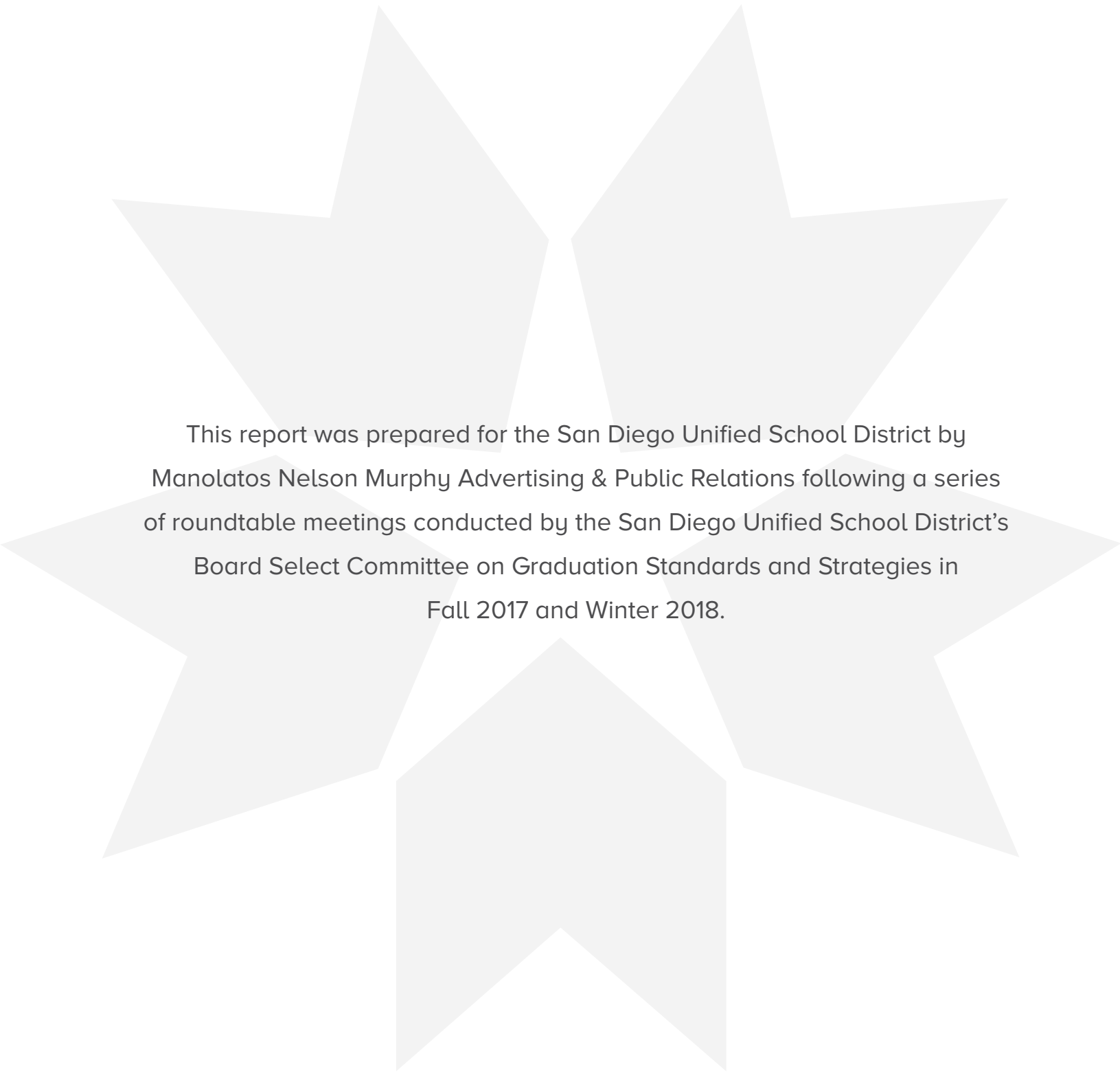


Board Select Committee on Graduation Standards and Strategies





This report was prepared for the San Diego Unified School District by Manolatos Nelson Murphy Advertising & Public Relations following a series of roundtable meetings conducted by the San Diego Unified School District's Board Select Committee on Graduation Standards and Strategies in Fall 2017 and Winter 2018.



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Executive Summary

To expand access to college, in 2016, the San Diego Unified School District began requiring students pass the University of California ‘a-g’ college preparatory courses in order to graduate. Successful completion of those standards is required for admission to the University of California and California State University systems.* The net effect of this change was to impose more stringent high school graduation standards on the Class of 2016. A full list of the new requirements appears on Page 11 of this report.

This report by the Board Select Committee on Graduation Standards and Strategies first offers a detailed look back at the impacts of the new standards on the Class of 2016, their graduation success, the strategies schools used to assist in that success and the students who were not included in that success. Next, the report provides recommendations on ways San Diego Unified can continue to provide students with more meaningful diplomas. The issues covered throughout the report include credit recovery, retention, student tracking and the importance of subject mastery and value.

*Admission to the UC/CSU systems require completion of the a-g coursework with grades of C or better. San Diego Unified allows students to pass individual courses with a D or better but requires an overall C or higher average.

Main Findings

Graduation Standards

The Committee found the San Diego Unified Class of 2016 graduation rate of 91% is accurate based on the reporting standards required by the California Department of Education and validated by the state. The Committee further noted the consistency of those standards California school district and their stability across multiple years. Significantly, the graduation rate in San Diego Unified actually improved under the stricter standards embedded in the UC a-g courses over the year prior to their implementation. The School District succeeded in both raising standards and improving outcomes. As a result, the San Diego Unified Class of 2016, achieved the highest graduation rate of any big-city district in the state.



Graduation Strategies

The strategies put in place by San Diego Unified to help students meet its higher graduation standards were multi-layered and developed over several years. Some were tailor-made in response to specific challenges unique to individual schools. Others were developed to confront those challenges that run throughout our public education system, especially those issues related to race and poverty. The Committee sought to enumerate the leading District strategies to help students graduate.

Among the most significant strategies adopted by San Diego Unified to support student graduation success were the following: master schedule reform, expanded core class offerings, the elimination of certain periph-

eral classes, access to online courses, and increased funding for high-needs schools, including additional counselors and other resources. The District also recognized its diversity as a strength and gave bilingual students academic credit for demonstrating fluency in languages other than English. Beyond the broad strategies adopted by the District to help implement increased graduation requirements, the Committee also considered the special supports put in place for struggling students. The Committee was able to validate successful graduation outcomes for many students who had initially fallen behind thanks to strategies collectively referred to as credit recovery efforts. However, there is currently insufficient data to draw a straight line from any one of these efforts to overall success of these struggling students.

Opportunities for Growth

Despite widespread success, the Committee expressed focused concern over those students who did not share in that success, including those students who stayed with the District but failed to graduate and those who left to attend charter schools. Many recommendations of the Committee are aimed at these two populations that fall generally within the category of credit recovery and retention.

The credit recovery supports put in place by the District were either insufficient or came too late to benefit those students who failed to graduate in 2016. The Committee found many

of these vulnerable students exhibited warning signs as far back as third grade of their academic difficulties.

These difficulties continued into the middle school years, where they were more likely to exhibit behavioral issues than their peers. Most concerning, the Committee found historically disadvantaged student populations were over-represented among those students who ultimately did not graduate.

In short, the district has more work to be done to close the achievement gap between its highest performers and those who have historically been left behind.



The Committee also focused on work to be done around the issue of retention. Thirty-seven percent of the 2016 Class left the District at some point. Data show for the Class of 2016, that most of the students (56.6%) who left District-managed schools did so because of family mobility issues, rather than academic failure. Many also left before high school, and of those who left in high school, most left as freshmen or sophomores. These trends are reflected also in the statewide dropout rate statistics (see California Dropout Research Project).

Overall, the District-managed high school retention rate matches the retention rate for surrounding charter schools, roughly 67%. Of the 37% of students who left the District, 28% of them enrolled in local charter schools. Put another way, 14% of all of the students from the Class of 2016 left for local charter schools.

About 1 in 10 of the students remaining in Grade 11 left before the start of Grade 12. Most of these students were off-track in terms of completing the District’s graduation requirements. The Committee was concerned to note that certain historically low-performing subpopulations are over-represented in this group, especially English Learners, students from lower-income households, and students with disabilities.

Recommendations

The Board of Education asked the Advisory Committee to make recommendations related to four specific areas based on it’s findings:

1. Mastery and Value

How does the District improve the graduation system overall to produce what students need?

The Committee made several recommendations related to the goal of providing students with a more meaningful diploma.

- Review grading practices to make sure grades truly reflect subject mastery.
- Go above and beyond state graduation standards to create internal metrics related to student career and college readiness.

To reinforce these objectives, the Committee recommended the District continue to focus on improving classroom instruction.

- Increase teacher effectiveness through added professional development, especially opportunities that offer collaboration among teachers within and across grade levels.
- Reinforce teacher understanding of the knowledge and skills students should acquire at each grade.
- Provide professional development for principals to help them better support effective classroom instruction.
- Increase training for teachers in methods that are responsive to the needs of different student groups.

2. Retention

How does the District help students who are thinking about leaving?

The Committee believes the District should establish a goal of decreasing the number of students who leave for charter and non-public schools within its boundaries.

- Report annually on the number of these students at all grade levels.
- Report trends among all racial/ethnic groups, Special Education students and English Learners.

- Create / report on the academic profile of these students.
- Develop a more thorough exit interview process for these students.
- Reinforce supports for students considering leaving a District-managed school.

3. Tracking Students

How does the District help students prepare at a younger age and follow them after graduation to track their progress?

The Committee urged the District to begin identifying students at risk of not graduating much earlier in their careers—no later than Grade 3.

- Set a Districtwide agreed upon profile of students most at-risk of not graduating based on their elementary school academic profile.
- Set a Districtwide agreed upon profile of students most at-risk of not graduating based on their elementary and middle school discipline history.
- Track the success of interventions applied to each of the previously identified groups.
- Help parents understand and track the academic success of their students specifically related to their status as on/off track for graduation throughout their careers.

The Committee further suggested additional tracking and reporting on students who leave District-managed schools for charters and non-public schools.

- Request charter schools share academic data on the academic success of students formerly in District-managed schools beyond what the law currently requires.
- Assume greater academic responsibility for the success of students attending charter

schools within District boundaries.

- Increase public awareness of the fact charter school students are not included in District graduation rates.

Finally, the Committee urged the District to create strategies to measure and track academic success after graduation.

- Partner with the community colleges and other higher education allies to pilot measures of students' academic readiness for college following graduation from the District.

4. Credit Recovery

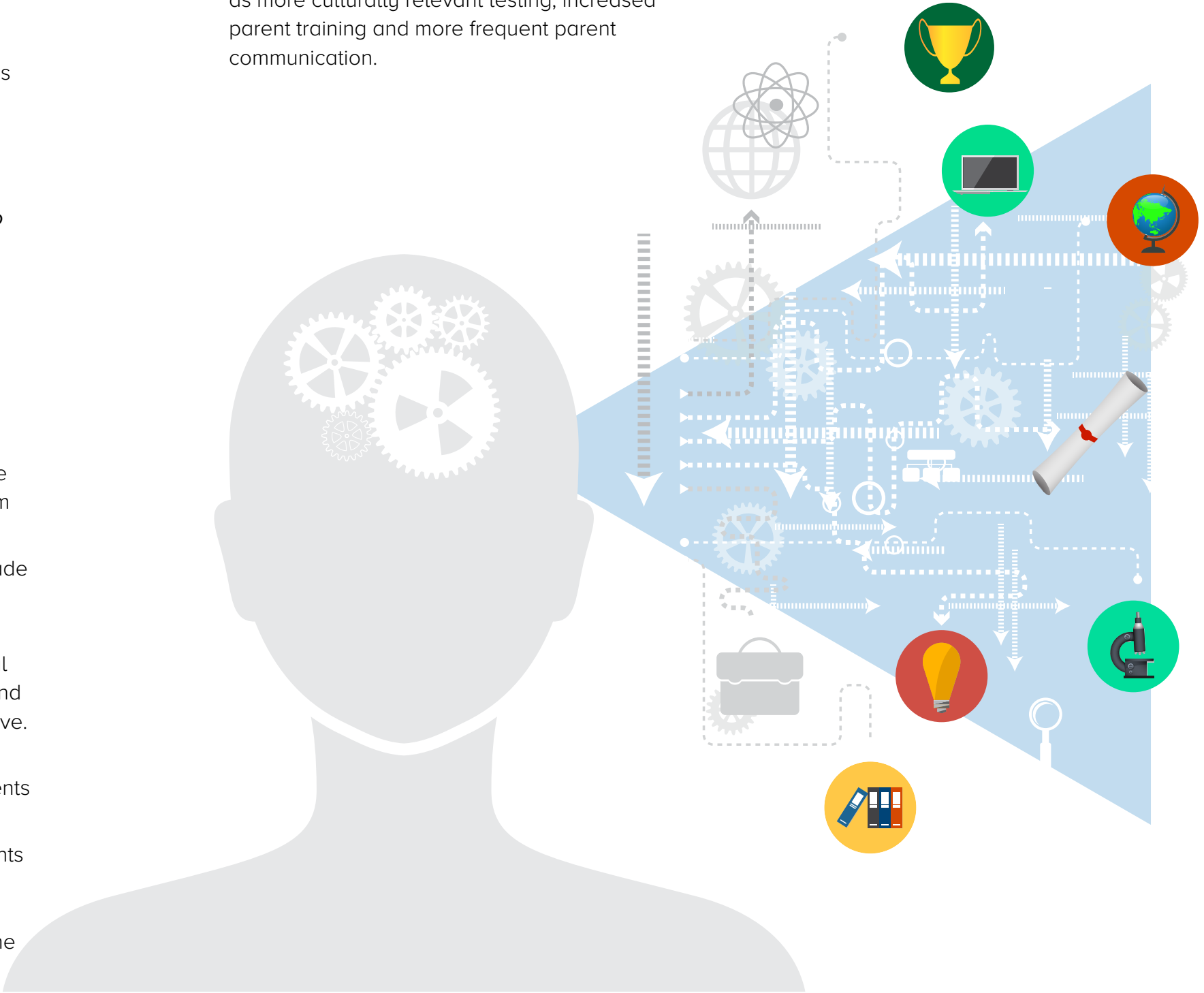
How does the District help students who are struggling to catch up?

The Committee agreed the District should expand its credit recovery efforts to better support younger students in need of assistance, especially those from historically underserved student populations.

- Initiate grade-by-grade mapping of the requisite knowledge students should have in order to succeed with the a-g curriculum once they reach high school.
- Develop specific interventions in each grade level to assist students who are falling behind.
- Evaluate these interventions, with the goal of improving the interventions that work and abandoning interventions proved ineffective.
- Training for parents to help them monitor their students' progress and to equip parents to help their students if they fall behind.
- Special attention should be paid to students who are chronically absent, students with disabilities, English Learners and other groups who have had difficulty meeting the new graduation standard.

Future Study

Committee members articulated the urgency for the District's continued progress in narrowing the achievement gap between the general student population and those from historically underserved communities. They called for further study of potentially fruitful strategies such as more culturally relevant testing, increased parent training and more frequent parent communication.





Introduction

The San Diego Unified School District's Board Select Committee on Graduation Standards and Strategies was officially assembled upon passage of a resolution by the Board of Education of the San Diego Unified School District on June 27, 2017. (Appendix A.1)

The distinguished members of the Committee were purposefully assembled by the District's then Board President, Richard Barrera, to represent a diverse cross-section of local leadership in education from early childhood through the collegiate and adult levels of instruction. The general goal of the Committee was to host a series of roundtable discussions to fully understand the District's new a-g graduation requirements, to interpret and verify the data from the Class of 2016, and then work to strengthen the process for future students.

Specifically, President Barrera asked the Committee to consider how the District could improve its service to students in the following four areas:

1. Credit Recovery:

How do we help students who are struggling to catch up?

2. Retention:

How do we help students who are thinking about leaving?

3. Tracking Students:

How do we help students prepare at a younger age for academic success? And, how do we follow them after graduation to track their progress?

4. Mastery and Value:

How do we improve the graduation system overall to produce what students need?

In an effort to stimulate effective roundtable discussions, hundreds of pages of relevant data, graphs, and charts were gathered and analyzed by the Committee. This report was drafted upon conclusion of the Committee meetings to document the strategies successfully implemented by the District, provide transparency into the challenges faced and data produced by the Class of 2016, and, most importantly, share the Committee's recommendations for continuous improvement of the District's efforts to prepare students for success in college and careers.

"Graduation has to mean something. That's the point of our whole effort. Is our system producing what our students need to be successful?" Barrera said at the first Committee meeting on September 18, 2017.

New Graduation Standards

In early 2009, Alliance San Diego, a local civil rights group pressing for equity in education, raised a question related to the gender gap on test results between men and women. Over the course of the next few months, Alliance used a petition to help persuade the District to adopt the University of California a-g subject requirements as a base curriculum for graduation standards to help minority students.

On June 9, 2009, the San Diego Unified Board of Education passed a resolution (Appendix A.2) to implement the a-g curriculum as the District’s base graduation requirement beginning with the Class of 2016.

“This move aimed to close the a-g completion gap by offering a-g at all high schools, as well as by requiring a-g course completion for graduation, so all students access the courses they need to be successful in career and college in the 21st century.” (Alliance report, October 2015, Appendix B.1)

The academic year of 2012-2013 signified the first year that entering Grade 9 students (Class of 2016) were subject to the new graduation requirements. Just as this academic year ended, the District welcomed aboard education veteran Cindy Marten as Superintendent on July 1, 2013. On that same day, California Governor Jerry Brown signed a school reform bill, known as the Local Control Funding Formula, which replaced California’s overly complex and ineffective finance system for K-12 schools with a model focused on equity. Both the change in leadership and in funding were essential in helping San Diego Unified meet the new graduation requirements.

