



CAPISTRANO

UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

2024-25 ANNUAL REPORT



WELCOME

I have had the privilege of serving as Superintendent of Capistrano Unified School District for two years. I am consistently amazed at the high level of achievement of our students, the passion of our teachers and classified staff and the support of our community. I wanted to be a part of CUSD because I knew it was a special district, and the reality has far exceeded my expectations.

This annual report serves as a reflection on the previous school year, a renewal of the pillars of our culture and a glimpse into the future of our District. While it is impossible to capture the full landscape of all we do in CUSD, we wanted to share some of the accomplishments with our community.

This report centers around three ideals that help shape our approach to preparing students for graduation—**Academics, Experiences, Future Readiness**. CUSD is committed to providing a world-class education for each student so they can achieve their maximum potential. Capistrano Unified is one of the few districts in Orange County that is exceeding pre-pandemic achievement levels and continues to increase in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Outside of the classroom, students grow as individuals and develop meaningful connections with others through athletics, music, arts and clubs. All of this work during a student's educational journey prepares them to pursue their dreams upon graduation, whether that be college, military service or a professional career.

We continue to grow and thrive as a district as well, expanding our footprint with a new school in Rienda and upgrading our facilities to meet the evolving needs of modern students. These improvements reflect our ongoing commitment to providing safe, innovative, and future-focused learning environments where every student has the opportunity to succeed. All of this achievement and growth would not be possible without the unwavering support of our community, whose partnership and trust allow us to move forward with confidence. As the largest school district in Orange County—both in enrollment and in geographic area—we take that responsibility to heart and recognize the impact we have on thousands of students and families every day. With each new step forward, we reaffirm our dedication to academic excellence, equity, and preparing students to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

I could not be more proud of all we have accomplished during my tenure in Capistrano Unified, and I am inspired by the fact that we are just getting started.

Sincerely,

Dr. Chris Brown
CUSD Superintendent

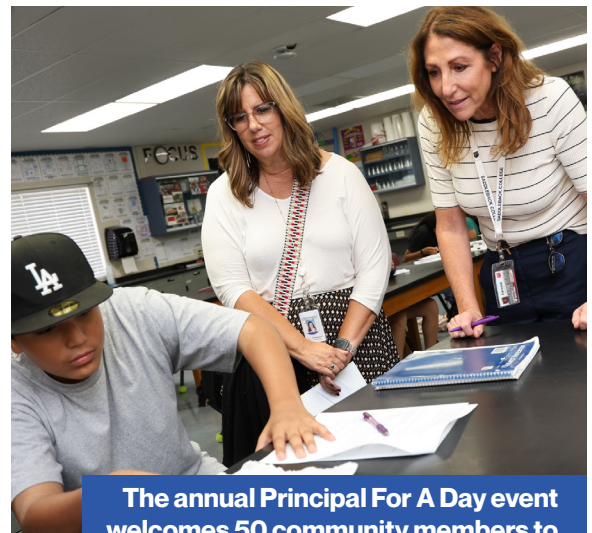




CUSD is proud to be part of the South Orange County community - educating children, employing residents and contributing to the culture. Through partnerships with local government, businesses, and community organizations, we work tirelessly to make our region such a desirable place to live.



The Assistance League of Capistrano Valley raised funds to support AVID programs at SJHHS and SCHS



The annual Principal For A Day event welcomes 50 community members to experience life on campus

