OUR VISION
Every child... College, Career and Community Ready.

OUR MISSION
Our mission is to develop students with a strong sense of identity, purpose and agency, so that they leave our system as effective learners who act with purpose to achieve the conditions they desire in their own and others’ lives.
Established in 1921 the Sunnyside Unified School District is the second-largest district in Southern Arizona serving more than 15,000 students and families. Located in a culturally and linguistically rich community and surrounded by two Native Nations—the Tohono O’odham and Pascua Yaqui Tribe—our learning community is flanked by an aerospace and innovation corridor, such that our district is positioned to lead our students into the 21st century through excellence in pedagogy, world-class career and technical education, and a legacy of athletic excellence and passion for the fine arts.
Sunnyside serves families with children from birth to grade 12. The Sunnyside District has a technology-rich digital learning environment where every student grades 4 through 12 have laptops assigned for use daily in classes and throughout the school year. Instructional content is primarily online which includes a unique and innovative curriculum that is current with today’s learning needs.

The nationally recognized Ocotillo Early Learning Center is the District’s high quality, developmentally appropriate early childhood center serving children ages birth to five of all abilities in an inclusive, nurturing, stimulating environment. Programs include Title One preschool, early childhood special education, Parents As Teachers, Family Literacy and a fee-based pre-school program. Below is a graphic representation of the schools and grade levels in our District.
During the 2018–19 school year, 13,553 (80%) students qualified to receive free and reduced-price meals, 2,688 (17%) of students are classified as English Language Learners and approximately 142 (.9%) of Sunnyside’s students are identified as homeless. Another 2,098 students (13%) receive Special Education services.

The District has a Serving Unique Needs (SUN) gifted program serving 988 (6%) who have been identified as having at least an above average ability (7th stanine or above on a group or individual IQ measure); demonstrate high levels of task commitment and high levels of creativity.

Languages Spoken: Navajo, Pueblo, Punjabi, Sioux, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, Tohono O’odham Vietnamese, Yaqui, American Sign Language (ASL), Apache, Arabic, Cantonese, English, Filipino French, Hopi, Lingala, Maay

**FRESHMAN + COLLEGE AND CAREER ACADEMIES**

The Academies provide a community learning environment and an individualized high school experience that allows students to explore a variety of pathways to graduation and college or career. The Academies offered include:

- AVIATION & MILITARY SCIENCE (AFJROTC)
- ENGINEERING SCIENCES
- INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY /COMPUTER REPAIR
- MECHANICAL DRAFTING & DESIGN (3-D)
- PRECISION MANUFACTURING
- SPORTS MEDICINE
- BUSINESS MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
- COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA & MARKETING – ENTREPRENEURSHIP
Most people think about the desert as desolated, dry and scarce – a place where nothing blooms. Similarly, this is how students from communities of high poverty are perceived.

*We are here to change that narrative.*

*The Sunnyside Unified School District, much like the desert, is an ecology full of beauty and possibility.*

You don’t have to change the student population to get results, you have to change the conditions in which they learn.

– Pedro Noguera
WHAT SETS US APART

In the Fall of 2019, we embarked in a deep study of our Graduate Profile, the District’s framework key to guiding each student’s journey towards graduation. This resulted in a better understanding of what sets us apart which subsequently guided the development of a marketing toolkit which allowed us to articulate our message, define our creative platform and define our position in the public school market. With the design of a Master Brand Guide, we have created alignment between what we do, who we serve and why it matters. This messaging platform has allowed us to define how we see ourselves and how we want other people to see us.

CREATIVE PLATFORM

Sunnyside’s emotional essence helps to inspire the feel, the tone and the look of our communications. It is important to be clear that we have high expectations of our students and educators and that the work we are doing here is significant despite the high rates of poverty in our District.

SIGNIFICANT

Adjective.
Sufficiently great, or important to be worthy of attention.

At the Sunnyside School District, expectations soar high. We know what we are capable of and we’re ready for the world to see it. Yes, we may face obstacles, but nothing will come between us and that mountain top because we are here to break barriers and defy expectations.

In our desert landscape, we bear witness to the colorful blooms that thrive despite the blazing heat. Life is created in the mountains that surround us, and we know that monsoon rains will always arrive no matter how impossible it may seem for water to meet the dry land.