The graduation requirements for the Class of 2016, were the most rigorous standards ever implemented by the District. Modeled after the University of California and California State University a-g subject requirements, the District determined that San Diego Unified students would be required to complete the full list of a-g requirements, satisfied by earning a D grade or higher. Overall, students must earn at least 44 credits and maintain a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or higher in Grades 9 through 12 to graduate. The current District graduation requirements are as follows:

3 years of History/Social Science

(“A” requirement)

- 1 year World History
- 1 year US History
- 1 year Government/Economics or course alternative

4 years of English (“B” requirement)

- 1 year English 1-2
- 1 year English 3-4
- 1 credit American Literature and 3 credits from ELA “b” courses

3 years of Mathematics (“C” requirement)

- 1 year Algebra or Integrated Math I
- 1 year Geometry or Integrated Math II
- 1 year Intermediate Algebra or Integrated Math III

3 years of Science (“D” requirement)

- 1 year of Life Science
- 1 year of Physical Science
- 1 additional year of Lab Science

2 years of World Language

(“E” requirement)

1 year of Visual/Performing Arts

(“F” requirement)

8 College-Preparatory Electives

(“G” requirement)

These requirements are stricter than the UC a-g requirements in that the latter require two years of science and history/ social science, but the District requires three each. The elective requirements also differ somewhat. At the same time, the District requirements are less strict than UC a-g requirements because students can graduate with grades of D or higher in the a-g courses, while the UC and CSU systems require grades of C or higher.

SDUSD UC a-g Graduation	
UC Admission Requirement (15 courses)	SDUSD 2016 Graduation Requirement (22 courses)
2 years: One year of World History One year of US History or ½ year US History and ½ year Am. Gov. or civics	3 years: One year of World History One year of US History One year of Government/Economics or Course Alternative
4 Years: College Preparatory English (“b”)	4 years: One year English 1-2 One year English 3-4 One credit American Literature and three credits from ELA (“b”) courses

SDUSD UC a-g Graduation	
UC Admission Requirement (15 courses)	SDUSD 2016 Graduation Requirement (22 courses)
3 Years: College Preparatory Mathematics (“c”) (Includes topics in algebra and Geo)	3 years: One year Algebra or Int. Math I One year Geometry or Int. Math II One year Intermediate Algebra or Int. Math III
2 years: Laboratory Science (“d”) that provides fundamental knowledge in at least two of the three disciplines of biology, chemistry and physics.	3 years: One year life science One year physical science One year “d” or “g” lab science

SDUSD UC a-g Graduation	
UC Admission Requirement (15 courses)	SDUSD 2016 Graduation Requirement (22 courses)
2 years: Same language taken for two years (equivalent to the second-level of HS instruction)	2 years: Same language taken for two years (equivalent to the second-level of HS instruction)
1 year: Dance, drama/theater, music or visual art (“f”)	1 year: One year “f” approved courses in same subject
1 year: Chosen from “a-f” courses	The extra lab science requirement for SDUSD would meet this requirement

SDUSD UC a-g Graduation	
UC Admission Requirement (15 courses)	SDUSD 2016 Graduation Requirement (22 courses)
	2 years of PE
	8 electives
	WGPA of 2.0 in grades 9-12
	Passage of math and ELA CAHSEE
	Computer Proficiency
	44 credits (specific subjects)

Graduation Strategies

The new graduation standards presented a set of increased challenges on both the District and the Class of 2016. Under the leadership of Superintendent Marten, the District implemented specific strategies related to campus funding equity and schedule reform that worked to positively impact the graduation process for students. Over time, these changes produced results that were further analyzed and amended accordingly to continue improving the system.

Funding Equity

The State of California provides annual “base” funding to school districts statewide for basic services and then additional funding for disadvantaged groups of students. Each district’s allocation is determined by the unduplicated percentage of students in poverty, students living in foster care, and English language learners (Appendix A.5). As one of the most diverse districts in California, San Diego Unified has many students that fall under two or even all three of the categories.

San Diego Unified has developed an internal funding system for school allocations that duplicates student counts in the categories listed previously. This means an English-learner, low-income student is counted only one time by the state in determining the funding allocation for the district, but San Diego Unified counts the same student twice in determining the funding it provides the individual school he or she attends. This double-counting method has worked to fund counselors at schools with the highest needs.

The District invests heavily to ensure that disadvantaged students are receiving the attention they need to create an equal opportunity for all. As part of the strategy to close the

achievement gap with the increased difficulty of graduation requirements, the District assigned additional intervention counselors to high-priority campuses and trained district-level resource counselors to track individual student progress.

UC A-G Strategies Implemented for 2016 Graduation

- Aligned graduation requirements to UC a-g requirements
- Created credit check tool to gain access to individual student course readiness.
- Created tracking tool to monitor each student in the system in relationship to UC a-g readiness.
- Graduation requirements letter mailed to students in the Class of 2016 and their parents.
- Graduation requirement posters were distributed to every school site for posting in every classroom.
- Hired intervention counselors in the five high-priority schools.
- Hired six resource counselors centrally to support the high schools with UC a-g.
- Created the High School Resources Office to focus on graduation success.
- Reviewed all senior transcripts by hand to understand how scheduling affected outcomes.
- Created 13 master schedule expectations, including the sequencing of all students in preparation for UC a-g.
- Created master schedule tool to ensure that equity was present in scheduling.
- Eliminated courses that tracked away from graduation.
- Converted New Arrival Centers into International Centers to ensure English Learners

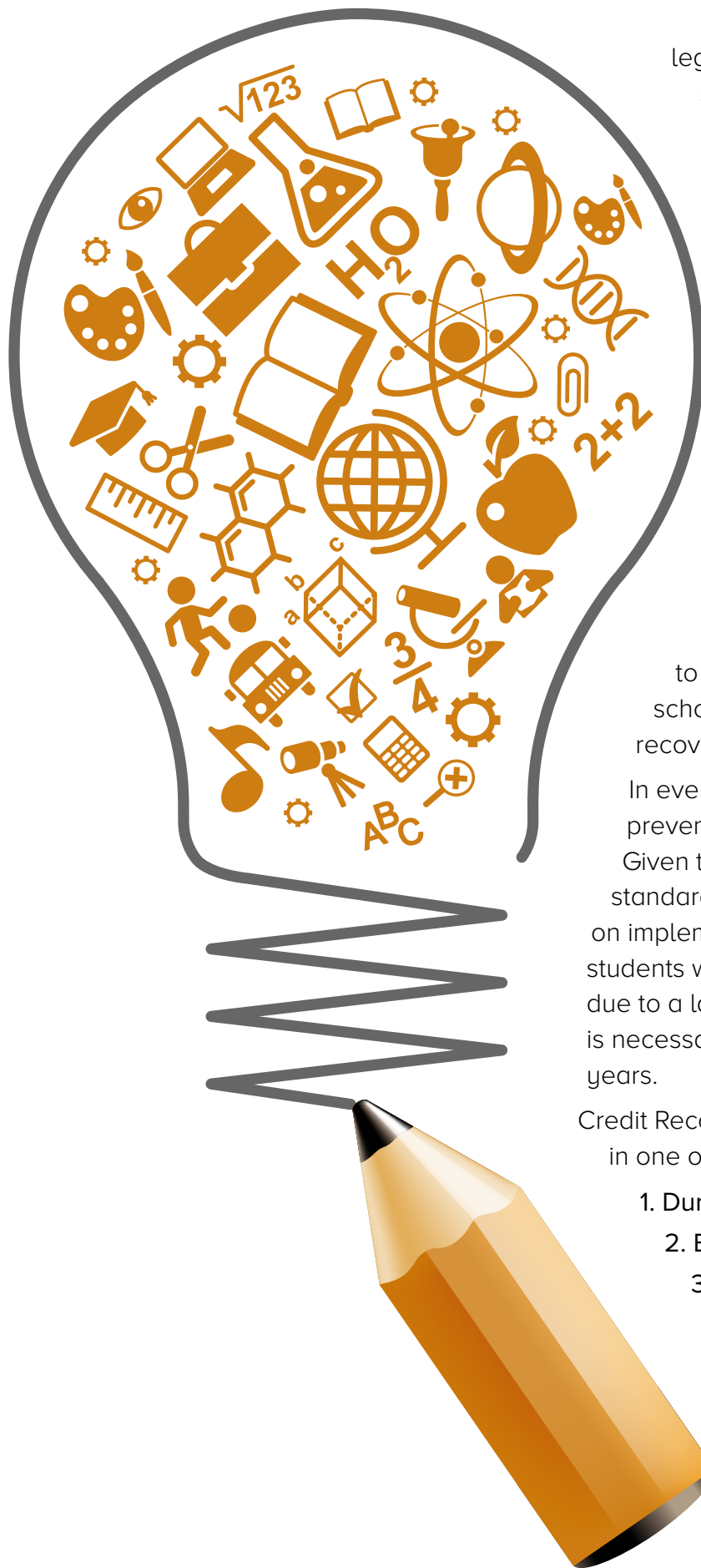
- had access to the core curriculum with appropriate support.
- Purchased UC a-g aligned online coursework. Expanded online course offerings for credit recovery and acceleration.
- Ensured most CCTE (College, Career, and Technical Education) coursework were UC a-g.
- Encouraged the prioritization of world languages in our middle schools to align language offerings within school communities.
- Expanded UC a-g Language Other Than English Course Equivalents, including the expansion from 5 to 14 language equivalents.
- Revised Administrative Procedure 4771 to clarify dual enrollment coursework and alternative means of satisfying the prescribed course of study.
- Expanded community college, UCSD and PLNU dual credit college coursework programs.
- Ensured that many CCTE courses were community college articulated.
- Studied Education Trust West UC a-g Report and Recommendations from 2009.

Important to note is that access to a-g curriculum courses took time to develop across the District while other non-a-g courses were scaled back to allow for space and time. For example, approximately half of the District’s secondary schools were still offering Unifying Algebra and Geometry in 2012-13 and 2013-14, which allowed a student to graduate but did not qualify for four-year college admittance (see Table below). In addition, some sites used Earth Science as an alternative to Physics if students were deemed to be poor in math. To address these issues, the area superintendents worked with sites to implement best practices for master schedule development, which included access to all UC a-g courses and discouraged the use of alternative coursework for tracking.

Another trend in the District curriculum, over the last decade, has been to add academic rigor to the many CCTE courses offered in District high schools to help students prepare for careers. Over time, the share of these courses that have qualified as a-g courses has risen so that about 74 CCTE courses are now a-g approved. This trend is important because it has helped to ensure that career and col-

Access to the UC a-g coursework was a challenge.

12-13 No Unifying Algebra	12-13 Did Offer Unifying Algebra * Offered Unifying Algebra in 13-14
Clairemont	Garfield*
Crawford	Henry*
IHigh	Hoover*
Kearny (all four schools)	La Jolla*
Madison	Twain*
Mission Bay	Lincoln*
San Diego HS (all four schools)	Mira Mesa*
SD Met	Morse*
SD Early Middle College	Mt. Everest
University City	Muir*
	Point Loma*
	SCPA
	Scripps Ranch*
	Serra*



lege readiness are not an “either/or” choice for students.

In addition to reforming curriculum, the District has encouraged campus leadership to make changes to class schedules that allow for students to have more opportunities for credit recovery and support throughout the day. Around half of the District’s secondary schools now have what is known as a 4x4 schedule instead of the traditional six-period day, which provides a flexible course load each semester to both students and teachers. The 4x4 schedule breaks the day into four 90-minute courses and one 30-minute lunch period. Students take up to four classes per day, but could take up to eight classes at once over the course of the school year, offering more opportunities for credit recovery.

In every cohort, unforeseen situations arise that can prevent students from staying on track to graduate. Given the increased rigor of the District’s graduation standards for the Class of 2016, the District focused on implementation of new strategies that would help students who fell behind. When students fall behind due to a lack of completed credits, credit recovery is necessary for students to still graduate within four years.

Credit Recovery occurs when students retake a course in one of four ways:

1. During a normal school day.
2. Before/after a normal school day.
3. On Saturday in the Extended Day program.
4. In a summer school program.

The District noted that students have varying abilities to register for recovery classes based on course schedules offered at individual campuses.

A comprehensive review and continuous follow-up efforts have been made to end course scheduling inefficiencies Districtwide.

The District also recognized that foreign-born students were struggling to get credit for world languages they knew how to speak. Students were being forced to take a third language because their home language was not offered as a course to complete the World Language “e” requirement. As students invested time learning a third language (other than English or their native language), they sometimes lost opportunities to receive needed assistance with English language arts or other areas of academic need. By passing a LOTE (Language other than English) exam, students demonstrate their mastery of a language and earn credit towards their “e” requirement. However, LOTE exams were not available in several languages spoken by many San Diego Unified students. As students invested time learning a third language (other than English or their native language), they sometimes lost opportunities to receive needed assistance with English language arts or other areas of academic need.

District leaders increased the total selection of LOTE assessments to give students a greater chance at earning their “e” requirement. The

District had offered only one World Language proficiency exam (Spanish) in 2009. By 2013, the District increased the variety of LOTE exams offered to include, for example, Spanish, Arabic, Somali, Swahili, and Vietnamese. The data show that by offering nine additional languages in 2015-16, the District increased distribution of LOTE certifications by 907 in one year (Appendix A.12, pages 12-15).

Increasing online courses is another strategy the District is exploring to increase student success. The district contracted with Edgenuity to provide approved a-g courses on line. Implementation included strict proctoring of mid-course and final exams. (Appendix B.5). The Committee reviewed data that show for the Class of 2016 close to 12% of students took at least one online course during secondary school. This is the highest percentage of students to date who have utilized the online course option for earning credits. (Appendix A.0 Class Of 2016 with Online Grad Credits).

To track student progress in meeting a-g requirements, the District needed to establish a way to identify students who need assistance. The District defines a student as “on-track” if when entering Grade 11, the student has passed the following courses: English 1-2, English 3-4, Algebra, Geometry

On track to graduate						
Table 2	English Language Arts (ELA)	Mathematics	History/Social Science (HSS)	Science	World Language	Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA)
Graduation Requirements	4 years	3 years	3 years	3 years	2 years	1 year
“On-Track” Requirements as of start of 3rd year	2 years	2 years	1 year	1 year	1 year**	1 year**

* On Track a-g defined as having passed the following courses (or their equivalents) English 1-2, English 3-4, Algebra, Geometry, World History/Geography, Biology or Physics, and at least 4 additional semester credits in any combination of approved science, world language, and visual/performing arts coursework.
 **Because individual course sequences vary, students with less than 1 year of VAPA and/or World Language will be considered on-track if they have completed a total of 6 semester credits in any combination of Science, World language, and VAPA coursework.

(now Integrated Math I and Integrated Math II), World History/Geography, Biology and either Physics or Chemistry, and has earned at least four additional semester credits in any combination of approved Science, World Language, and Visual/Performing Arts coursework (see Table 2 from Appendix A.7). Students are considered “off-track” if they fall behind in school and need to make up credits to reach these targets.

The District was able to use annual student data to pinpoint areas of concern where strategic changes were still needed for those struggling. Graduation Coaches were assigned to every high school and targeted interventions were offered at the lowest performing schools to support students in English language arts and math. All Summer School 2014 resources focused on the high school program—2,000 additional students attended for credit recovery, world language, and physical education.

With all of the positive work being made toward improving student access to the a-g curriculum, the District also identified and solved unforeseen technical issues arising within the system. Transcript data errors were impacting the enrollment process, saddling students with failing grades, and delaying

overall student progress towards graduation. Other inconsistencies gave students credit for high-level coursework like honors, Advanced Placement (AP), and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses, but did not recognize courses taken through colleges (while students were still enrolled in high school).

By increasing communication between the District and each campus, sharing best practices, and applying more oversight for adopting the new requirements, the District responded to challenges that arose along the way.

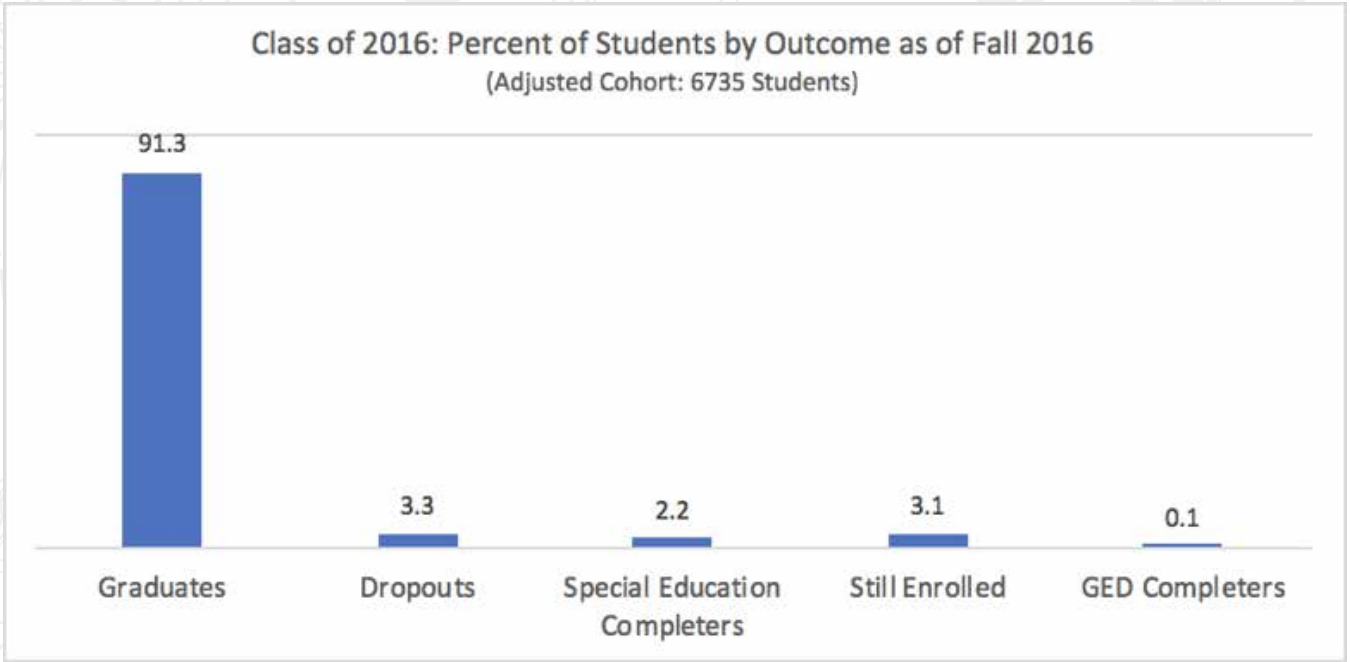
Cohort Data

A Cohort is the group of students that could potentially graduate during a four-year time period. The Adjusted Cohort is calculated by using the cohort total, adding students who transfer into the cohort during Grades 9, 10, 11, or 12, and subtracting the students who transfer out, emigrate, or die during the four-year cohort period. For example, if a student leaves the district and/or transfers to a charter school, they are not included in the Adjusted Cohort total.

of 2016 completed with an official graduation rate of 91.3%. Chart 2 shows how the adjusted cohort total is broken down by outcome and percentage.

