

2012-2015 Strategic Plan  
**Madera Unified School District**  
Madera, California



**Madera: Unified for Student Success!**

**Gustavo Balderas**  
Superintendent of Schools

August 2012

# Madera: Unified for Student Success!

2012 –2015 Strategic Plan  
Madera Unified School District  
Madera, California

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**PERFORMANCE Fact, Inc.**, led by Mutiu O. Fagbayi (President/CEO), facilitated and compiled this Strategic Plan. PERFORMANCE Fact, Inc. provides tools and technical assistance to state education departments, districts, schools and related institutions regarding strategic planning and school improvement, leadership development and building trust.

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*“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”*

*- Margaret Mead*

**This Strategic Plan is a statement of the aspirations of the Madera Community for all our students.**

Like all plans, it must be implemented well, through good times and lean, before its promise can become a reality for our children and our community.

Although there will be challenges along the way, it is our hope that Madera will always have a “small group of thoughtful, committed citizens” who will lead and motivate us all to follow-through on the aspirations we have expressed in this Strategic Plan.

And in doing so, we will remain

**Madera: Unified for Student Success!**

# CHAPTER ONE

## About Madera Unified School District

During the 2011-2012 school year, Madera Unified School District enrolled approximately 19,800 students, an increase of almost 1,000 students compared to five years earlier. Our students reflect the make-up of our community.

- 83 out of every 100 students (83.2%) were Latino/Hispanic.
- 2 out of every 100 students (2.3%) were Black or African American.
- About 9 out of every 100 students (8.6%) were non-Hispanic White.
- 32 out of every 100 students (31.6%) were English language learners.
- 6 out of every 100 students (6.1%) were Special Education students.
- 83 out of every 100 students (82.6%) came from socio-economically disadvantaged, or low-income homes.
- Out of every 100 students, about 51 were Male, and 49 Female.



In the past five years, growth in student enrollment occurred primarily with the Latino/Hispanic subgroup, and, to a lesser extent, with the Asian population. In contrast, enrollment of African American and White subgroups dropped appreciably between 2007 and 2012.

Madera USD maintains 25 school sites. There are 13 Kindergarten-to-Grade 6 elementary buildings; 3 Grades 7-8 middle schools; 3 K-8 sites; 2 high schools; and 4 Alternative Education/Preschool sites.

Madera USD employed about 1,571 people during 2011-2012 school year. Of these, 875 were teachers, 613 support personnel, and 83 were school and district-level administrators.

Regarding student achievement and school performance, the results have been mixed based on the data for the past three years (2008-2011).

- At the Elementary level, the number of students who met or exceeded the state standards (“proficient/advanced”) in Mathematics oscillated between 11 out of every 20 students and 12 out of every 20 students during the past three years. In Reading/Language Arts, the number of “proficient/advanced” students varied between 8 out of every 20 and 10 out of every 20 in Grades 2, 4, 5, and 6
- Student performance in Mathematics beyond the Elementary grades has been particularly low during the past few years. About 5 out of every 20 students passed the Algebra I tests; about 1 in 20 passed the Algebra II tests; and fewer than 3 out of every 20 were “proficient/advanced” in Geometry.
- On the California High School Exit Exams (CAHSEE), slightly less than half of students who took the tests passed the CHSEE between 2008-2011.

- Twenty-five out of 26 schools in the district did “not meet AYP” in 2011.

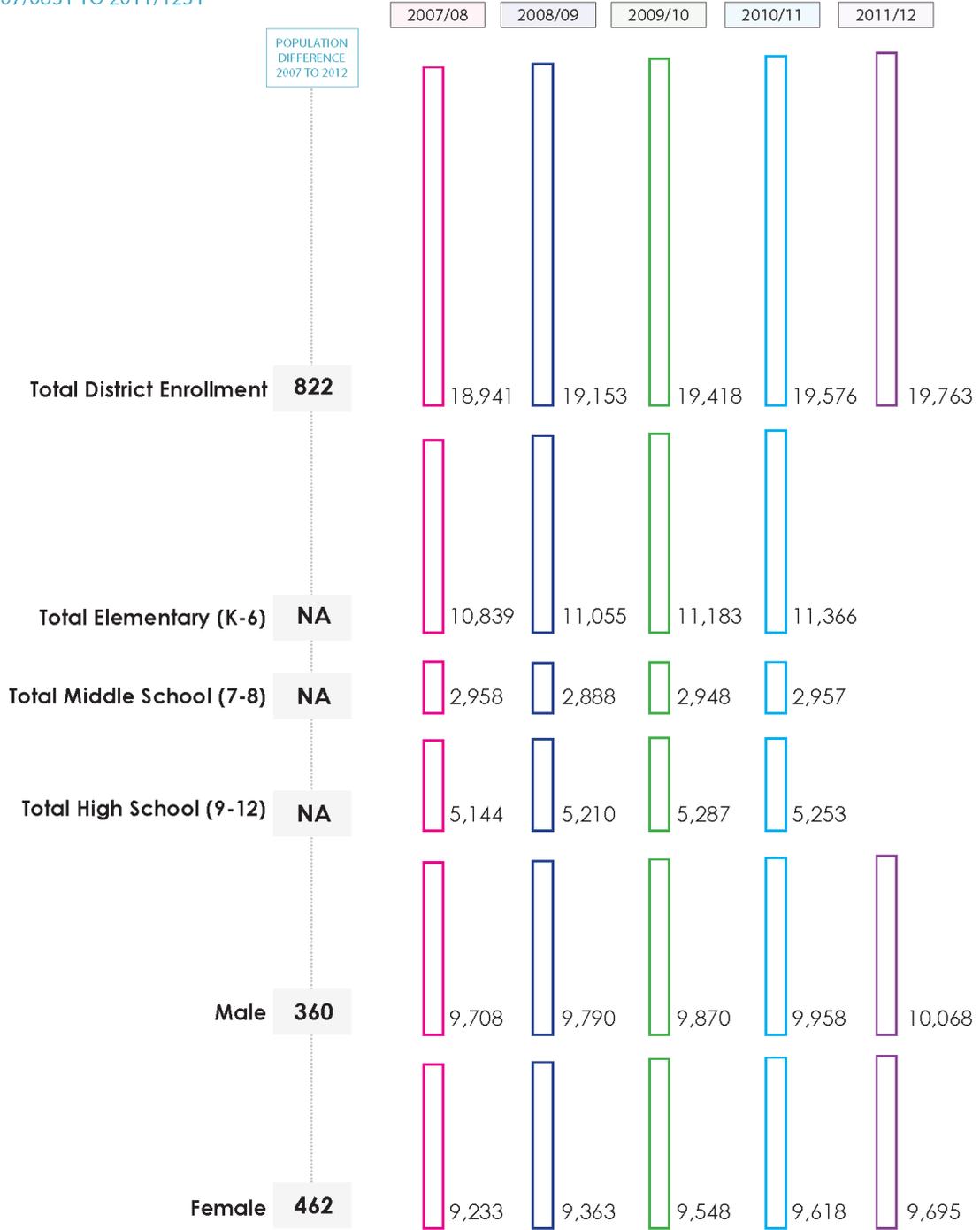
Consequently, nearly all the schools in the district have been designated “PI” – or “Program Improvement” – schools. The district as a whole did “not meet AYP” and has been designated a “PI 3” school system.

- Six out of 26 schools in Madera USD had “API” scores above 800, the level at which a school is considered “high performing” by the California Department of Education.

Although there have been pockets of significant gains in student achievement in recent years and many more schools are making some progress, our district has a long way to go to ensure successful learning for our students. That goal unifies our school and our community. This Strategic Plan – **Madera: Unified for Student Success** – is our roadmap for that journey.

# STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

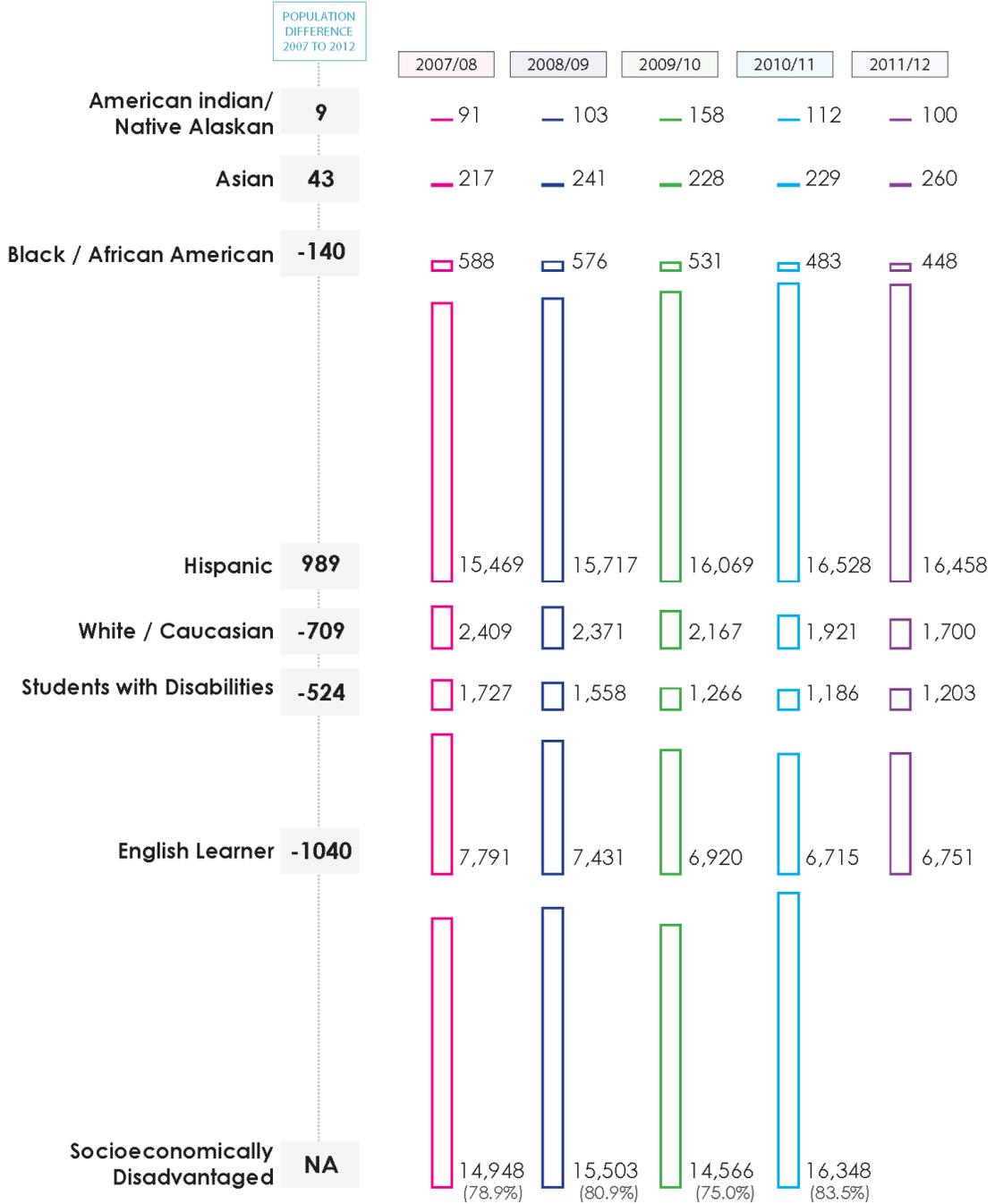
MADERA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
2007/08SY TO 2011/12SY



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# STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

MADERA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
2007/08SY TO 2011/12SY

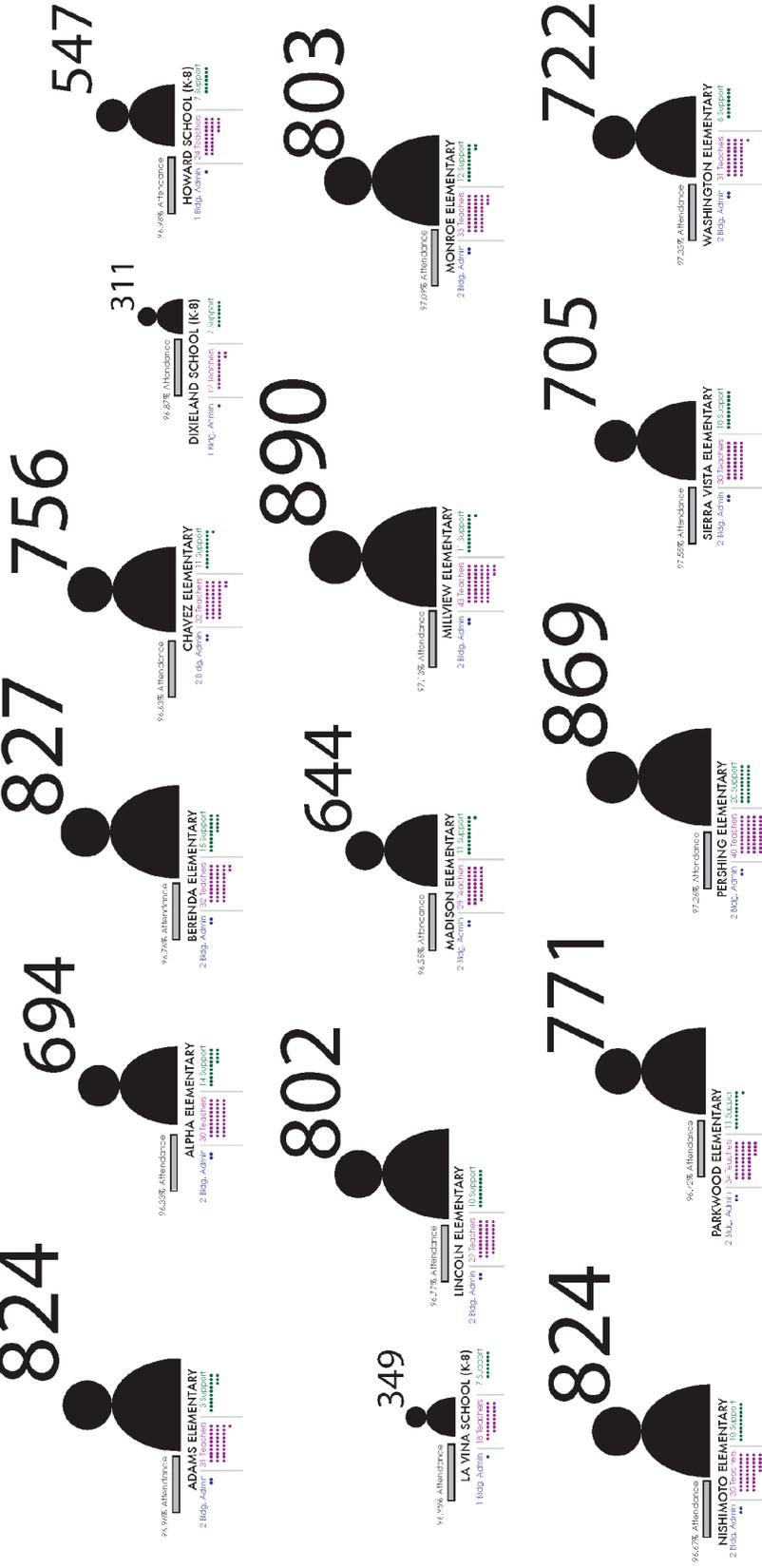


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**STUDENT ENROLLMENT,  
ATTENDANCE AND STAFFING  
LEVELS BY SCHOOL**

