

# SJ 2020

An invitation from

Chuck Reed, *Mayor of San José*

and

Dr. Charles Weis,

*County Superintendent of Schools*

to join the SJ2020 Initiative  
to close the achievement gap in  
San José within the next decade.

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## **Launch Event**

**San José City Hall**

**October 29, 2009**

## **Introduction of Honored Guests**

Dennis Cima | Senior Vice President, Silicon Valley Leadership Group

## **Welcome**

Chuck Reed | Mayor, City of San José

## **SJ2020 Initiative**

Dr. Charles Weis | Superintendent of Schools, Santa Clara County

## **SJ2020 Commitments**

Jon Whitmore | President, San José State University

Dr. Linda Murray | Acting Executive Director, Education Trust–West

Beth Gonzales | Member, PACT

Leslie Reynolds | Board President, San José Unified School District

Alicia Gallegos Fambrini | Director, San José Charter School Consortium

Dr. John Porter | Superintendent, Franklin-McKinley School District

## **Compact Signing**

Everyone

## **Closing Remarks**

Dr. Charles Weis

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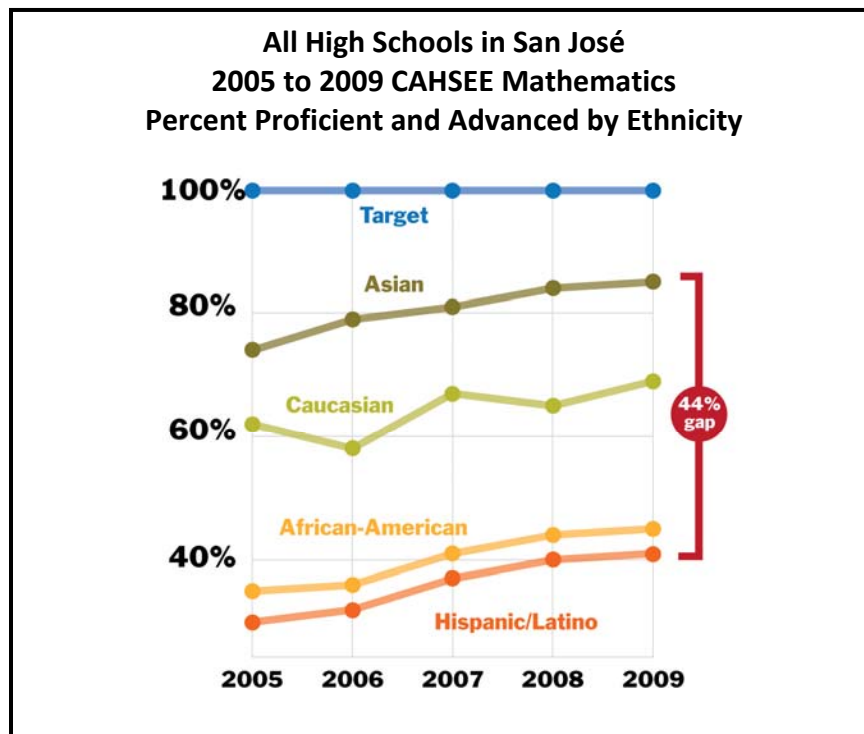
## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### THE GOAL

It is the vision of the City of San José, the Santa Clara County Office of Education, school districts, charter schools, colleges, and business and nonprofit community agencies to join together to eliminate the achievement gap in San José by 2020. The “achievement gap” refers to the disparity in academic performance between two groups: lower-performing Hispanic/Latino and African-American students, and higher-performing Asian and Caucasian students.

### THE URGENCY

In the city of San José, over 40,000 students are not proficient in their grade-level skills; that’s nearly *half* of all public school students tested.<sup>1</sup> A study by global consulting firm McKinsey & Company reports, “avoidable shortfalls in academic achievement impose heavy and often tragic consequences, via lower earnings, poorer health, and higher rates of incarceration.”<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup> The number of students testing not proficient in English-Language Arts is 42,153 (46% of the 91,353 students tested) and in mathematics is 40,084 (44% of the 91,291 students tested). Source: California Department of Education AYP data file 2009. However, these figures likely undercount the actual number of students who are not proficient, as only 61% of the 149,712 students in the City of San José were tested.