The State of California releases official graduation data in California, and for the Class of 2016, San Diego Unified ranked highest of the big-city districts in the state. With an official graduation rate of 91.3%, San Diego Unified-students outperformed the state average with

Chart 2



The Four-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate is calculated by dividing the number of students in the four-year adjusted cohort who graduate in four years or less, by the total number of students who form the adjusted cohort for that graduating class. Students will be considered “graduates” once they have obtained a traditional high school diploma.

With a final adjusted cohort total of 6,735 students and a total of 6,148 graduates, the Class

higher graduation rates (chart 3a), lower dropout rates (chart 3b), and higher overall academic achievement in a-g courses (chart 3c).

The improvements reflected in Charts 3a-c suggest that some of the strategies described in the previous section may have positively influenced graduation rates -- even with more challenging graduation requirements.

The data in Chart 4 show graduation rates for racial/ethnic groups. These data demonstrate

Chart 3b

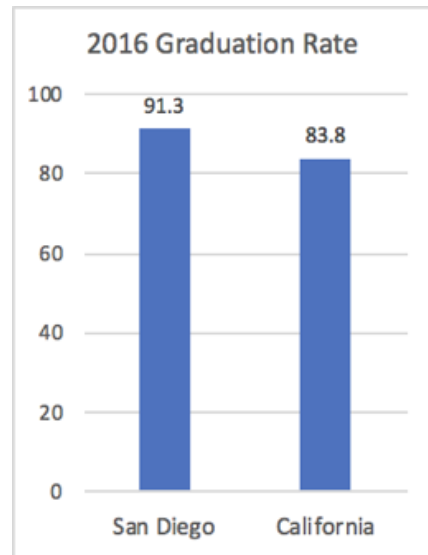


Chart 3c

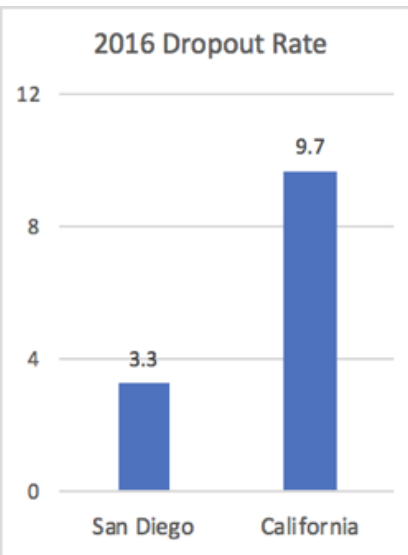
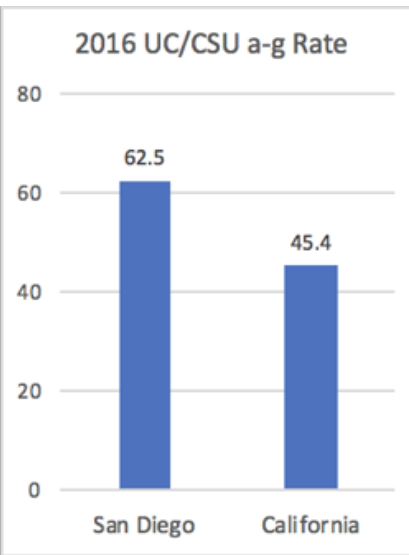


Chart 3a

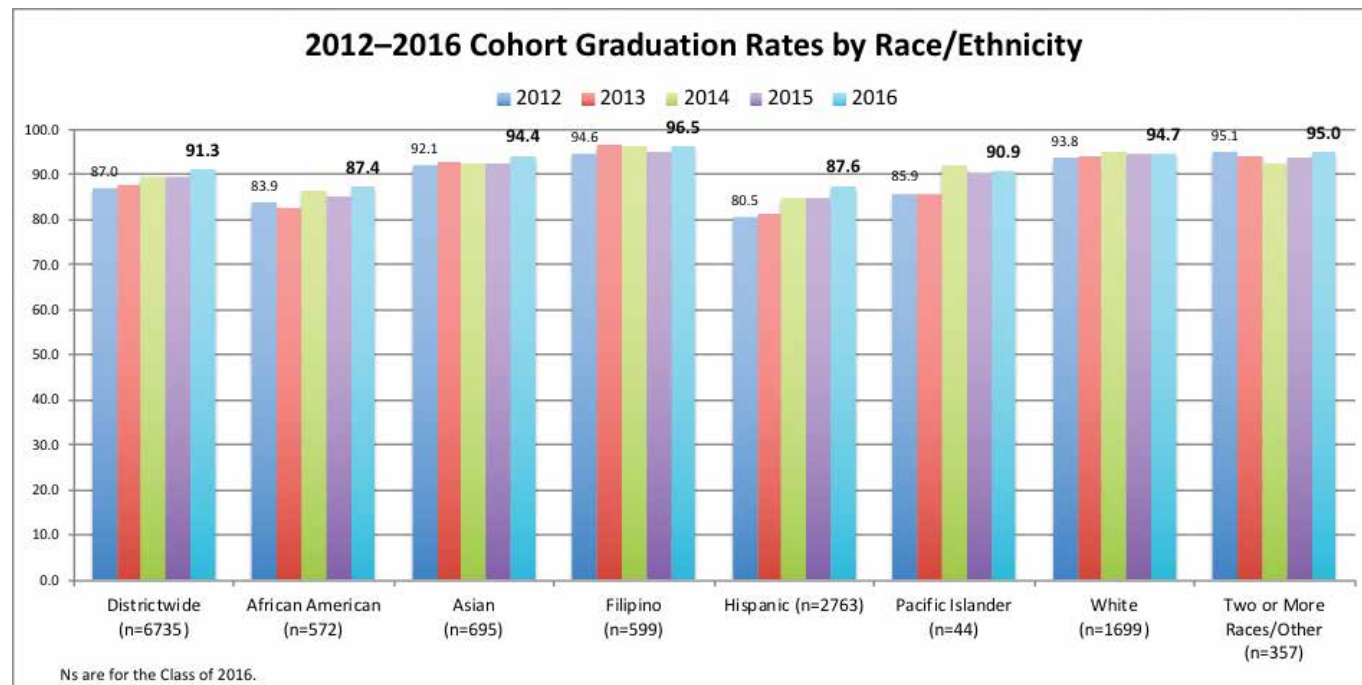


improvement over time for most racial/ethnic groups, although a segment of the student population is not included in the data, as discussed in the following.

Chart 5 shows 2016 UC/CSU a-g completion rates (with grades of C or better) for the District

overall. Although the District requires grades of D or higher for graduation, students who obtain grades of C or higher on all the a-g courses become eligible to attend either state university system, and they are classified as “college ready.” Approximately 62.5% of 2015-16 grad-

Chart 4



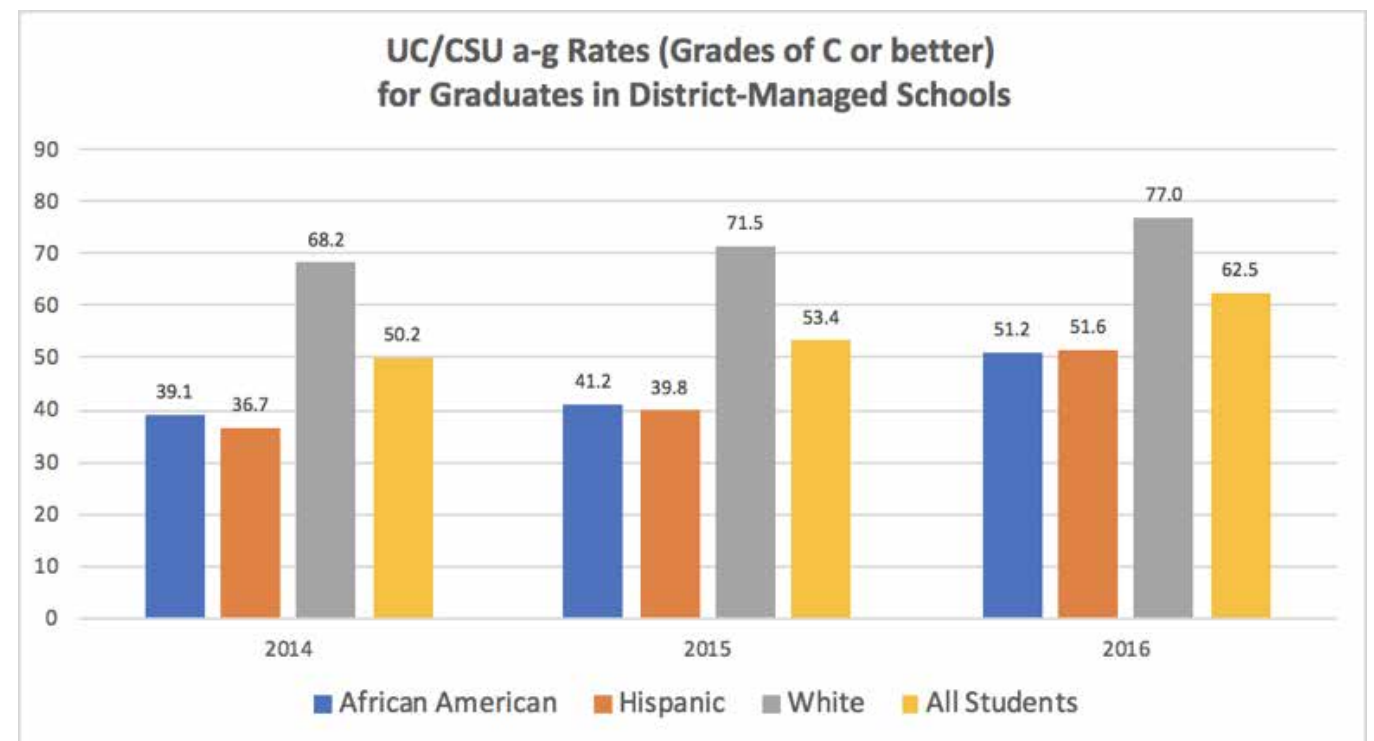
uates completed all a-g requirements with a grade of C or higher. The Committee noted, however, substantial disparities among racial and ethnic subpopulations regarding college readiness.

As the District increased access to a-g courses over the course of a few years, a higher percentage of students continued to meet the new challenges they faced. As shown in Chart 5, there was a 10 percentage point improvement from 2015 to 2016, in the number of

students meet a-g requirements, the District also discovered that more students actually enrolled in college, Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses than ever before (Appendix A.12, pages 21, 26, 34).

Just as the higher standards did not negatively impact those students who stayed in District-managed schools, the San Diego Education Research Alliance (a collaborative research effort between UCSD and San Diego Unified that has studied the new graduation

Chart 5



African American students completing a-g and a nearly 12 percentage point improvement for Latino students. This suggests that increased access to more rigorous and required courses did not negatively impact graduation rates among minority students, instead helping the class move forward as a whole (Appendix A.6, pages 8-9). While finding new ways to help

standards) team also pointed out that the grade point average for struggling students who left did not drop after implementation of the more rigorous standards (Appendix B.7, page 12). Many students in the Class of 2016, stepped up to the new challenges.

While the Committee did not find evidence the new standards had disadvantaged students,

they were wary of applying the term “college ready” to those graduating with a C or better on the UC a-g curriculum. They called for the District to develop its own definition of mastery

and value—one that focuses more squarely on producing students who are fully ready for college and career.

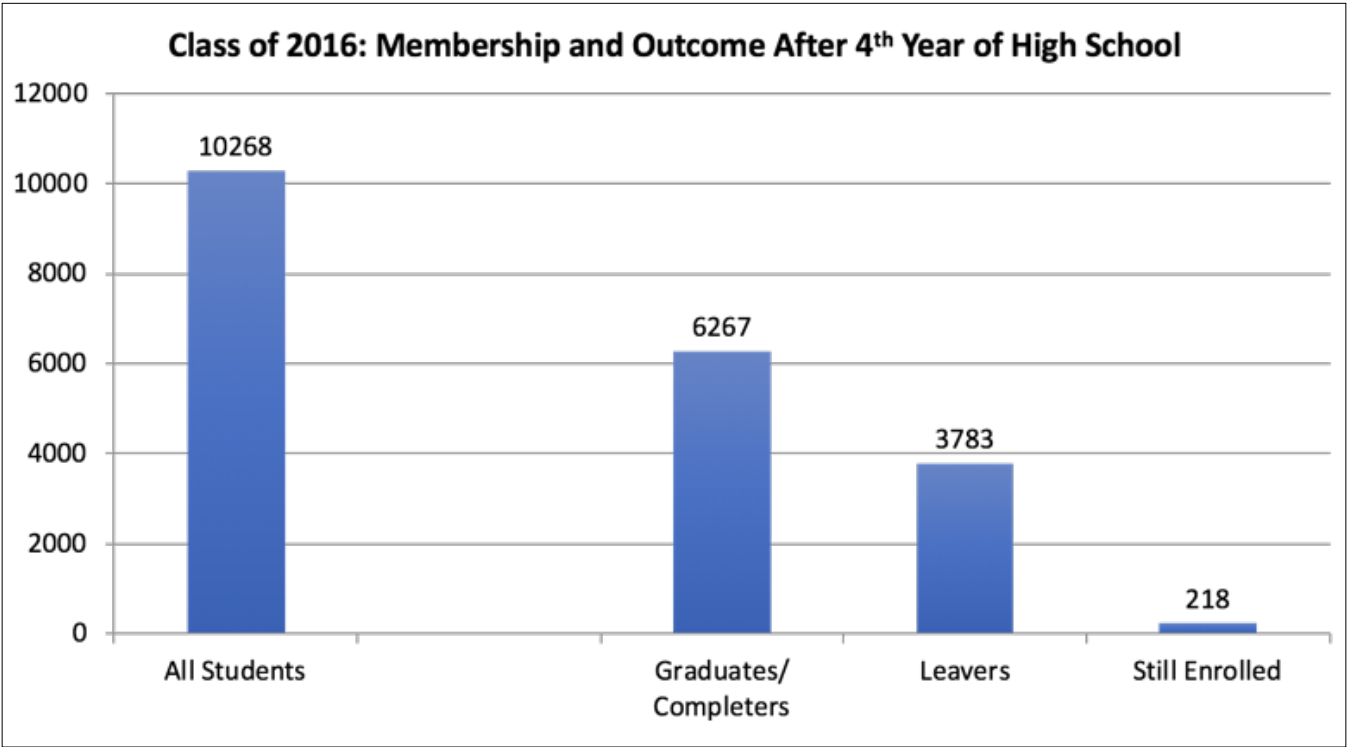


Room for Growth

Despite the success noted previously, the Committee expressed concern over those students who did not share in that success, including those students who stayed with the District, but failed to graduate and those who left to attend charter schools. The Committee focused intensively on those students who did not share in the academic success of their peers, finding these students as the most in need of further support.

Within the San Diego Unified School District, the Class of 2016 had a total unadjusted cohort size of 10,268 students comprised of those who started in the fall of 9th grade and those who entered the cohort through 12th grade. Chart 6 shows how that number was further broken down by student outcome over the complete history of the cohort (Appendix A.9, page 4).

Chart 6



Many recommendations of the Committee are aimed at these two populations that fall generally within the category of credit recovery and retention.

Retention

How does the District help students who are thinking about leaving (for reasons other than family mobility)?

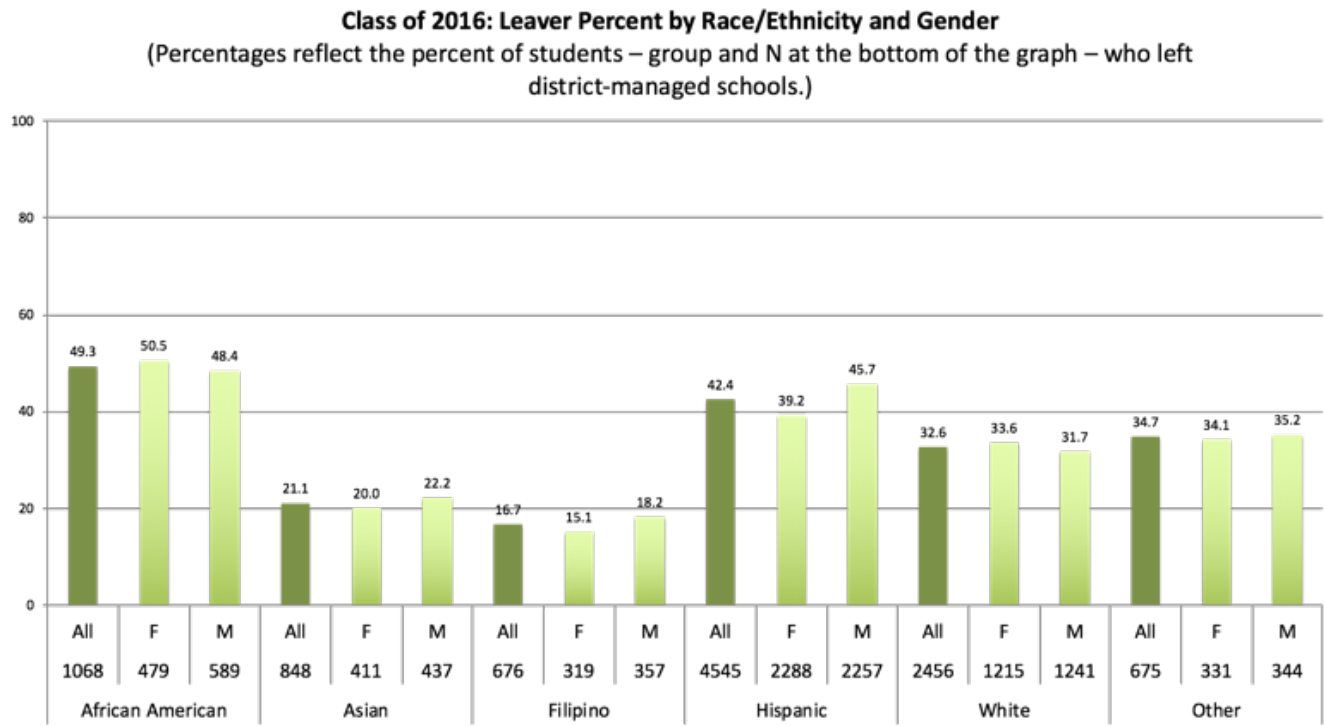
Taken together, 3,783 out of 10,268 students in the unadjusted cohort, or 36.8%, were labeled leavers, because they left District-managed schools sometime after entering high school and before the end of Grade 12. (Many students who actually leave District-managed schools leave before high school).