**MADERA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

ETA&A CHARTER AND SHERMAN THOMAS  
CHARTER ELEMENTARY NOT INCLUDED  
IN FIGURE DUE TO LACK OF DATA

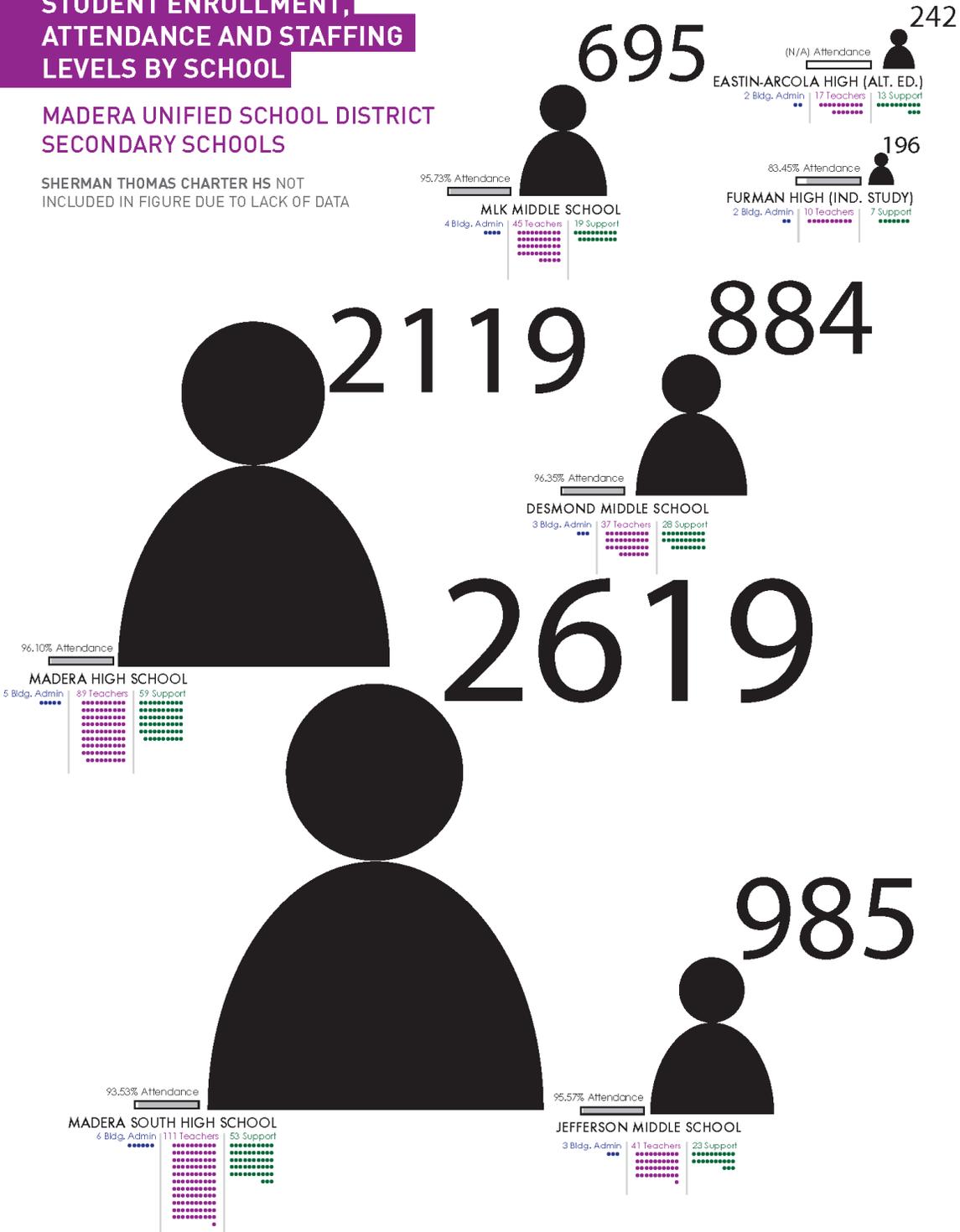


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# STUDENT ENROLLMENT, ATTENDANCE AND STAFFING LEVELS BY SCHOOL

## MADERA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT SECONDARY SCHOOLS

SHERMAN THOMAS CHARTER HS NOT INCLUDED IN FIGURE DUE TO LACK OF DATA



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## LENGTH OF SERVICE OF TEACHERS, STAFF AND ADMINISTRATORS

MADERA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

	All Admin. ----- Years with district	Bldg. Admin. ----- Years in current position	Teachers ----- Years with district	Support ----- Years with district
<1 yr.	1	0	15	25
1-3yrs.	30	8	129	36
4-7yrs.	13	9	204	187
8-15yrs.	8	3	259	158
15+yrs.	11	2	267	207
2011 -12	83	22	875	613
2010 -11	85	24	849	616
2009 -10	89	25	881	656

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# CHAPTER TWO

## Executive Summary

This strategic plan is a **call to action** for the Madera Community. It is a statement of our hopes and dreams for our schools and the education of all our students, without exception. A broad cross-section of Madera parents, students, educators, and community leaders participated in the development of this strategic plan.



### The Goal and Vital Signs of Student Learning

In Madera, we are committed to educating the whole child through high expectations, community collaboration and shared responsibility for each student's health, safety, and success in life.

#### Our Goal

**Madera: Unified** to ensure every student is **educated for College, equipped for Career, and empowered with Character.**

#### The Vital Signs of Student Growth & Development

We want our students to experience continuous *academic growth*, embody *academic tenacity*, and to model *socio-emotional resiliency*. Therefore, we will monitor and thoroughly analyze:

1. **Self-responsibility, self-discipline and initiative**
2. **Critical thinking and problem-solving**
3. **Proficiency** in all subjects
4. Meaningful **participation** in class, school and community
5. Acquisition of **positive life skills**
6. Closing the "**achievement gap**" and accelerating learning for all student groups
7. **Successful transitions** from level-to-level (Prekindergarten-Elementary-Secondary-post-Secondary)

## The “Four Pillars”

Our **FOUR PILLARS** are the building blocks of our professional practices; they frame what we must do well in every classroom, in every school, and system-wide to ensure success for all students, without exception.

Our first Pillar – **EQUITABLE ACCESS TO RIGOROUS HIGH-LEVEL PROGRAMS** – ensures that curriculum, standards-based instruction, and programs provide all students with equitable access and opportunity for achievement.

Our second Pillar – **DATA-DRIVEN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING & COLLABORATION** – promotes meaningful collaboration and professional learning to improve and shift practices in every classroom, every school, and every district-level department.

Our third Pillar – **SAFE AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS FOR LEARNING & WORK** – focuses on school-level and district-wide culture and structures that support the personal safety of the students, staff and community with fair and consistent expectations.

Our fourth Pillar – **STRONG RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILIES & COMMUNITY** – recognizes that schools can’t do it alone. Therefore, we will initiate and sustain relationships among home-school-community through shared responsibility for student success, proactive communication and meaningful stakeholder “voice.”

The Four Pillars and corresponding Commitments provide a consistent framework for day-to-day action, allocating resources, assessing the impact of taxpayers’ investments in our public schools, and accelerating student achievement in Madera schools.

## Getting Desired Results Demands Discipline!

This strategic plan is the *beginning*, not the end. Realizing our hopes and dreams for our students and our community rests on disciplined implementation of the priorities outlined in this plan. That takes each of us doing our part well, and all of us working together to ensure success for all students.

As we do so, we will make manifest our ultimate goal: **Madera: Unified for Student Success!**

# CHAPTER THREE

## The Planning Process

The strategic planning process for Madera Unified School District was commissioned by Superintendent Gustavo Balderas and the Board of Education. The purpose of the exercise was to develop a strategic plan that:

1. Clarifies Madera's goal for student learning and achievement
2. Outlines the roadmap for accomplishing that goal
3. Embraces the diverse "voices" of the district's internal and external stakeholders
4. Mobilizes leadership for courageous action at all levels

A *Core Planning Team*, broadly representative of school district employees and community stakeholders, developed the plan between February–May 2012, with

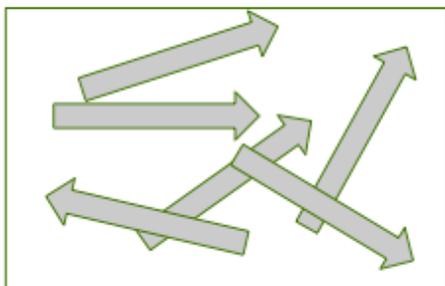


ongoing input and feedback from other school staffs, elected officials, parents, and students. The planning process was developed and facilitated by Performance Fact, Inc., led by Mr. Mutiu O. Fagbayi (President/CEO).

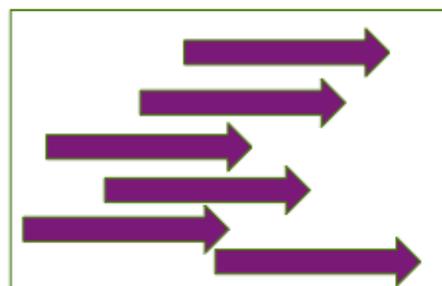
### Why Plan?

A primary aim of planning is unity of purpose, or **alignment**. Without a plan, there is no focus or clear direction. A results-focused plan is the first step toward making the future you envision manifest as reality. Regardless of the level of planning – long-range strategic planning, continuous school

### Misalignment



### Alignment



improvement planning or operational planning – the intent is the same: *getting people, practices and programs on the same page, going in the same direction, at the same time.*

This alignment process enables the school system and its community partners to develop a continuous improvement plan that focuses everyone on the district's core mission: *ensuring successful learning for every student, without exception.*

Performance Fact's framework for developing the plan emphasizes in-depth analysis of student data from multiple perspectives, identifying the "root causes" of the current state of student achievement, and developing concrete solutions to address the "root causes".

## **Making Every Voice Count**

Early in the planning process, the Core Team agreed on a set of 6 guiding principles to frame the strategic planning exercise:

1. Highest priority: Student learning through instructional effectiveness
2. Leadership commitment and active participation
3. All voices count, all points of view welcomed

4. Transparent process, open to all
5. Communication using diverse media
6. Final plan: simple, clear language, focused on strong results for students

## A Data-driven, Continuous Improvement Planning Process



What data do we have?	What does the data say? and Why does the data look that way?	What are we going to do about it all?
<b>Student data</b> from multiple sources	Student Achievement <b>Areas of Strength</b> and <b>Areas of Concern</b> and <b>“Root cause”</b> (underlying causes) of the current state of student achievement	<b>The Goal, “Four Pillars”, Professional Practices &amp; Vital Signs</b>

A primary purpose of planning is to ensure *alignment on common purpose*. Therefore, the development of Madera USD’s strategic plan involved the engagement of diverse stakeholders within the Madera Community.

- The *Core Planning Team* consisted of about 35 participants, including teachers, school-level administrators, district-level leaders and managers, parent and community representatives, and city/county officials. The team met monthly in full-day or two-day sessions, and was responsible for analyzing the current state of student learning, reflecting on the effectiveness of educational programs and professional practices, and developing the

recommendations. Furthermore, the team led the “reality check” phase during which feedback and suggestions were gathered from the staff of each school or from parent and community groups, and integrated into the final recommendations, as appropriate. *Union leadership* participated as well, through their membership on the Core Team. (See the Appendix for a list of Core Team members).

- The *Alignment Team* was composed of a number of elected officials (including the Madera’s Mayor and City Council members), business representatives, parents, community leaders, and selected school district personnel. This

team provided additional parent/community perspective on the deliberations of the Core Team, particularly regarding strengthening coherence and alignment between Madera USD and other leaders and organizations that also serve students and their families. The Alignment Team met twice during the planning process.

- Through the “*Reality Check*” exercise, teachers and administrators in every school provided feedback and suggestions regarding the Goal, Vital Signs, and Core Strategies proposed by the Core Team and Alignment Team. The “*Reality Check*” solicited the voices of Madera USD staff that were not members of the Core Team. A similar exercise occurred with site principals and other administrators who were not on the Core Team or Alignment Team.
- The district held two *Parent/Community Forums* at two district schools to solicit input and feedback from parents and community partners.