Like the desert, we are not bound by limitations – we see opportunity. This is the place where the unexpected is expected – where what you can accomplish has no limits. This is the place where the game changes...and that, is really significant.
POSITIONING

In an era of educational freedom of choice, it is critical to be clear about what separates us from other School Districts. Although other Districts may be doing similar work, identifying the intersection point of our offer will help us stand out in a more authentic way.

What We Do
Ensure that traditionally under-served communities receive the best educational experiences.

Where We Do It
In a culturally and linguistically rich community surrounded by Native Nations and a neighboring international border.

How We Do It
Offering innovative practices focused on improved learning.

WHY IT MATTERS
We are ensuring equitable opportunities for the success of students in high poverty.
WHAT SETS US APART

MESSAGING

Key messaging helps articulate the story of our District. It clearly defines what we offer (attributes) and what our audience gets (benefits). The messaging map below shows how the Benefit and the Attribute work together to provide a foundation for our branding that is clear, consistent and impactful.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATTRIBUTES  (what we offer)</th>
<th>WHERE WE DO IT</th>
<th>HOW WE DO IT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHAT WE DO</td>
<td>WHERE WE DO IT</td>
<td>HOW WE DO IT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ensure that traditionally under-served communities receive the best educational experiences</td>
<td>in a culturally and linguistically rich community surrounded by Native Nations and an international border.</td>
<td>innovative practices focused on improved learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a hub for innovation and best practices</td>
<td>a community in close proximity to the US-Mexico border and surrounded by native nations</td>
<td>advocate for support services that promote equity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teachers dedicated to improving their practice</td>
<td>flanked by an aerospace and innovation corridor</td>
<td>equip our students with the capacity and confidence to be successful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leveling the playing field for kids from socio-economically challenged areas</td>
<td>a deep-rooted community that celebrates its cultural richness</td>
<td>innovative practices focused on improved learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BENEFITS (what they get)</th>
<th>IDENTITY</th>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
<th>AGENCY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>how students see themselves and what they are capable of</td>
<td>awareness of intersectionality with various identity groups</td>
<td>make a significant difference in their lives and lives of others</td>
<td>have capacity and propensity to take purposeful initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strong sense of who they are and what they represent</td>
<td>strong sense of desires, goals and motives</td>
<td>understand the value of advocacy, and their role in it</td>
<td>understand value of social capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ability to identify systems that perpetuate inequality and do something about it</td>
<td>have the skills to take charge of their own learning and trajectory</td>
<td>contribute to community in a meaningful way</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School systems and communities of high poverty play a significant role in fostering inequalities that limit students’ future opportunities for success. At the Sunnyside Unified School District, we are creating a new narrative and a vision that is rooted in equity and this approach has positioned us as a school district that is “revolutionizing the public school experience, so that students leave our schools college, career and community ready.”

**SUNNYSIDE IS...**

*Attributes (what we offer)*

Revolutionizing the public school experience

**SO THAT...**

*Benefits (what they get)*

students leave our schools college, career and community ready.
Since the release of the 1983 report “A Nation at Risk” our public school systems have been challenged with the task of improving public perception regarding how we prepare students for the future. This issue of a quality of education was compounded with the accountability requirements under the No Child Left Behind of 2001, which focused primarily on one assessment. This narrow focus on one metric as the definitive measure of school quality misrepresents the complexity of educating students and diminishes the great work of educators across this nation who make a difference in the lives of students every day, in every classroom. And though aggregate performance is a key variable for measuring success, it simply fails to tell a bigger picture of what our students have and will be able to do in the future. For this reason we felt it critical to recast our Profile of a Graduate within a broader narrative of student success.

### Knowledge for Learning
An understanding that learning is a social and shared responsibility attained through respectful listening and valuing learning from one another.

### Knowledge for Impact
An awareness of community issues and obtaining real-world knowledge gained from internships and other experiences that put global issues into a local context.

### Creative Confidence
Obtaining human-centric experiences that use empathy, systems thinking, design thinking and collaboration to unlock creativity.

