



CASE STUDY | MOUNTAIN VIEW WHISMAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

K-12 District Builds Capacity for Equity Progress

To address its student equity gaps, Mountain View Whisman partnered with Hanover to build a strategic framework for supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the district.



THE DISTRICT

Mountain View Whisman School District

LOCATION

Mountain View, CA

THE CHALLENGE

To engage in a committee-led process to develop equity metrics and continuous reporting mechanisms

HANOVER SOLUTIONS

Advisory Services, School Climate, Student Success

In the heart of California's bustling Silicon Valley, Mountain View Whisman School District (MVWSD) serves nearly 5,000 pre-K-8 families from diverse ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. With a focus on creating an inclusive and welcoming culture, the district began taking steps to build an infrastructure to address equity at a systemic level.

In 2020, Superintendent Ayindé Rudolph hired the district's first Director of Equity, Megan Pohlman, and established an equity advisory committee to help collaborate and sustain the work. Pohlman was charged with not only leading the large 30-member committee, but also establishing data-driven metrics and reporting mechanisms to chart the district's progress toward equitable student outcomes.

THE CHALLENGE

To establish a baseline of the district's current state, Hanover helped facilitate a comprehensive look at the district's historical data to identify equity gaps. This work revealed that over decades, district operations had resulted in stark equity gaps for some subgroups of students.

Armed with this information, Pohlman faced several daunting challenges, from building trust with stakeholders, to skillfully using the data to build support for change. Moreover, she needed to help staff collaborate across departments to achieve new and better results.

“In a lot of districts, there’s a notion that committees don’t actually get work done. What we were able to do with Hanover in the first five months, however, was set a foundation for the members to meaningfully contribute and engage in work projects. We were able to workshop an equity vision and mission statement. It turned out beautifully and everyone is still really proud of it.”

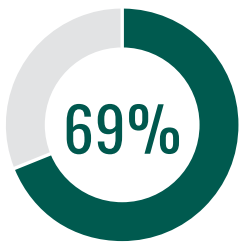
Megan Pohlman
Director of Equity

THE SOLUTION: ESTABLISHING A MEANINGFUL EQUITY FRAMEWORK

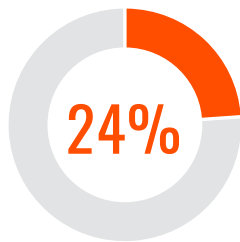
To inform the district's strategy, the equity advisory committee was composed of parents, staff, students, and a board trustee with varying levels of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) expertise. Hanover staff worked closely with Pohlman to design a sequence of trainings and deliverables to help the committee set a solid foundation for advancing equity work for years to come.

EQUITY WORKSHOPS

Hanover's team co-facilitated a workshop series to help the committee build trust, explore what equity means, and develop a shared understanding of equity in education. Before each session, Hanover consulted with Pohlman to tailor the work around the group's evolving needs. After each workshop, Pohlman facilitated a "homework" assignment with the group to extend their learning.



The percentage of MVWD students who identify as non-white



The percentage of students who qualify for the free and reduced lunch program



50

The number of languages spoken by students

EQUITY VISION AND MEASUREMENT PRACTICES

The workshops enabled the committee to establish vision and mission statements to guide their work. With consensus around their vision, the committee was ready to dive into data and explore how to measure equity. Hanover shared best practices on data analysis, outcomes measurement, and benchmarking to help the committee determine which metrics and actions to consider. To frame the work ahead, the committee developed four thematic equity pillars:

- Academic readiness
- Access
- Representation
- Wellness

EQUITY DATA INSIGHTS

To showcase the district's equity data, Hanover worked with Pohlman to develop a shareable infographic to explain complex data patterns. This visual tool can be refreshed each year to illustrate the district's longitudinal progress, pinpoint gaps, and identify focused improvement areas.

“We are very intentional about how transformation and change happen within our district and Hanover is responsive to our needs. When we are in the initial creative stages of a new initiative, we feel supported by Hanover’s guidance. When it’s time to make a big decision, Hanover offers best practices but gives us the flexibility and space to critique our choices internally.”

Megan Pohlman
Director of Equity

THE OUTCOME: SUSTAINABLE PROGRESS TOWARD EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

MVWSD's equity-focused initiatives have successfully established a foundation that will advance the district's equity progress for many years. By partnering with Hanover, the district was able to:

- Educate and engage a large, diverse group of stakeholders in collaborative equity work
- Produce multiple equity project deliverables to inform future work
- Help staff understand what equity work looks like and what data to monitor
- Identify key performance indicators to track progress over time

MVWSD is now primed to continue its equity journey by updating its equity data infographic and developing an annual scorecard. These tools will enable the district to continue monitoring its progress and share it with the broader community. In partnership with Hanover, MVWSD continues to scale its equity projects to build a strategic, sustained effort to overcome institutional barriers, close achievement gaps, and invest in the success of all students.