- *Three groups of students* – elementary, middle and high school students - participated in focus group discussions facilitated by Performance Fact’s President/CEO. Each student group reflected the diversity among Madera students, and included high-performing and under-performing students, fluent English as well as English learners, regular education and special education pupils, and students from diverse racial/ethnic or socio-economic backgrounds. Nearly 40 students in grades 4-12 participated in the focus group sessions.

By providing opportunities for meaningful engagement of Madera’s diverse stakeholders, the strategic planning process produced a set of recommendations that reflect the aspirations and priorities of the Madera Community, thereby strengthening the likelihood of their commitment to disciplined implementation of the recommendations in the strategic plan.

## CHAPTER FOUR

# Assessment of Current State

This Chapter summarizes highlights of the current state of educational outcomes and programs in Madera Unified School District. Specifically:

- It provides an overview of student achievement results and the current levels of performance of Madera schools;
- It highlights comments and suggestions provided by a group of approximately 40 Madera students (in grades 4-12) regarding their educational experiences;
- It describes the current state of educational programs in the core subjects, including Mathematics, Reading/Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, English Language Development (ELD), Special Education, and World Languages.
- It summarizes the Core Team's assessment of professional practices based on 16 research-based high-leverage practices, or "16 Pillars";
- It provides an overview of the feedback from stakeholders regarding parent and community engagement in the Madera school system.

*"All students will learn at high levels when instruction meets their needs. What a student has not learned well yet, is something that she/he has not been taught well yet."*

*Student learning, then, is an "effect" whose "cause" lies in the quality and effectiveness of educational practices.*

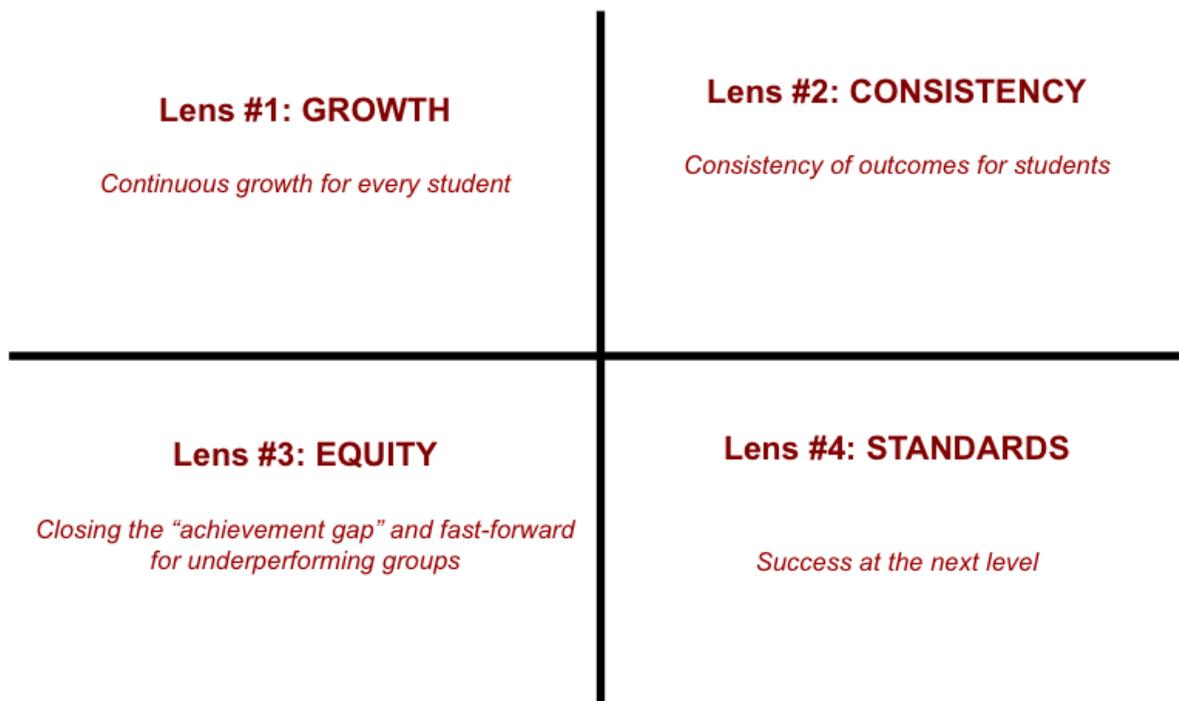
*If we want improved outcomes for students, the starting point must be the continuous improvement of teaching practices, leadership practices and organizational practices, because they are the precursors to student learning."*

-MOF

## Analysis of Current State of Student Achievement

The Core Planning Team used Performance Fact's 4-Lens Data Analysis Protocol™ (Figure 1) to analyze student data. The 4-Lens protocol is the first step of the Data Summit™ process. The 4-Lens protocol is a simple but comprehensive way to probe all kinds of data, including data from benchmark assessments, state tests, survey data, attendance and disciplinary referrals. By looking at the data through "four lenses," practitioners acquire a richer understanding of "what the data says."

**Figure 1. 4-Lens Data Analysis Protocol**



Below are highlights of Areas of Strength and Areas of Concern based on each Lens. To ensure that all stakeholders can participate in the data analysis exercise, Performance Fact provided the Core Team with easy-to-understand data charts corresponding to each Lens.

**4.1.1 DATA ANALYSIS FOR LENS 1: COHORT**

**Lens 1: GROWTH** focuses on “value-added” in learning and achievement for identical group of students or cohort.

Figure 2 shows the performance of Madera students on the California Standards Tests (CST) in Mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA) between 2008-2009 and 2010-2011 school years. Figure 3 shows data for the graduation and dropout rates for the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 cohort of high school graduates; the latter results were obtained directly from the California Department of Education’s DataQuest database.

**Figure 2. Number of Students Proficient/Advanced, out of every 20 Students**

<b>MATH</b>				<b>ELA</b>			
<b>Grade</b>	<b>2008-2009</b>	<b>2009-2010</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>2008-2009</b>	<b>2009-2010</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>
2nd Grade	12	11	11	2nd Grade	9	8	9
3rd Grade	12	12	11	3rd Grade	7	6	6
4th Grade	12	13	12	4th Grade	10	10	10
5th Grade	10	11	11	5th Grade	9	9	9
6th Grade	9	9	8	6th Grade	9	10	8
7th Grade	7	8	8	7th Grade	8	9	9
				8th Grade	8	9	9
				9th Grade	7	13	9
				10th Grade	6	6	8
				11th Grade	6	6	7

Numbers and shading might not match due to rounding.  
**Direction of arrow indicates COHORT**

**Figure 3. Cohort Graduation and Dropout Rates**

	TOTAL # OF COHORT STUDENTS	# COHORT GRADUATES	COHORT GRADUATION RATE	# COHORT DROPOUTS	COHORT DROPOUT RATE
<b>2010-2011</b>					
All Students	1177	952	80.9%	143	12.1%
Hispanic	947	746	80.3%	117	12.4%
Asian	17	16	94.1%	*	*
African American	38	31	81.6%	*	15.8%%
White	158	133	84.2%	18	11.4%
<b>2009-2010</b>					
All Students	1165	915	78.5%	169	14.5
Hispanic	904	700	77.4%	136	15.0%
Asian	18	17	94.4%	*	*
African American	42	36	85.7%	*	7.1%
White	174	146	83.9%	20	11.5%

*Areas of Strength based on Lens 1: COHORT data*

- Mathematics achievement for the Cohort held steady as students progressed through Grades 2, 3, and 4. The proportion of students who were proficient/advanced in Grade 2 in 2008-2009 remained relatively constant when those students became 4th graders in 2010-2011.
- Student cohorts performed significantly better in Mathematics than English

Language Arts in the primary grades (Grades 2-4).

- District-wide, high school graduation rates increased appreciably between 2009-2010 and 2010-2011: from 78.5% to 80.9%. The 2.4 percentage-point increase is higher than the state-wide increase of 1.5 percentage-points between 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years.
- The 2010-2011 graduation rates for Madera USD's are significantly higher

- than the state-wide figures for all subgroups except White students: for Hispanics, 80.3% in Madera vs. 70.4% state-wide; for Asians, 94.1% vs. 89.7%; for African Americans, 81.6% vs. 62.9%; for non-Hispanic Whites, 84.2% vs. 85.5%.
- Similarly, Madera dropout rates in 2010-2011 were lower than the state average for all subgroups except non-Hispanic White students: for Hispanics, 12.1% vs. 14.4%; for African Americans, 15.8% vs. 24.7%; for White students, 11.4% vs. 8.9%. The district-wide dropout rate is also lower than the state average: 12.1% for Madera USD vs. 14.4% across California districts.

*Areas of Concern based on Lens 1: Cohort data*

- Performance of the student cohorts declined as they progressed from Grade 4 through Grades 5, 6, and 7.
- For nearly all Cohorts across the 3-year span, fewer than 10 out of every 20 students were proficient/advanced in English Language Arts at each grade level (Grades 2-11).
- In general, there was marginal growth in the performance of student Cohorts in Mathematics and English Language Arts between 2008 and 2011.

- Lower graduation rates and higher dropout rates for cohort of White students, compared to the state-wide figures for 2010-2011. The dropout rate was 11.2% for Madera's White students, compared to 8.9% statewide.
- Cohort dropout rates for African American students more than doubled between 2009-2010 and 2010-2011: from 7.1% in 2009-2010 to 15.8% in 2010-2011.

**4.1.2 DATA ANALYSIS FOR LENS 2:  
CONSISTENCY**

**Lens 2: CONSISTENCY** investigates learning and achievement for different groups of students, or non-cohort. Figure 4 shows the performance of Madera students on the California Standards Tests (CST) in Mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA) between 2008-2009 and 2010-2011 school years. Figure 5 summarizes the performance of Madera schools on the *Annual Yearly Progress* ("AYP") accountability metric of the federal *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) law, as well as on California's *Academic Performance Index* ("API").

Figure 4.

LENS 2 - CONSISTENCY  
**Madera Unified School District**  
 BY GRADE  
 California Standards Test (CST)  
 Percent Proficient / Advanced

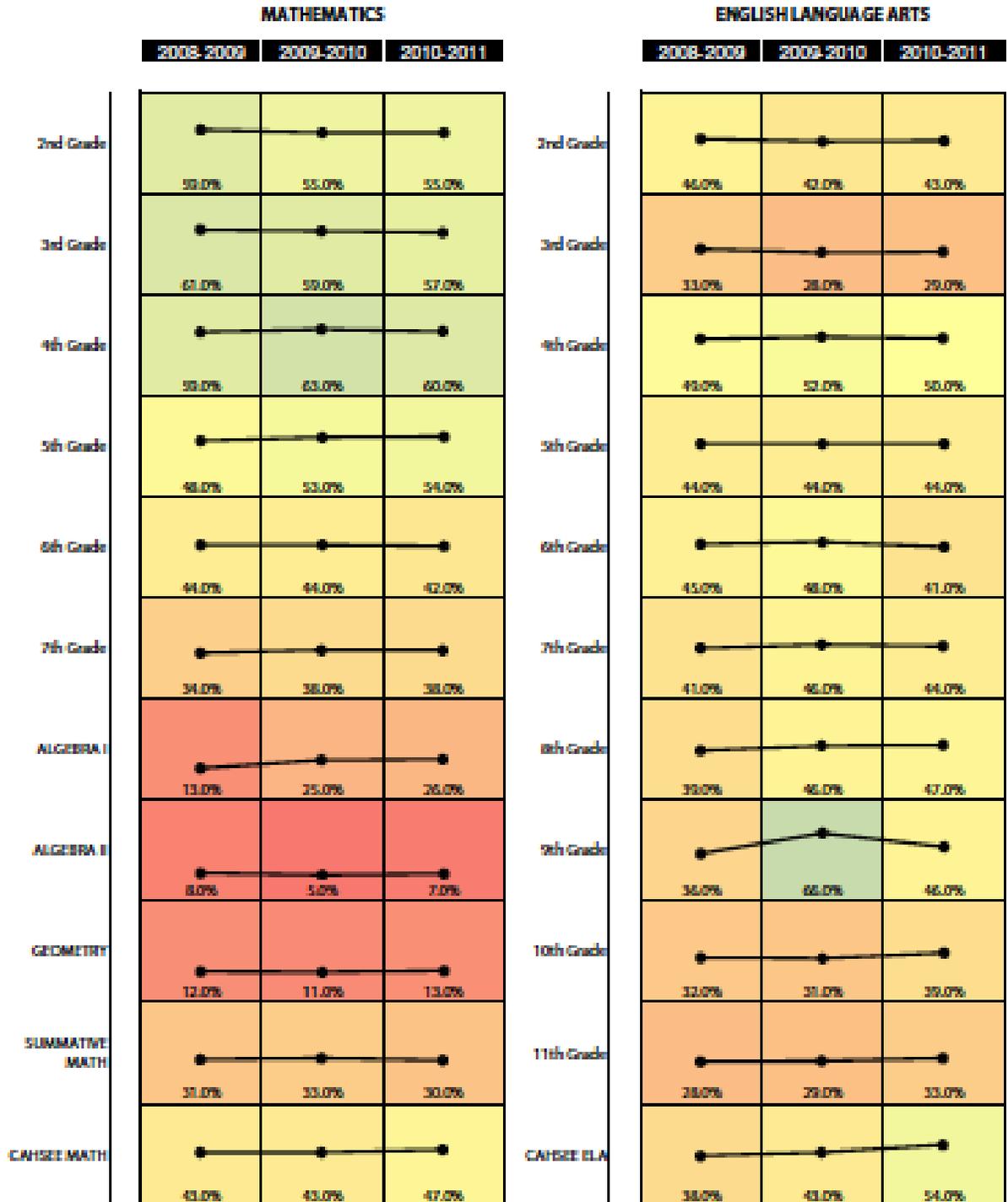
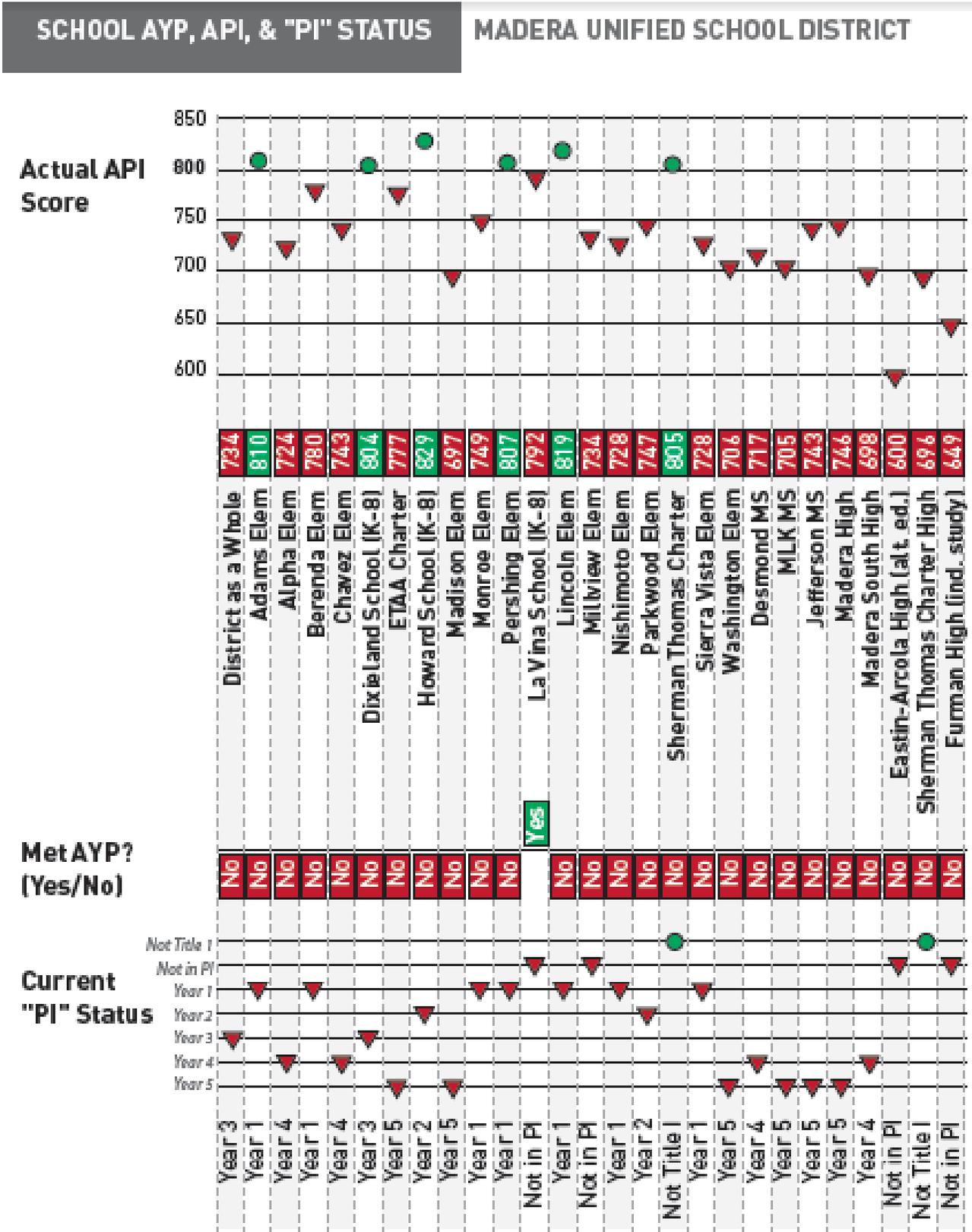