### Critical Consciousness
Empowerment that provides tools to identify systems that perpetuate inequality so actions can be taken to combat systems that hinder upward mobility.

### Self and Social Awareness
Providing skills for social and emotional development and values traits (e.g., assertiveness, conflict resolution, and positive self-talk) to prepare for life after high school.

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*The Profile of a Graduate provides an unparalleled level of clarity that aligns our mission, vision, and the work. To the right, are the five competencies we identified as essential to each student’s journey towards graduation.*
This framework allows our District to capture the summative experiences that mark each child’s learning journey so that personalizing the classroom is less about technology, and more about each student’s ecology.
The purpose for developing this strategic plan is to inform and guide the Sunnyside community about our vision for what a public school district who is ensuring equitable opportunities for the success of students in high poverty looks like and how we plan to improve upon this work.

Strategic planning has allowed our district the opportunity to evaluate and plan for how we will elevate the mission and vision of our District. This plan will provide measurable goals for the District to focus on for the next 3 years.

The aim of this work is to ensure that we are improving upon an infrastructure that supports effective teaching and learning, operations and leadership development within the Sunnyside Unified School District.
Putting a district-wide strategy into practice requires building a coherent organization that connects to teachers' work in classrooms and enables people at all levels to carry out their part of the strategy. The framework identifies the organizational elements critical to high performance and poses a series of diagnostic questions about each element, all in an effort to bring them into coherence with the strategy and with each other.
DISTRICT GOALS

To support the SUSD Coherence Framework, organizational elements are critical to the successful implementation of a district-wide improvement strategy. These interdependent elements influence all aspects of the organization.

Business and Finance, Human Capital, Learning and Teaching, Community Relations and Maintenance are identified as critical elements to support what happens for every child, in every classroom, every day.

The following are the Goals and Strategies developed for each of the strategic plan focus areas. Based on data the goals and strategies will be revised and modified as well as new goals and strategies developed throughout year one of the strategic plan. A narrative follows each element describing the current status of the strategies.
BUSINESS & FINANCE

As good stewards of financial resources, we project a culture of accountability and solvency; taxpayers trust our judgment and support our mission.

GOAL 1: PROVIDE STRATEGIC PLANNING TO ACHIEVE A “BALANCED BUDGET” FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 AND SUBSEQUENT YEARS

Reason: Decreasing enrollment and lack of M&O Override authorization will result in decreased funding and smaller budgets. State statute does not allow over-expending budget limits.

STRATEGIES
Develop accurate budget projections
Implement “hiring freeze” and identify and recommend cuts in non-essential programs

GOAL 2: MANAGE AND ALLOCATE AVAILABLE FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO MEET THE OPERATIONAL AND CAPITAL NEEDS OF THE DISTRICT

Reason: Lack of adequate funding does not relieve a school district’s responsibility of providing educational services to students.

STRATEGIES
Identify programs that may be funded from Federal and State Grants
Identify and recommend options for continued implementation of increasing teacher salaries

GOAL 3: DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN A LONG RANGE CAPITAL PLAN

Reason: Providing quality educational services requires maintaining and improving existing educational facilities and planning for and constructing new ones.

STRATEGIES
Complete installation of Solar Energy Projects
Manage remaining Bond Funds to address high priority projects and minimize Unrestricted Capital Outlay Budget expenditures
COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Genuine relationships, honest communication and a culture of success engages families, alumni, stakeholders, elected officials and business and industry groups alike; we constantly strive to build a deep reservoir of trust.

**GOAL 1: INCREASE DISTRICT VISIBILITY**

**STRATEGIES**
- Develop a master brand guide
- Create and implement a marketing/communications plan
- Leverage CTE/JTED Resources

**GOAL 2: IMPROVE THE CUSTOMER SERVICE EXPERIENCE WITH PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE**

**STRATEGIES**
- Create a PR Office “menu” of services
- Develop relationships with school administration

**GOAL 3: ESTABLISH A CULTURE OF COLLABORATION BETWEEN DISTRICT AND SUNNYSIDE FOUNDATION**

**STRATEGIES**
- Collaborate with Foundation Executive Director
HUMAN CAPITAL

Our organization is human-centric, always seeking the best in people and investing in human potential. We are a learning organization where everyone is a learner, yet we are sure-footed when poor individual behavior threatens the learning and working environment.

