SEIZE YOUR OPPORTUNITY

#TeamSISD
2019-20 Annual Report

The right choice for ENDLESS OPPORTUNITIES.
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In a time, full of hurdles
We have adapted
We have adjusted
We have improvised
No matter the challenge…
We continue to Achieve Success as a Team

VISION
Tomorrow’s Leaders Learning Today

MISSION
The mission of the Socorro Independent School District is to optimize our students’ academic, artistic, athletic, and interpersonal skills.
Safe and Supportive Learning Environment
Safety is the top priority in Team SISD! Our efforts are endless in ensuring student/staff safety, campus security, emergency management, health/wellness protocols, and social/emotional support is in place, and making improvements to always Keep SISD Safe.

College and Career Readiness
All SISD students deserve a quality education with relevant, rigorous instructional standards that adequately prepare them for the college and career of their choice. Our 100 percent No Excuses Vision of Excellence promotes high expectations for our students and staff.

Highly Qualified, Effective Faculty and Staff
Highly qualified, effective faculty and staff are dedicated to improving student academic performance and ensure all students graduate college and career ready. SISD faculty and staff are committed to treat and educate all students as if they are their own children.

Home, School, Community Partnerships
Students, parents, faculty, staff, volunteers, and community members work together in Team SISD to increase student academic and behavioral achievement. Our strong partnerships that are fortified with unity, support, and respect ensure every student succeeds in our schools.

Accountability For ALL
All SISD students deserve a quality education that will prepare them to be successful in life. It takes a team to educate a child. Teachers, principals, assistant principals, support personnel, administrators and the superintendent have roles to fulfill in our quest for academic excellence.
Superintendent's Message

Over the last nine years, I have humbly and proudly worked with an amazing community in the Socorro Independent School District to establish and pursue a shared vision of success, which has taken our school district on a transformation from good to great.

As the proud superintendent of Team SISD, it has been an honor to lead and collaborate with students, parents, educators, employees, board trustees, community members, volunteers, and Partners in Education to accomplish hundreds of success stories, all of which have resulted in unprecedented student success.

One of the most notable is that SISD became the first and only large district in the El Paso region in 2019 to earn an “A” grade in the Texas Education Agency accountability ratings. For two consecutive years, SISD is the only district in the region and one of only three districts in a pool of the largest 50 in the state to earn the distinction for postsecondary readiness at the district level.

Our outstanding student and staff performance has generated numerous accolades at all levels and areas, including instruction, leadership, technology, counseling, financial responsibility, communication, fine arts, partnerships, and academic honors.

With our expansive achievements, Team SISD has become a destination district for students and families seeking overall success no matter the situation. As we continue to grapple with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, we remain 100 percent committed to treat and educate all students as if they are our own children.

From the bottom of my heart, I thank everyone in Team SISD for joining us on our journey to become the best school district on the planet. We will continue to unite as a team and work together to ensure all of you can Seize Your Opportunity in Socorro ISD!

Respectfully,

José Espinoza, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Board President’s Message

It is an honor to be part of the outstanding Socorro Independent School District as a longtime board member and as a parent, volunteer, and community member. We certainly have Achieved Success as a Team under the leadership of Dr. Espinoza and it is a pleasure to guide and govern the district as we continue to celebrate tremendous success together.

The great results have been accomplished as a team effort with incredible unity, perseverance, and compassion, especially over the past year as we all have had to deal with the unpredictable COVID-19 pandemic and its ramifications.

We were always in it together and we did everything the best that we could to continue instruction and operations and provide the comfort and support that everyone needed in Team SISD. We continue to move forward as a team with determination and pride to ensure every student succeeds!

I am forever grateful for the amazing people in our great school district who pour their heart and soul into their work for the children in our schools. I appreciate our dedicated students and parents who trust and believe in us to give them the best education and service they deserve.

Thank you to all our stakeholders and community members who know that Team SISD is the Right Choice for Endless Opportunities! Our commitment never wavers from doing what is best and right for our students and employees, and your support enables us to provide the resources and assistance so that they can succeed.

Our vision to ensure our students are Tomorrow’s Leaders Learning Today remains bright and clear. Together, I know we can achieve our goal of academic excellence as we prepare our students for a successful future in college, careers, and life!

