High School Spotlight: Mission Vista High School

March 2022
MVHS is located 25 miles north of San Diego. Part of Vista Unified School District, Mission Vista HS opened in 2009 and is one of five high schools.

MVHS is a “school of choice,” serving students residing within the district boundaries, as well as students who choose to attend the school on inter-district transfer agreements from neighboring communities.

MISSION
Our purpose is to empower students to be self-directed, creative, and critical thinkers who persevere to positively impact the interconnected world.

VISION
Our vision is to be the model of educational excellence through discovery, innovation, and growth.

MVHS Demographics (2019-2020)
- 47% White
- 34% Hispanic / Latinx
- 5.8% 2 or more races
- 5.7% Asian
- 4.1% Filipino
- 1.5% Black or African American
- 0.6% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- 0.3% American Indian or Alaska Native

1,668 Students
- 28% Free or Reduced Lunch (FRL)

Smarter Balanced Assessment 2019-2020
- 65% of juniors met or exceeded standards in math
- 89% of juniors met or exceeded standards in English Language Arts

Postsecondary Education Graduate Stats 2019-2020
- 76% met the UC/CSU A-G requirements, making them eligible to enroll in UC or CSU.
- 43% plan to attend a 4 year college or university
- 47% plan to attend a 2 year community college
To prepare students for postsecondary success, MVHS provides a rich and varied curriculum designed for academic rigor as well as relevance to learners’ strengths, interests, and values. The high school offers 19 Advanced Placement courses, 13 honors courses, and concurrent enrollment opportunities in partnership with local colleges. Students may also pursue career goals through six unique Career and Technical Education pathways or dig deeply into areas of interest via a robust set of electives—everything from Psychology to Discrete Math to A Socio-Political History of Rock and Roll.

Mission Vista High School (MVHS) is located in Oceanside, California, approximately 25 miles north of San Diego. One of three comprehensive high schools in Vista Unified School District (VUSD), MVHS was founded in 2009 and serves approximately 1,700 students. MVHS is a school of choice within the district, a dual-magnet public high school that focuses on two special areas of study, Arts & Communication and Science & Technology.
Personal Learning at MVHS

Supported by a program that is both broad and deep in its offerings, MVHS learners create personalized, four-year pathways of study. Because of this pathways approach, the school had already incorporated key capacities, mindsets, and structures to support personalized learning in its model. So when MVHS was invited to join the district’s PL (Personal Learning) Challenge in 2017, the school community entered, not as novices, but as a phase three PL school—ready to take bold action to implement personal learning across the curriculum.

Measuring What Matters: Learner-Centered Assessment

One current area of focus for innovation at MVHS is assessment of student learning. Aligned with the district-wide goals for personalizing learning and promoting equity, MVHS educators are rethinking traditional assessment practices and piloting new ways to assess, grade, and monitor student growth. With an emphasis on competency, equity, and self-direction, MVHS learners and their teachers are co-creating new approaches to measuring success, such as capstone projects and competency-based grading.

Mission Vista High School’s Broader Vision for Lifelong Success

The purpose of MVHS, as articulated in the school’s mission statement, is “to empower students to be self-directed, creative, and critical thinkers who persevere to positively impact the interconnected world.” To achieve that ambitious goal, MVHS leaders, educators, and learners exercise agency and experience numerous opportunities to innovate. At the same time, commitment to a shared vision of learner success provides coherence among the various strands of innovation. In response to the changes they see in the world and in the employment landscape, educators at MVHS have embraced a broader definition of postsecondary success, one that encompasses durable and transferable Habits of Mind, as well as academic achievement.

Sharing Power for a Shared Vision: Change Agent Leadership at VUSD

MVHS not only set an accelerated pace for their learning transformation, but the staff also created their own definition of PL and determined the instructional elements that would best support their learners. A key factor in the success of MVHS and its students is the culture of trust and agency they have built, an environment that promotes creativity and innovation. Mirroring VUSD’s commitment to “change agent leadership,” an inclusive approach to transformational change, members of the MVHS learning community are empowered to set collective and individual goals and exercise autonomy in determining how to meet them.

Learn More
Read the story about how MVHS educators are personalizing the learner experience at MVHS »

Learn More
Read the story about why and how MVHS is reimagining assessment »

Learn More
Read the story to learn about the mindsets and practices that promote educator agency and innovation »

Learn More
Read the story to learn about the habits of mind.

Listen to the Podcast
Listen to learners talk about their personalized pathways.

Listen to the Podcast
Listen to learn how the distributed leadership model works at VUSD.

Listen to the Podcast
Listen to learn about why and how MVHS is reimagining assessment.