Figure 5.



*Areas of Strength based on Lens 2:*

*CONSISTENCY data*

- At the Elementary level, the number of students who met or exceeded the state standards (“proficient/advanced”) in Mathematics oscillated between 11 out of every 20 students and 12 out of every 20 students during the past three years.
- Six schools in Madera USD had “API” scores above 800, the level at which a school is considered “high performing” by the California Department of Education. The API, or Academic Performance Index, is a California-specific measure of school performance.

*Areas of Concern based on Lens 2:*

*CONSISTENCY data*

- Student performance in English Language Arts (ELA) is significantly lower than in Mathematics. The number of “proficient/advanced” students in ELA varied between 8 out of every 20 and 10 out of every 20 in Grades 2, 4, 5, and 6, compared to about 12 out of every 20 students in Mathematics.
- At Grade 3, student performance is appreciably low for three years during between 2008-2009 and 2010-2011, with

only about 6 out of every 20 students

“proficient/advanced” in

Reading/Language Arts.

- At the 7th grade, fewer than 8 out of every 20 students were “proficient/advanced” in Mathematics between 2008-2011; in Reading/Language Arts, between 8 and 9 out of every 20 students met state standards.
- In Grades 8-11, student performance on the Reading/Language Arts tests has been inconsistent from grade to grade: approximately 9 out of every 20 students were “proficient/advanced” in Grades 8 and 9, compared to about 7 out of every 20 students in Grades 10 and 11.
- Student performance in Mathematics beyond the Elementary grades has been particularly low during the past few years. About 5 out of every 20 students passed the Algebra I tests; about 1 in 20 passed the Algebra II tests; and fewer than 3 out of every 20 were “proficient/advanced” in Geometry.
- On the California High School Exit Exams (CAHSEE), slightly less than half of students who took the tests passed the CHSEE between 2008-2011.

— Twenty-five out of 26 schools in the district did “not meet AYP” in 2011. AYP – or Annual Yearly Progress – is the accountability system associated with the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law, and is based on the proportion of students in every subgroup who performed at the “proficient/advanced” levels on the state tests. Consequently, nearly all the schools in the district have been designated “PI” – or “Program Improvement” – schools. The district as a whole did “not meet AYP” and has

been designated a “PI 3” school system.

#### 4.1.3 DATA ANALYSIS FOR LENS 3: EQUITY

**Lens 3: EQUITY** provides insights into the learning and achievement by students by subgroup. The Core Planning Team analyzed subgroup data across all grade levels and multiple subjects, as well as district-wide AYP AND API results disaggregated by relevant student subgroups. A sampling of the datasets can be found below (Figures 6 to 10).

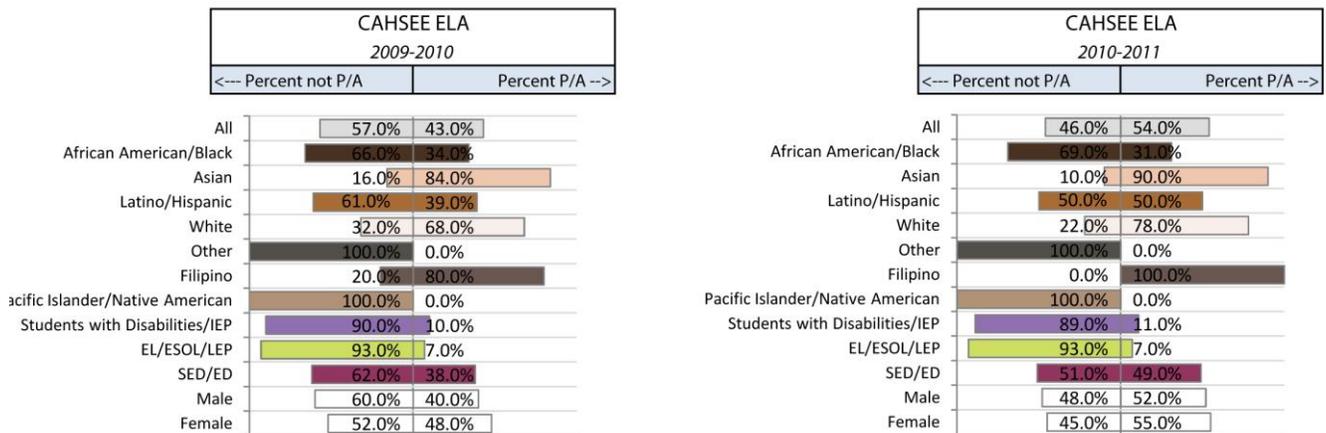
**Figure 6. Madera USD: 3-Year District-wide AYP Results by Student Subgroup**

	ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS			MATHEMATICS		
	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
All Students	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
African American	No	No	No	No	No	No
Asian	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hispanic/Latino	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
White	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
English Learners	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
Students with Disabilities	No	No	No	No	No	No

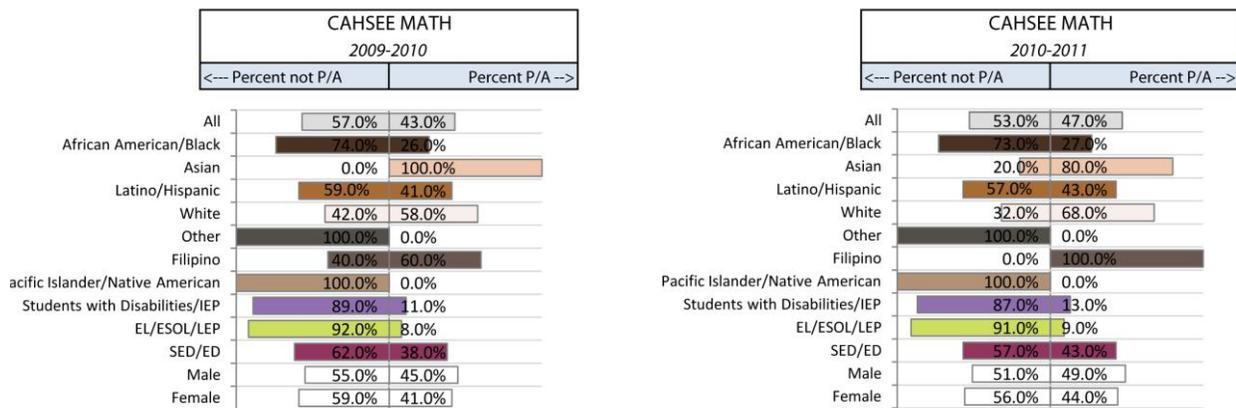
**Figure 7. Madera USD: 3-Year District-wide API Results by Student Subgroup**

	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2-year API Change (2009-2011)
District-wide	--	734	735	--
African American	698	692	673	-25
Asian	833	831	845	+10
Hispanic/Latino	717	723	725	+ 8
White	798	810	811	+13
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	712	719	720	+ 8
English Learners	696	695	699	+ 3
Students with Disabilities	607	597	600	- 7

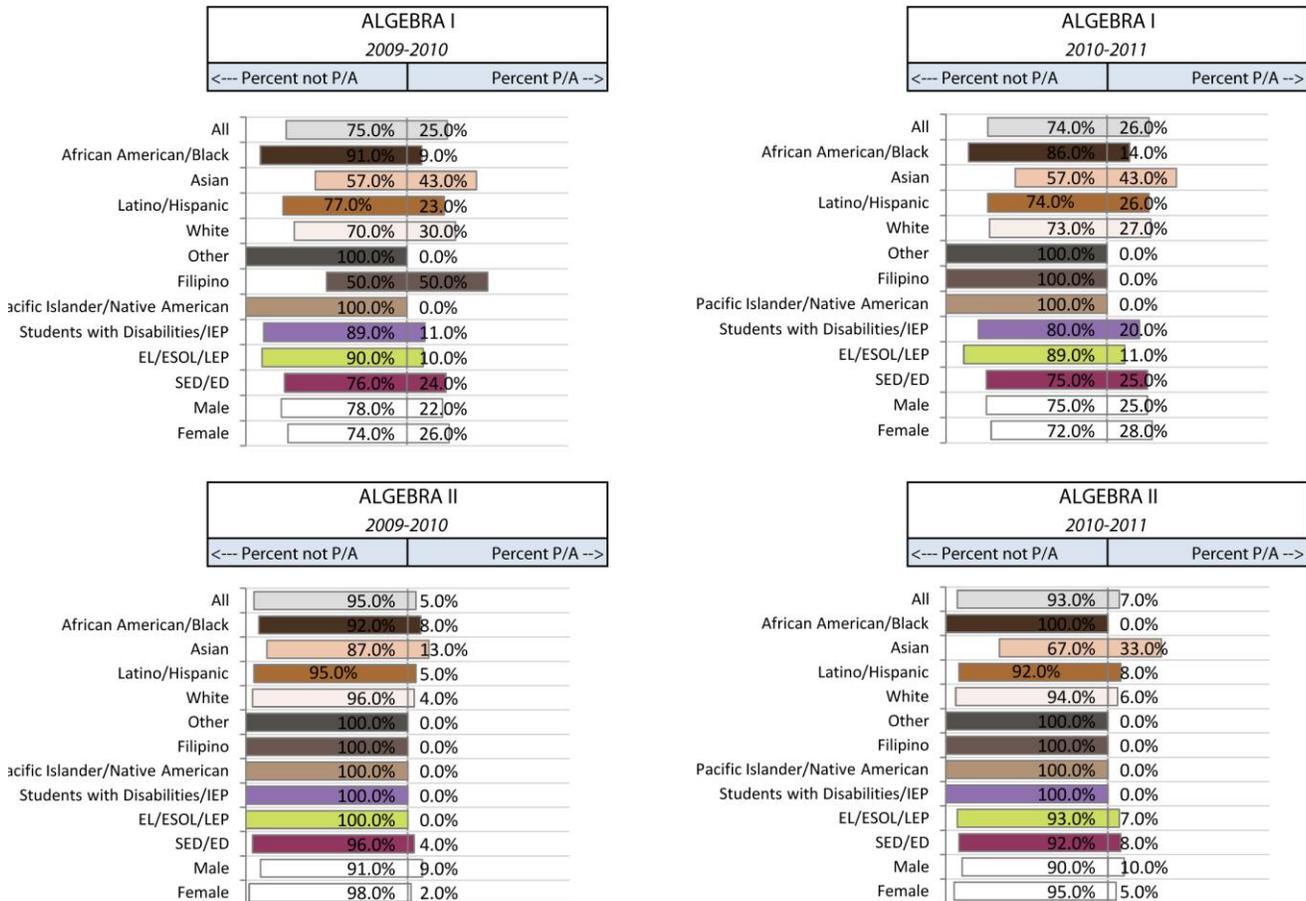
**Figure 8. Student Performance on CAHSEE - ELA**



**Figure 9. Student Performance on CAHSEE - Mathematics**



**Figure 10. Student Performance in Algebra I & Algebra II**



*Areas of Strength based on Lens 3: EQUITY data*

- Across the board, Asian students performed better than other numerically significant subgroups. Their AYP, API, CAHSEE and CST results were consistently strong.
- Performance of White students has been quite strong, too, across multiple measures: AYP, API, CAHSEE and CST (except with respect to AYP results for Math in 2011).