Sincerely,

Cynthia A. Najera
Board President
The Socorro Independent School District Board of Trustees consists of seven volunteer elected citizens who are responsible for the governance of the school district and welfare of students, faculty, and staff. The board takes on the charge of upholding high standards of ethical leadership, responsibility, and transparency to provide endless opportunities for all students and staff to achieve success and to ensure the best learning and working environments across the district. The SISD Board of Trustees has earned honors for being an outstanding school board, having been recognized in the HEB Excellence in Education award program and selected twice as the Region 19 Board of the Year. The SISD board also earned the prestigious title of Texas Honor Board, one of the highest achievements a Texas school board can earn.
District Accolades

A Rated District and TEA Postsecondary Readiness Distinction
District award

2017 Escalante-Gradillas Prize for Best in Education Award
Superintendent José Espinoza, Ed.D.

2021 Best Communities for Music Education Award
Fine Arts • five consecutive years

2020 National Public Relations Association Golden Achievement Awards
Public Relations

2019 National School Public Relations Association Gold Medal
Public Relations

2020 American School Counselor of the Year Finalist and 2019 Texas School Counselor of the Year
Amanda Bustamante
Paso del Norte School

2019 CAFR Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting
District award • three consecutive years

2020 RYHT Raising Blended Learners Grant Recipient
District Award

2018-19 Texas K-12 Tech Savvy Superintendent Award
Superintendent José Espinoza, Ed.D.

2020-21 Lone Star Counselor Award
9 Counseling Programs

H-E-B Excellence in Education Large District Winner and Finalist
District Award • three years

H-E-B Excellence in Education Board Award Finalist & Semifinalist
Board of Trustees • three years

2020 Region 19 Elementary Teacher of the Year and 2020 Texas Teacher of the Year Finalist
Perla Lozoya

2021 Region 19 Elementary Teacher of the Year
Vista del Sol

Region 19 Board of the Year
Board of Trustees • two years

Texas Honor Board
Board of Trustees

Three Transparency Stars Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts Financial Services

Superior rating in the School Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas Financial Services

Texas Association of School Business Officials Award of Merit for Purchasing & Operations Financial Services • 10 years

2019 Texas School Public Relations Association Platinum Award
Public Relations
In 2019 and 2020, SISD became the only district in the El Paso County and the largest district in Texas to earn the Texas Education Agency top honors: “A” Rating and Postsecondary Readiness Distinction.

Attendance rate (2018-2019): 95.5%
Graduation rate (Class of 2019): 91.7%
2020 total graduates: 3,676
Scholarship and grants earned by graduates (2020): $59.8 million

ACCOUNTABILITY*
Rated Campuses that Met Standard: 47
Rated Campuses that did not meet standard: 0
Number of Distinction Designations earned: 163
District Accountability Rating: 90 (A)
District Distinction Designation: 1
Schools that earned Distinction Designations in every category: 2

*Based on 2019 data due to no 2020 TEA accountability ratings because of COVID-19
SISD has many security measures to keep a vigilant eye on campuses and facilities.

Every school in SISD has at least one security guard or police officer assigned to patrol the campus.

An access control system to screen individuals before granting entry to schools.

Panic buttons at schools to instantaneously alert police in the event of an emergency.

Metal detectors at the entrances of the Student Activities Complex with security guards and police officers checking for dangerous objects.

The district conducted 685 safety drills in 2020-21 to maintain emergency preparedness among SISD staff.

Services, which includes 50 total police officers and six dispatchers, maintains a strong partnership with local law enforcement agencies to ensure collaboration for routine law enforcement as well as in emergencies. In addition, award-winning K-9 units in the SISD police department ensure schools are drug-free zones.

Team SISD has a robust Emergency Operations Management program that works hand-in-hand with campus security guards and EOP administrators. The program ensures schools and the district are prepared to handle crises or emergencies. The SISD Safety and Security Committee meets regularly with a safety representative from each campus to ensure all are informed on the latest emergency operation plans and trainings. The district has implemented the NaviGate application to streamline communication, updates to campus/district EOPs, safety drills, and behavioral threat assessment manager. The district conducted 685 safety drills in 2020-21 to maintain emergency preparedness among SISD staff.

SISD works to meet the needs of the whole child with outstanding Child Nutrition Services, Health Services and Guidance and Counseling services across the district. With nutritious meals and social/emotional support, SISD students can set their sights on goals in the classroom. SISD Child Nutrition Services provides free Breakfast in the Classroom for all elementary, middle, and high school students. SISD has 26 participating Community Eligibility Provision campuses at which all students receive all meals for free.

