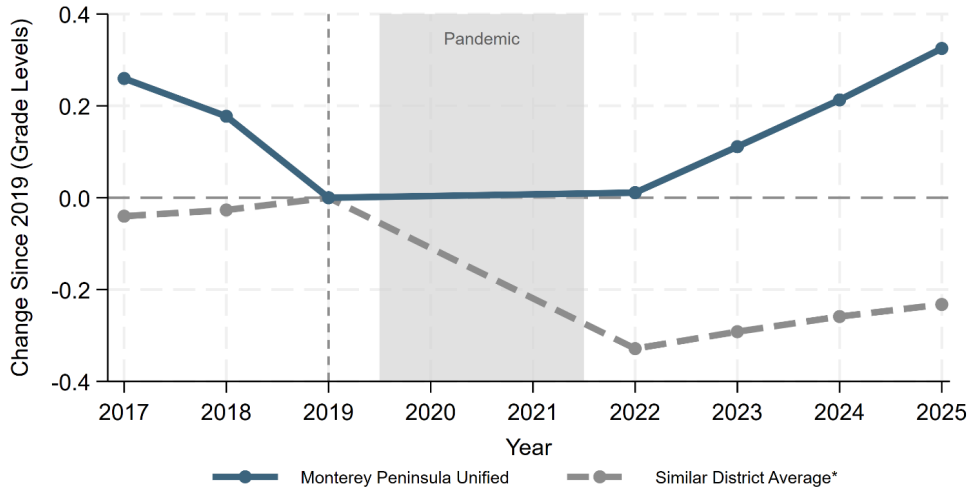


EDUCATION RECOVERY SCORECARD

Monterey Peninsula Unified School District
 Monterey, California

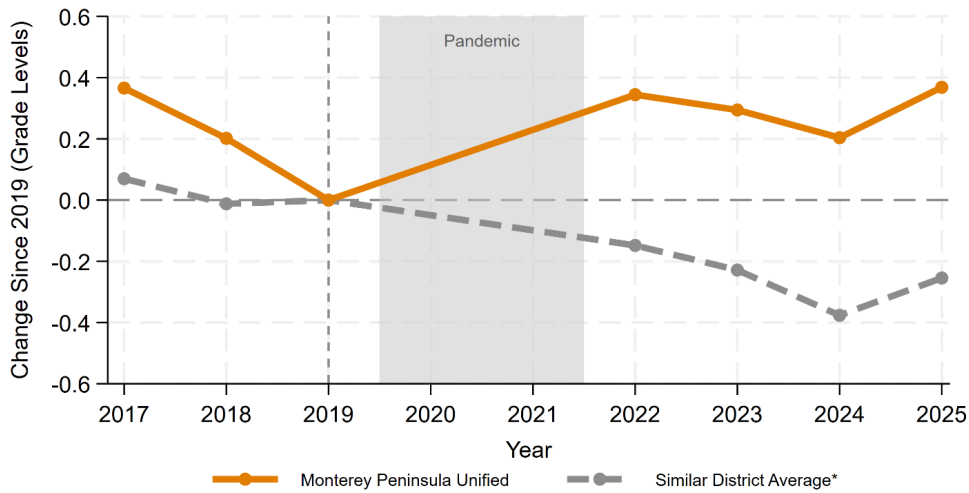
Monterey Peninsula Unified, CA

Change in Math Achievement Since 2019, Grades 3-8



The achievement in the focal district and the similar district average are shown relative to their 2019 achievement and set to 0 in 2019. Source: Figure created by the Education Scorecard, a collaboration between Harvard's Center for Education Policy Research and Stanford's Educational Opportunity Project. Data courtesy of the Stanford Education Data Archive (SEDA). For details on the methodology to create the SEDA data, see <https://edopportunity.org/trends/methods>

Change in Reading Achievement Since 2019, Grades 3-8



The achievement in the focal district and the similar district average are shown relative to their 2019 achievement and set to 0 in 2019. Source: Figure created by the Education Scorecard, a collaboration between Harvard's Center for Education Policy Research and Stanford's Educational Opportunity Project. Data courtesy of the Stanford Education Data Archive (SEDA). For details on the methodology to create the SEDA data, see <https://edopportunity.org/trends/methods>

*Similar Districts: Upland Unified, Woodland Joint Unified, Central Elementary, Beaumont Unified, Norwalk-La Mirada Unified

Student Demographics:

Total student population: 9,350

Hispanic/Latino: 62%

White: 19%

Black/African-American: 5%

Two or more races: 5%

Socioeconomically disadvantaged: 71%

English learners: 23%

Homeless*: 19%

*The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act defines youth and children experiencing homelessness as those who are unsheltered, in shelters, living in a hotel/motel, or who are doubled or tripled up in a home.

Dr. PK Diffenbaugh, Superintendent

- “Increasing our school leaders’ knowledge of the curricula has allowed them to have meaningful conversations about specific standards and instructional strategies with teachers. When principals and teachers speak the same language, they can collaborate to strengthen classroom instruction.”
- “Addressing chronic absenteeism requires uncovering and addressing the specific barriers that prevent students from getting to school and helping them show up prepared and in the right headspace to learn.”