- Proportion of Hispanic students passing ELA CAHSEE increased from 39% (2009-2010) to 50% (2010-2011). There was a slight increase in the Math CAHSEE pass-rates during the same period, from 41% to 43%.

*Areas of Concern based on Lens 3: EQUITY data*

- Performance of African American, English Learners and Students with Disabilities lagged behind the results for other subgroups by a significant

margin. The API for each of the three subgroups has remained below 700 during the past 3 years.

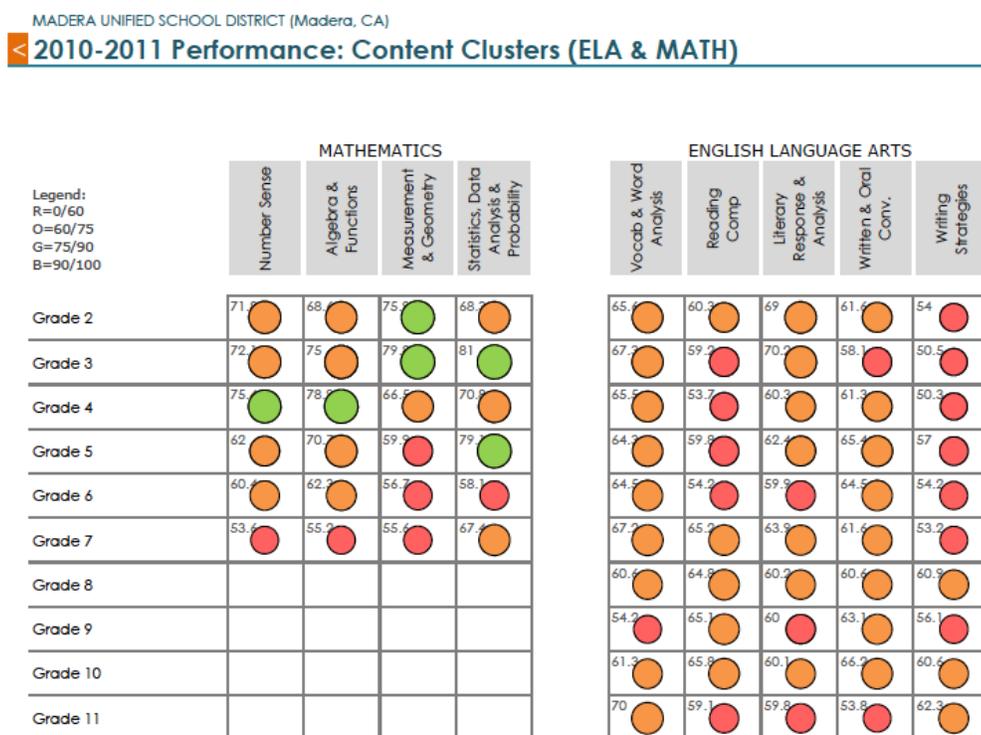
- Mathematics achievement for English learners has been extremely low: about 19 out of every 20 EL students did not pass the CST Geometry test or Algebra I or Algebra II or High School Summative Math. Results for Hispanics, African American students and Students with Disabilities were equally abysmal between 2009-2010 and 2010-2011.
- Overall, student performance in Mathematics at the secondary level was significantly worse than at the

elementary level for virtually all subgroups.

#### 4.1.4 DATA ANALYSIS FOR LENS 4: STANDARDS

**Lens 4: STANDARDS** tells us about student mastery of the academic standards that would prepare them for success at the next level. The chart illustrates student performance at the content cluster level for the Mathematics and English Language Arts examinations (CST). The results for 2008-2009 and 2009-2012 school years (not shown) are similar to the data for 2010-2011, shown below:

**Figure 11. Student Performance on the CST by Content Clusters**



Areas of Strength based on Lens 4:

STANDARDS data

- Moderately stronger student performance in Mathematics in the primary grades than at the secondary level.
- Elementary students performed better on the Statistics, Data Analysis & Probability content cluster than on any other Math cluster.

Areas of Concern based on Lens 4:

STANDARDS data

- ELA results at the content cluster level showed limited growth during the past few years.
- Writing Strategies and Reading Comprehension were weakest content clusters.

**4.1.5 HIGHEST-PRIORITY AREAS OF STRENGTH AND AREAS OF CONCERN**

	<b>HIGHEST-PRIORITY AREAS OF STRENGTH &amp; AREAS OF CONCERN BASED ON ANALYSIS OF STUDENT DATA</b>	<b>Strength / Concern</b>
1.	Mathematics achievement for the Cohort held steady as students progressed through Grades 2, 3, and 4. The proportion of students who were proficient/advanced in Grade 2 in 2008-2009 remained relatively constant when those students became 4 <sup>th</sup> graders in 2010-2011.	<b>Strength</b>
2.	District-wide, high school graduation rates increased appreciably between 2009-2010 and 2010-2011: from 78.5% to 80.9%. The 2.4 percentage-point increase is higher than the state-wide increase of 1.5 percentage-points between 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years.	<b>Strength</b>
3.	Madera dropout rates in 2010-2011 were <i>lower</i> than the state average for all subgroups (except non-Hispanic White students).	<b>Strength</b>
4.	Six schools in Madera USD had “API” scores above 800, the level at which a school is considered “high performing” by the California Department of Education.	<b>Strength</b>
5.	Proportion of Hispanic students passing ELA CAHSEE increased from 39% (2009-2010) to 50% (2010-2011). There was a slight increase in the Math CAHSEE pass-rates during the same period, from 41% to 43%.	<b>Strength</b>
6.	Moderately stronger student performance in Mathematics in the primary grades than at the secondary level. Elementary students performed better on the Statistics, Data Analysis & Probability content cluster than on any other Math cluster.	<b>Strength</b>

7.	For nearly all Cohorts across the 3-year span, fewer than 10 out of every 20 students were proficient/advanced in English Language Arts at each grade level (Grades 2-11).	<b>Concern</b>
8.	Lower graduation rates <u>and</u> higher dropout rates for cohort of White students, compared to the state-wide figures for 2010-2011. The dropout rate was 11.2% for Madera's White students, compared to 8.9% statewide.	<b>Concern</b>
9.	Cohort dropout rates for African American students more than doubled between 2009-2010 and 2010-2011: from 7.1% in 2009-2010 to 15.8% in 2010-2011.	<b>Concern</b>
10.	Twenty-five out of 26 schools in the district did "not meet AYP" in 2011. AYP – or Annual Yearly Progress. The district as a whole did "not meet AYP" also, and has been designated a "PI 3" school system.	<b>Concern</b>
11.	Student performance in English Language Arts (ELA) is significantly lower than in Mathematics. The number of "proficient/advanced" students in ELA varied between 8 out of every 20 and 10 out of every 20 in Grades 2, 4, 5, and 6, compared to about 12 out of every 20 students in Mathematics.	<b>Concern</b>
12.	On the California High School Exit Exams (CAHSEE), slightly less than half of students who took the tests passed the CAHSEE between 2008-2011.	<b>Concern</b>
13.	Student performance in Mathematics beyond the Elementary grades has been particularly low during the past few years. About 5 out of every 20 students passed the Algebra I tests; about 1 in 20 passed the Algebra II tests; and fewer than 3 out of every 20 were "proficient/advanced" in Geometry.	<b>Concern</b>
14.	Performance of African American, English Learners and Students with Disabilities lagged behind the results for other subgroups by a significant margin. The API for each of the three subgroups has remained below 700 during the past 3 years.	<b>Concern</b>
15.	Mathematics achievement for English learners has been extremely low: about 19 out of every 20 EL students did <u>not</u> pass the CST Geometry test or Algebra I or Algebra II or High School Summative Math. Results for Hispanics, African American students and Students with Disabilities were equally abysmal between 2009-2010 and 2010-2011.	<b>Concern</b>
16.	Overall, student performance in Mathematics at the secondary level was significantly worse than at the elementary level for virtually all subgroups.	<b>Concern</b>
17.	Writing Strategies and Reading Comprehension were weakest content clusters, based on the CST data for English Language Arts (ELA).	<b>Concern</b>

# Student Voice – What They Said

Three groups of students – one Elementary, one Middle Grades and one High School – participated in a focus group discussion about their educational experiences, at home, at school, and within the community. A total of 37 students took part in the 60-90-minute conversations, facilitated by Mutiu Fagbayi (President/CEO, Performance Fact, Inc.). Below are highlights of the students' comments and suggestions regarding ways to improve their educational experiences.

## 4.2.1 Elementary Students

### *What's going well*

- “The teachers are really nice.” / “I like my teachers”
- Get along with other students and classmates
- Student safety is a plus– 14 out of 16 students “feel safe most of the time”. “Teachers are visible during recess and after school”; “There is always a grownup around to make sure everything is fine.”
- Students are nice to each other

### *What needs improvement*

- Bullying; picking on other kids for no reason
- After-school support for kids who need it; current program is non-academic – “It's like babysitting”

- More help from teachers re: Math
- More time for Science
- Playground equipment
- “Everybody tolerates other people, but are not necessarily nice” to other students
- Level of rigor in Math rated “too easy” by 6 out of 16 students; for Reading, 13 out of 16 rated rigor “just right”
- Better and more playground equipment
- Healthier options during lunch; vegetarian meals, like salads.
- More time for lunch – “15 minutes is too short”
- Better substitute teachers
- More enrichment opportunities – “higher achieving students are getting bored”
- Some teachers have different academic standards for different kids – 14 out of 16 kids mentioned that teacher expectations vary from student to student

## 4.2.2 Middle Grades Students

### *What's going well*

- Like the teachers – “... they are good teachers”; “...really nice teachers”
- Sports clubs (e.g., volleyball, FCA, BEAR Helpers
- Counselors! Counselors! Counselors!
- Algebra classes
- Having 60 minutes for lunch

### *What needs improvement*

- Bullying
- More time to receive academic help from teachers during the school day (e.g., lunch time)

- Better classroom management; kids disrupting classes, kids not disciplined when they act
- Inconsistent enforcement of consequences
- Too many fights during lunch
- More healthy food
- Show student sports events on local TV
- Better subs needed – "... the quality is horrible"
- Students selling drugs outside the school – "Do you have a lighter? I want to roll this blood"
- Teacher favoritism toward "better students"
- Differential standards – "some teachers have low standards for some [kids], high standards for others"
- Inconsistent teacher behavior depending on teacher's mood
- "Would like to learn more about college even while in middle school"
- Strong Continuation High School program --- high demand, high support
- Inconsistent and inequitable enforcement of rules and consequences
- School bus – too many students, too few seats, frequent breakdown
- Large class sizes

### **4.2.3 High School Students**

#### *What's going well*

- Counselors – "they are really helpful"; "My counselor knows me 1-on-1"
- High expectations
- Administrators, in general
- "Really great teachers"
- "Opportunities always there"; multiple chances
- Adults truly want things to get better; "always open to improvement"

#### *What needs improvement*

- Drugs – "at least 5 to 7 out of every 10 kids" use drugs; "even the 'good' kids..."; very easy access
- Bullying
- Poor Substitute teachers

# Reflection on Professional Practices

All students will learn at high levels when instruction meets their needs. What a student has not learned well *yet*, is something that she/he has not been taught well *yet*. Following the analysis of the current state of student achievement, the Core Planning Team used Performance Fact's "root cause" protocol and rubric to assess the underlying causes of the current state of student learning and achievement.

The participants rated current Madera USD teaching practices, leadership practices and organizational practices on a set of

research-based **16 high-leverage practices** (Figure 12), using a 4-point rating **rubric** that offered a consistent interpretation of each high-leverage practice. The root-cause process also guided the identification of the **"Four Pillars"** of the district's **Instructional Focus** and the other recommendations in the strategic plan, described in the next Chapter. The participants applied the rubric ratings to five student achievement Areas of Strength (S1-S5) and five Areas of Concern (C1-C5). The relative ratings provided a "map" of the effectiveness of current professional practices in Madera USD. The preponderance of "2" ratings on the map was highly correlated to the current state of student achievement in the district, with approximately *half* of all students "meeting standards" by most measures.