<sup>2</sup> *The Economic Impact of the Achievement Gap in America’s Schools: Summary of Findings*, April 2009, p. 5.

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The graph illustrates results from the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE), which all high schools students are required to pass in order to earn a high school diploma. Only about four out of 10 (41%) Hispanic/Latino students in San José tested proficient or advanced on the mathematics portion of the CAHSEE in 2009, compared to about eight out of 10 (85%) Asian students.

The economic losses to the City of San José due to dropouts are estimated at almost **\$400 million** over these students' lifetimes.<sup>3</sup> CEOs for Cities (a national network of urban leaders) asserts that, "across metropolitan areas, improving education levels could be one of the most powerful forces for improving income and economic well-being."<sup>4</sup> Their research has found that for each 2% increase of the population with a college degree, there is a 1% increase in personal income growth; in San José, 12,052 additional degree holders would translate to an additional **\$1.4 billion** in aggregate personal income *every year*.

The achievement gap has personal, economic, and moral implications for a society committed to the ideal of equal opportunity. This is the civil rights issue of our generation. Do we stand by as 40,000 students fail to succeed in our schools and in our community, or do we declare that we will work together to fix the problem? There can be only one choice: We must focus our efforts on eliminating the achievement gap.

## **THE STANDARD**

This will be our standard of success: *All students will test as proficient or advanced on grade-level state assessments.*

## **THE STRATEGIES**

Although the goal is ambitious, it is attainable. In our local schools, there are examples where the achievement gap has been eliminated or significantly reduced. We will take the strategies from these schools and implement them city-wide. Utilizing local best practices and findings from national research over the last three decades, we know what must be done to close the achievement gap:

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<sup>3</sup> Based on the number of middle and high school dropouts (2,328 students) in the city of San José in 2006-07, under the assumption that half will eventually complete high school, according to the California Dropout Research Project's *How California's Dropout Crisis Affects Communities*, April 2009.

<sup>4</sup> CEOs for Cities, *City Dividends: Gains from Improving Metropolitan Performance*, February 2009, p. 6.

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- Provide high-quality preschool programs that are accessible to all children that will prepare them to be successful in kindergarten
- Create a culture of success that includes high standards for all students
- Engage students in reflection and provide feedback to inform them of what they know and what they need to work on
- Recruit, develop, and retain high-quality teachers and effective leaders
- Use regular assessments to inform instruction
- Employ extended learning time strategies (i.e., longer days, longer school year, and preschool attendance)
- Involve parents in their children's education
- Utilize a multi-disciplinary approach and curriculum that is relevant to the real world, beyond high school (e.g., Career Technical Education)
- Unite the community to support students and families holistically

## **THE COMMITMENT**

Eliminating the achievement gap will take the dedication and commitment of the City of San José, the Santa Clara County Office of Education, school districts, charter schools, colleges, and business and nonprofit community agencies. As long as each agency is willing to play its role in addressing the issue and working together, we will help every child in San José achieve in school and in life. All SJ2020 partners will sign a *Compact to Eliminate the Achievement Gap* to affirm their commitment.

It is a bold vision, and it will take a bold commitment to realize it—a commitment to fundamentally change our culture, improve our practices, share and learn from one another, align resources, and work strategically to make San José the first large urban area in the nation to eliminate the achievement gap by the year 2020.

*This resolution template may be downloaded at [www.sccoe.org](http://www.sccoe.org).*

**RESOLUTION**  
**SUPPORTING SJ2020 INITIATIVE TO ELIMINATE THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP**  
**[ORGANIZATION]**  
**RESOLUTION NO. [#]:**

WHEREAS, the education of our youth is vital to their future and to the health and vitality of our society;  
and

WHEREAS, in the City of San José, over 40,000 students – nearly half of all public school students tested – are not proficient in their grade level skills; and

WHEREAS, avoidable shortfalls in academic achievement impose heavy and often tragic consequences via lower earnings, poorer health, and higher rates of incarceration; and