Data show for the Class of 2016 that most

of the students who left District-managed schools (56.6%) left due to family mobility, rather than academic failure. Many also left before high school, and of those who left in high school, most left as freshmen or sophomores. These trends are reflected also in the statewide dropout rate statistics (see California Dropout Research Project). Overall, the District-managed high school retention rate

enrolled in local charters during their high school years. This represents a significant subpopulation who did not share in the academic progress enjoyed by Class of 2016. The Committee was concerned to note that certain historically low-performing subpopulations are over-represented in this group, especially English Learners, students from lower-income households, and students with

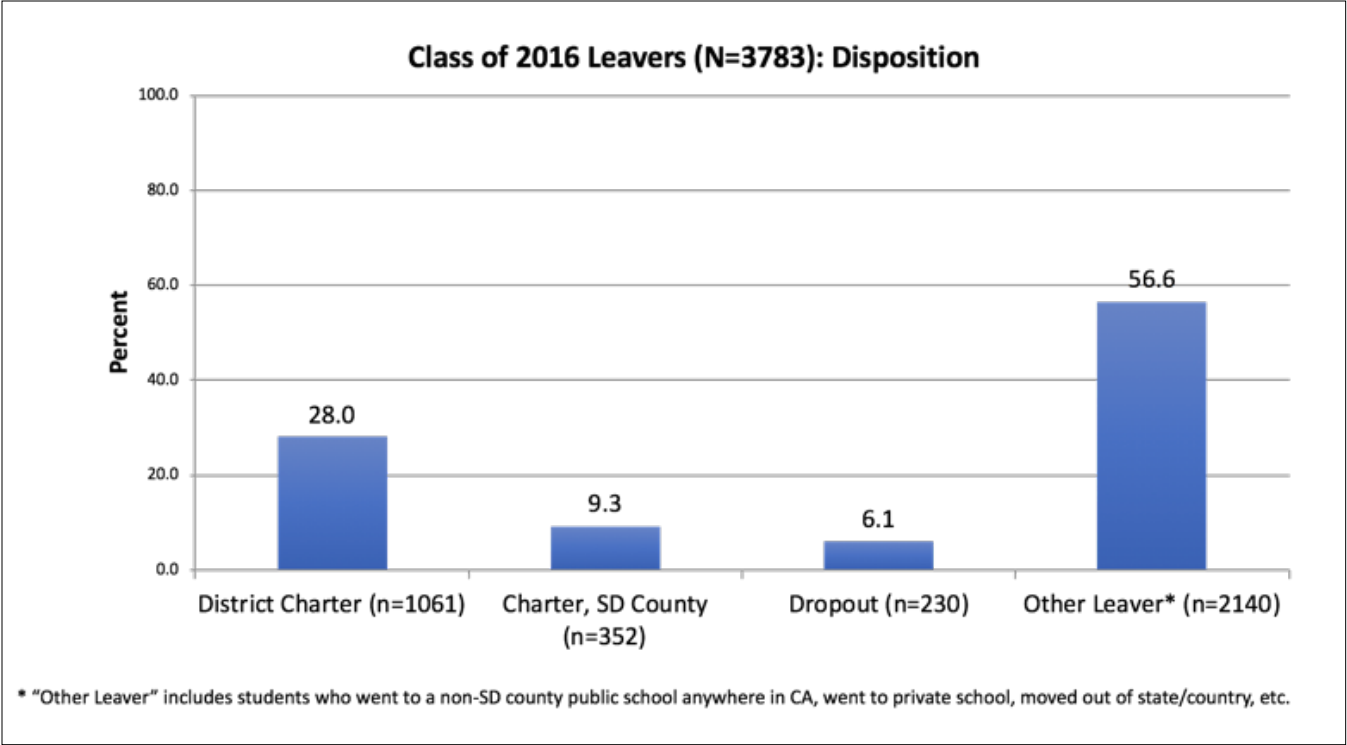
Chart 7



matches the retention rate for surrounding charter schools, roughly 67%. Committee members noted, with concern, that some student groups had substantially higher leave rates than others. For example, as shown in Chart 7, nearly half of the African American students, who were in the 2016 cohort at some point (N=1068), left District-managed schools. Despite the previous findings, 28% of the 37% of students who left the District

disabilities. Data specifically tracks the year in school when students leave the District and which school students transfer to, if within the District (Appendix A.17). Of the 3,783 total students who left the District, or 37% of the Class of 2016, 1,061 students (28%) transferred to a District charter school, 352 students (9.3%) enrolled in charter schools outside the District, and only 230 students (6.1%) actually dropped out of school.

Chart 8



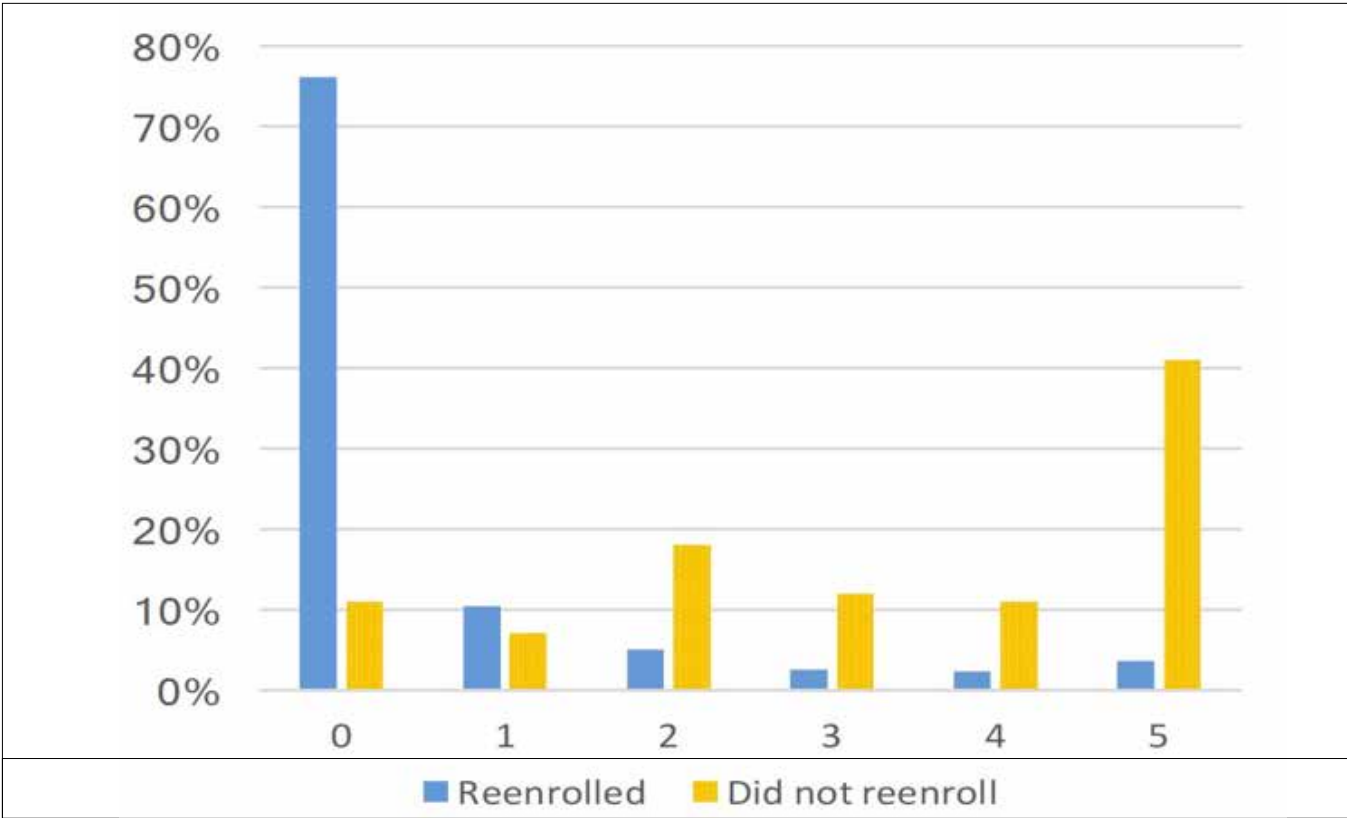
As shown in Chart 8, a majority of students who left the District (56.6%) were considered “Other Leavers” (Appendix A.9, page 16). These “Other Leavers” transferred to a private school or a non-San Diego County school, most likely due to parents who took a job in another city or had a military transfer. Even more importantly, most of the “Other Leavers” tend to leave the District in Grade 9 (34.6%) and grade 10 (33%), compared to grade 12 (11%), as shown in Chart 9 (Appendix A.9, page 17). This suggests that most students who do leave are not leaving for last-minute academic reasons. On the other hand, the chart from the SanDERA report showed that most students who left between Grades 11 and 12 were far off-track, and the leavers represented just under one tenth of students still enrolled at the end of Grade 11. Chart 24 from the SanDERA report shows that over 40% of those leaving had more than one year of work to

complete in five subject areas, and that over half had more than a year of work to complete in four or more subject areas. The yellow bars show that the median leaver had more than one year of coursework to complete in 4 different subject areas, while among those re-enrolling, just over three-quarters were on track in all subject areas. Among the off-track students who left between Grades 11 and 12, it was disproportionately to the students who were behind in multiple subject areas who were the most likely to leave District-managed schools. This means that those off-track students who remained in District-managed schools in Grade 12 were “less off track” than the average “off track” student. Source: Betts et al. (2017) reproduced in Appendix B7.

Additionally, data from the Class of 2012 through the Class of 2016, for each secondary school campus in the District show that cohort dropout rates have decreased at each of the

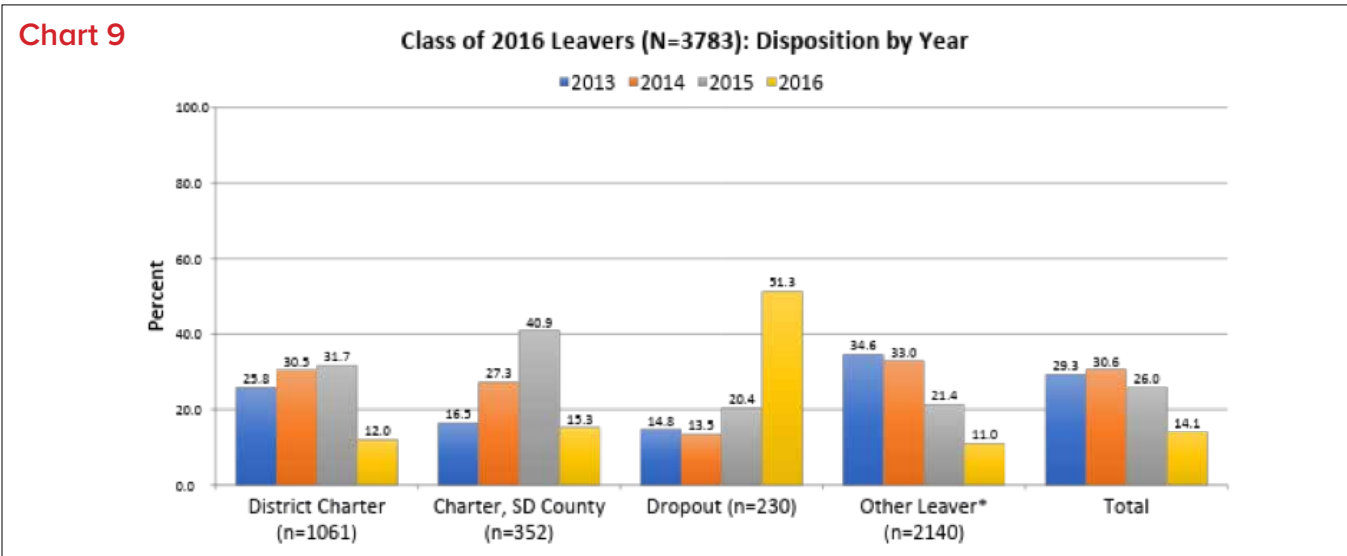
The A-G Status of Those Re-enrolling and Not Re-enrolling in District-Managed Schools in Grade 12 Differed Dramatically

Chart 24 Class of 2016: Percent of students 0-5 subjects behind enrollment status



35 campuses except for six locations over the past five years (Appendix A.18). Of the six locations with an increased dropout rate over the five-year period, La Jolla High (1.1%) and Mira Mesa High (1.2%) have fluctuated by less

than half of a percent. Most importantly, of the 35 total campus locations studied, 21 have dropout rates at 2% or lower and seven of the schools had a dropout rate of 0%. Once again, the Committee was concerned to



note that certain historically low performing subpopulations are over-represented in this group, especially English Learners, students from lower-income households, and students with disabilities.

District. English Only (EO), Initial Fluent English Proficient (IFEP) students who have a home language other than English, but who were deemed proficient in English upon their first evaluation, and Reclassified Fluent English

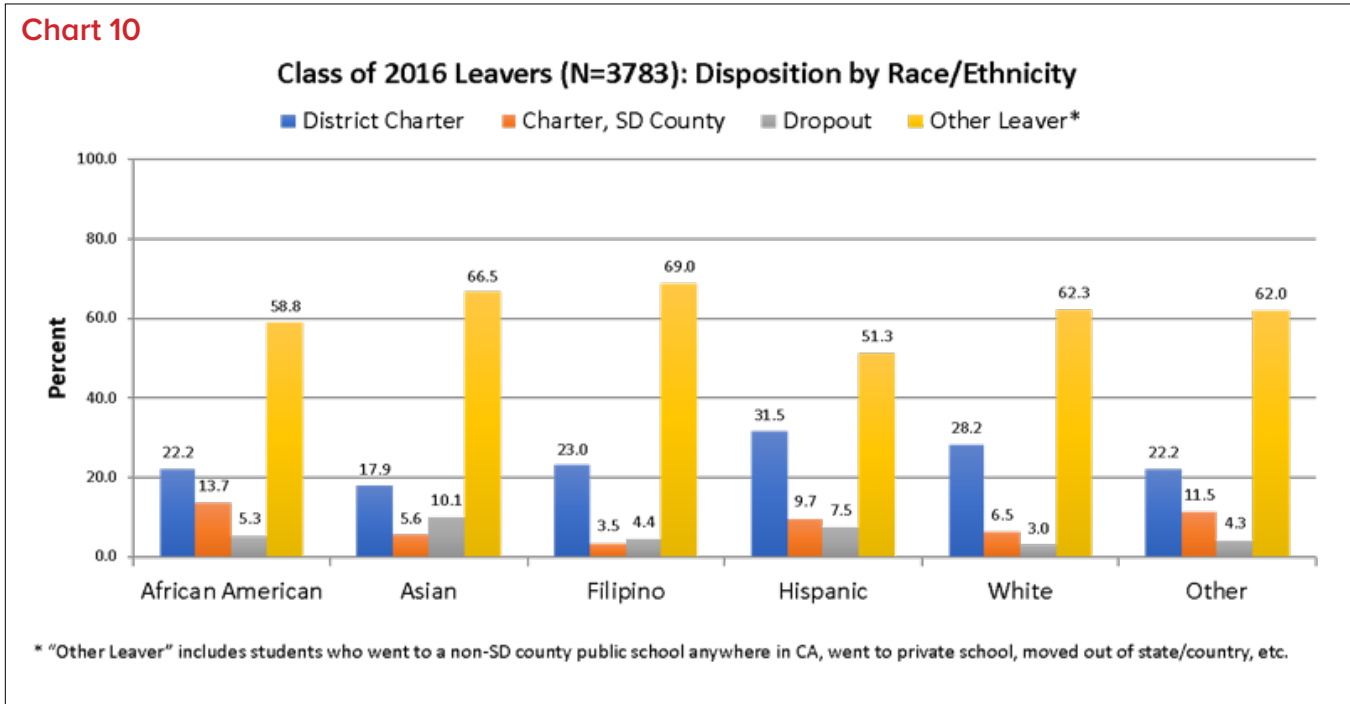


Chart 10 shows the percentage of types of leavers for each racial/ethnic group. Among leavers, Hispanic and white students were the most likely to opt for District charters, and African-American and Hispanic students were the most likely to choose non-District charters in the county. Also important to note is that students considered to be "Other Leavers" were proportionately spread across all categories of race for the Class of 2016, as shown in Chart 10 (Appendix A.9, page 18). Across all ethnic groups, the most important reason students leave the District is their families left the San Diego Unified boundaries. Chart 11 portrays the percentage breakdown of various language status groups by graduation/completion versus leaving versus not graduating but continuing to enroll in the

Proficient (RFEP) students all have over half of students either obtaining a regular diploma or close substitute or completing in the sense of earning a special education Certificate of Completion or a GED. The results are quite different for students who were still English Learners: 68.2% left District-managed schools and only 24.4% graduated or completed. Chart 12 shows that low-income students and those receiving special education services were less likely to stay and graduate or complete than higher income and general education students. Roughly equal percentages of students with disabilities stayed and graduated or received a certificate of completion compared to those who left District-managed schools. Regarding leavers, the SanDERA research team also pointed out that