The top priority in the Socorro Independent School District always has been to ensure the safety and security of all students and staff. Our 100 percent dedication to Keep SISD Safe has never been more important. In 2020, Team SISD worked tirelessly to ramp up health and safety protocols and establish new measures to combat the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. The district continues its round-the-clock work to protect students, employees, and families in SISD and the greater community.

SISD maintains a solid, comprehensive safety and security plan that has been continuously improved over the last nine years with additional programs, resources, and officers to Keep SISD Safe. All 49 schools are monitored 24/7 with a state-of-the-art video surveillance system that has a minimum of 15 cameras at each school. SISD Police
SISD Health Services promotes, protects, and maintains student, staff, and community health to its optimal level. The top priority of the 55 registered nurses in Team SISD is to protect the health and wellbeing of students and staff. School nurses are vigilant in caring for ill or injured students, conducting health screenings, health promotion and disease prevention.

The SISD Guidance and Counseling services provides excellent, comprehensive support to students, parents, and families. School counselors help with students’ academic, personal and social needs so that they can be well-rounded and productive citizens in our global society. The SISD counseling department trains all employees on suicide awareness and prevention and continues the Mental Health Awareness Taskforce to provide access to behavioral health services on school campuses through a partnership with Project Vida Health Center.

Safe, Supportive Learning Environment

Direction One

At the helm of Team SISD, Superintendent Jose Espinoza, Ed.D., along with the leadership team and board trustees, guided the district through uncharted waters during the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic to ensure safety/wellbeing of students and employees, continuity of instruction and maintaining operations regardless of the many challenges faced. Team SISD followed the guidance of local, regional, state, and national health authorities, met with other area school districts, and collaborated with partner agencies to execute the best course of action to protect Team SISD. All employees stepped up in many roles to support and meet the needs of students/families, including SISD police services, school nurses, transportation, custodial, maintenance and operations employees. One incredibly important service that never faltered was meal service. Child Nutrition Services employees have worked continuously to provide meals to all children in the community throughout the pandemic.

Combatting COVID
Meeting student/family needs, keeping safe
The Socorro Independent School District is committed to treating and educating all students as if they are our own children. As part of that commitment, Team SISD works tirelessly to provide a high-quality, rigorous, and relevant education for students to seize their opportunity and ensure they are prepared for a successful and prosperous future. With endless opportunities in academic programs and extracurricular activities, Team SISD students receive an unmatched educational experience that ensures they are successful now and in the future.

A strong foundation in Team SISD begins with a free half-day program for qualifying 3-year-olds who live within SISD boundaries and a free Pre-Kindergarten program for all 4-year-olds in the community. The early childhood programs provide engaging, hands-on learning for students to start their education. The curriculum includes social and emotional development, language development, technology, social studies, math, science, and physical development. In 2019-2020, Team SISD has 1,840 students enrolled in the Pre-K program and 430 students enrolled in the inaugural year of the 3-year-old program.

As children progress through their academic journey in Team SISD, a critical part is Operation College Bound, which provides countless activities that establish a college bound culture at their campuses. A “Yes I Can!” theme is promoted districtwide by increasing college and career awareness at all elementary, K-8, middle, and high schools. Free college classes at all high schools, the most Early College High School programs in the region and advanced academic academies ensure students are being prepared for the college and career of their choice. More Team SISD students are earning college credit while in high school by taking dual credit courses.

SISD students collectively earned more than 36,400 college credits valued at over $13.2 million in college cost savings in the 2019-20 school year alone.
EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

SISD, in collaboration with El Paso Community College, offers the most Early College High School programs in the region. SISD students can save money and be immersed in post-secondary education as they can earn a free associate degree or 60 college credit hours and a high school diploma in a rigorous and engaging college experience.

SISD was the first district in the region to open an early college high school, Mission Early College High School, in 2006.

In 2019-20, SISD opened three more early college high schools (Falcon Early College, Empire Early College and Pebble Hills Early College) making the district the only one in the region and one of few in the state to offer an Early College High School program in all comprehensive high schools in the district.

In 2019-20, SISD celebrated 150 graduates earning associate degrees through the Mission Early College High School, Socorro Early College, Rams Early College and Trailblazers Early College.