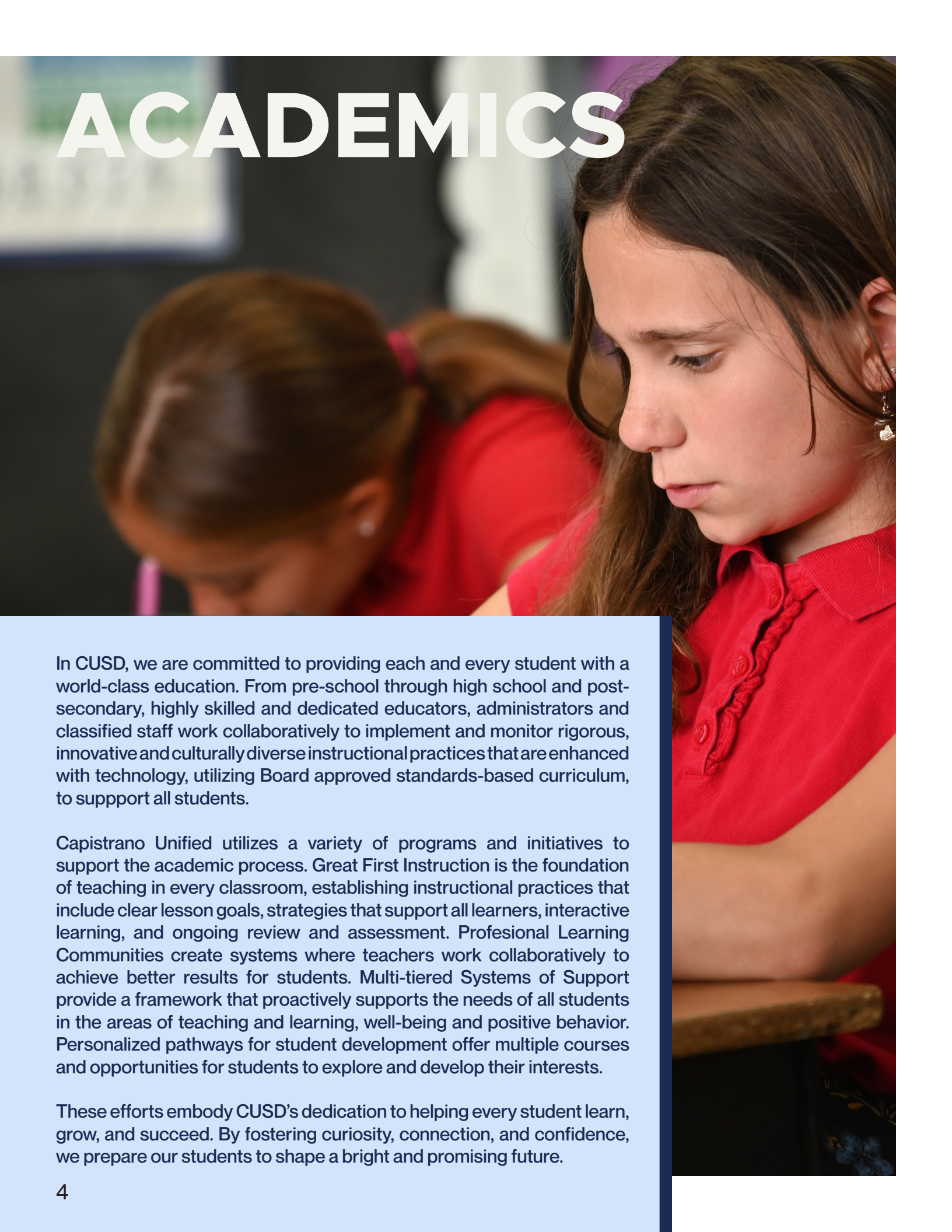


Partnerships with OCDE and CHOC, along with private donations, have opened student centers on several CUSD campuses, like Capistrano Valley



The Orange County Sheriffs Department helps keep our students safe and support school initiatives, like Walk to School Day

ACADEMICS



In CUSD, we are committed to providing each and every student with a world-class education. From pre-school through high school and post-secondary, highly skilled and dedicated educators, administrators and classified staff work collaboratively to implement and monitor rigorous, innovative and culturally diverse instructional practices that are enhanced with technology, utilizing Board approved standards-based curriculum, to support all students.

Capistrano Unified utilizes a variety of programs and initiatives to support the academic process. Great First Instruction is the foundation of teaching in every classroom, establishing instructional practices that include clear lesson goals, strategies that support all learners, interactive learning, and ongoing review and assessment. Professional Learning Communities create systems where teachers work collaboratively to achieve better results for students. Multi-tiered Systems of Support provide a framework that proactively supports the needs of all students in the areas of teaching and learning, well-being and positive behavior. Personalized pathways for student development offer multiple courses and opportunities for students to explore and develop their interests.

These efforts embody CUSD's dedication to helping every student learn, grow, and succeed. By fostering curiosity, connection, and confidence, we prepare our students to shape a bright and promising future.