Chart 11

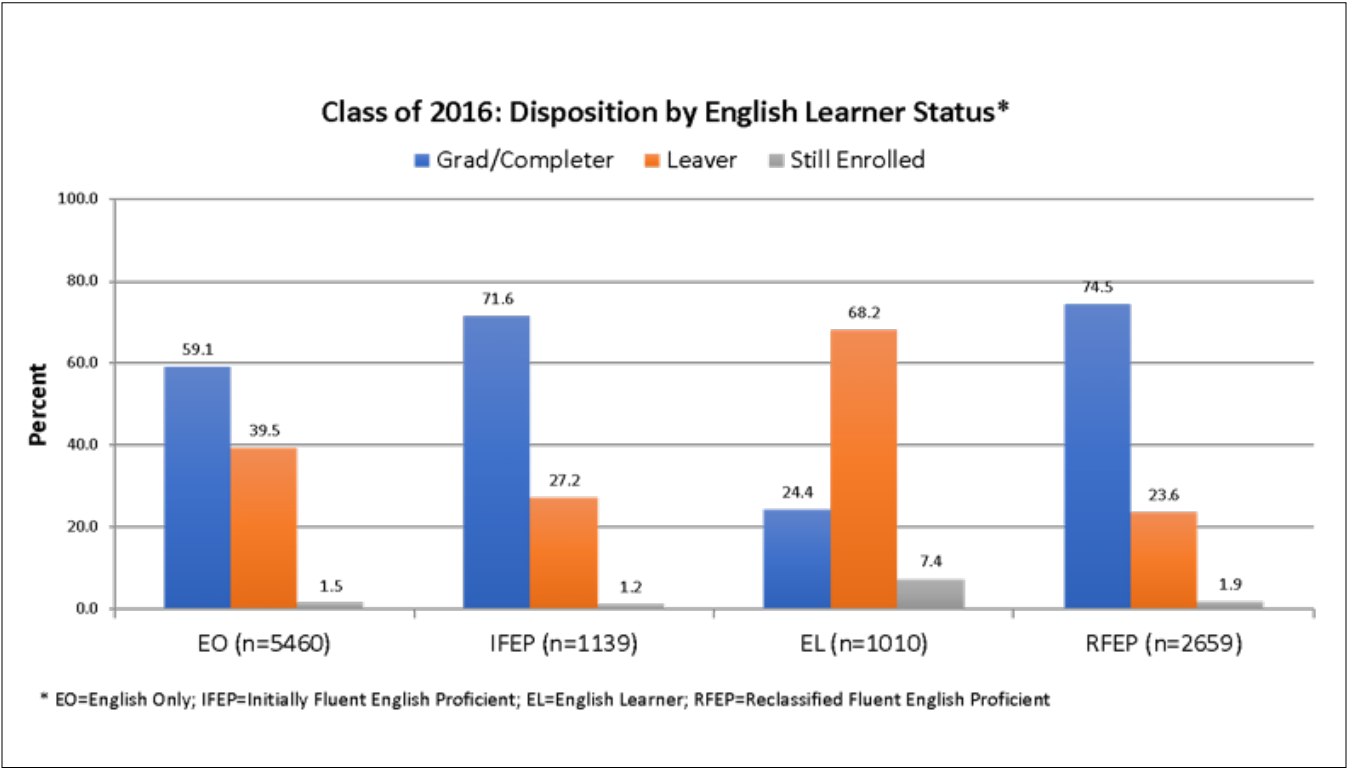
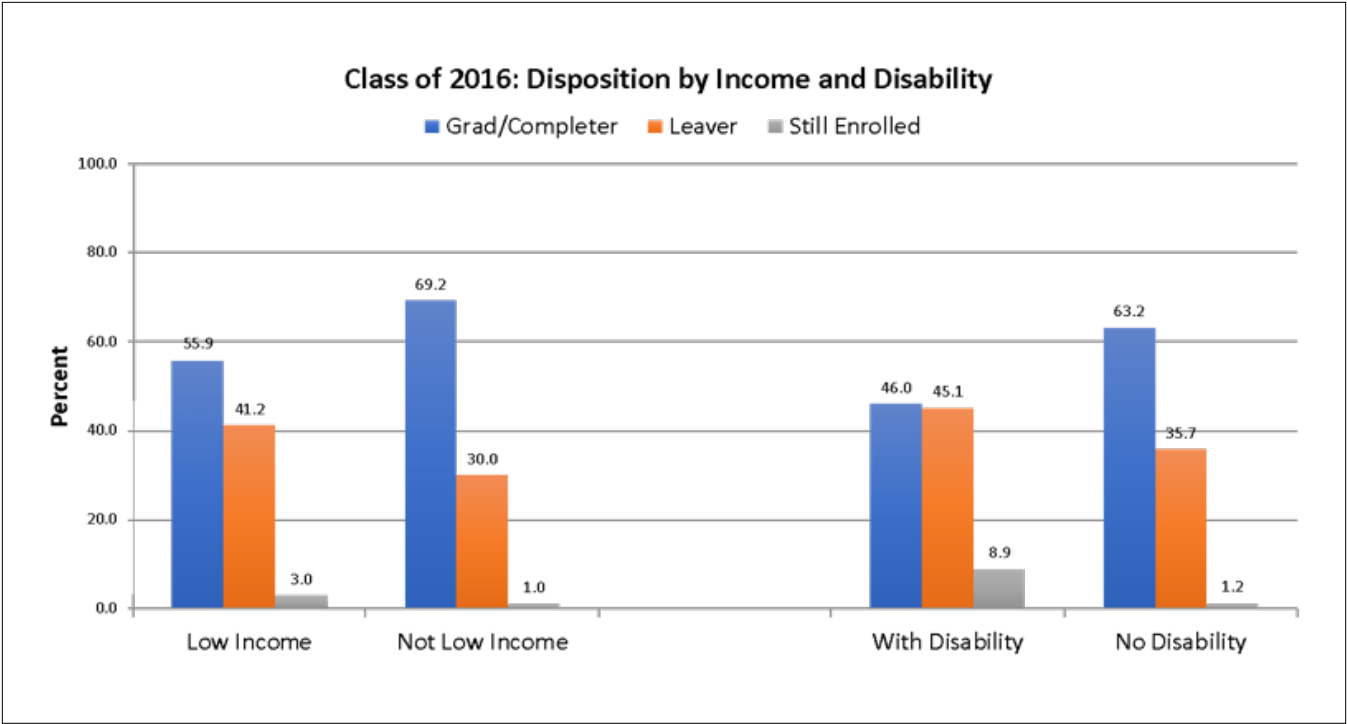


Chart 12



the grade point average for struggling students who left did not drop after implementation of the more rigorous standards (Appendix B.7, page 12).

Credit Recovery

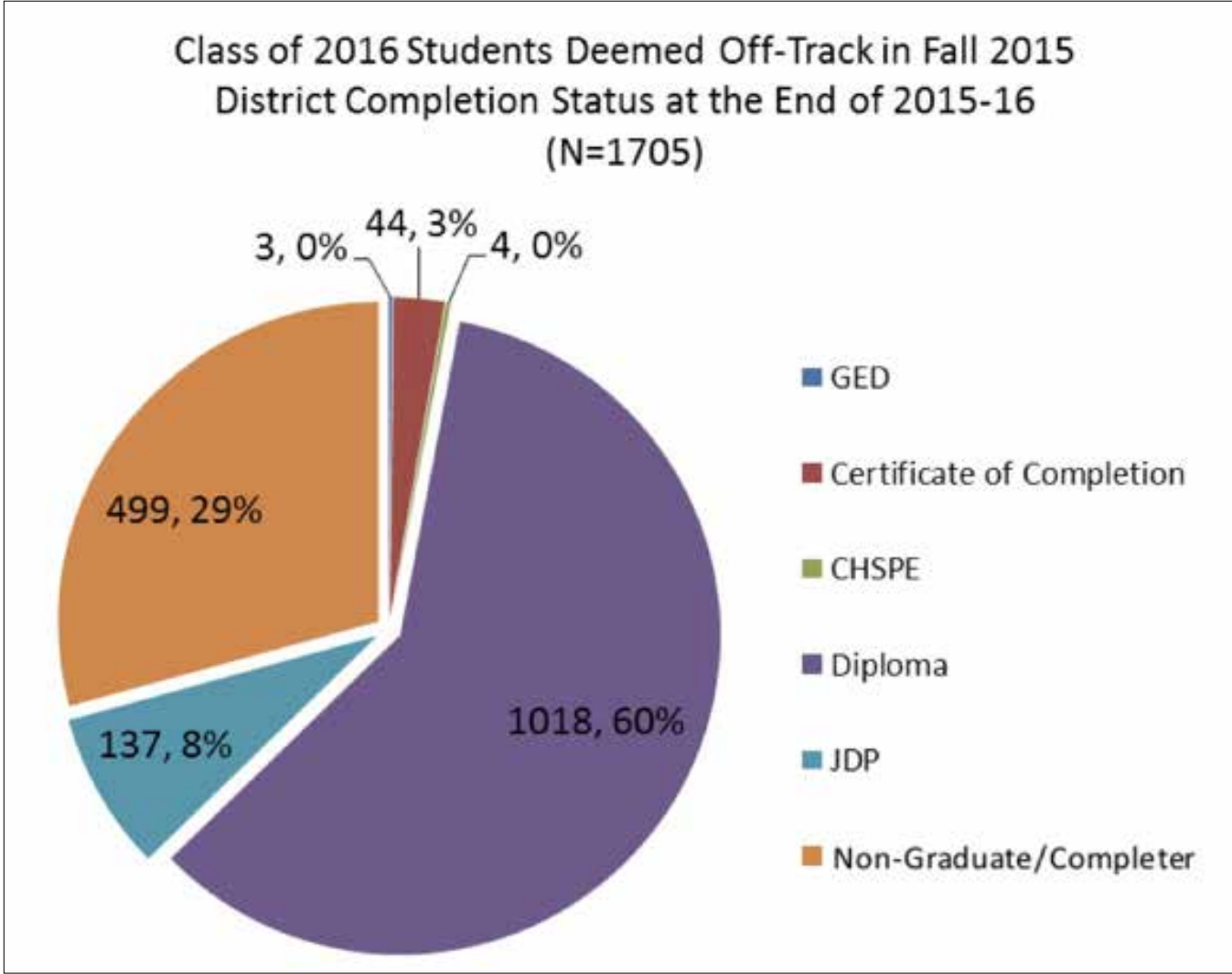
How do we help students who are struggling to catch up?

Credit recovery worked for some students. The off-track students who reenrolled in District-managed schools in Grade 12 received numerous supports described earlier, such as online credit recovery, which helped many of them graduate with a standard diploma. As for the 25% of students who were considered

off track to graduate when starting Grade 12, Chart 13 breaks down their eventual outcomes by category (Appendix A.8, page 10). In the end, 60% of students earned the District's regular diploma.

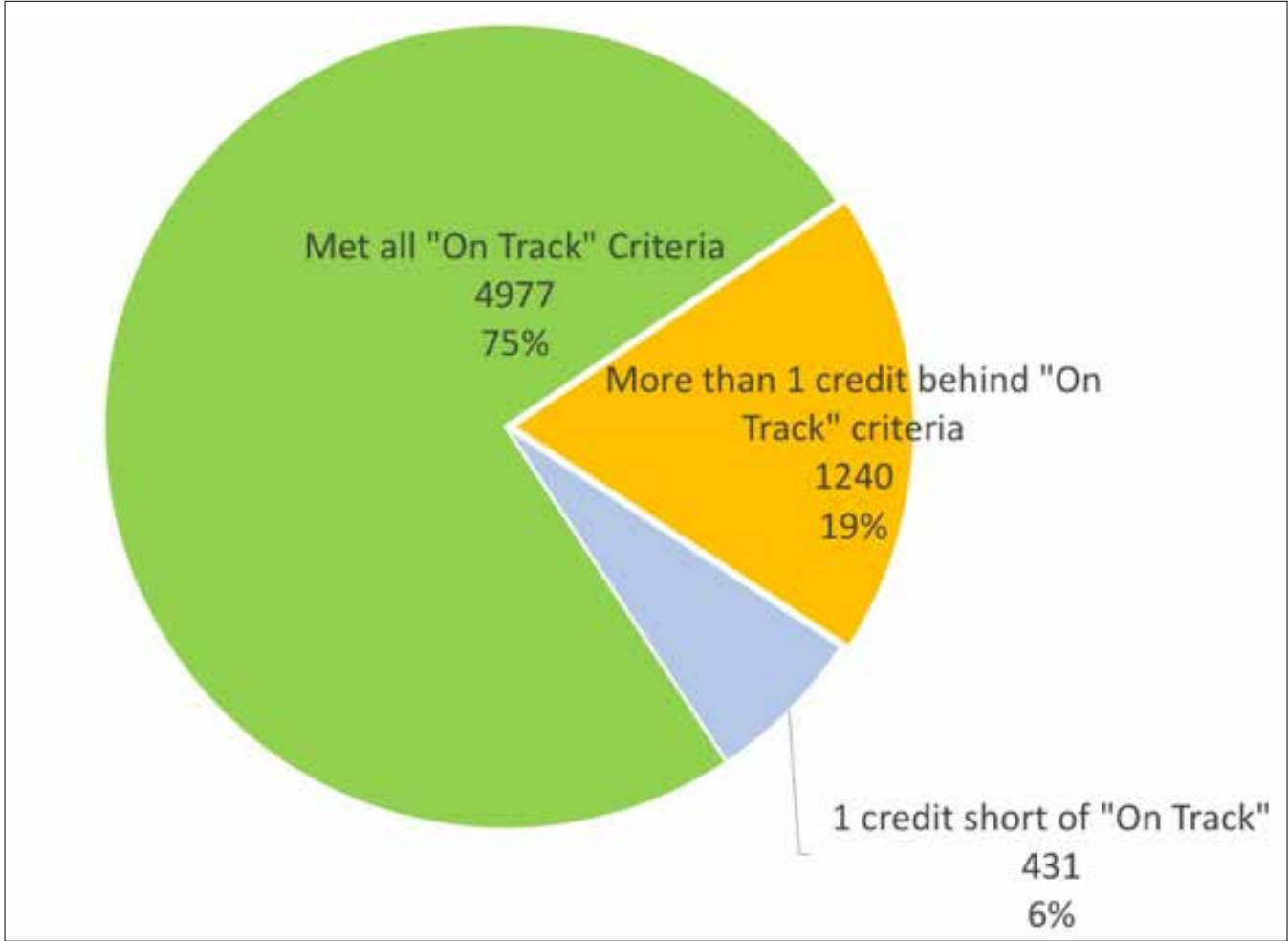
Some others (8%) earned close substitutes such as graduating through the Joint High School Diploma Program (JDP). Of the remaining, 29% did not graduate, and another 3% obtained a Certificate of Completion, which is a certificate granted to Special Education Completers, but is not considered a regular high school diploma. It is worth noting that the District also deliberately over-identified stu-

Chart 13



dents as “off track” to cast the broadest possible net when providing support to students at potential risk of not graduating. In other words, the District was deliberately over-inclusive in identifying students as off track because it wanted counselors to focus on helping those students. For example, Chart 14 shows that

Chart 14



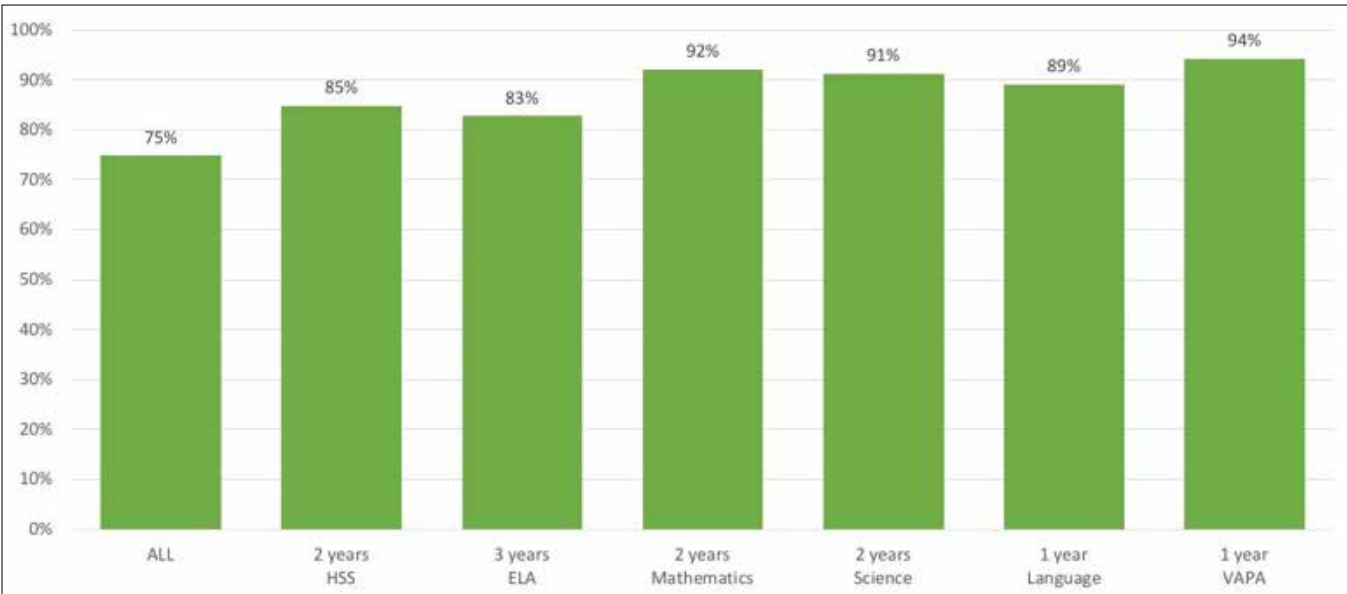
6% of students were only off track to graduate by one credit when heading into Grade 12 (Appendix A.8, page 10). Tracking data helps to better understand why students were counted as “off track.” Chart 15 shows what percentage of Class of 2016 students were on track to complete each subject requirement heading into their senior year (Appendix A.8). English, at 83%, was the

subject area in which the fewest students had earned the required number of credits. Many off-track students had to catch up in only one or two subject areas. To better understand how 68% of “off-track” students were able to successfully earn the necessary

credits to graduate, Chart 16 shows a breakdown of how many credits were needed for recovery (Appendix A.8, page 11). Data show a logical increase in graduation rates based on how close the students were to being on track. Additionally, almost 70% of off track students were only behind by three subject requirements or less heading into their senior year. These three requirements could have been