**Figure 12. Core Team’s Ratings of the Effectiveness of Professional Practices**

1 = Beginning Implementation	3 = Full Implementation
2 = Partial Implementation	4 = Exemplary Implementation

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
<b>High Leverage Practices</b>										
1 Standards-aligned consistent instruction	2	4	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2
2 Equitable access to rigorous, high-level program	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1
3 Differentiation	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	2
4 Culturally responsive teaching and learning	3	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	1
5 Data-driven continuous improvement	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	2	2	2
6 Accelerated intervention	2	3	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	2
7 Collegial collaboration and accountability	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
8 Results-focused professional learning	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	2	2	2
9 High expectations for all	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2
10 Effective teacher for every student, effective leader for every school	3	2	3	2	2	3	2	3	1	2
11 Needs-based resource allocation	3	3	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2
12 Supports for staff	3	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	3
13 Instructional leadership	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	2
14 Safe climate for learning and work	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	2
15 Effective and efficient operations	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2
16 Strong relationships with families and community	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

**Figure 13. 16 Research-based High-leverage Practices, or “Pillars”**

**RESEARCH-BASED HIGH-LEVERAGE PRACTICES FOR “ROOT CAUSE” ASSESSMENT OF TEACHING PRACTICES, LEADERSHIP PRACTICES AND ORGANIZATIONAL PRACTICES**

<b>High-leverage Practices</b>	
1.	<b>STANDARDS-ALIGNED CONSISTENT INSTRUCTION</b> Curriculum, assessment and teaching are directly aligned with all state standards in all content areas and for all students, with standards at the center of curriculum planning and student learning.
2.	<b>EQUITABLE ACCESS TO RIGOROUS, HIGH-LEVEL PROGRAMS</b> All students have access to challenging, on-standard teaching and courses that include coverage of the “power standards” and core content.
3.	<b>DIFFERENTIATION</b> Instructional strategies are differentiated to meet the varied learning needs of each student.
4.	<b>CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING</b> Instruction reflects students' prior knowledge, learning styles and cultural background; programs and policies integrate the perspectives and needs of diverse stakeholders.
5.	<b>DATA-DRIVEN CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT</b> School staff uses frequent and timely formative assessments to monitor and adjust teaching practices, leadership practices and organizational practices.
6.	<b>ACCELERATED INTERVENTION</b> Students not meeting academic expectations receive immediate and targeted academic and social support.
7.	<b>COLLEGIAL COLLABORATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY</b> Staff engage in year-round cycles of inquiry (e.g., <i>Eye on the Goal™</i> , Lesson Study), with clear standards of professional practice and accountability.
8.	<b>RESULTS-FOCUSED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING</b> Professional learning is linked to instructional priorities, is standards-based, has clear goals, and meets the individual needs of staff.
9.	<b>HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL</b> Beliefs and behaviors reflect commonly held high expectations and shared responsibility for professional practices and student learning.
10.	<b>EFFECTIVE TEACHER FOR EVERY STUDENT, EFFECTIVE LEADER FOR EVERY SCHOOL</b> Staffing assignments ensure equitable distribution of teachers and leaders to meet the specific needs of students and schools.

11.	<b>NEEDS-BASED RESOURCE ALLOCATION</b>	School resources are focused on strategies that enhance professional practice and accelerate learning for all student populations.
12.	<b>SUPPORTS FOR STAFF</b>	Teachers, leaders and staff receive timely, focused support and intervention (e.g., coaching, mentoring, peer support, targeted training).
13.	<b>INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP</b>	The principal and instructional leadership team articulate a clear school vision, and are actively involved in planning, guiding and assessing instruction and student learning.
14.	<b>SAFE CLIMATE FOR LEARNING AND WORK</b>	The school culture and structures support the social-emotional needs of students, and standards for student and adult conduct are fair and consistently enforced.
15.	<b>EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT OPERATIONS</b>	The school has well-established organizational procedures, and day-to-day operations run smoothly to facilitate teaching, learning and leadership.
16.	<b>STRONG RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY</b>	Trust among home-school-community is nurtured through shared responsibility for student success, proactive communication and meaningful stakeholder “voice”.

Figure 14.



## Assessment of Current State of Standards-aligned Instructional System

The staff of Madera USD's Educational Services Department conducted a comprehensive assessment of the current educational programs in the core subjects, with particular attention to the quality and effectiveness of standards-aligned instructional practices in each subject. For each area of focus, they assessed what is going well and what needs improvement relative to each of the six components of a standards-aligned system (Figure 14).

## SIX COMPONENTS OF A STANDARDS-ALIGNED INSTRUCTIONAL SYSTEM

Continuous improvement of core instructional programs demands the alignment of the six components of a **standards-aligned instructional system**.

The first component – **standards** – clarifies what students need to know, be able to do, and be like. The next three components ensure that what we teach (i.e., **curriculum**), how we monitor (i.e., **assessments**), and how we teach (i.e., **instruction**) are aligned to the content and performance standards.

The fifth component – **instructional materials and resources** – calls for appropriate and adequate teaching “tools” for teachers and their students. The final component of a standards-aligned system is **interventions**; its focus is on timely, accelerated “safety nets” that assure equity of access and opportunity for successful learning for every student, regardless of the student's background, ‘condition,’ or circumstance.

Together, these six components make up a standards-aligned instructional system. All six components should be considered when assessing the effectiveness of your current instructional system and when selecting your priorities for continuous improvement of your standards-aligned instructional system.

The strategic planning Core Team used the initial assessments by the Educational Services staff as a starting-point for further evaluation of the current state of educational programs. Highlights of their comprehensive assessments are available in a separate report.

# Assessment of Operations, Supports and Services

The following are highlights of the assessment of the current state of district-level services, conducted by the staff of the Madera USD Business Office.

<b><u>Department</u></b>	<b><u>Shift from ...</u></b>	<b><u>Shift to ...</u></b>
<b>Business Office</b>	An accounting-driven system	Fully integrate all budgets to best serve the students. User-friendly process that can be understood by all
<b>Child Nutrition</b>	Guideline-driven	Meals of high quality and enjoyed by students
<b>Data Processing Facilities Planning</b>	“We know best” attitude Self-contained planning	“What the teacher needs” Planning collaboratively for the future with all stakeholders
<b>Maintenance &amp; Operations</b>	Priorities driven by Maintenance & Operation department	Becoming more customer-service oriented relative to the needs of teachers and staff; informing teachers and staff why we do what we do
<b>Purchasing</b>	Centralized requisition processing	Site-based requisition process.
<b>Transportation</b>	Department-focused system	A system that serves sites and students
<b>Security/Gang Intervention</b>	Perceived as a “reactive” system	Proactive system that includes building relationships with those we serve

# Feedback from Madera USD Stakeholders and Partners

A broad-based team of Madera parents, community leaders, business representations, and local government officials participated in an assessment of the current state of the relationship between Madera USD and its external stakeholders. The following are highlights of their assessment.

<b><u>Stakeholder</u></b>	<b><u>Shift from ...</u></b>	<b><u>Shift to ...</u></b>
<b>Parents/Families</b>	Handing out introductory information to parents; monthly newsletters from school to parent; MUSD website; parent conferences; school-site council; school events (i.e., Back to School nights, open house).	Continued school-parent communication; more district-based communication regarding district info, as opposed to only school-based; implement and increase use of social media as a communication/information tool
<b>Community-based Organizations (including faith-based groups, business, and higher education)</b>	Reactive communication to service organizations; Principal-for-the-Day program once per year.	"Adopt-a-School" program; inserting district into community process; more proactive interaction with organizations; create opportunities for volunteerism; work with internal groups to promote volunteerism; more frequent business-school interaction
<b>Local Governmental Agencies (including Parks/Community Service Dept.)</b>	Limited-use agreements with Parks Dept.; little joint-use of facilities; community not allowed onto campuses after school hours.	Expand relationship with Parks Dept. and increase trust; more comprehensive use of facilities by community; share resources and facilities (e.g., Youth Center)
<b>Health, Social Services &amp; Safety Agencies (including Police Department, Sheriff, Public Health)</b>	Entities operating in isolation; lack of collaboration between Police Department and district; one Resource Officer employed	Combine services and efforts where possible; increased communication and collaboration with Public Health; use of schools as vaccination centers and public health resource; employ more Resource Officers

# CHAPTER FIVE

## The Recommendations

Success does not happen “by chance.” Consistently high-performing schools and districts do not become that way “by accident.” Rather, sustained student performance is an outcome of *disciplined practices* ... in every class, in every school, in every department, in every part of our community.

This section focuses on the consensus Recommendations of Madera stakeholders regarding the vision and goal for student learning, as well as the roadmap for achieving the desired outcomes.

Specifically:

- We clarify our **Goal** for student learning and the **Vital Signs** we will pay attention to along the way.
- We define the “Four Pillars” of our teaching practices, leadership practices, and organizational



practices, and our core Commitments under each Pillar. Together, the **Four Pillars** and the **Commitments** represent the capabilities we need and must develop to accomplish our Goal for student learning; they “frame” our day-to-day practices, processes and procedures.

- We describe specific **Key Actions** that we will implement consistently day-to-day, in alignment with each core Commitment.

# The Goal and Vital Signs of Student Learning

In Madera, we are committed to educating the whole child through high expectations, community collaboration and shared responsibility for each student's health, safety, and success in life.

## Our Goal

**Madera: Unified** to ensure every student is **educated for College, equipped for Career,** and **empowered with Character.**

## The Vital Signs of Student Growth & Development

We want our students to experience continuous *academic growth*, embody *academic tenacity*, and to model *socio-emotional resiliency*.

Therefore, we will monitor and thoroughly analyze:

**4. Self-responsibility, self-discipline and initiative**

**5. Critical thinking and problem-solving**

**6. Proficiency** in all subjects

4. Meaningful **participation** in class, school and community

8. Acquisition of **positive life skills**

9. Closing the “**achievement gap**” and accelerating learning for all student groups

10. **Successful transitions** from level-to-level (Prekindergarten-Elementary-Secondary-post-Secondary)

In Madera, we are committed to educating the whole child through high expectations, community collaboration and shared responsibility for each student's health, safety, and success in life.

## OUR GOAL MADERA: UNIFIED

to ensure every student is educated for COLLEGE, equipped for CAREER, and empowered with CHARACTER

# Madera: Unified for Student Success!

## 2012-2015 Strategic Plan

(Madera, California)

### Madera Unified School District



### THE VITAL SIGNS OF STUDENT GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

We want our students to experience continuous academic growth, embody academic tenacity, and model socio-emotional resiliency.

Therefore, we will monitor and thoroughly analyze:

1. Self-responsibility, self-discipline and initiative
2. Critical thinking and problem-solving
3. Proficiency in all subjects
4. Meaningful participation in class, school and community
5. Acquisition of positive life skills
6. Closing the "achievement gap" and accelerating learning for all student groups
7. Successful transitions from level-to-level (preKindergarten –Elementary –Secondary –post-Secondary)

#### PILLAR #1: EQUITABLE ACCESS TO RIGOROUS HIGH-LEVEL PROGRAMS

##### Commitment 1.1: STRONG CORE ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Build and sustain a standards-aligned instructional system that promotes a culture of high standards for *all* students, with the expectation that all students complete academic programs of study that equip them for success at the next level in school, college and career.

##### Commitment 1.2: CONSISTENT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS

Ensure consistency in teaching practices, leadership practices, and organizational practices by implementing the Instructional Focus with fidelity in every school.

#### PILLAR #2: DATA-DRIVEN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND COLLABORATION

##### Commitment 2.1: INVESTING IN PROFESSIONAL GROWTH OF TEACHERS, LEADERS AND STAFF

Accelerate instructional effectiveness by investing in evidence-based collaboration, differentiated professional development, timely support, and leadership development for teachers, leaders and staff.

##### Commitment 2.2: DATA-INFORMED CULTURE

Reinforce continuous improvement and innovation by making decisions based on fact instead of opinion, using data-driven cycle of inquiry, and motivating professional accountability among teachers, leaders and staff.

#### PILLAR #3: SAFE AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS FOR LEARNING AND WORK

##### Commitment 3.1: SAFE, CARING AND RESPECTFUL ENVIRONMENT

Maintain a caring, respectful and drug-free environment for learning and work, with equitable reinforcement of the guidelines of conduct for students and adults, and nurture socio-emotional resilience in our students through collaboration among school, home and community.

##### Commitment 3.2: RESPONSIVE DISTRICT SUPPORTS AND SERVICES

Empower our schools in carrying out their mission by providing sound stewardship of resources, effective and responsive services, and ongoing training for district-level and support staffs.

#### PILLAR #4: STRONG RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY

##### Commitment 4.1: PROACTIVE OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Embrace parents and families as partners in student learning through mutual respect, culturally inclusive practices, and open communication, and nurture enduring partnerships with our external stakeholders by linking school-based learning with the world of work, aligning resources, and maintaining open channels of communication.

##### Commitment 4.2: PUBLIC TRUST AND COMMITMENT

Sustain public trust and commitment in our schools through sound stewardship of resources, transparency in decision-making, and accelerated gains in student achievement.



# The “Four Pillars” and Core Commitments

In the Madera Unified School District, we are committed to high expectations, community collaboration, and shared responsibility for professional practices and student learning. We aim to provide an effective teacher for every student and effective leader for every school.

Our **FOUR PILLARS** are the building blocks of our professional practices; they frame what we must do well in every classroom, in every school, and system-wide to ensure success for all students, without exception.

Our first Pillar – **EQUITABLE ACCESS TO RIGOROUS HIGH-LEVEL PROGRAMS** – ensures that Curriculum, standards-based instruction, and programs are directly driven to provide all students with equal levels of opportunity and achievement. The Commitments that accompany our first Pillar are as follows:

## **Commitment 1.1: STRONG CORE ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

*Build and sustain a standards-aligned instructional system that promotes a culture of high standards for all students, with the expectation that all students complete academic programs of study that equip them for success at the next level in school, college and career.*

## **Commitment 1.2: CONSISTENT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS**

*Ensure consistency in teaching practices, leadership practices, and organizational practices by implementing the Instructional Focus with fidelity in every school.*

Our second Pillar – **DATA-DRIVEN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING & COLLABORATION** – promotes meaningful collaboration and professional learning to improve and shift practices in every classroom, every school, and every district-level department. The corresponding Commitments are as follows:

## **Commitment 2.1: INVESTING IN GROWTH OF TEACHERS, LEADERS AND STAFF**

*Accelerate instructional effectiveness by investing in evidence-based collaboration, differentiated professional development, timely support, and leadership development for teachers, leaders and staff.*

## **Commitment 2.2: DATA-INFORMED CULTURE**

*Reinforce continuous improvement and innovation by making decisions based on fact instead of opinion, using data-driven cycle of inquiry, and motivating professional accountability among teachers, leaders and staff.*

Our third Pillar – **SAFE AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS FOR LEARNING & WORK** – focuses on school-level and district-wide culture and structures that support the personal safety of the students, staff and community with fair and consistent expectations.