Cresta McIntosh, Associate Superintendent of Educational Services

- “As a district, we identify priority students in need of the most support, such as our multi-lingual learners. Our focus on high-quality instruction not only helps those priority students, but all students in their academic growth.”
- “In the past, a focus on making sure students could access the curriculum could have the unintended consequence of watering down instruction. Now, we are seeing decisionmaking that builds scaffolds and supports for all students in accessing grade-level work. Our students rise to the expectations we set for them.”

Background:

In Monterey Peninsula Unified School District (MPUSD), more than seven in ten students are socioeconomically disadvantaged, nearly one in four students are English learners, and nearly one in five students are homeless. Despite the significant challenges facing its students, MPUSD has maintained stable student achievement throughout the pandemic. Among the district’s successes are the implementation of wraparound student supports, including efforts to address the root causes of chronic absenteeism, and leadership development at the school and district level.

Strategies for Success:

Curriculum-focused leadership development:

- MPUSD selected a high-quality curriculum for middle school mathematics, Ready Math by Curriculum Associates, during the 2018-19 school year. Implementation began in 2019-20, along with curriculum-aligned professional learning for educators. Despite these efforts, the district was not seeing the success it wanted: there were disparities across schools, and classrooms were using the curricular resources in different ways or not at all. The pandemic further impacted the successful implementation of the curriculum.
- The district identified a need to equip school and district leaders with an instructional

leader mindset to help teachers bring the new curriculum to life. In 2021, MPUSD received the [Effective Implementation Cohort](#) (EIC) grant from UnboundEd and CORE Learning to build the capacity of district and school leaders to support implementation.

- MPUSD recognized that principals and other school and district leaders desired more expertise in conducting classroom evaluations for middle school math. Through the EIC grant, school and district leaders were able to unpack the curriculum and internalize the lessons and language used in them. Then, the leaders conducted classroom walkthroughs to observe how teachers used the materials.
- Because the leaders understood the details of the lessons and the purpose of the different instructional practices embedded throughout, they could discuss their observations with teachers. Leaders were trained to explore how teacher modification of the lessons enhanced or hindered how students were learning.
- These efforts helped [increase](#) district leaders' knowledge of effective curriculum implementation and helped school leadership teams build their capacity to implement these programs. [According](#) to Associate Superintendent McIntosh, every single teacher in every middle school classroom in the district now uses the curriculum with integrity.
- According to Associate Superintendent McIntosh, high school math teachers have reported that incoming ninth graders are both better equipped for high school math content and more prepared for deeper learning in math since the district adjusted its middle school math strategy. McIntosh credits the power of coherence and consistency for these positive improvements.
- Due to the success of the middle school mathematics capacity training, in the 2024-2025 school year, the district expanded the school and district leader training to cover elementary, middle, and high school math and ELA.
- An additional outcome of these efforts is that school and district leaders developed stronger systems of support. For example, in one school, there was only one middle school mathematics teacher. The teacher began attending meetings with a professional learning community at another school for peer support.

Addressing chronic absenteeism:

- MPUSD [received a grant](#) for nearly \$1.4 million over three fiscal years (2024 to 2027) to support efforts to reduce chronic absenteeism. The district's program, called Promoting Attendance through Collaboration and Compassionate Systems (PACCS), focuses on non-punitive and evidence-based practices to address the causes of absenteeism and enhance instructional time, student engagement, and academic performance.
- Specific components of the PACCS program include enhancing collaboration among attendance staff across the district, providing telehealth services, improving access to absenteeism data, offering technical assistance, and strengthening family support. The district also hired three additional intervention specialists to increase its capacity for working with families and conducting home visits.
- In the 2023-2024 school year, MPUSD implemented a pilot program called EveryDay Labs that allows leaders at every school site to access attendance rates. Schools use this data to identify the students who are absent and provide resources to families with chronically absent students, including a chat box to identify the barriers their child is experiencing.
- MPUSD reports that the five schools where the pilot program has been implemented saw decreases in chronic absenteeism. The districtwide chronic absenteeism rate dropped from 26.9% in the 2022-23 school year to 16.07% in the 2023-24 school year. Beginning in 2024-2025, this program expanded from a pilot program to a permanent district initiative.

Coherence in early childhood education:

- In 2015, MPUSD [expanded](#) its commitment to early learning after data showed that only 27% of students were fully prepared for kindergarten. In 2016, MPUSD adopted its Expanded Transitional Kindergarten (TK) policy, which extended TK eligibility to all children turning five by March 1, years before California's universal TK expansion. Today, all MPUSD elementary schools offer TK.
- Students who attend MPUSD's preschool and TK programs enter kindergarten [scoring](#) 10-16% higher on early reading assessments. Further, over 90% meet or exceed expectations in self-regulation and engagement, compared to 29% in 2015.
- MPUSD credits its improvements in third-grade ELA achievement to these investments in early learning. Third-grade students districtwide [showed improvements](#) on the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) from 2023-2024 to 2024-2025, including "double-digit gains" for Black and African American students.
- In 2025, MPUSD [received](#) the Golden Bell Award from the California School Boards Association for its early learning and PK-3 coherence.