In the spring, summer and fall of 2020, SISD celebrated 150 graduates earning associate degrees through the Mission Early College High School, Socorro Early College, Rams Early College and Trailblazers Early College.
At the core of ensuring all students are college and career ready is to ensure we leave no student behind. The one-of-a-kind SISD WIN Academy was developed for children who are performing below grade level by one or more years. The successful program is offered at 19 campuses across SISD to students in grades second through ninth. It provides students, who struggle in a traditional education setting, more instructional time with a digital device and digital curriculum, and a teacher who loops with them for multiple years. The WIN Academy was introduced in 2015-16 at 10 schools. Since then, the academy has achieved much success in helping students improve their academic performance, discipline, and attendance. Among the endless opportunities in Team SISD is the innovative SISD Dual Language Academy/Academia de Dos Idomas launched in 2019 at Myrtle Cooper and Dr. Sue A. Shook elementary schools for kindergarten and first-grade students. Pre-Kindergarten was introduced for the 2020-21 school year. The academy now serves students in Pre-Kindergarten, kindergarten, first-grade, second grade, and third grade will be added in the 2021-22 school year. The academy uses a 50/50 model of Spanish/English instruction that teaches students to be bilingual and biliterate through rigorous instruction and multicultural experiences. Students in the program learn to develop high levels of language proficiency and literacy in both languages, demonstrate high levels of academic achievement and develop an appreciation and understanding of diverse cultures. The SISD Dual Language Academy serves some 350 students at both elementary schools.

SISD helps students seize their opportunities by giving them options and preparation to succeed in the workforce and careers. Team SISD’s award-winning Career and Technical Education enables students to earn some 6,000 industry-recognized certifications annually. Students earn skills, knowledge, and confidence to jump into lucrative jobs and trades through SISD’s nationally recognized CTE programs. SISD offers 16 career clusters and more than 46 specialized tracks for students to choose from. The district’s Career Awareness Showcase; Job Con; and College, Career, and Job Expo showcases the educational and career opportunities available to students while in high school and after graduation.
Every comprehensive high school in SISD offers an Advanced Academics Academy to give real-world experiences and specialized classes and training. The widely recognized academies provide students advanced instruction and high-tech skills so that students are fully prepared to succeed immediately in higher education and professional careers.

- Sparta Business Academy at Pebble Hills High School
- School of Advanced Technology Applications (SATA) at Eastlake High School
- SYNERGI4 at Montwood High School
- International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme at El Dorado High School
- Aztec Architectural Academy at El Dorado High School
- Health Professions Academy at Socorro High School
- Libertas Law Academy at Americas High School
Team SISD has a robust fine arts program to cultivate students’ creativity. The diverse programs engage students in educational and competitive settings where they can fine-tune their musical, visual arts, coordination skills, and showcase their talent in district, community and UIL competitive events. SISD fine arts programs earn consistent recognition at the local and state level.

Twenty-four students qualified as Texas Music Educators Association all-state musicians in 2020 and 2021. In 2021, 290 SISD music students earned sweepstakes awards in UIL Solo and Ensemble. In 2020-21, 133 middle and high school students made all-region band, 49 qualified for area and 7 qualified for state. In 2019-20, 125 middle and high school students made all-region band and 49 qualified for area, the most of all districts in El Paso. In 2019-20, all SISD high school marching bands received a Division 1 rating in the UIL 5A region, two bands qualified for the final competition at the area contest and one band advanced to the state marching band contest.

In 2021, Team SISD had the first cohort of all-state dancers represent at the Texas Dance Educators Association virtual conference. In 2020, eight art students were selected for the 2020 Texas Association of School Administrators/Texas Association of School Boards statewide gallery. Two students were chosen for their artwork to hang in the Texas Capitol and an elementary student was named the 2021 Elementary School Youth Art Month Flag Design winner. In 2020 and 2021, 21 art students qualified for the state VASE competition. In 2019 and 2020, 17 students earned honors in the El Paso Community College art contest.

SISD also produces champions in athletics with diverse athletic programs in which students gain valuable life skills, develop excellent sportsmanship, and strive for winning seasons. In 2020-21, some 15 athletes advanced to regional and state competitions and teams have earned 2 district, 2 bi-district and 1 area championship. In the 2019-20 school year, SISD varsity athletic teams earned 23 team trophies – 11 district, 7 bi-district, 4 area, and 1 regional championship. Also, 25 individual student-athletes won district and regional championships and one wrestler earned a state championship. Since 2015, some 500 SISD student-athletes have signed to continue playing their sports at colleges and universities across the country.
In the last two years, SISD has invested $22 million in laptops/tablets for ALL 47,000-plus students to have access to a personal mobile tech device.