**Commitment 3.1: SAFE, CARING AND RESPECTFUL ENVIRONMENT**

*Maintain a healthy, caring, respectful and drug-free environment for learning and work, with equitable reinforcement of the guidelines of conduct for students and adults, and nurture socio-emotional resilience in our students through collaboration among school, home, public safety, health and recreational agencies, and community-based organizations.*

**Commitment 3.2: RESPONSIVE DISTRICT SUPPORTS AND SERVICES**

*Empower our schools in carrying out their mission by providing sound stewardship of resources, effective and responsive services, and ongoing training for district-level and support staffs.*

Our fourth Pillar – **STRONG RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILIES & COMMUNITY** – recognizes that schools can't do it alone. Therefore, we will initiate and sustain relationships among home-school-community through shared responsibility for student success, proactive communication and meaningful stakeholder "voice."

**Commitment 4.1: PROACTIVE OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION TO PARENTS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

*Embrace parents and families as partners in student learning through mutual respect, culturally inclusive practices, and open communication, and nurture enduring partnerships with our external stakeholders by linking school-based learning with the world of work, aligning resources for cost-effectiveness, and maintaining open channels of communication with leaders and policymakers.*

**Commitment 4.2: PUBLIC TRUST AND COMMITMENT**

*Sustain public trust and commitment in our schools through sound stewardship of resources, transparency in decision-making, and accelerated gains in student achievement.*

The Four Pillars and corresponding Commitments provide a consistent framework for day-to-day action, allocating resources, assessing the impact of taxpayers' investments in our public schools, and accelerating student achievement in Madera schools.

# The Key Actions

## PILLAR #1: EQUITABLE ACCESS TO RIGOROUS HIGH-LEVEL PROGRAMS

### Commitment 1.1: STRONG CORE ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

*Build and sustain a standards-aligned instructional system that promotes a culture of high standards for all students, with the expectation that all students complete academic programs of study that equip them for success at the next level in school, college and career.*

Specific **Key Actions** relating to this Commitment are as follows.

**1.1.1** Reaffirm uniform academic standards, learning outcomes and graduation requirements for all students, including completion of the California A-to-G criteria and proficiency based on the Common Core State Standard.

**1.1.2** Maintain the system-wide commitment to and continuously update implementation of the five strategies of the *District Instructional Action Plan (DIAP)*, namely: Instructional Program; Instructional Strategies; Response to Intervention - Academic & Behavior; Assessment; and Accountability. Fully integrate the DIAP as the base model and adjust as necessary based on school-level needs and data about student learning and professional practices.

**1.1.3** Strengthen the instructional core in each content area through disciplined implementation of the six components of a standards-aligned instructional system, namely:

#### Standards

- Transition to the full implementation of the California Common Core Standards by the 2014-2015 school year.
- Continue to refine and execute the California Common Core Standards Implementation Plan.
- Provide teachers with professional development in the scope and sequence of the standards, evidenced based assessment, and authentic work that reflects mastery of the standards.

#### Assessments

- Revise District Level Assessments to reflect the Smarter Balanced assessment system that will measure mastery of the California Common Core Standards and provide actionable information about student progress toward college and career readiness beginning in 2014-2015.
- Expand training in the development of Common Formative Assessments beyond multiple-choice questions by including short and extended constructed response items and performance tasks that allow students to complete in depth projects that demonstrate analytical skills and real-world problem solving.

### Curriculum

- Revise and/or update curriculum guides to reflect the California Common Core Standards, and to include sequencing and/or pacing guidance for common instruction and assessment.
- Provide professional development regarding effective use of curriculum aides and instructional materials focused on the standards-aligned and State Board of Education-approved core program.
- Provide professional development in deconstructing standards and backwards mapping using district curriculum guides.

### Instruction

- Provide instructional assistance and support to all teachers using trained content experts, instructional coaches, and teacher-leaders who are knowledgeable about the common core standards, adopted program materials, and the effective instructional strategies.
- Utilize the direct instruction lesson design and delivery model to implement the Common Core standards.
- Provide professional development in instructional strategies to support struggling students, especially English learners and special education pupils.

### Instructional Materials

- Identify and purchase State Board of Education (SBE)-approved materials to support the implementation of the California Common Core Standards in the content areas.
- Identify and purchase SBE-approved intensive intervention materials for each content area.

### Intervention

- Develop and implement a coherent system of timely, accelerated intervention for underperforming students, with particular emphasis on strengthening proficiency of English learners, special education pupils, and chronically underperforming students.
- Identify research-based programs appropriate for Tier II Interventions to serve as a resource at the school site, and designate standard district assessment tools that will be used in the evaluation of student movement within the Response to Intervention (RtI) model.
- Identify and purchase SBE-approved intensive intervention materials for each content area.

## **Commitment 1.2: CONSISTENT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS**

*Ensure consistency in teaching practices, leadership practices, and organizational practices by implementing the Instructional Focus with fidelity in every school.*

Specific **Key Actions** relating to this Commitment are as follows.

**1.2.1** Embed the teaching practices, leadership practices, organizational practices, and vital signs outlined in the system-wide Instructional Focus in day-to-day instructional design, delivery, and monitoring (See Appendix for the Instructional Focus).

**1.2.2** Provide timely, easy-to-understand diagnostic and formative assessment data to teachers and school leaders to facilitate evidence-based continuous improvement of professional practices and student learning.

**1.2.3** Conduct evidence-based collegial reflection at the end of each assessment cycle to monitor and communicate classroom, school-wide and district-wide progress on student learning and professional practices.

## PILLAR #2: DATA-DRIVEN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND COLLABORATION

### **Commitment 2.1: INVESTING IN GROWTH OF TEACHERS, LEADERS AND STAFF**

*Accelerate instructional effectiveness by investing in evidence-based collaboration, differentiated professional development, timely support, and leadership development for teachers, leaders and staff.*

Specific **Key Actions** relating to this Commitment are as follows.

**2.1.1** Define the *Madera Standards of Professional Practice* for teachers, school administrators, district-level leaders and managers, and support staffs outline professional expectations and explicit criteria for assessing progress toward and supporting mastery of the professional standards.

**2.1.2** Develop and implement *Madera Practitioners' Academies* as avenues for implementing practice-based professional development aligned to the *Madera Standards of Professional Practice* for teachers, leaders and staff. Ensure that the *Academies* provide ongoing opportunities for coaching, mentoring, and collaboration in areas that include:

- Motivation strategies for students and adults
- Acquisition of deeper knowledge of content
- Research-based instructional strategies
- Proven practices for English learners and Special Education students
- Instructional supervision, feedback and support
- "Nuts-&-bolts" of school management

**2.1.3** Establish the *Madera Professional Development Council* (made up of teachers, site leaders, classified staff, district-level personnel, and appropriate external partners) to:

- Assess the effectiveness of professional development programs on an ongoing basis
- Develop annual plans to ensure consistency, equity of opportunity, and alignment with district priorities;
- Serve as a communication bridge between practitioners and district leadership

**2.1.4** Strengthen leadership effectiveness at all levels through continuous learning for principals, administrators and teacher-leaders, and by nurturing new leaders by:

- Developing strong Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) or equivalent at each school
- Cultivating a cadre of Madera practitioners – teachers, leaders, and staff – to facilitate professional development offerings competently and confidently for their colleagues
- Developing and implementing a year-round leadership development curriculum for site administrators, managers, and district-level leaders focused on strengthening their capabilities and effectiveness relative to the California Standards for Educational Leaders (or equivalent)
- Promoting greater parent and community leadership on School Site Councils, English Learner Advisory Committees, parent clubs, school and district task forces, etc.

**2.1.5** Facilitate induction of new teachers into the rigors of their profession by offering orientation, training and mentor-teacher support in areas such as: classroom management, teaching students from diverse backgrounds, differentiated instruction, student engagement, higher-order thinking, checking for understanding, maintaining a reflective portfolio, collaboration with colleagues, and engaging parents as partners in student learning.

## **Commitment 2.2: DATA-INFORMED CULTURE**

*Reinforce continuous improvement and innovation by making decisions based on fact instead of opinion, using data-driven cycle of inquiry, and motivating professional accountability among teachers, leaders and staff.*

Specific **Key Actions** relating to this Commitment are as follows.

**2.2.1** Motivate a system-wide focus on performance, professional accountability, and celebration of progress by:

- Setting clear annual goals and performance targets for schools, departments, and district-wide
- Systematically reporting progress from classroom level to board level, based on data
- Recognizing and periodically celebrating accomplishment of teams and schools via school based award ceremonies, using local media to recognize accomplishments, and holding annual district award ceremony

**2.2.2** Strengthen implementation of the cycle of inquiry (COI) as a tool for continuous improvement of practices and processes at every level, including:

- Developing 6-12-week instructional plans, including identifying the essential learning for the cycle, setting SMARTER goals, identifying core instructional strategies, outlining intervention for "focus" students, and detailing the week-by-week pacing calendar
- Conducting a Data Summit at the end of each assessment cycle, including analysis of student data and assessment of effectiveness of implementation of the professional practices in the system-wide Instructional Focus
- Monitoring and reflecting on instruction day-to-day, and providing timely support and intervention to teachers and students to ensure successful learning
- Refining district-wide data management system to facilitate cycle of inquiry practices, assessments development and data recording

## PILLAR #3: SAFE AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT FOR LEARNING AND WORK

### **Commitment 3.1: SAFE, CARING AND RESPECTFUL ENVIRONMENT**

*Maintain a healthy, caring, respectful and drug-free environment for learning and work, with equitable reinforcement of the guidelines of conduct for students and adults, and nurture socio-emotional resilience in our students through collaboration among school, home, public safety, health and recreational agencies, and community-based organizations.*

Specific **Key Actions** relating to this Commitment are as follows.

- 3.1.1** Review and revise district policies and procedures and provide training for teachers, staff, and administrators regarding effective strategies for addressing bullying, drug use and other unhealthy behaviors among students.
- 3.1.2** Partner with governmental agencies (e.g., Parks & Recreation), community-based organizations, youth development agencies, and law-enforcement to motivate and reward positive student behavior.
- 3.1.3** Encourage student leadership, voice, and engagement through strategies that include:
  - Establishing strong student-driven leadership in every school
  - Inviting the perspective of students regarding how motivate safe and healthy conduct among students
  - Conducting an annual survey of students to assess their perception and satisfaction regarding their academic and socio-emotional experiences

### **Commitment 3.2: RESPONSIVE DISTRICT SUPPORTS AND SERVICES**

*Empower our schools in carrying out their mission by providing sound stewardship of resources, effective and responsive services, and ongoing training for district-level and support staffs.*

Specific **Key Actions** relating to this Commitment are as follows.

- 3.2.1** Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of services provided by district-level departments, in ways that enable schools to fully carry out their core teaching-and-learning mission.
  - *Business Office* – Fully integrate all budgets to best serve the students, implement a user-friendly process that can be understood by all, and offer training that will facilitate the flow of information.
  - *Child Nutrition* – Enhance quality and enjoyment of food services offerings by seeking input and feedback from the students.
  - *Data Processing* – Restructure and incorporate a long-term data processing plan with budget.

- *Facilities Planning* – Implement a comprehensive master facilities plan.
- *Maintenance & Operations* – Improve communication with sites and inform them upfront of what the department plans to do and why.
- *Purchasing* – Implement an online purchasing process.
- *Transportation* – Implement efficiency study.
- *Security/Gang Intervention* – Align systems among district office, school sites and public-safety partners, and provide needed training.

**3.2.2** Review and revise the use of technology as a platform for conducting the work of the district and schools in a seamless way, and provide a technology-rich environment for students and staff through staff development on how to use classroom technology effectively to enhance instruction and keeping network and hardware resources in sound working order.

**3.2.3** Review and revise the efficiency and effectiveness in all human resource functions:

- Institute uniform hiring practices such as job descriptions, postings, screenings, interview protocols, and timelines.
- Strengthen employee relations, including building strong working partnerships with employee Unions, and promoting work-life balance programs.
- Continually seek ways to improve the organizational climate, using employee “voice” surveys and other stakeholder feedback.
- Strengthen communications with job-applicants and establish a transparent process for prospective applicants.
- Improve customer service through timely, friendly, responsive feedback and follow-through.

**3.2.4** Conduct annual feedback surveys of each department's customers/clients to assess the quality of services provided by the unit, identify opportunities for improvement, compile annual service ratings, and recognize departments that meet improvement targets and/or achieved significant year-to-gain growth in their services ratings.

## PILLAR #4: STRONG RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY

### Commitment 4.1: PROACTIVE OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION TO PARENTS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS

*Embrace parents and families as partners in student learning through mutual respect, culturally inclusive practices, and open communication, and nurture enduring partnerships with our external stakeholders by linking school-based learning with the world of work, aligning resources for cost-effectiveness, and maintaining open channels of communication with leaders and policymakers.*

Specific **Key Actions** relating to this Commitment are as follows.

