



School Transformation in Three Broad Brush Strokes: Early, Personal and Relevant!

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Our world is becoming increasingly more complex. Sadly, our traditional model of education is simply not equipped to keep pace with the increase in complexity. Students graduating high school from a traditional system often do not move into the world of work with the requisite experiences, skills and abilities to navigate a rapidly changing career ecosystem. Indeed, projections from a research project at Oxford University indicate that by the year 2033 47% of all jobs may be lost to automation (Frey and Osborne, 2013). We are seeing the impact of this projection today with the rapid movement towards autonomous automobiles silently moving around our streets. In Vista Unified, we not only acknowledge the shift towards complexity, but we are embracing the reality of its implications on how we structure our educational program. At Vista Unified, innovation is key to transformation to a new learning ecosystem that paints three broad brushstrokes intended to engage all students in a learner-centered pathway, leading to flexible, nimble thinkers ready to adapt to careers that do not currently exist.

Pictured below, these three brushstrokes are simple but powerful drivers towards a transformed learning experience. Simply put, our educational program is focused on early education, personal learning and relevant exposure to the world of work - Early, Personal and Relevant! All three brushstrokes begin with a foundation based on in-depth understanding of individual student strengths, interests and values. From these brush strokes, we define a set of three wildly important goals (WIGs) to ensure that our transformation truly leads to improved outcomes for all students. The focus of this article highlights our first brushstroke (Early Education) and the WIG that goes along with it.



Early Education P-3
Close the achievement gap before it opens

Personal Learning
Every Student, by Name

Relevant World of Work
Career experiences for All Students

We have set a WIG (wildly important goal) to close the achievement gap in language, literacy and numeracy by 75% by Grade 3 by 2025. To lay down our first brushstroke and WIG, Vista Unified staff collaborate with the Vista Partnership for Children, led by the United Way, and the San Diego Workforce Partnership's newly

formed Center for Low Income Mobility, CLIMB, led by Laura Kohn, to create a new ecosystem to serve the very beginning of life, ensuring that the earliest of learners start off on the best of learning pathways. Together, we are building a P-3 continuum (Prenatal to grade three) that will assist families from the beginning creating home and community environments that support readiness to learn.

The P-3 continuum will change the shape of the Vista Unified campus and enhance its ability to serve the Vista community. Working with the Partnership for Children, Vista Unified will ensure that its community is informed of pre-natal care services for expecting mothers, family and childhood services for age 0-3, and then entry to a P-3 Continuum that provides a seamless education through third grade. Our goal is to coordinate with our community wraparound services to intervene early (before birth) to address health, family, language and employment issues that may hold students back from learning. As early as possible, we seek to identify and address gaps in social-emotional wellness and physical and learning disabilities that may inhibit full student agency. Early interventions are less disruptive, less costly, and more successful. At Vista Unified, we have seen a dramatic decrease in the number of English

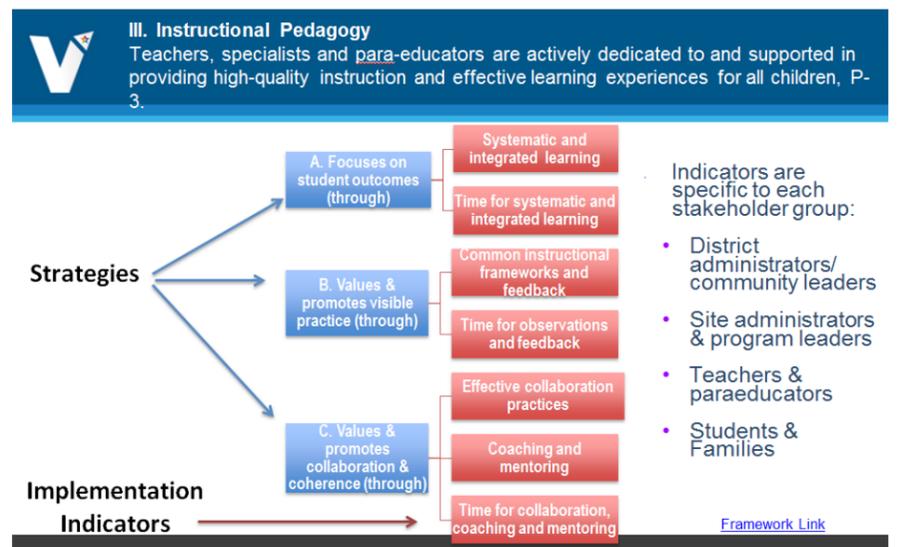
Language Learners in the 3rd grade as students are reclassified as fluent English proficient much earlier. Specifically, in 2008, we reclassified 0% of our English learners. By 2017, after nine years of expanding preschool programs to ten schools in the district, we have reclassified over 29% of English learners by first grade. The overall reclassification rate went from 5% to 21% over the same time frame. Our focus on early learning is starting to make a meaningful impact on narrowing the achievement gap for English learners.

Classification Rates by Grade Level 2007-2008 versus 2016-2017

RECLASSIFICATION RATE 2007-2008		RECLASSIFICATION RATE 2016-2017	
TK	NA	TK	0%
K	0%	K	3%
1	0%	1	29%
2	0%	2	15%
3	5%	3	10%
4	8%	4	22%
5	11%	5	40%
6	12%	6	18%
7	9%	7	27%
8	15%	8	42%
9	3%	9	17%
10	2%	10	22%
11	3%	11	27%
12	6%	12	29%
TOTAL	5%	TOTAL	21%

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At Vista Unified, early education centers, pre-schools and kindergarten classrooms are being reconfigured to form a seamless continuum through grade 3. Teachers are at the heart of this change. We have formed a P-3 Focus Group composed of expert teachers who will take the lead designing the framework and professional development for this Continuum. The P-3 Continuum will create a consistent, strengths-based culture in which students are recognized for the progress they make, the curiosity they portray and their capacity for sharing with others. In this environment of strengths and interests coupled with personalized support, we believe we will reach our WIG. Below, please see our instructional pedagogy model.



Our goal is to serve the whole family creating a sustainable support system for learning based on best practices. To determine best practices, this Fall, Vista Unified and University of California at San Diego will extend its already successful partnership to create an International Center for Education and Research Practices, ICERP. Located on the Vista Unified Campus, ICERP already has a list of multiple research projects scheduled for action in the 2017-18 school year.

These research projects will make an immediate impact on the lives of all Vista students, but particularly our earliest of learners. ICERP is under the joint leadership of Professor Alan Daly, Graduate School of Education, UCSD, and Dr. Matt Doyle, Interim Superintendent, Vista Unified. Professor Daly observed, “Collaborative partnerships are the future of deep educational progress. Drawing on our mutual commitment to equity and community this Center is poised to transform education in a diverse society. The Department of Education Studies at UCSD is privileged to be a partner in this groundbreaking effort.”

Collaborative partnerships guide the design and implementation of our Early Education brushstroke. Working with UCSD, the United Way and CLIMB, Vista Unified will reach its Wildly Important Goal and perhaps even more importantly, we will reach it in a manner that is scalable and sustainable across our district. In our next blog, we will talk about our most important brushstroke, Personal Learning. Please continue to follow our transformation through this blog over the course of the next year. We also invite you to observe and interact with our journey at the Vista Unified Innovation Website: www.vistausd.org/innovation