



Information for Applicants for the Position of **SUPERINTENDENT**

THE POSITION

The Board of Education of San Luis Coastal Unified School District (SLCUSD) seeks an exceptional educational leader to serve as its next Superintendent. This appointment marks a significant leadership transition following more than 17 years of stable and highly regarded service.

The Superintendent serves as the chief executive officer of the district and is responsible for implementing Board policy, leading district operations, managing the budget, and ensuring high-quality educational outcomes for all students. Working in close partnership with a cohesive and engaged Board of Education, the Superintendent will provide visionary leadership while maintaining strong systems of accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement.

The next Superintendent will inherit a district with many strengths, including dedicated staff, strong community support, and high-quality programs, while also leading through a period of fiscal, demographic, and organizational transition. Key aspects of the role include:

- Providing a clear, student-centered vision aligned to the district's core value that "All Means All."
- Leading long-term fiscal planning within a complex community-funded environment
- Supporting and developing a high-performing leadership team and workforce
- Maintaining strong relationships with employee groups, families, and community partners
- Navigating evolving community expectations with transparency, responsiveness, and integrity
- Ensuring continued progress in closing opportunity and achievement gaps

This is a leadership role that requires both stability and forward-thinking innovation, with a strong emphasis on trust-building and effective communication.

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

San Luis Coastal Unified School District seeks a Superintendent who brings a demonstrated record of effective leadership and the professional capacity to guide a high-performing district through complexity and change.

The successful candidate will:

- Demonstrate deep expertise in school finance and budget management, including multi-year fiscal planning, community-funded district dynamics, and the ability to communicate complex financial realities clearly to diverse audiences
- Be an experienced leader with a strong background in public education, with a preference for candidates who have served as a superintendent or district-level executive in a comparable district
- Possess a proven record of improving student outcomes and closing achievement and opportunity gaps for all students, including English learners, students with disabilities, students experiencing poverty, and historically underserved populations
- Demonstrate strong instructional leadership, with genuine classroom experience and a clear understanding of effective teaching and learning across grade levels
- Establish and sustain productive, trust-based relationships with employee associations, with experience including traditional and interest-based bargaining, necessary to navigate fiscal stress and organizational transition

- Use data effectively to inform decision-making, drive continuous improvement, and communicate progress transparently to the Board and community
- Demonstrate political acumen and the ability to navigate complex local, state, and legislative contexts, including Diablo Canyon and TK revenue implications
- Develop and sustain relationships with local government, business, and non-profit organizations
- Build, support, and hold accountable a high-functioning cabinet and leadership team, with a commitment to developing leadership capacity throughout the organization

PERSONAL PROFILE

In addition to professional qualifications, the Board places high value on personal attributes that foster trust, connection, and effective leadership within the SLCUSD community. The successful candidate will:

- Be trustworthy and transparent, demonstrating consistent follow-through and honest communication as the foundation of effective leadership with all stakeholder groups
- Be a visible, accessible, and genuinely engaged leader, regularly present across the full district, in ways that reflect authentic belonging rather than institutional obligation
- Communicate clearly and effectively with a wide range of audiences, delivering difficult messages with care, favoring proactive and two-way communication over reactive messaging
- Demonstrate high emotional intelligence and empathy, showing genuine warmth, humility, and interest in the experiences of staff, students, and families as individuals
- Be a strong listener who fosters genuinely inclusive dialogue, learning the district's culture, history, and community dynamics before implementing significant change
- Exhibit courage and sound judgment, be willing to take on difficult issues, hold people accountable with care, and stay the course under political and financial pressure
- Be collaborative and relationship-oriented, able to unify varied perspectives, involve education partners meaningfully in decision-making, and build trust-based labor-management relationships
- Show authenticity and approachability, be genuine in interactions, connected to diverse families and communities across the district, and committed to long-term leadership with a desire to be part of this community

THE DISTRICT

San Luis Coastal Unified School District serves a richly diverse community, bringing together approximately 7,600 students of varied cultures, experiences, and languages across ten elementary schools, two middle schools, two comprehensive high schools, and one alternative high school. The district's commitment to maintaining relatively small schools is a deliberate expression of its core philosophy of knowing students well.