GOAL 1: INCREASE THE NUMBER OF SUNNYSIDE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT ALUMNI WHO ARE HIRED INTO POSITIONS THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT.

Reason: The district has had success in retaining district alumni when hired into positions throughout the district in the past; retention of qualified individuals provides students with consistent instruction. The students of the district have cultural ties to employees who are alumni thus allowing students to have a more positive interaction with the teachers who have had similar experiences.

STRATEGIES
Locate all current SUSD alumni and record current information and data on each hire
Attend High School College and Career Fairs
Provide “bonus scores” to SUSD alumni who apply for positions
University of Arizona Pathways - tracking numbers and success
JTED Education courses - tracking numbers, success and how to recruit these students back to the district

GOAL 2: INCREASE THE DIVERSITY OF THE SUNNYSIDE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT EMPLOYEE POPULATION; ESPECIALLY IN AREAS THAT REPRESENT THE DEMOGRAPHIC MAKEUP OF OUR STUDENT POPULATION

Reason: Students who have similar demographics (gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation) as their Teachers have been shown to have more interest in education and attending their classes

STRATEGIES
Obtain current demographic data for employees AND students to get a benchmark on how the District stands in 2019/20
Focus recruitment efforts at colleges, universities and areas of the state/country that would provide our District with a more accurate demographic ratio of teachers to students
LEARNING & TEACHING

Our teachers and support staff are learning professionals who understand our work is complex; the interaction between the teacher, student and content is at the core of every interaction; a culture of internal accountability and collective responsibility to foster equity and develop student agency supports the continuous improvement and success of each learner.

GOAL 1: FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Reason: Create a shift to advance achievement where students come to see themselves as responsible for, and agents of their own learning

STRATEGIES
Build capacity around formative assessment practices in all schools with teachers, leaders and students
Develop systems of support and monitoring for the formative assessment practices to ensure deep implementation; develop a communication plan for parents and community stakeholders

GOAL 2: DEEPER LEARNING

Reason: Focus on Deeper Learning will support the development and actualization of the Graduate Profile Competencies

STRATEGIES
Identify deeper learning strategies within curricular experiences to provide structure to the Graduate Profile Competencies
Develop a strategic implementation and monitoring plan for the Graduate Profile Competencies highlighted at each grade band.

GOAL 3: CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Reason: Provide purposeful and intentional educational experiences that foster Agency for all students through dispositions and practices

STRATEGIES
Begin alignment process for formative assessment strategies and culturally responsive practices to ensure better impact with our student demographics
Utilize the aligned framework to develop leadership professional learning practices to create meaningful interaction with learning
MAINTENANCE

Safe schools are physical spaces where children and adults thrive. Taxpayers entrust us to build, invest and care for our resources. Trust and accountability are two sides of the same coin.

GOAL 1: ESTABLISH MORE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT METHODS OF COMMUNICATION TO INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY AND CLARITY OF MAINTENANCE PROCESSES

Reason: There has been issues in the past that site administration has difficulty knowing the status of requests.

STRATEGY
Open lines between myself and site administrators so they can provide feedback to staff and community members as needed

GOAL 2: INCREASE THE LEVEL OF ACCOUNTABILITY OF TECHNICIANS TO ENHANCE THE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN SITE PERSONNEL AND MAINTENANCE STAFF

Reason: Often site administration and personnel do not know the technician servicing their school leading to a lack of personalization

STRATEGY
Introduce maintenance technicians to the administrators and faculty so they know who is doing the work

GOAL 3: ESTABLISH OPPORTUNITIES FOR MAINTENANCE TECHNICIANS TO BECOME INVOLVED IN THE DISTRICT AND HELP CREATE ENVIRONMENTS THAT ENHANCE OWNERSHIP

Reason: The external and internal school environment directly influences the level of care and ownership students perceive the district has with their school

STRATEGY
Develop special projects at each site (e.g., logos, special colors, etc.) to increase site pride in their school and classrooms
The Sunnyside Unified School District is revolutionizing the public school experience, so that students leave our schools college, career and community ready.