Class of 2016: Progress at Start of Senior Year for Meeting District Course Requirements, by Subject Area, for On-Time Graduation

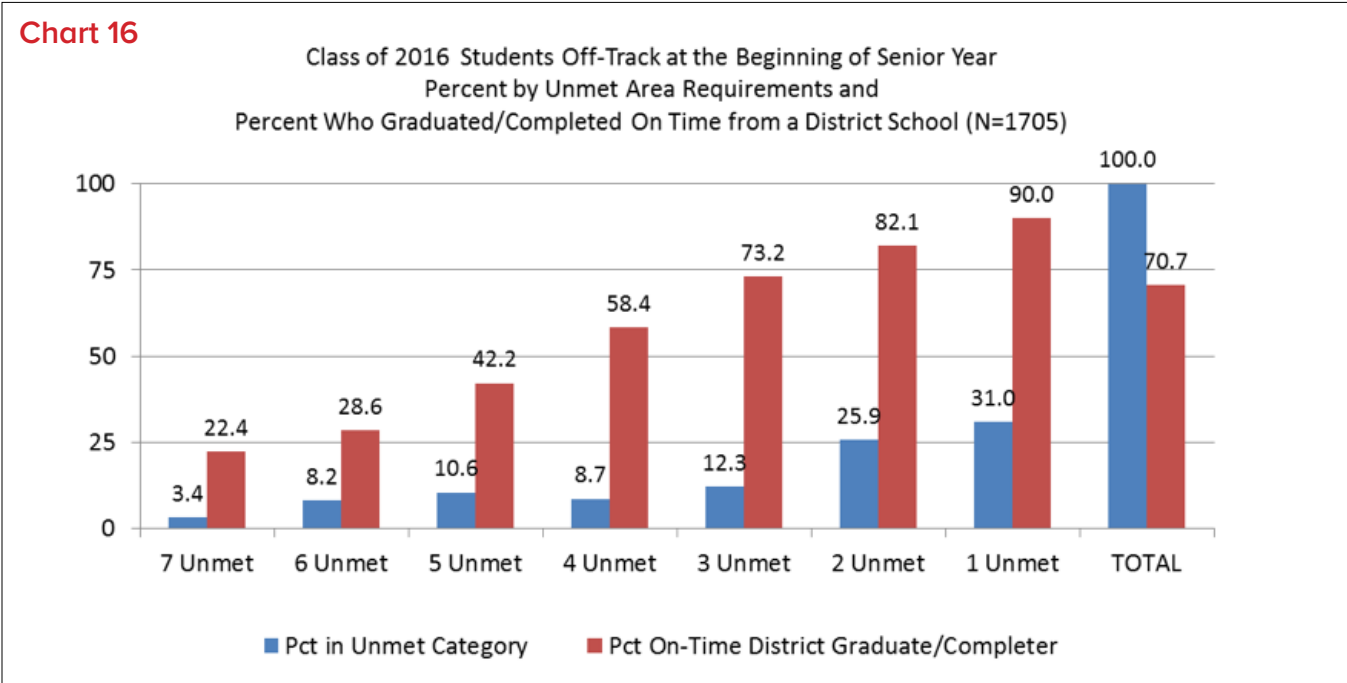
Chart 15



recovered during the fall, spring, and summer terms, for example, in order to successfully complete high school. From the SanDERA report: “The modest but important goal of this report is to update our projections in order to understand what happened between August 2015 and August 2016, with a special focus

on the 3 in 10 students in the Class of 2016, who had more than a year of coursework to complete during their senior year. Our calculations suggest that roughly 8 in 10 students in our cohort graduated with a standard San Diego Unified diploma by August 2016. This represents meaningful improvement for some

Chart 16



students, with only 7 of 10 students on track at the end of Grade 11. Put differently, 1 in 3 students who were off-track to graduate on time did graduate by summer 2016. What about the other students? Of those students who were off-track at the end of Grade 11, roughly one-third graduated on time, roughly one-third left District-managed schools, either enrolling in charter schools in the District or leaving altogether, and roughly one-third dropped out or stayed enrolled but failed to graduate by summer of 2016. We cannot know which District interventions helped students the most, but we note several steps the District has taken to help students meet the new requirement. These include multiple pathways to meet the world language requirement, spending on online courses that satisfy the a-g

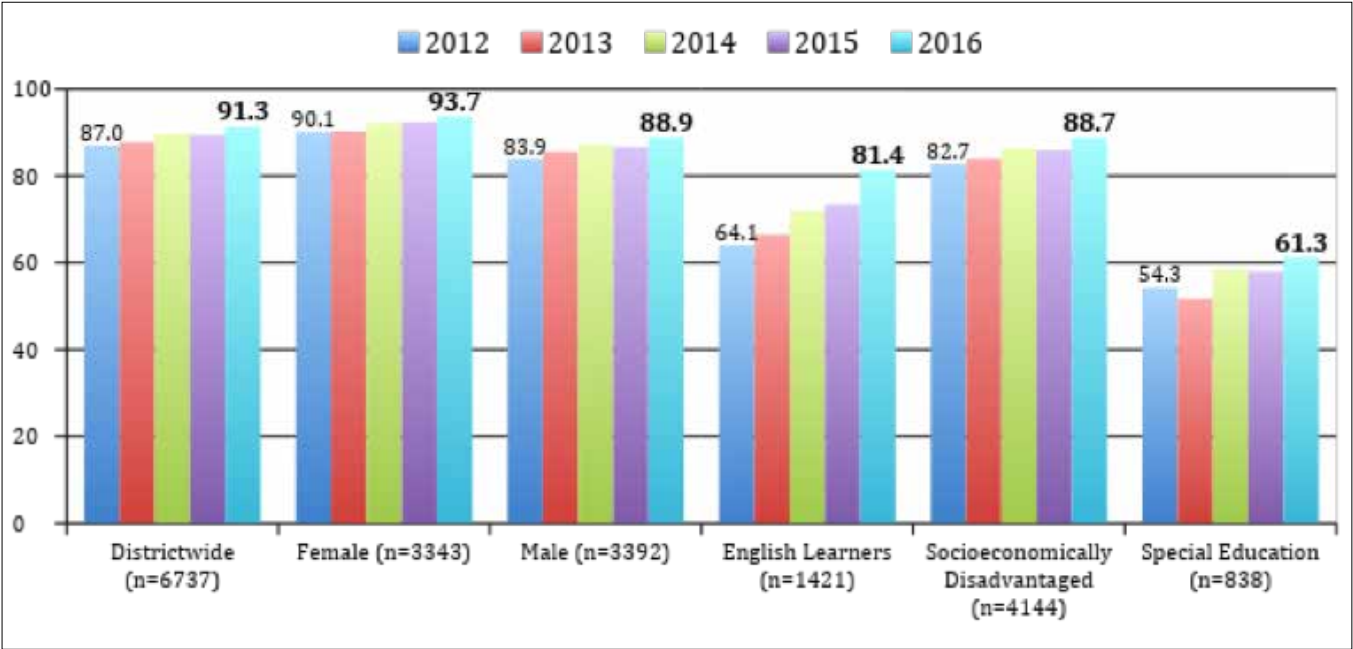
requirements, increased spending on summer school, and detailed student-by-student tracking by central office staff of students’ progress toward completing required a-g coursework” (Appendix B.7, page 2).

Nevertheless, wide gaps between some student populations remain. Chart 16 shows graduation rates by gender, English Learner, socioeconomic disadvantage, and special education statuses. Students receiving special education services and English Learners showed the lowest graduation rates among these groups, although the graduation rates improved in recent years. Chart 17

The credit recovery supports put in place by the District were either insufficient or came too late to benefit those students who failed to graduate in 2016. The Committee found many



Chart 17

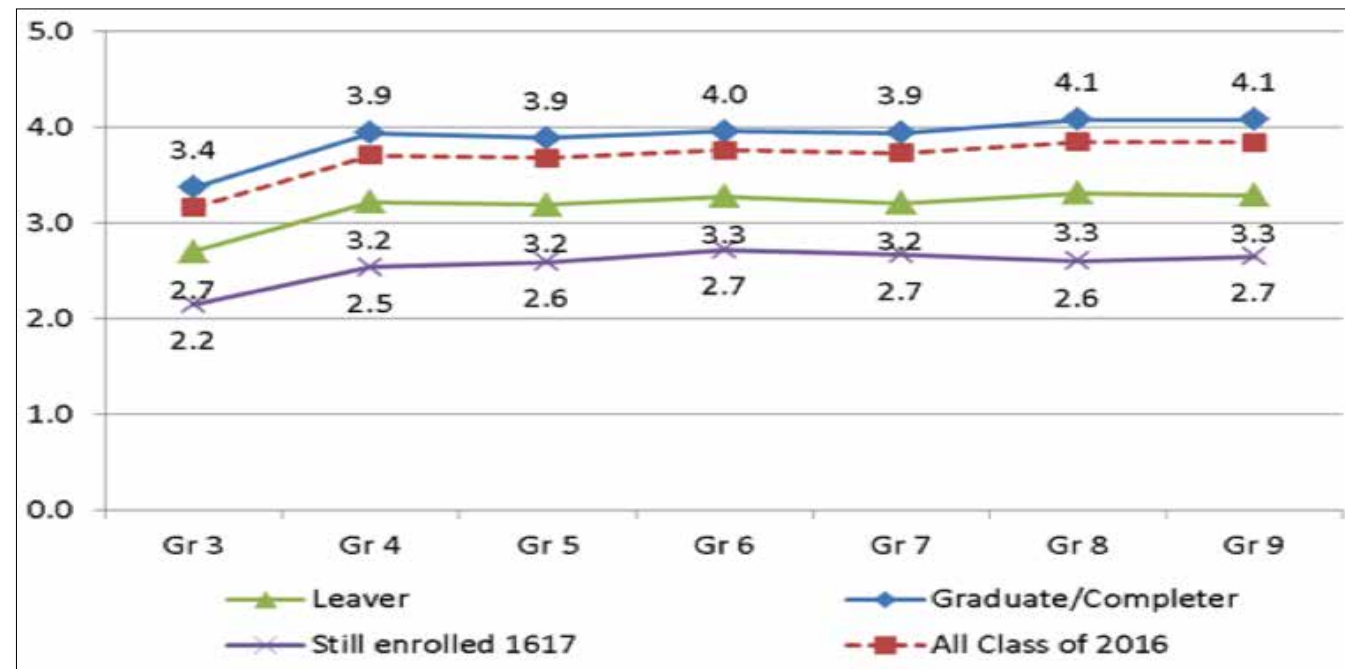


of these vulnerable students exhibited warning signs as far back as third grade of their academic difficulties. These difficulties continued into the middle school years where they were more likely to face discipline issues than their peers. Most concerning, the Committee found historically disadvantaged student populations were over-represented among those students who ultimately did not graduate. The Committee found there was a subpopulation of students who are highly mobile and

who do not succeed in school. These students, as shown in the following four charts, are identifiable as far back as 3rd grade. Students identified as “Leavers,” those who left District schools at some point in high school, had lower academic performance, lower attendance rates, and higher rates of suspension early on in their school careers, than did students who graduated. Further, leavers did not make up significant academic ground prior to leaving.

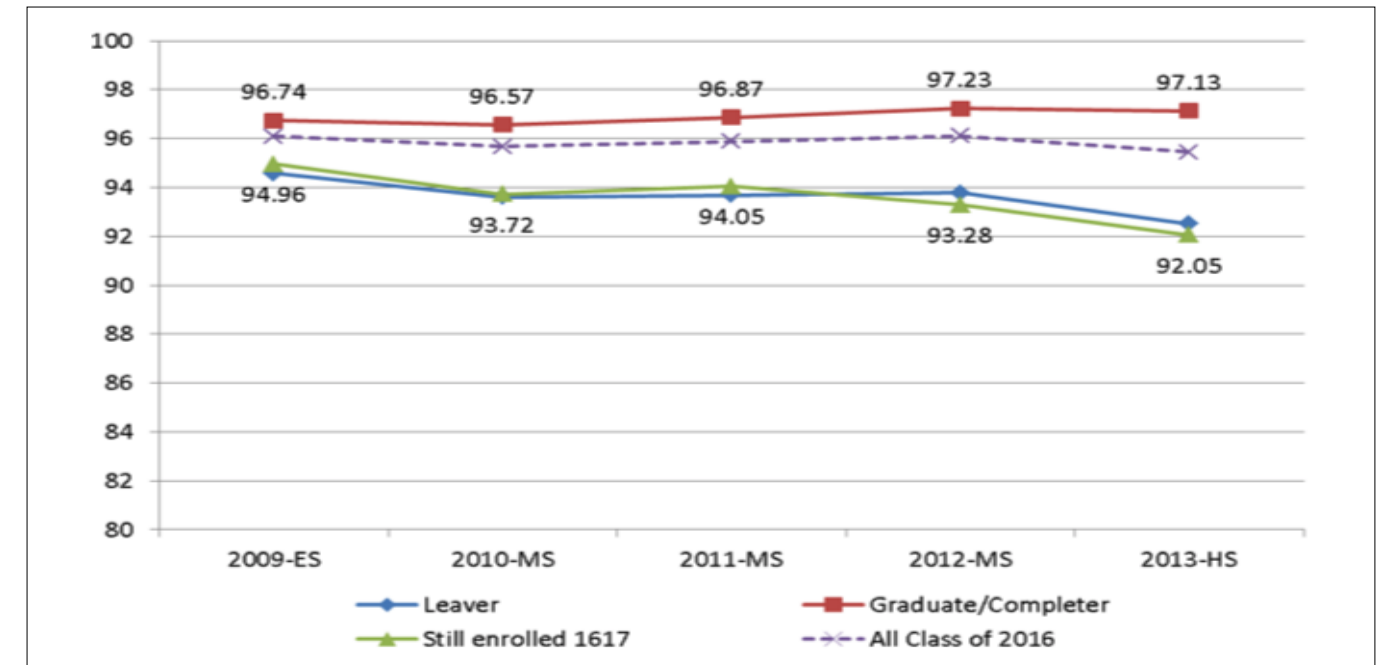
Average CST Performance Level from Grades 3 to 9
Class of 2016 Overall by Exit Category
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Chart 18



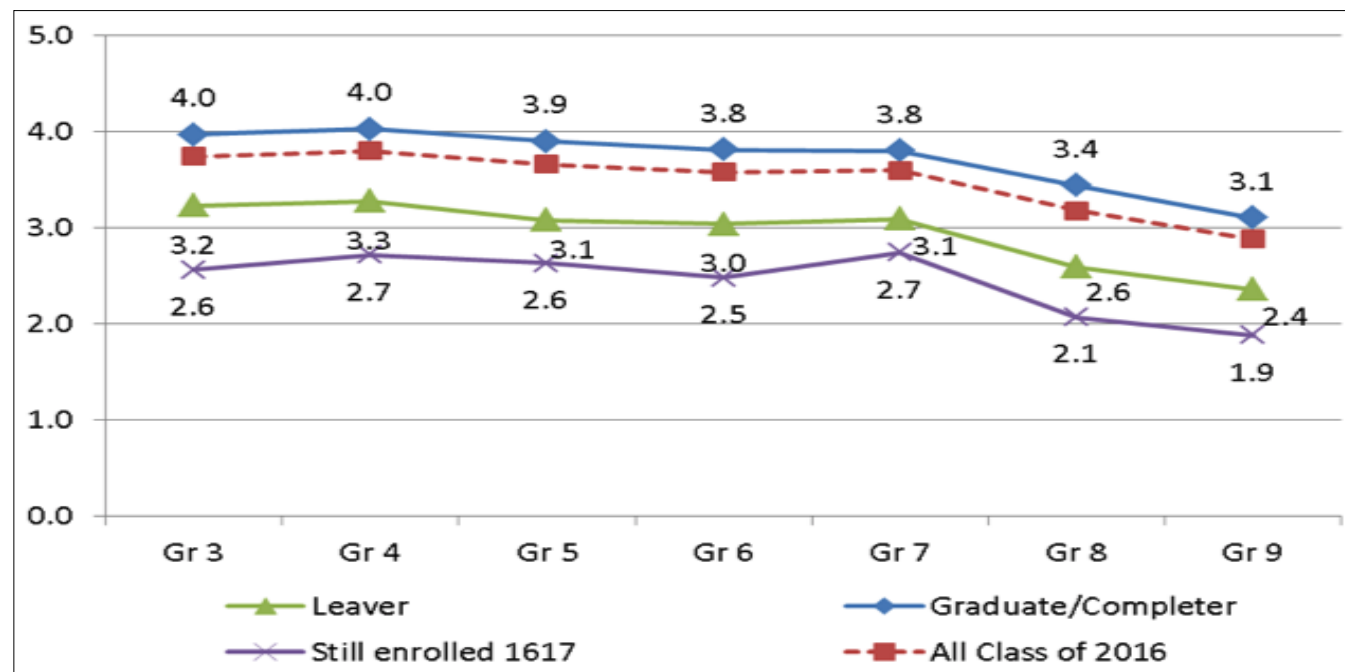
Average Attendance Rate from 2009 through 2013 (Grades 5 to 9)
Class of 2016 by Exit Category