Digital learning and technology have been at the forefront of SISD’s success since 2015. That year, SISD launched Operation Future Ready to expand digital teaching/learning opportunities for all students and staff. In the last two years, SISD has invested $22 million in laptops/tablets for ALL 47,000-plus students to have access to a personal mobile tech device. Team SISD also invests in technology as part of its Digitally Nurturing Academics Program (DNA 1:1 – one student to one laptop). DNA 1:1 started in 2014 and has expanded every year since the launch. For the last seven years through DNA, the SISD technology team has been providing laptops to incoming freshmen for 24/7 access to technology and digital learning during their four years of high school. The DNA program, which started at Socorro High School, has now expanded to every high school in the district and four middle and two K-8 schools. For the 2020-21 school year, some 4,000 laptops were provided to incoming freshmen throughout the district through DNA. In addition, this was the first year that all students in grades ninth through 12th at every SISD high school received a laptop through the DNA program, meeting the 1:1 initiative goal to give all high students a device by 2020-21.

In spring 2020, Team SISD teachers, staff, and leaders burned the midnight oil to ensure the pandemic would not deprive SISD students from the education they deserve. In March 2020, students started the new SISD Remote Learning Academy with instruction in their homes led by their dedicated teachers and parents. Over time, the academy grew stronger with great collaboration among SISD parents, teachers, and administrators. Grading adjustments were approved for remote learning to ensure that students, teachers, and families were not experiencing undue pressure. All SISD departments, especially Technology Services, provided exceptional support with laptop/tablet distribution, troubleshooting, and training. In June and July 2020, always with a focus on celebrating student success and undeniable team effort, SISD was able to conduct safe, socially distanced graduation ceremonies for the resilient and appreciative Class of 2020 graduates and their families.

PREPARING FOR A NEW YEAR, NEW NORMAL
Team SISD worked tirelessly over the summer months to enact its Back to School SAFELY plan for the unprecedented 2020-21 school year. While remote instruction continued for most, the district opened its doors with elaborate safety plans in place to welcome back first essential employees and, later as the COVID hospitalization rate improved in El Paso and restrictions were lifted, teachers and those students who chose in-person instruction.

The Back to School SAFELY plan was developed by the district Safety and Security Committee, in line with guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control, state and local health and government authorities and Texas Education Agency, to ensure the health and safety of all students and employees. The new measures considered the optimal ways to implement daily wellness checks, social distancing, and mask usage, while resuming instruction and supporting the physical, social, and emotional needs of all SISD students and staff.

The fine arts and athletics staff members did an outstanding job in adapting and following guidance from UIL, TEA and local health/government officials so that students could continue to participate in music, art, dance, and sports. Virtual lessons and trainings were incorporated, and a focus was emphasized on individual student growth. Events and games were recorded or shared live via apps such as YouTube and Mascot Media so that parents/families could continue to cheer on their children in a safe, remote manner.
Highly Qualified, Effective Faculty & Staff

Educators in the Socorro Independent School District are committed to treating and educating all students as if they are their own children. This dedication has resulted in unprecedented student success and widespread recognition for the outstanding work teachers, principals and staff are achieving in our schools. Each Team SISD educator is valued and supported with feedback, professional development, and a collaborative network so that they can focus on high performance for themselves and their students.

SISD has long been recognized for having a highly qualified and effective faculty and staff with team members consistently earning local, regional, state, and national awards. Team SISD has had eight regional Teacher of the Year winners with four consecutive winners since 2018, four state finalists and one state winner in elementary and secondary categories. Since 2016, more than 50 counseling teams have been recognized for their outstanding work in the Lone Star State School Counselor Association awards. SISD has had seven national RAMP award winners, four Texas School Counselors of the Year, three American School Counselor Association SCOY finalists and one national winner.

In addition, SISD educators and staff have been recognized by various organizations such as the Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association, Texas Association of Secondary School Principals, National Speech & Debate Association, LifeChanger of the Year, Texas Association of Student Councils, Texas Association of Literacy and Adult Education, College Board, Raise Your Hand Texas, the Consortium for School Networking, Texas K-12 CTO Council, just to name a few.

SISD employees – heroes conquering amazing feats

- SISD teachers quickly adapted to make Remote Learning Academy a success and seamlessly incorporated in-person instruction with remote learning to meet all students’ needs.
- Transportation employees delivered more than 19,804 remote learning packets from March 2020 to March 2021 to ensure students had access to their instructional materials.
- Child Nutrition Employees served more than 4.2 million meals from March 2020 to March 2021 for children in the community.
- SISD police officers monitor all district campuses/facilities 24/7 while assisting with other functions, such as student welfare checks, laptop distributions, COVID-testing and vaccinations.
- The Technology Services team executed SISD’s first-ever live streamed audio board meeting and has continued the new format so the district could maintain critical functions safely.
- SISD nurses have been critical in providing COVID-19 tests, promoting safety/health awareness and best practices at schools, and contact tracing in school communities.
- Over 700 SISD employees volunteered to become certified COVID-19 rapid test facilitators to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 within our SISD facilities.