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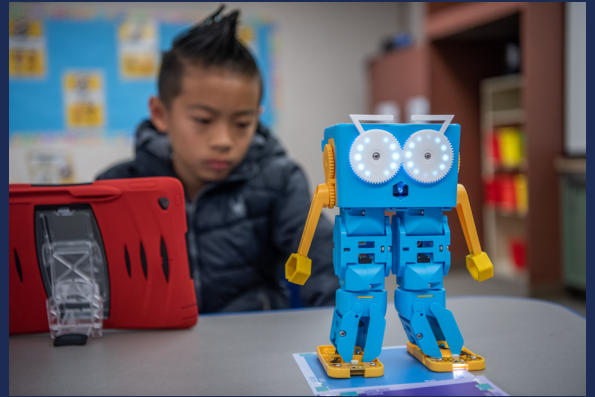
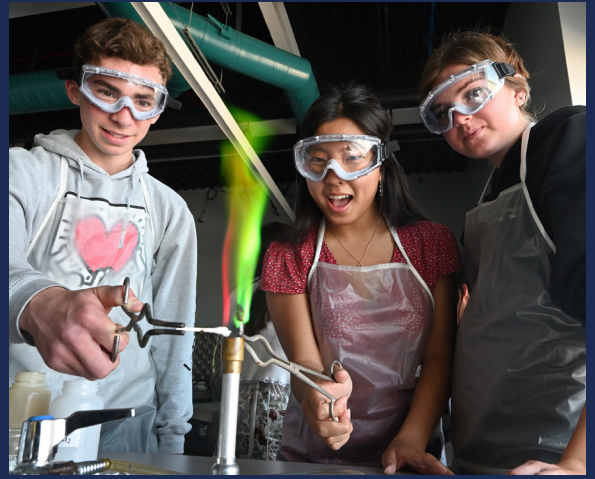
CUSD is the highest performing large district in California in Math and English Language Arts.

88%

Pass rate on Advanced Placement exams, with more students taking exams of higher rigor.

80

CUSD schools named California Distinguished Schools since 1986, including three in 2025, highlighting excellence in closing the achievement gap and delivering excellent student performance.



Castille and Clarence Lobo became the first CUSD elementary schools to earn Model PLC recognition. Model PLC schools excel in ongoing, job-embedded learning for teachers to improve student achievement.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Academic opportunities continue to evolve, as CUSD adopts curriculum and technology to provide for the modern student. The Marblehead Flex Academy opened in 2025, providing an in-person/online hybrid setting to meet the needs of families who desire a more flexible learning environment.

EXPERIENCES

The background image shows a large group of students in a school auditorium, many in formal attire, performing or participating in an event. In the foreground, a student is playing a double bass.

Beginning in the earliest grades and continuing through high school, students benefit greatly from opportunities that extend beyond traditional academics. By offering world-class visual and performing arts, athletics and physical education, student-led clubs, and innovative STEM activities, CUSD creates an environment where every student can explore diverse interests and pursue personal passions. These experiences not only enrich their education but also help them develop critical life skills such as teamwork, creativity, problem-solving, and resilience.

Equally essential to student success is the cultivation of welcoming, inclusive, and supportive school cultures. Each campus across CUSD invests in this vision through engaging programs such as AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) and ASB (Associated Student Body), language immersion opportunities, and built-in systems of support designed to ensure that every child feels valued and encouraged. These intentional efforts foster a sense of belonging and community that allows students to thrive.

Ultimately, our goal is for every CUSD student to feel at home on campus—comfortable to express who they are, confident to take on challenges, and inspired to explore every aspect of their talents and personalities.

32%

Middle school students participated in intramural sports program in 2024-25, resulting in an increase in attendance and engagement.