#### 4.1.1 Enhance the engagement of parents in the learning and growth of their students by:

- Using a student-teacher-parent *Compact for Learning* to clarify the responsibilities and commitments of each party to student success
- Providing parents/guardians with family-friendly report cards that show student progress toward grade-level, promotion and graduation standards
- Holding periodic parent-teacher-student conferences to review progress and define improvement objectives
- Conducting annual surveys of students and families to assess their perception, satisfaction and suggestions regarding their educational experiences
- Publishing a quarterly newsletter, and using the district website, social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook) to communicate with parents and families on an ongoing basis

#### 4.1.2 Foster stronger partnership with community groups to promote shared responsibility for student learning and strategic use of resources:

- *Community-based Organizations* – Begin Speakers' Circuit to regularly address service organizations and to promote volunteerism in Madera schools
- *Local Governmental Agencies* – Employ more “wrap-around,” community-engaging models in Madera schools; long-range master planning, including joint purchase of property, use of facilities; use of City of Madera facilities for school functions and events (e.g., Sober Grad, basketball leagues)
- *Health, Social Services and Safety Agencies* – Promote joint-use message/alert system; explore joint grant opportunities to fund safety personnel; help drive collaboration between Police Department, County Sheriff's Office, and the district; explore options beyond two full-time retired sworn officers (SRO's).

## **Commitment 4.2: PUBLIC TRUST AND COMMITMENT**

*Sustain public trust and commitment in our schools through sound stewardship of resources, transparency in decision-making, and accelerated gains in student achievement.*

Specific **Key Actions** relating to this Commitment are as follows.

**4.2.1** Establish the *Community Roundtable for Performance and Accountability* to build and sustain community commitment to a strong, high-performing, accountable school system:

- Ensure that the *Community Roundtable* is representative of all Madera's internal and external stakeholders
- Establish annual goals for the district and its stakeholders in ways that ensure alignment of focus and resources and acceleration of outcomes for students
- Present progress reports to the Board of Directors biannually and compile annual report on progress relative to the goals outlined for each stakeholders
- Holding an annual recognition ceremony to acknowledge students, employees, parents, schools, community partners and district-level departments for their contributions relative to meeting the priorities defined in their annual plans

# CHAPTER SIX

## Appendix

### Members of the Core Planning Team



<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Position/Title</u>
Michelle	Alexander	NAACP Madera Chapter	Legal Redress/Criminal Justice/Fundraising Chair
Ricardo	Arredondo	MUSD	Board President
Marvin	Baker	MUSD	Middle School Principal
Gustavo	Balderas	MUSD	Superintendent
Eugene	Bell	Kings View Workforce "Ready-Set-Go" Program	Executive Director
Mark	Beveridge	MUSD	K-8 Principal
Jake	Bragonier	MUSD employee until July 2012	Former Director of Communications
Debi	Bray	Madera Chamber of Commerce	President
Luis	Ceja	Community member	Parent/Community leader
Tom	Chagoya	MUSD	Elementary Principal
Robert	Chavez	MUSD	Chief Academic Officer
Alma	De Luna	MUSD	Director of English Learners
John	Denno	MUSD	Continuation High School Principal
Lisa	Fernandez	MUSD	Elementary Principal
Alex	Garcia	AMAE Madera Chapter	President
Laura	Garibay	MUSD	Teacher
Chuck	Genseal	Community member	Parent Advocate
Pat	Gordon	JBT FoodTech, Madera	Human Resources Executive
Kathy	Horn	Madera Unified Teachers Association (MUTA)	Teacher Union President
Steve	Imrie	MUSD - retired 6/30/12	Director of Technology

Babette	Jaire	MUSD	Teacher
Omar	Jeronimo	MUSD	Elementary Principal
Michael	Kime	City of Madera	Chief of Police
Mike	Lennemann	MUSD - retired 6/30/12	Director of Human Resources
David	Merchen	City of Madera	Director of Community Development
Rebecca	Murdoch	MUSD	Teacher
Melissa	Murray	MUSD	Elementary Principal
Danna	Petty	Classified School Employees Association (CSEA)	Classified Union President
Kelly	Porterfield	MUSD Employee until July 2012	Former Associate Superintendent
Elizabeth	Runyon	MUSD	Elementary Principal
Jody	Salazar	MUSD	Teacher
Sandon	Schwartz	MUSD	High School Principal
Mary Anne	Seay	City of Madera	Director of Parks and Community Services
Ray	Seibert	MUSD	Trustee
Jim	Taubert	RDA Successor Agency	Executive Director
Laura	Toney	MUSD	Teacher on Special Assignment
Debie	Wood	MUSD	Associate Superintendent



# Madera Unified School District

*Madera, California*

## 2012-2015 Instructional Focus

### Madera: Unified for Student Success!

Gustavo Balderas  
Superintendent of Schools  
June 2012



At Madera Unified School District, we have a long-standing commitment to educate all students so that they meet rigorous academic standards. In recent years, we have made some gains relative to fulfilling that commitment. However, about half of our elementary students and nearly 12 out of every 20 secondary students did not meet state standards. We can do better. Our Goal is clear: equip our students with the knowledge, skills and character for success in college, career and life.

This **Instructional Focus** is the centerpiece of our plan to transform student learning in every school in our district. It is an affirmation of our commitment to improving the effectiveness of teaching practices, leadership practices, and organizational practices, because they are the preconditions for higher levels of student learning.

The Instructional Focus is one component of the district's three-year strategic plan; it is framed by **Four Pillars** that provide a strong foundation for teaching, learning and leading.

- Our first Pillar – **Equitable access to rigorous high-level programs** – ensures that all students, without exceptions, are held to high academic expectations and are provided multiple opportunities for successful learning.
- Our second Pillar – **Data-driven professional learning and collaboration** – focuses on continuous professional development for our teachers, leaders and staff.
- The third Pillar – **Safe and healthy environments for learning and work** – addresses environments where students and adults feel safe, secure, and respected, and, therefore, are able to do their best work.
- Finally, our fourth Pillar – **Strong relationships with families and community** – recognizes that schools can't do it alone! Through collaboration and proactive communication with parents and community stakeholders, we strengthen trust and public commitment to our schools.

This Instructional Focus, together with our 2012-2015 strategic plan, provides us a roadmap for our journey toward our Goal. In Madera, we are **unified for student success!**

In Madera, we are committed to educating the whole child through high expectations, community collaboration and shared responsibility for each student’s health, safety, and success in life.

**Our Goal is clear:**

**Madera: Unified to ensure every student is educated for College, equipped for Career, and empowered with Character.**



Vital Signs of Student Growth and Development

We want our students to experience continuous **academic growth**. Therefore, we will monitor and thoroughly analyze:

- Proficiency in all subjects
- Closing the “achievement gap” and accelerating learning for all student groups
- Successful transitions from level-to-level (i.e., prekindergarten-Elementary-Secondary-post-Secondary)

We want our students to embody **academic tenacity**. Therefore, we will thoroughly analyze and continuously motivate:

- Self-responsibility, self-discipline and initiative
- Critical thinking and problem-solving

We want our students to model **socio-emotional resiliency**. Therefore, we will promote and consistently monitor:

- Meaningful participation in class, school and community
- Acquisition of positive life skills

# PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES

In the Madera Unified School District, we are committed to **HIGH EXPECTATIONS, COMMUNITY COLLABORATION** and shared responsibility for professional practices and student learning; ensuring an **EFFECTIVE TEACHER FOR EVERY STUDENT AND EFFECTIVE LEADER FOR EVERY SCHOOL.**

Teaching Practices	Leadership Practices	Organizational Practices
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**Pillar #1**  
Curriculum, standards-based instruction, and programs are directly driven to provide all students with equal levels of opportunity and achievement.

## Equitable Access to Rigorous, High-Level Programs

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <p>T1: Teachers will uphold high expectations and rigorous student engagement to ensure continuous growth and development.</p> <p>T2: Teachers will require cognitively challenging, real-world tasks that require questioning, exploration, research, decision-making and communication.</p> | <p>L1: Leadership will facilitate ongoing dialogues around high expectations of student work that meets rigorous standards.</p> <p>L2: Leadership will provide professional development and support to facilitate discussions and implementation of standards-based curriculum and instructional practices.</p> | <p>O1: All leaders, teachers and staff will proactively monitor their own beliefs and behaviors to ensure that high expectations are communicated to all.</p> <p>O2: All leaders, teachers and staff will use data to identify strengths and adjustments to delivery of standards-aligned curriculum, instruction and assessment practices.</p> |
|---|---|---|

**Pillar #2**  
Staff uses data to engage in meaningful collaboration and professional learning to improve and shift practices.

## Data-Driven Professional Learning and Collaboration

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <p>T3: Teachers will collaboratively use a data-driven cycle of inquiry to improve student learning and professional practice.</p> <p>T4: Teachers will use effective collaboration discussions, observations and interactions to improve instructional practices.</p> | <p>L3: Leadership will guide teachers through data-driven inquiry cycles focused on student learning.</p> <p>L4: Principal will provide in-service and ongoing support to grade-level groups/department teams regarding mindset and behaviors for effective collaboration.</p> | <p>O3: District will provide time, resources and professional development opportunities for collaboration.</p> <p>O4: District leadership will provide a data management system that provides user friendly access and timely reports.</p> |
|--|--|--|

**Pillar #3**  
The school culture and structures support the personal safety of the students, staff and community with fair and consistent expectations.

## Safe and Healthy Environment for Learning and Work

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <p>T5: Teachers will solicit input from students regarding behavioral expectations and will engage students to enforce them.</p> <p>T6: Teachers will recognize students for achievement and will make a concerted effort to motivate positive attitudes and behaviors.</p> | <p>L5: Leadership Team will consistently and equitably enforce broad-based agreements about standards for student behavior.</p> <p>L6: Administration/Teachers will develop a comprehensive system to address barriers in teaching and learning, engage students and recognize achievement.</p> | <p>O5: School staff will implement practices that promote social, emotional and civic competencies along with content-area competencies.</p> <p>O6: Administration/Teachers/District/Community will build systems to link educators, students, parents and caregivers to create schools that are safe and caring.</p> |
|---|---|---|

**Pillar #4**  
Initiate and sustain trusting relationships among home-school-community through shared responsibility for student success, proactive communication and meaningful stakeholder "voice."

## Strong Relationships with Families and Community

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <p>T7: Teachers will include parents in setting learning goals and will communicate student expectations for academic and behavioral standards.</p> <p>T8: Teachers will show appreciation for parents' participation, value their diverse contributions and encourage them to be equal partners in the education of their children.</p> | <p>L7: Leadership team will treat parental concerns with respect and demonstrate genuine interest in developing solutions.</p> <p>L8: Leadership team will enable parents to participate as partners when setting school goals, developing or evaluating programs and policies or responding to performance data.</p> | <p>O7: District leadership will create an environment for staff, parents and community to collaborate and share decision-making.</p> <p>O8: District will mobilize community groups to provide aligned, coordinated services (e.g., health and safety, after-school, co-curricular and extracurricular, internships) that maximize students' educational experiences.</p> |
|--|---|---|

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# Vital signs & look-fors

*What gets measured and reinforced, gets done!*

In the medical profession, vital signs define the body's most basic functions and are used to detect and monitor patient health. In a professional learning community, a series of vital signs can be used to track "organizational health" and monitor progress toward the goal.

By paying consistent attention to the Vital Signs of Student Learning and Professional Practices, we will be able to monitor and communicate progress, continuously improve practices, ensure accountability and celebrate our successes.

Student Learning	Teaching Practices	Leadership Practices	Organizational Practices
<p><b>Work that meets standards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in percentage of students meeting standards on assessments and benchmark.</li> <li>Student articulation of the skills and concepts that are currently being taught.</li> </ul> <p><b>Application of learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student collaboration extends beyond the classroom.</li> <li>Students apply knowledge to solve problems in new situations.</li> <li>Increase percentage of students successfully completing a multi-disciplinary project.</li> </ul> <p><b>Motivation and satisfaction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase percentage of students monitoring own learning goals.</li> <li>Students receive timely, constructive feedback and encouragement.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Effective lessons</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher assigns tasks/activities directly related to the standards.</li> <li>Teacher includes instructional tasks with high levels of rigor.</li> <li>Increase percentage of classrooms/grade levels/ departments implementing core instructional practices consistently.</li> </ul> <p><b>Relationships with students</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher communicates realistically high and positive academic and behavioral expectations for all students.</li> <li>Teacher recognizes students for achievement and improvement in academic and behavior.</li> <li>Teacher communicates caring for and interest in students' welfare and learning.</li> </ul> <p><b>Collaborative analysis of work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase percentage of grade levels/departments that plan and assess student progress collaboratively.</li> <li>Increase percentage of grade levels/departments where teachers routinely visit colleagues' classrooms and reflect together on their observations.</li> <li>Teachers have rich discussions regarding the quality of student work and implementation of appropriate practices.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Instructional monitoring and feedback</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase percentage of teachers who use the school's vital signs and "look-fors" rubric for self-monitoring of instructional effectiveness.</li> <li>Leadership facilitates the staff's usage of assessment data to guide instructional practices.</li> </ul> <p><b>Team collaboration aligned to priorities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grade level/department teams meet for blocks of time sufficient to develop and refine instructional plans and review student learning data.</li> <li>Principal provides grade level/ department teams with explicit, measurable and public criteria for quality professional practice.</li> </ul> <p><b>Positive school culture</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school promotes understanding, appreciation and use of the community's diverse cultural, social and intellectual resources.</li> <li>Principal provides teachers with materials, resources and professional development crucial to their jobs.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Aligned instructional supports</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding is aligned to meet the needs of students, based on data and research, as evidenced in the district's plan.</li> <li>School schedule maximizes time spent on quality instruction.</li> </ul> <p><b>Culture of achievement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regularly acknowledge and celebrate achievement.</li> </ul> <p><b>Positive home-school-community connections</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents are viewed as partners in students' problem-solving and goal setting.</li> <li>Parents and community members take part on various advisory committees within the schools.</li> </ul>

Facilitated, compiled and designed by Performance Fact, Inc.

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## **Madera: Unified for Student Success!**

2012 –2015 Strategic Plan  
Madera Unified School District  
Madera, California