Chart 20



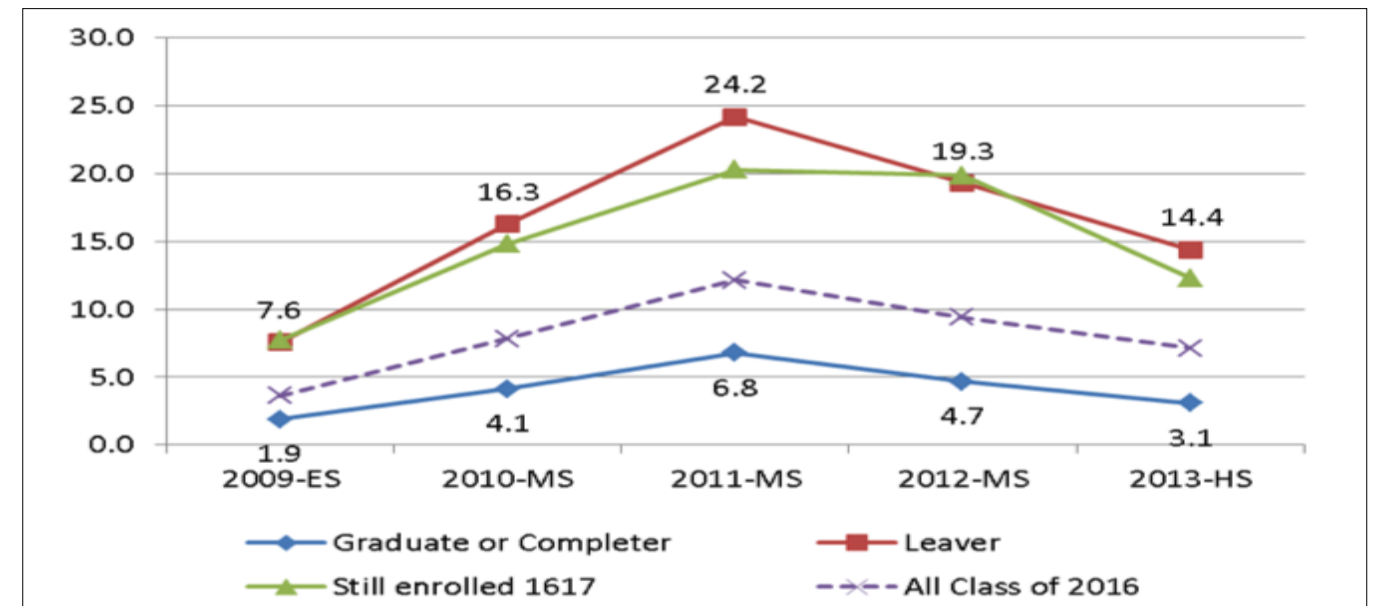
Average CST Performance Level from Grades 3 to 9
Class of 2016 Overall by Exit Category
MATHEMATICS

Chart 19



Percent with At Least One Suspension from 2009 through 2013 (Grades 5 to 9)
Class of 2016 Overall by Exit Category

Chart 21



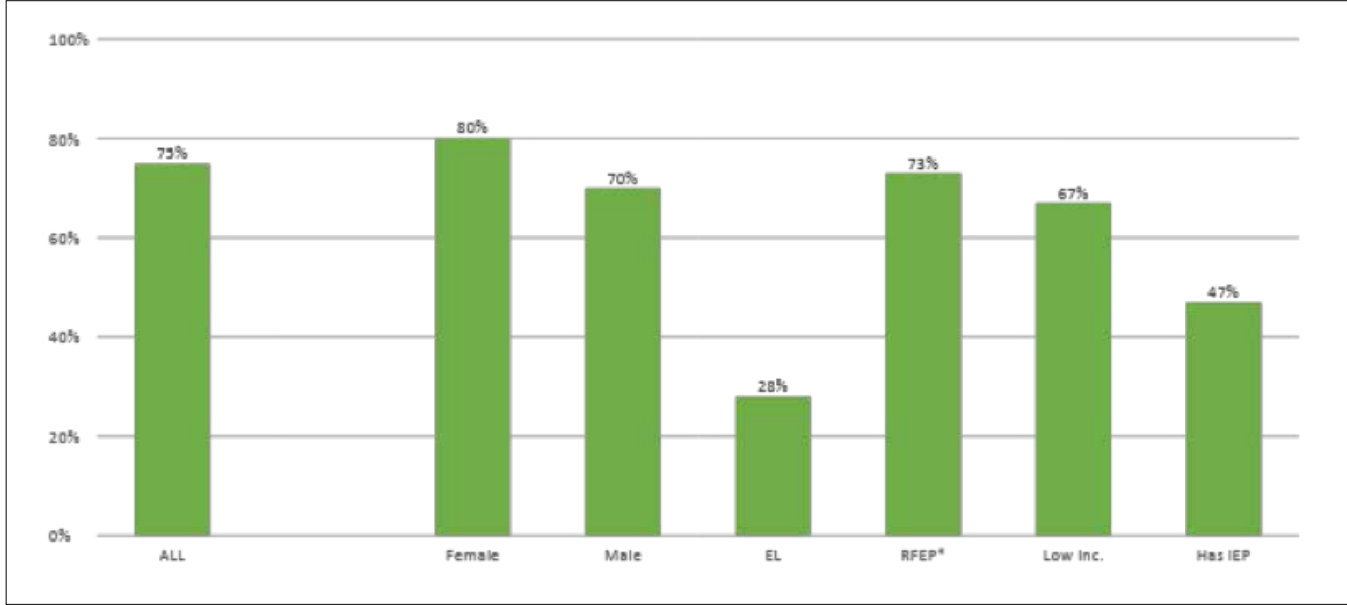
The data in the following two charts show what percentage of the Class of 2016 students were on track to graduate based on their progress at the beginning of Grade 12, broken down by demographic categories (Appendix A.8, pages 5-6). Note that as shown in these charts, 75% of the overall total number of

students ('ALL') were on track to graduate. However, only 28% of English Learners were on track to graduate and 47% of those students having an IEP (Individualized Educational Plan).

Class of 2016: Progress at Start of Senior Year for Meeting District Course Requirements by Student Group for On-Time Graduation

Class of 2016 Overall by Exit Category

Chart 22

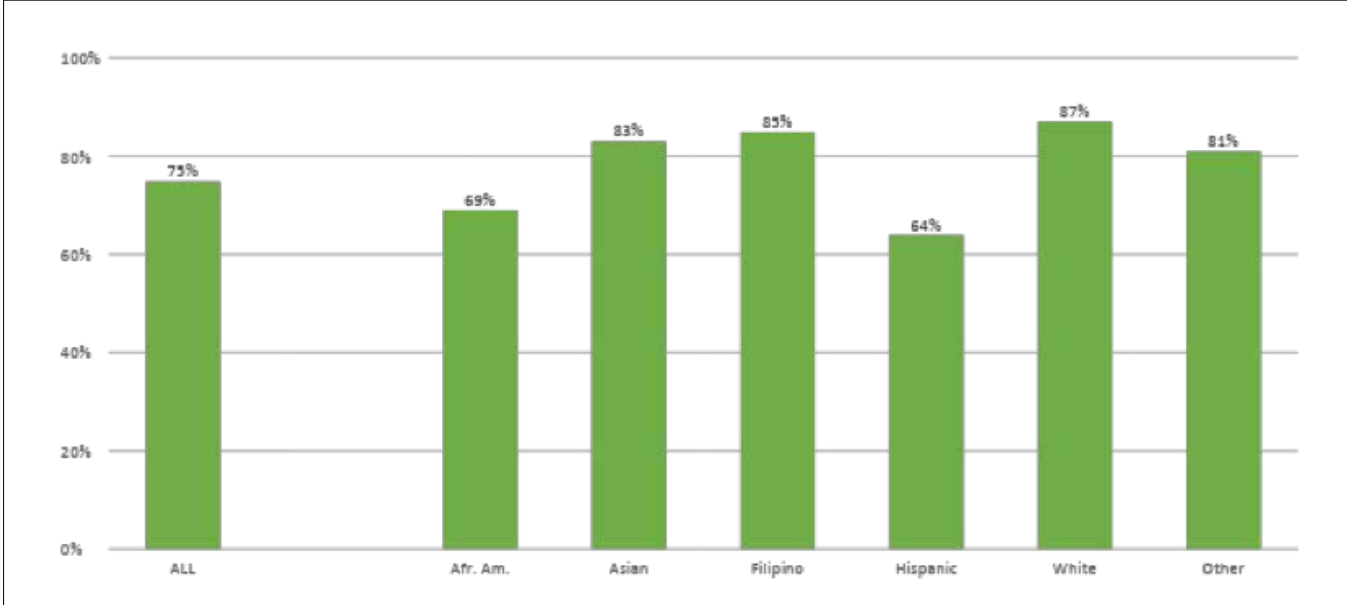


As shown in the following chart, 69% of African American students were on track to graduate at the beginning of Grade 12 and 64% of Hispanic students. Again, these two charts show students as of the start of Grade 12; the percentage of students who were on-track at the end of Grade 11 would have been lower given that about one third of off-track students departed between the end of Grade 11 and the start of Grade 12.

It should be no surprise then that these same students are overrepresented among those who either left or did not graduate on time. Committee members suggested that additional supports in earlier grades may eventually lessen reliance on credit recovery in Grade 12.

Class of 2016: Progress at Start of Senior Year for Meeting District Course Requirements by Race/Ethnicity for On-Time Graduation

Chart 23



Methodology

Every district in California is obligated to follow the same process for calculating the graduation rate. The following nationally recognized definitions from the California Department of Education (Appendix B.2) are crucial to understanding the calculations and analysis of the data pulled from the District's Class of 2016:

- A **Cohort** is the group of students that could potentially graduate during a four-year time period.
- **Adjusted Cohort** is calculated by using the cohort total, adding students who transfer into the cohort during Grades 9, 10, 11, or 12, and subtracting the students who transfer out, emigrate, or die during the four-year cohort period. Therefore, if a student leaves the district and/or transfers to a charter school, they are not included in the Adjusted Cohort total.
- **Four-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate** is calculated by dividing the number of students in the four-year adjusted cohort who graduate in four years or less, by the total number of students who form the adjusted cohort for that graduating class. Students will be considered “graduates” once they have obtained a traditional high school diploma, an adult education high school diploma, or have passed the California High School Proficiency Exam.
- **Four-year Adjusted Cohort Dropout Rate** is the rate of students that leave the 9-12 instructional system without a high school diploma, passing a high school equivalency exam, or special education certificate of completion and do not remain enrolled at the end of year four.

The total cohort size of the Class of 2016 was calculated at 10,268 students (Appendix A.9, page 4). Specifically, this means that 10,268 students started in Grade 9 or entered the Class of 2016 cohort at some point in Grades 9, 10, 11 or 12. This number represents the maximum total of students that could have potentially graduated from the District with the Class of 2016. Of those 10,268 total students, data show that 3,783 students (36.8%) left the District at some point in Grades 9, 10, 11 or 12 (Appendix A.9, page 4). Students who move out of the District or transfer to charter schools are not counted as part of the four-year adjusted cohort total (Appendix B.2).

The adjusted cohort total for the Class of 2016, was therefore calculated at 6,872 students. With 6,267 students officially graduating as part of the Class of 2016, the final graduation rate is calculated as 91.3%.



A stylized illustration of a globe showing the continents of North and South America in white against a blue background. A yellow pencil with a pink eraser is pointing towards the continent of Africa on the right side of the globe.



Recommendations

If the District adopts the strategic recommendations and suggestions for future research as proposed by the Committee, this report may further serve as a roadmap for the San Diego Unified School District to help strengthen graduation requirements and produce a higher number of graduated students who are better prepared to succeed in college and beyond.

The Committee's recommendations fall into two broad categories:

- A) the need for regular District reporting to the public on how entire cohorts of students are faring, who is leaving the District and why, and information on the degree to which leavers were off track to meet the new graduation standard



- B) the urgent need for educational supports and interventions, beginning far earlier than high school

These two categories of recommendations reinforce each other because better information on how age cohorts are faring will help to identify student groups who need additional support well before high school, while a focus on better supports and monitoring in all grades will help to accelerate learning among the students identified as off track. Details on both sets of recommendations follow.

A) ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS FOR
OFF TRACK STUDENTS FROM
PRESCHOOL TO GRADE 12,
ACCOMPANIED BY INTENSIVE
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

San Diego Unified should reinforce the goal of ensuring that all students, Grades Pre-school-12, who enroll in the District will graduate well prepared for college and/or careers. The pursuit of this goal requires attention to more than just state graduation rate data. It requires attention to the students who leave the District because they perceive they are unlikely to meet graduation requirements. It also requires attention to the educational

services provided to all students, within and beyond the classroom. Therefore, we recommend the following:

1. San Diego Unified should develop additional strategies to identify students who need added support in order to achieve college and/or career readiness. The District should focus intensively on identifying students who need additional interventions prior to the third grade. When young children (ages 0-8) receive services that maximize their opportunities to excel academically, they are more likely to stay in school, graduate, and achieve college and career readiness. Even with excellent early identification, some students will develop needs for additional help during or after 3rd grade. Therefore, San Diego Unified should also develop strategies to ensure the needs of these students (in Grades 3-12) are identified and responded to in a timely and precise manner. Effective academic or other supports must be provided in ways that maximize the likelihood all students stay in school and graduate with the requisite preparation for college and/or career.

a. The District should develop data tools that help educators promptly identify those who need additional support. District leaders should ensure all school and District administrators, with academic and/or pupil personnel responsibilities, and other appropriate school personnel (e.g., counselors) have sufficient training on use of the data tools to ensure the identification of needs is timely, precise, and sensitive to the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of students. The data tools and the associated training should maximize the likelihood every student who needs additional assistance will receive it in

a timely and effective manner, so they have a much greater likelihood of graduating with college and/or career readiness. A prerequisite for new data analysis tools to help school administrators is that the underlying data be correct and as up to date as possible. The Committee identified the importance of robust training sessions for campus registrars to prevent typographical/technical errors on transcripts.

b. In order to identify students at risk of not being on track to achieve college or career readiness, the District should engage teachers and academic leaders in identifying the critical knowledge and skills students need to succeed in a-g courses and create the vertical maps that define when (in earlier grades) the knowledge and skill should be demonstrated with proficiency. This “backward mapping” of requisite knowledge should extend back to the earliest school experiences in ways that inform efforts to identify students immediately when they begin to fall behind. For example, inability to “code switch” dialectically when appropriate to academic English by 3rd grade has been found to negatively impact students’ degree of future academic success.

c. Parents should be offered multimedia tools and training that help them understand the critical knowledge and skills associated with each grade level and how to appropriately help their children. This should be done in a way that helps parents monitor when their child might begin to fall behind and informs parents about what they can do to prevent and/or respond if this should happen.

d. San Diego Unified leaders should continue to examine “leaver” data to better understand which students leave the District, at what points in their educational experience, and for what reasons. This examination of data should give

special attention to those populations of students who are overrepresented among “leavers.”

e. Because existing data suggest chronically absent students are more likely to become leavers, San Diego Unified



should develop strategies to 1) identify chronically absent students more promptly, 2) identify and implement strategies for supporting chronically absent students and their families so that attendance improves, and 3) create timely, educationally effective safety net programs that help chronically absent students acquire critical knowledge and skills.

f. Because existing data suggest that students with disabilities are more likely to become leavers, San Diego Unified should develop strategies to train IEP committees on the importance of aligning special education services, to the extent appropriate for each individual student in ways that maximize the likelihood students with disabilities will learn the critical knowledge and skills needed to achieve college and/or career readiness.

2. San Diego Unified should also develop, implement, and refine strategies for ensuring all students, and especially those who might fall behind, will receive quality supports that promote their educational success. These in and out of classroom interventions should include the following:

a. San Diego Unified should provide classroom teachers intensive, ongoing, job-embedded opportunities for assistance, observation of instruction, and professional development that increases the likelihood students will develop deep mastery of the critical knowledge and skills to be learned at each grade level for all students to have a high likelihood of succeeding in college or the workplace. The District should ensure teachers are helped to develop 1) shared understandings of the critical knowledge

and skills that should be learned at each grade level, 2) capacity to develop and use formative assessments that provide accurate information about the extent to which students have achieved appropriate levels of mastery, and 3) capacity to work together in teams to support each other in developing culturally responsive Tier I instruction (i.e. how content is delivered to students which is also the first instruction provided concerning a learning standard or objective). Such instruction is likely to generate deep levels of understanding among all demographic groups of students. In order for assistance and professional development to be effective, it must make possible collaborative teacher development of instruction responsive to the cultural, linguistic (including dialectic), social, and individual strengths and needs of each student. Teachers should have leadership that inspires, motivates, and demonstrates high expectations for application/customization of such instruction.

b. San Diego Unified should provide ongoing, job-embedded assistance, observation, and professional development that strengthens the capacity of principals, other school leaders, and District leaders to support effective classroom instruction (such as described in 2a). San Diego Unified should monitor the extent to which professional development and support result in school personnel evidencing effective classroom instruction and instructional supervision for all demographic groups of students. Greater accountability by all is central to this effort.

c. For instruction to meet the needs of all students, San Diego Unified should

develop strategies that build upon the cultural and linguistic strengths of the diverse populations served within the District. These strategies should maximize opportunities to acknowledge the knowledge and skills students possess, so they accelerate progress toward college and career readiness. For example, the District should continue to increase the number of world language proficiency examinations offered so that students who speak other languages proficiently can receive appropriate credit and focus their attention on other a-g requirements.

d. In addition to providing ongoing support and professional development for culturally responsive Tier I instruction, San Diego Unified leaders should design, implement, evaluate, and refine timely interventions that help students master the specific knowledge and skills necessary to enable them to “catch up” with their peers and benefit from general classroom instruction. Effective interventions should not be considered luxuries that can be sacrificed in difficult financial times. Instead, these interventions should be considered essential components of an effective educational program. At the same time, the District should not settle for interventions that fail to generate measurable improvements in student mastery of critical knowledge and skills. Interventions should be systematically implemented, evaluated, improved, or eliminated.

Within these recommendations, there are implications for new or revised educational policies needed in San Diego Unified. They are offered based on what is needed now to build upon the significant efforts made in the

last five years to improve the quality of education in the District, and the quality of educational outcomes. In addition, the District leadership acknowledges the work to date was essential and noteworthy, but only the first series of steps to achieving equitable opportunities/outcomes for all students.