Direction Three

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Direction Three
Team SISD provides endless opportunities for staff members to boost their professional growth. New teachers participate in the district’s nationally recognized Building Friends for the Future program where they are paired up with mentors that provide guidance and support on a regular, one-to-one basis. New principals are provided with highly qualified mentors during their first year as SISD leaders. The AP Academy develops assistant principals with resources and skills so they can be prepared to take on the leadership role of a principal. The Grow Your Own Grant allows instructional aides to earn their bachelor’s degree and certification to transition to full-time teachers. The peer-led Digitally Nurturing Academics Conference provides all SISD educators innovative blended learning strategies and ways to incorporate the latest web-based and technological resources in classroom instruction.

In addition, Team SISD has excellent partnerships with the University of Texas at El Paso, Texas Tech University and El Paso Community College to enable students and staff to seize their opportunities for academic advancement. In collaboration with UTEP, SISD provides opportunities for educators to earn masters and doctoral degrees. SISD was the first in the region to offer scholarships for teachers to attain master’s degrees and a certification to teach dual credit courses. The collaboration with the UTEP and EPCC has expanded SISD dual credit course offerings districtwide and opportunities for student enrollment in college. SISD was awarded a second TEA Principal Residency Grant that gives Team SISD teachers an innovative opportunity to participate in the Texas Tech Principal Fellows program. This is a nationally recognized, job-embedded graduate program that gives educators first-hand, real-world experience to become campus leaders.

With the abundant support and collaboration in Team SISD, educators develop a deep connection and loyalty to the district. SISD has more than 3,200 teachers and instructional aides in classrooms across the district. SISD teachers average 11 years of experience and nine years serving in the district. The teacher turnover rate in SISD is 11.1 percent, below the state average of 16.8 percent.

From the onset of the pandemic, Team SISD leadership reassured SISD employees that they would be taken care of. In unprecedented action with district administration recommendation and board approval, employee compensation policy was updated to ensure all district employees were paid during the district closure in spring 2020. While limited essential staff were required to complete critical functions, most employees, including teachers and support staff, could complete job duties via technology from the safety of their own home. The SISD COVID-19 Guidelines and Procedures Reference Manual was developed and shared with all employees to help them transition back to work safely. The SISD Human Resources department has assisted employees with concerns as everyone has been navigating the new normal at work. To further ease the stress of job performance during the pandemic, with a TEA waiver, administration recommendation and board approval, evaluations/appraisals for all employees in the district were waived for the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years.
Team SISD has tremendous support from diverse community members who are instrumental in the district’s success. The team unity and support has grown tremendously with long-standing partnerships growing stronger and new ones established each school year.

The district has a robust Partners in Education program with more than 300 partners who generously contribute time, service, and monetary donations to SISD schools. The PIE program has been an invaluable part of Team SISD and in 2020 the district worked to help businesses as they struggled with challenges during the trying times. The SISD community was encouraged to support our partners and the first-ever virtual Partners in Education Exhibition was conducted in the fall 2020 to give local businesses and nonprofit organizations the opportunity to share information on their services and resources still available to campuses during the pandemic.

SISD has more than 8,000 registered volunteers and more than 300 Partners in Education that support with time, service, and donations.

The SISD volunteer program includes another excellent group of proactive community members who unite to help the district and schools; SISD has more than 8,000 registered volunteers at 49 campuses and at the district level. In 2019-20, SISD volunteers completed 128,262 service hours with a value of some $3.3 million. On a regular basis, the volunteers help with numerous tasks, special events and school functions and within the last school year they have been critical in helping the district adjusted to remote learning and new safety protocols. During the pandemic, SISD volunteers selflessly served schools safely and remotely, assisting with take home kits for parade/drive through celebrations; preparing learning center game pieces, assembling booklets for math, science and reading; organizing virtual classroom parties, serving on district/campus committees to give input/feedback. PTAs and parent booster clubs had virtual meetings and virtual fundraisers in support of various student programs. Volunteers participated in virtual workshops and presentations offered by the SISD Volunteer Program and Region 19 ESC Parent Involvement Services. In addition, SISD volunteers have been recognized for their outstanding work. Five SISD volunteers have won the prestigious Heroes for Children Award from the Texas State Board of Education.
Parent groups, such as the Watch D.O.G.S. (Dads of Great Students), help keep schools safe and assist students and staff with special events and daily routines. In addition, SISD has cultivated great partnerships with real-estate professionals, lawmakers, and other civic leaders, who contribute to and laud the district’s achievements. These supporters regularly come together for annual events such as the mother-daughter and father-son conferences, Spring Games, Latino Family Literacy Project, Teacher of the Year event, State of the District, and numerous other campus-based activities.

