

Why Smaller Learning Communities

The public demands more from schools than ever before. The already excellent schools of the San Mateo Union High School District are on notice that they must become even better to meet the challenges of the 21st century. That means we must educate all students, regardless of social, economic or educational background. If we hold all students to high standards, then we must provide the necessary support systems for students to reach these goals. We must also provide a structure that will enable teachers to employ the best strategies and to provide greater personal care for their individual students.

The point of moving to Smaller Learning Communities as a means to raise achievement of all students is fourfold:

1. It will create greater personalization between teachers and students.
2. It will promote equity among students.
3. It will enhance the students' emotional well-being.
4. It will place an emphasis on collaboration and professional development to improve instruction.

Through smaller community, both students and teachers will perform at a higher level. Indeed, a major goal of moving to Smaller Learning Communities is to increase participation and success of students in rigorous, high-level, college preparatory classes. The goal is for all students to have the choice of attending a four-year college upon graduation.