22

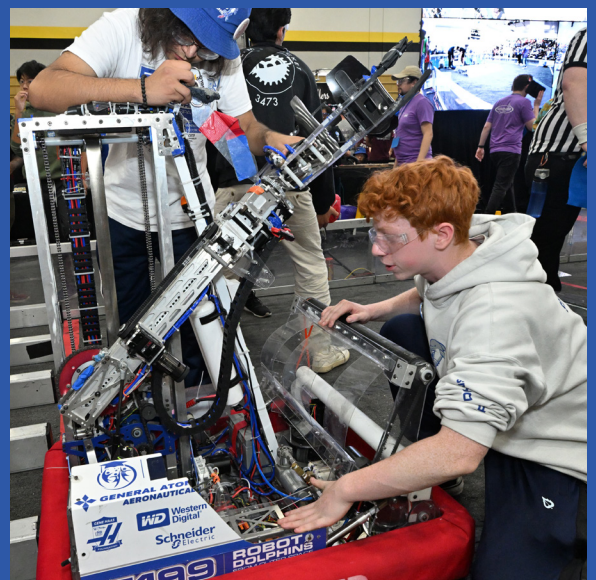
Golden Bell awards won by CUSD for outstanding and innovative programs, including the language immersion program in 2022 and College and Career Advantage in 2023.



The Most Inspiring Student Awards debuted in 2024-25, with each school selecting an honoree that inspires their campus community.

WHAT'S NEXT?

CUSD is developing a middle school sports academy for athletically-inclined students to develop their skills ahead of high school in a more dedicated atmosphere. Through the independent study educational model, students will have increased daily flexibility as they balance schoolwork, athletic training, and their personal lives.





As our mission states, CUSD prepares students to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world. Upon graduation, our students will leave with the skills, confidence, and adaptability to excel in whatever pathway they choose—whether pursuing higher education, serving in the military, or entering directly into the workforce.

Each CUSD graduate will be equipped with five key attributes: Continuous Learner, Engaged Citizen, Inspired Leader, Innovative Problem Solver, and Skilled Communicator.

Futureology counselors offer every secondary student personalized college and career guidance. Our strong partnership with College and Career Advantage opens doors to 31 distinct career pathways, giving students access to hands-on training, real-world experiences, and coursework that connects their classroom learning to future opportunities. These programs empower students to explore a wide range of possibilities, building both practical skills and a vision for their next steps.

A CUSD education does not end at graduation; it lays the foundation for ongoing growth, discovery, and leadership in every stage of life. Our graduates are lifelong learners and critical thinkers, prepared to engage with the challenges and opportunities the world has to offer.

95%

CUSD senior graduation rate

25

College and career pathways available through CCA.



Each year, nearly 4,000 students graduate from CUSD schools, prepared for education and professional opportunities that will impact Orange County.



WHAT'S NEXT?

To better prepare students for post-secondary education, CUSD is bringing college to our campuses. A middle college partnership with Saddleback College will enable students to earn a diploma and college credit simultaneously. Cal Prep Academy will be adding this program with an AVID focus to provide students with the skills and support needed to help students reach their individual post-secondary goals. CUSD is also enrolling in the CSU Direct Admissions program, empowering students to earn admission through select criteria.



FACILITIES

CUSD is always adapting and growing, in its strategies and practices, and its facilities and offerings. Developing new curriculum and courses, integrating emerging technologies, and updating and building new facilities keep CUSD on the cutting-edge of public education.

CUSD continues to make smart investments in facilities (leveraging state matching funds) while maintaining a budget that provides a healthy stability and long-term outlook. A brand new two-story classroom opened at Dana Hills High School in the fall of 2025, updated athletic facilities are in the works at Capistrano Valley High School and San Clemente High School, and a brand new TK-8 school will service the Rienda community in Rancho Mission Viejo in 2027.



Dana Hills Two-Story Classroom- Opened Fall 2025



Rienda TK-8 - Opening Fall 2027



Capistrano Valley Stadium- Opening Summer 2026



San Clemente Gymnasium- Opening Spring 2027

CUSD AT A GLANCE

CUSD operates 64 schools/programs:

- 30 elementary schools
- 5 TK-8 schools
- 8 middle schools
- 6 comprehensive high schools
- 6 dual language schools (Spanish & Mandarin)
- 3 International Baccalaureate (IB) schools
- 5 charter schools
- 8 alternative schools/programs

CUSD operates in 9 municipalities:

- Aliso Viejo
- Dana Point
- Ladera Ranch
- Laguna Niguel
- Mission Viejo
- Rancho Santa Margarita
- Rancho Mission Viejo
- San Clemente
- San Juan Capistrano

OUR MISSION

To prepare our students to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world.

OUR VISION

An unwavering commitment to student success.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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