WHEREAS, there is a disparity in academic achievement across the student population, resulting in a significant “achievement gap” in which Hispanic/Latino and African-American students are less likely to be performing at proficient levels in English-Language Arts and Mathematics than White and Asian students; and

WHEREAS, the economic losses to the city of San José due to dropouts are estimated to run almost \$400 million over their lifetimes; and

WHEREAS, increasing college attainment in the San José metropolitan area by 12,052 graduates will result in an additional \$1.4 billion in aggregate personal income every year; and

WHEREAS, the achievement gap has personal, economic, and moral implications for a society committed to the ideal of equal opportunity; and

WHEREAS, there are local examples of schools that have eliminated or significantly reduced the achievement gap; and

WHEREAS, there are research-based strategies that have demonstrated their educational effectiveness at eliminating the achievement gap; and

WHEREAS, educators, parents, elected officials and governments, business leaders, and community organizations are joining the SJ2020 Initiative to Eliminate the Achievement Gap in San Jose by 2020.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that [ORGANIZATION] supports and endorses the SJ2020 Compact to Eliminate the Achievement Gap.

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## Compact to Eliminate The Achievement Gap

### The Goal

It is the vision of the City of San José, the Santa Clara County Office of Education, school districts, charter schools, institutions of higher education, and business and nonprofit community agencies to join together to eliminate the achievement gap in San José by 2020. We know what works; strategies are already being deployed in San José that are successfully closing the achievement gap in isolated areas. We need to take these strategies to scale, city-wide. Together, we will work strategically and be accountable to each other to align our efforts to eliminate the achievement gap.

### The Urgency

In San José, over 40,000 students—nearly *half* of all public school students tested—are not proficient in their grade-level skills. As a McKinsey study reports, “avoidable shortfalls in academic achievement impose heavy and often tragic consequences, via lower earnings, poorer health, and higher rates of incarceration.” The economic losses to the City of San José due to dropouts are estimated at almost \$400 million over these students’ lifetimes. The “achievement gap”—the disparity in achievement between under-performing Hispanic/Latino and African-American students on the one hand, and Caucasian and Asian students on the other—has personal, economic, and moral implications for a society committed to the ideal of equal opportunity. Do we stand by as 40,000 students fail to succeed in our schools and in our community, or do we declare that we will no longer stand for this and will instead work to fix the problem? There can be only one choice: We must focus our efforts on eliminating the achievement gap.

### The Standard

This will be our standard of success: *All students will test as proficient or advanced on grade-level state assessments.*

### The Commitment

The **City of San José** affirms it will align its efforts to help all students reach proficiency, including:

- Coordinating youth-focused efforts across City departments/programs
- Initiating partnerships between public schools and the City
- Developing policies that promote healthy and successful students

The **Education Community** affirms it will align its efforts to help all students reach proficiency, including:

- Establishing a culture of success by holding all students to a high standard that prepares them to meet postsecondary goals and to be successful in the 21st century workplace
- Recruiting, developing, and retaining effective teachers and leaders
- Supporting teachers and leaders in using frequent assessments to inform and drive instruction
- Aligning P-16 efforts to increase high school and college graduation rates

The **Business Community** affirms it will align its efforts to help all students reach proficiency, including:

- Engaging with education agencies to define the skills and knowledge students need to be successful in the workplace
- Sharing innovations and providing resources that help schools educate students more effectively
- Developing policies that encourage employees to be engaged in classrooms as skill-based volunteers

The **Nonprofit Community** affirms it will align its efforts to help all students reach proficiency, including:

- Partnering with schools to provide services that address the full continuum of students’ needs, making schools a center of the community
- Aligning resources and coordinating services with other organizations
- Building a culture that values education and success for all students

This will be a focused collaboration in which all partners bring best practices and resources (including networks, knowledge, and expertise) to the table. The undersigned affirm that they will reach out to parents and work together as engaged, informed, and involved partners to align resources and work strategically to help all students reach proficiency.



Santa Clara County  
Office of Education  
[www.sccoe.org](http://www.sccoe.org)