B) IMPROVED ANALYSIS OF ENTIRE AGE COHORTS, CREATING AN EARLY WARNING SYSTEM, AND PUBLIC RELEASE OF RESULTS

3a) The District should supplement the official graduation rate by also annually reporting the percentage of students in each graduating class who have left District-managed schools between Grades 9 and 12, and studying the preparedness of those leaving. Specific steps that the District should take include:

- Reporting annually the disaggregated percentage of a graduation cohort who leave District-managed schools in each grade between Grades 9 and 12.
- Reporting annually the percentage of students leaving after Grades 10 and 11 who were on- and off-track to graduate. The District should conduct a cohort study which includes specific analysis of courses taken, GPA, attendance, a-g completion, ACT/SAT scores, graduation rate, college enrollment and college persistence to better understand the extent to which District graduates are prepared. Through this information, the District and the public can gain a fuller picture of how close the District is coming to preparing all students for college.
- Studying the academic profile and trajectories of students who leave the District, especially those who are off-track overall and by racial/ethnic, linguistic, and special

education subgroups. This work may help the District to identify students at risk of not meeting the a-g graduation requirements years before they reach high school. This early identification can lead to better supports before students reach high school.

- Explaining more fully to the public that students who leave for District charter schools or non-District schools are not included in the official state calculation of the graduation rate for each district.

3b) The District should consider setting a target to decrease the percentage of entering high school students who leave for charter or other non-District-managed schools in the next several years. By setting such a target, the District will want to understand the reasons why students leave, and to set in place supports to encourage more students to stay and thrive. Ultimately, such efforts could increase the percentage of San Diego youth who graduate from high school ready for college.

3c) The committee recommends the District develop early warning indicators that help identify students who are off track in earlier grades, reaching all the way back to elementary school. Equally critical is reporting annually the disaggregated percentage of students leaving after Grades 9, 10, and 11 who were on- and off-track to graduate. Through this information, the District and the public can gain a fuller picture of what else needs to be done to help all students stay on track. The District has already developed a method to

identify students who were off-track to graduate at the end of Grades 10 and 11, based on courses passed.

As a first step towards an early warning system, the District should publicize its expectations for a-g course completion in each grade of high school, described earlier in the report, allowing both parents and teachers a guide to help them make sure students get the support needed to stay on track.

Some work has already been done to identify off-track students. Earlier this report lists the set of courses the District expects students to have completed by the end of Grade 10 and Grade 11. By publicizing these expectations both parents and teachers can use these course guidelines as tools to help identify whether any of their students require additional support.

Additional work has already been done to forecast a-g completion: Betts, Zau, and Bachofer (2013), in an early assessment of San Diego Unified’s new graduation requirements, published a data tool that any District in California could use to predict a-g completion probabilities for students in either Grade 6 or 7. The same SanDERA team has been working collaboratively with the District for the last five years to develop models to predict a variety of academic outcomes, and this work could also prove relevant.

That tool is now somewhat out of date because it used the former state achievement test, the CST, which has not been given in California since 2013. But updating these statistical models should be fairly straightforward. The publication referenced is Julian R. Betts, Andrew C. Zau, and Karen Volz Bachofer, (2013) “College Readiness as a Graduation Requirement: An Assessment of San Diego’s Challenges,” San Francisco, CA: Public Policy Institute of California. See <http://www.ppic.org/publication/collegereadiness-as-a-graduation-requirement-an-assessment-of-san-diegos-challenges/> for a link to the report and the data analysis tool for predicting students’ probability of completing the a-g requirements.

Biographies of the Board Select Committee Members

Committee Chair
Dr. Kyra Greene
Executive Director,
Center on Policy Initiatives

Dr. Kyra Greene currently serves as the executive director at the Center on Policy Initiatives in San Diego. Before joining CPI, Dr. Greene was an assistant professor of sociology at San Diego State University where she taught courses on socioeconomic inequality, race, and qualitative research methods. Dr. Greene has served as an instructor in sociological courses on public policy at both Rider University and Stanford University. She was also the Diversity Coordinator for Enhancing Diversity in Graduate Education in the Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences program at Stanford University.

Dr. Greene’s past research has focused on social movement messaging and framing, legislative processes, and public policies affecting the lives of people of color and people with disabilities. Dr. Greene earned her Master of Arts and Ph.D. in sociology from Stanford University. She also holds a Bachelor of Arts in social sciences from Bard College at Simon’s Rock.

Committee Co-Chair
Mel Katz
Executive Officer, Manpower Staffing
Services of San Diego

Mel Katz is the executive officer for Manpower Staffing Services of San Diego, Inc. Mr. Katz has been one of San Diego’s most respected business leaders since 1977, and today, Manpower of San Diego is the largest Manpower franchise in the United States. Beyond Manpower, Mr. Katz is an outspoken advocate of child literacy, K-12 and higher education

issues. Mr. Katz has also served as chairman for the San Diego Library Commission, San Diego Workforce Partnership, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, and the San Diego Convention Center.

Mr. Katz has been recognized as a Junior Achievement Hall of Fame Laureate and has received the Sam Walton Business Leader Award, the LEAD San Diego’s Visionary Award for Regional Stewardship, and earned the Exemplary Award for Business Community Service by the Downtown San Diego Rotary. Mr. Katz received a Bachelor of Science in marketing and business administration from the University of Nevada at Las Vegas.

Dr. Julian Betts
Professor, Department of Economics,
University of California at San Diego

Dr. Julian Betts is a professor and former chair of the Department of Economics at the University of California at San Diego. Dr. Betts is also the executive director of the San Diego Education Research Alliance at UCSD, a Research Associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research and a Bren Fellow at the Public Policy Institute of California. Dr. Betts has written extensively on the link between student outcomes and measures of public school spending including class size, teachers’ salaries, and teachers’ level of education. He has also examined the role that standards and expectations play in student achievement.

Dr. Betts is principal investigator on a multi-year study of magnet elementary schools funded by the U.S. Department of Education. He was also principal investigator of a three-year study for the U.S. Department of Education on the effects of career and technical education on students’ academic trajectories.

Dr. Betts obtained a Bachelor of Science in chemistry from McGill University, a Ph.M. in economics from Oxford University, and a Ph.D. in economics from Queen’s University in Ontario, Canada.

Dr. John Robert Browne II
CEO, Third Millennium Enterprises

Dr. John Browne was a District administrator in San Diego City Schools for several years, with responsibilities for the humanities and then for integration and school choice programs. He created his education consulting firm in 1999, but has served school districts and other educational entities in that capacity throughout the State of California and the United States for over 40 years. His focus is achieving cultural democracy and equitable outcomes for historically underserved students by improving leadership and organizational effectiveness in education. His book, published in 2012 by Corwin publishers, is titled Walking the Equity Talk, a guide for culturally courageous leadership in school communities.

Before becoming an administrator in San Diego Unified, Dr. Browne was superintendent of instruction and interim superintendent in the Grant Joint Union High School District, Sacramento. He is a charter member of the San Diego Association of African American Educators, and is on the Executive Board of New Creation Church. He has a Bachelor of Arts from Ohio University, a Master of Arts in teaching from Antioch College, and a Doctor of Education from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, where he was a Ford Fellow.

Peter Callstrom
President & CEO, San Diego Workforce Partnership

In July 2012, Peter Callstrom joined San Diego Workforce Partnership as CEO. Under Mr. Callstrom’s leadership, the Workforce Partnership has expanded services, received excellent audits, and has been awarded millions of dollars in new and disparate grants and contracts to serve more job seekers in our region. With an annual budget of \$40 million, the Workforce Partnership funds and delivers workforce programs to train and support job seekers to meet the needs of regional employers. The organization also conducts in-depth labor market research and translates this information into robust reports, an online data resource, and ‘priority sector’ poster boards in hundreds of local schools.

Mr. Callstrom has led nonprofit organizations in the San Diego region for over 25 years including organizations that provide services to adults with disabilities and the homeless. He is a graduate of Harvard Business School and earned a Bachelor of Science in business administration & communications from Minnesota State University at Mankato.

Dr. Constance Carroll
Chancellor, San Diego Community College District

Dr. Constance M. Carroll was appointed chancellor of the San Diego Community College District in 2004, after eleven years of service as president of San Diego Mesa College. The San Diego Community College District is composed of City College, Mesa College, and Miramar College, as well as a seven-campus Continuing Education division. With a total enrollment of 100,000 students per semester,

the District is the second largest community college District in California and ranks sixth in the nation. In 2007, the Association of Community College Trustees presented to Dr. Carroll the national “Marie Y. Martin CEO Award,” as the top-rated community college CEO in the nation.

Prior to coming to San Diego, Dr. Carroll was president of Saddleback College in Orange County and president of Indian Valley Colleges in Marin County, California. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in humanities from Duquesne University, a Master of Arts and Ph.D. in classics from the University of Pittsburgh, as well as a Certificate of Proficiency in Hellenic studies from Knubly University in Athens, Greece. Dr. Carroll also attended the Harvard University Institute for Educational Management.

Bill Freeman
Past President, San Diego Education Association

Bill Freeman has taught in San Diego for more than twenty years after a successful career as an U.S. Army officer. He was selected as Teacher of the Year in San Diego Unified in 2010 and runner-up as County Teacher of the Year. He served in numerous leadership positions in the San Diego Education Association including president from 2010 to 2014 where he was instrumental in preventing the layoff of 1500 educators. He has served as a Director on the National Education Association board from 2014 to 2017, where he advocated for education professionals, including lobbying the U.S. Congress and federal agencies for funding and the influencing of educational policies. He is currently serving as an at large director, on the California Teachers Association where he seeks to ensure that all students receive a quality education.

Andrea Guerrero
Executive Director, Alliance San Diego

Andrea Guerrero is the executive director of Alliance San Diego. Originally from Mexico City, Ms. Guerrero views the world from a binational, bicultural, and bilingual lens. She has dedicated her professional life to protecting civil rights and advancing social justice.

Before joining Alliance San Diego, Ms. Guerrero was the Field and Policy Director of the ACLU of San Diego & Imperial Counties. Prior to that, she practiced immigration law before administrative, federal district, and appellate courts. Guerrero earned her J.D. from UC Berkeley Law School, a Master of Arts from University of Texas LBJ School of Public Affairs, and a Bachelor of Arts from Stanford University.

Dr. Gary Hoachlander
President, ConnectEd

Since 2011, Gary Hoachlander has served as president of ConnectEd: The California Center for College and Career. Dr. Hoachlander is widely known for his expertise in career and technical education, and he has devoted most of his professional life to helping young people learn by doing.

Dr. Hoachlander has consulted extensively for the U.S. Department of Education, state departments of education, local school districts, foundations, and a variety of other clients. He earned his Ph.D. and master’s degree from the Department of City and Regional Planning at the University of California at Berkeley, as well as a Bachelor of Arts in urban affairs from Princeton University.

Dr. Joseph Johnson
*Dean, College of Education,
San Diego State University*

Dr. Joseph Johnson is the executive director of the National Center for Urban School Transformation (NCUST) and the QUALCOMM professor of urban education at San Diego State University. At NCUST, Dr. Johnson leads efforts to identify, study, and promote the best practice of high performing urban schools and districts. As a member of the Education Leadership faculty, he helps develop and teach programs designed to prepare effective school and district leaders.

Previously, Dr. Johnson has served as a classroom teacher, a school district administrator, a state department official in two states, a researcher and technical assistance provider at the University of Texas, and as the director of Student Achievement and School Accountability at the U.S.

Department of Education. Dr. Johnson earned a Ph.D. in educational administration from the University of Texas at Austin's Cooperative Superintendency Program, a Master of Arts in education from San Diego State University and graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Science from the University of Wisconsin at Oshkosh.

Dr. Makeba Jones
*Professor, University of California
at San Diego*

Dr. Makeba Jones is an assistant teaching professor in the Department of Education Studies at the University of California at San Diego and is specifically interested in school reform, educational equity, and urban education. Dr. Jones has expertise in areas such as the social and cultural organization of schools, student engagement, tracking/ability group-

ing, secondary school reform, educational policy, teacher professional development, school-university partnerships, high school to college transitions, and youth leadership/development.

Dr. Jones has a Ph.D. in education from the University of California at Los Angeles as well as a Bachelor of Arts in anthropology and sociology from the University of California at San Diego. She has accumulated over 15 years of experience in design-based collaborations with San Diego County teachers, students, principals, and district administrators on a range of school reform initiatives.

Dr. Pedro Noguera
*Distinguished Professor,
University of California at Los Angeles*

Dr. Pedro Noguera is a Distinguished Professor of Education at the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies at the University of California at Los Angeles. His research focuses on the ways in which schools are influenced by social and economic conditions, as well as by demographic trends in local, regional, and global contexts. Dr. Noguera serves on the boards of numerous national and local organizations, including the Economic Policy Institute, the Broader, Bolder Approach and The Nation Magazine.

Prior to joining the faculty at UCLA, he served as a tenured professor and holder of endowed chairs at New York University (2003-2015), Harvard University (2000-2003), and the University of California at Berkeley (1990-2000). From 2009-2012, Pedro served as a trustee for the State University of New York (SUNY) as an appointee of the Governor. Noguera has a Ph.D. in sociology from University of California at Berkeley as well as three degrees and a teaching credential from Brown University.

Matt Spathas
Managing Principal, SENTRE

Matt Spathas is managing principal and co-founder of SENTRE, a real estate investment company, and CEO of Bandwidth Now, which creates buildings of the future. Matt has acquired, developed, managed, or facilitated in excess of \$2 billion of real estate transactions and is passionate about transforming the 150-year-old educational delivery system to better prepare students for the global economy. Mr. Spathas recently served on the team which created San Diego Unified School District's iHigh Virtual Academy.

In 1999, Mr. Spathas founded the educational resource website library.com to facilitate and share best practices, ideas and innovation in education. He is a frequent speaker in educational forums on the topic "Engaging, Empowering and Preparing Students for the 21st Century." Mr. Spathas is a graduate of Oregon State University.

Dr. Lynn Neault
*Vice Chancellor of Student Services,
San Diego Community College District*

For 25 years, Dr. Lynn Neault has served as the vice chancellor of Student Services for the San Diego Community College District. As vice chancellor, Dr. Neault provides leadership and coordination for a comprehensive program of student support services for the District. Her responsibilities include providing leadership for the implementation of new programs and services for student success, enrollment management, state reporting, compliance with state and federal laws and regulations, policy development, oversight of student records, as well as management of the student information system.

Dr. Neault is a graduate of San Diego State University, where she earned a bachelor's degree in political science, a master's degree in public administration and a doctorate degree in educational leadership.

San Diego Unified Liaisons:

Cindy Marten
*Superintendent,
San Diego Unified School District*

In July 2013, Cindy Marten became superintendent of San Diego Unified School District, bringing over 25 years of experience serving as a classroom teacher and a school-wide literacy specialist to the position. Ms. Marten is deeply committed to creating educational conditions and opportunities that enable all children to become actively literate, contributing, and participating members of a democratic society who make a positive difference in the world.

After participating in a seven-year improvement effort at a struggling school in Poway, Ms. Marten chose to move to Central Elementary in City Heights, one of the most challenging schools in San Diego Unified, where she served for 10 years as teacher, instructional leader and principal before becoming superintendent. Marten earned her Master of Arts in curriculum and instruction at the University of California at San Diego as well as a Bachelor of Arts in elementary education from the University of Wisconsin at La Crosse.

Richard Barrera
*Board Member, San Diego Unified School
District*

Richard Barrera was first elected to represent District D on the San Diego Unified School

Board in 2008 and then re-elected in 2012. Mr. Barrera has helped lead the District through the most devastating financial cutbacks in the history of California public schools by pulling together a community coalition of students, parents, teachers, classified staff, neighborhood, business and civic leaders around a long-term vision of excellence in our public schools. Mr. Barrera's focus continues to be on achieving equity and excellence for all public school students in San Diego.

Along with a focus on supporting students in the classroom, Mr. Barrera has also led the District's efforts in supporting students and staff through securing billions of dollars in investment in school facilities, including breakthrough investments in 21st century technology and environmentally sustainable infrastructure. Mr. Barrera earned a master's degree in public policy degree from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University as well as a Bachelor of Arts in history from University of California at San Diego

Dr. Sharon Whitehurst-Payne
Board Member,
San Diego Unified School District

Dr. Sharon Whitehurst-Payne has dedicated her entire professional career supporting students and educators in various capacities from Pre-K through the university level. Sharon has worked tirelessly for over 10 years with the San Diego Unified School District and Cal State University San Marcos College of Education. She also served as a consultant for a plethora of organizations such as the State Department of Education, Commission on Teacher Credentialing, National Science Foundation, San Diego State University Research Organization, University of Wisconsin at Madison, and the Ford Foundation, to name a few. Dr. Whitehurst-Payne also served

as an Accreditation Commissioner for WASC Accreditation Commission for Community and Junior Colleges.

She is most passionate about helping educators and students reach their maximum potential through building successful models and best practices. She is committed to transforming the traditionally role-based education system to a goal-based system.

Dr. Whitehurst-Payne earned a Ph.D. in administrative and policy studies from the University of California at Los Angeles, along with a Master of Science in mathematics, Bachelor of Science in mathematics, and a Bachelor of Arts in history from Duke University.

Ron Rode
Director of Research and Evaluation,
San Diego Unified School District

Ron has worked for San Diego Unified for over 25 years where his responsibilities have involved program evaluation, accountability measurement, and research. Early assignments involved evaluating such programs as Gifted and Talented, English Learners, court-mandated integration, partnerships, and many others. Ron also coordinated the implementation of numerous No Child Left Behind requirements during the mid-2000s, a complex task in California's second largest school district. Subsequently, as executive director of the Research and Evaluation Division, Ron provided leadership for student assessment, data analysis and reporting, accountability measurement and reporting, program evaluation, and implementation of Title I programs and services. Currently, as director of Research and Evaluation, Ron oversees data analysis and reporting; program evaluation; research within the district, including collaborating with research partners from the University of California; and supports development

of the district's Local Control and Accountability Plan, with a particular focus on metrics and evaluationDigital Media and Desi

Andrew Sharp
Chief Public Information Officer,
San Diego Unified School District

Andrew Sharp is the Chief Public Information Officer for the San Diego Unified School District. In that role, he works to increase public understanding of all district operations. His office is also responsible for maintaining strong relationships with other public agencies and elected officials in order to assist them in serving the needs of their constituents and for the purpose of advancing public policies to help San Diego students succeed.



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