Team SISD is highly supportive of its military families and adult students in the community. SISD proudly serves the highest population and percentage of military connected students in the region and the district had the most TEA Purple Star Awards in the state with 40 campuses earning the honor. The Purple Star Award recognizes schools that show their support and commitment to meeting the unique needs of military-connected students and their families. The SISD Community Education department supports adult students to earn their GED, take ESL, citizenship, and vocational classes. SISD Community Education has been nationally recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the National Skills Coalition for working in collaboration with the SISD Career and Technical Education to provide adult students with free skills courses to earn certifications in business and industry and be prepared for success in the workforce.

Team SISD also has great success uniting to advocate for its students, employees, and schools. The district has made a significant impact with Walk for Success, a proactive effort to bring students back to school to earn their high school diploma. The program has recovered more than 320 students, helped dozens graduate, and has contributed to the district’s graduation rate of 91.7 percent. SISD’s highly lauded Stand and Deliver, a unique event to extend a personal outreach to SISD parents and families, reached more than 14,000 families, convinced parents to keep their children enrolled in SISD schools, and contributed to an SISD enrollment increase of 1,200+ in two years.

SISD has an expansive network of followers on social media platforms, which allows for the district to share timely, critical information and news to its stakeholders. Follow Team SISD on its social media channels to get updates and to interact with the district.

SISD maintained consistent communication with employees, students, parents, and the entire community to assure everyone that keeping Team SISD safe was the top priority during the pandemic. Every decision made was with the health and safety of all students and staff at top of mind. Comprehensive messages addressed the many questions from stakeholders transparently and in a timely manner to keep Team SISD informed on every development within the district. A special webpage was created, Dr. Espinoza delivered numerous emails and video messages, updates were shared on social media. In addition, many actions were taken to emphasize the spirit of unity in Team SISD that would allow the district to maintain success despite the challenges. SISD gathered feedback via employee surveys and focus groups, participated in the statewide #BeTheLight movement, and established Family Fridays during remote learning to promote the emotional well-being of SISD families.
The Socorro Independent School District is committed to maintaining fiscal integrity, transparency and responsibly managing taxpayer funds, and consistently earns recognition for its outstanding financial management.

Team SISD received a Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting (COE) for its 2019 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) by the Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO). The award signifies high achievement in the district’s commitment to transparent and high-quality financial reporting.

The district also has earned three Transparency Stars from the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts program, which recognizes local governments for going above and beyond in their financial transparency efforts. The stars earned are for traditional finance, debt obligations and contracts and procurement.
For 11 consecutive years, Socorro ISD has earned an A in the School Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST), the highest possible rating in the system. The rating cites the district as accountable in financial management practices and providing the maximum allocation for instructional purposes.

The district also earned the 2020 Texas Association of School Business Officials Award of Merit for Purchasing & Operations for maintaining professional standards in the acquisition of goods and services. This is the 10th year in a row that the district has won this award.

In addition, the Fitch Rating Agency reaffirmed strong bond ratings for SISD maintaining its underlying financial rating of AA. Factors that support the AA rating include the districts above average revenue growth, revenue raising capacity, strong gap-closing capacity and low fixed costs. Moody’s Investors Service assigned SISD an Aa2 underlying bond rating based on a stable financial outlook and an AAA enhanced rating based on a guarantee from the Texas Permanent School Fund. Moody’s cited the district’s robust financial position, large and growing tax base, and manageable pension burden. The district also has an S&P rating of AA-.

Throughout the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, SISD leadership met daily and/or weekly to direct critical functions and instruction and to ensure community services continued. Every member of Team SISD was integral in maintaining successful operations in the district, including teachers working one-on-one, virtually with students, custodians regularly and thoroughly disinfecting and cleaning facilities, and technology services providing laptops/tablets/ internet access and support for students and employees to continue school and office work.

Numerous essential teams across the district contributed to the district’s overall success in continuity of services during the pandemic. One of the most critical functions was to provide meal service for all children in the community during the closure. CNS streamlined operations to safely distribute meals to parents/students with socially distanced procedures to ensure all children who needed the vital nutrition service were provided the opportunity all year long. The SISD Police Services and Health Services departments also have provided essential operations and valuable support during the district closure. SISD Police Services continued its chief role in Keeping SISD Safe and provided extra help as the community adjusted to new operations. The SISD school nurses and Health Services department stepped up to support employees, students, and parents in the Team SISD community who had questions or concerns regarding COVID-19, providing COVID-19 testing and vaccines, and implementing isolation and contact tracing procedures on campus for COVID-19 positive cases. Transportation employees were integral in delivering learning packets to students, delivering some 20,000 packets to students’ homes since March 2020.

The SISD Facilities and Planning team has successfully moved Bond 2017 projects forward despite the challenges the district has had to address due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The district has kept on schedule with all projects in Bond 2017, including much progress on the highly anticipated reconstruction of Socorro High School.

FINANCIAL INTEGRITY & TRANSPARENCY

**Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas**
- A-rating – 11 consecutive years

**Texas Association of School Business Officials**
- Award of Merit – 10 consecutive years

**Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting**
- Certificate of Excellence – 3 consecutive years
Team SISD has maintained tremendous support from the community to improve and construct facilities for students and staff through its successful bond programs. SISD is progressing with projects through the $448.5 million Bond 2017, which was approved by voters in November 2017, to keep up with growth in the district and upgrade facilities to provide state-of-the-art and equitable learning environments.

Through Bond 2017, SISD completed Cactus Trails Elementary, which opened in 2019, to serve the rapidly growing Pebble Hills community. The district celebrated the completion of baseball, softball fields, tennis courts, marching band practice area, and parking lots at Socorro High School in the first phase of the highly anticipated total reconstruction of the flagship school. The district is on schedule with all projects in Bond 2017 to deliver Promise Made, Promises Kept.

An independent citizen Bond Accountability Committee ensures the accountability surrounding all elements of the $448.5 million capital improvement program. The committee is updated regularly and reviews progress of Bond 2017, asks questions, provides feedback, shares concerns, and is tasked with keeping the district accountable to fulfilling its commitment to the community.

**BOND 2017 PROJECTS**

- **Reconstruction Of Socorro High School** $135,000,000
- **New Construction** $105,820,625
- **Support Services** $23,610,000
- **High School Improvements** $95,759,375
- **Elementary Multi-purpose Rooms** $20,810,000
- **Athletic Improvements** $67,500,000

Learn more about Bond 2017 at sisd.net/bond2017
Overall #1 Student Performance
Overall, SISD students outperform the state and region in STAAR/EOC exams.

Advanced Career & Technical Training
Team SISD’s Career and Technical Education program provides unmatched opportunities for students to graduate from high school prepared for the workforce with industry-recognized certifications and licenses.

Award-Winning Fine Arts Programs
SISD offers award-winning, diverse and competitive fine arts programs to enhance student creativity, coordination, and discipline for a complete educational experience.

One-of-a-Kind WIN Academy
The unique WIN Academy provides students who struggle in a traditional education setting more instructional time with a digital device, digital curriculum, and a teacher who loops with them for multiple years.

World-Class Facilities
SISD facilities are of the highest-quality, and well-maintained to ensure students have the best learning environments. Continued improvements and new schools provide modern classrooms, specialized, and collaborative learning spaces.

Free College Classes
SISD gives students the opportunity to earn an associate’s degree or 60 college credit hours, concurrent with a high school diploma, in one of seven early college high school programs and through various degree plans at every high school.

Innovative Advanced Academic Academies
Every comprehensive high school in SISD offers a unique advanced academics academy to give real-world experiences and specialized classes and training.

Championship Athletes & Teams
The SISD athletic program develops student athletes who excel on the playing field, win numerous championships, and thrive in the classroom.

Free Pre-K, 3-year-old program
SISD ensures young students receive the support and instruction they need to be successful in pre-k and beyond with FREE FULL-DAY Pre-K and FREE HALF-DAY 3-year-old programs for students who qualify.

State-of-the-Art Technologies
Through Operation Future Ready, Team SISD is committed to invest in the latest instructional technology tools and resources for students and teachers to ensure digital learning is taking place in classrooms across the district.

The Right Choice for Endless Opportunities

#TeamSISD
SEIZE YOUR OPPORTUNITY
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