That philosophy is evident throughout the organization. SLCUSD is widely recognized for the quality of its teaching staff and the breadth of its instructional programs, which span AP, CTE, AVID, and dual-language immersion. That recognition extends beyond the classroom, with the District having earned state and national awards and designations spanning academics, governance, and operations. Arts education and co-curricular opportunities are treated as essential components of a complete education, not additions to it. Social-emotional supports and inclusive school environments are embedded across the district, reflecting a genuine commitment to the whole child.

The District's positive labor relations, reflected in its status as a Merit System District for classified employees, are emblematic of a broader collaborative organizational culture that defines how SLCUSD operates. Strong parent engagement and the support of the San Luis Coastal Education Foundation, a

robust nonprofit partner providing meaningful resources and enrichment opportunities for students reflect a community deeply invested in its schools. Together, these qualities round out a District that, by most measures, functions as a model of what California public education can be.

SLCUSD operates as a community-funded district, a structure that has historically provided financial stability and program flexibility, benefiting students and staff. At the same time, the district faces fiscal pressures, including anticipated loss of key revenue sources and rising costs associated with program expansion and staffing, all of which will require clear-eyed financial leadership in the years ahead.

Through it all, the district's guiding principle remains constant. "All Means All" is not simply a slogan; it is the standard by which SLCUSD measures its decisions, programs, and progress in ensuring that every student has access to high-quality opportunities and the support needed to succeed.

THE COMMUNITY

SLCUSD serves a vibrant and highly engaged Central Coast community that includes the cities of San Luis Obispo and Morro Bay, as well as the communities of Los Osos and Avila Beach. The region is known for its natural beauty, strong civic culture, and exceptional quality of life, and that community pride is reflected directly in the strength of its public schools.

Residents have consistently demonstrated their commitment to education through successful bond measures, high levels of volunteerism, and active parent organizations. Strong relationships with California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo, Cuesta College, local cities, and nonprofit organizations further distinguish SLCUSD as a district with deep civic roots and meaningful partnerships that benefit students, families, community, and staff alike.

The community also presents the next Superintendent with genuine opportunities for impact. The high cost of living, while a real pressure on staff recruitment and retention, invites creative regional partnerships and workforce solutions. The district's increasing socioeconomic diversity enriches the community and strengthens the case for equity-centered programs in which SLCUSD already excels. Stakeholder interest in broader inclusion in decision-making is an open door for a leader who communicates transparently and builds trust across all segments of the community.

SELECTION PROCESS

The Board of Education has retained Peggy Lynch, Ed.D., and William Banning of Leadership Associates as consultants to recruit qualified candidates. The consultants will screen applications and recommend candidates to the Board for interviews and further consideration. The Board will have the opportunity to review all applications submitted. Finalists will have an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the community and schools. Board members reserve the right to visit the District and communities of a candidate prior to a final decision.

DESIRED EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE

- An educator with TK-12 experience
- California Administrative Service Credential (or eligibility)
- Master's Degree or Doctorate (preferred)
- Bilingual candidates are encouraged to apply

SALARY AND CONTRACT

The salary will be competitive and based on qualifications and experience. The approximate range is \$300,000 - \$340,000. A multi-year contract will be considered.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

To be considered, the candidate must provide:

- A letter of introduction
- A fully completed application form
- A resume
- Three current letters of recommendation (within the past 12 months)
- Verification of degrees and credentials (finalists only)

All materials will be acknowledged and treated confidentially.

THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Ellen Sheffer, President

Brian Clausen, Clerk

Robert Banfield, Member

Mark Buchman, Member

Erica Flores Baltodano, Member

Marilyn Rodger, Member

Chris Ungar, Member

San Luis Coastal Unified School District is an equal opportunity employer.

APPLICATION PROCESS

To request application materials for the San Luis Coastal Unified School District Superintendent position, visit www.leadershipassociates.org/active-searches and select San Luis Coastal Unified School District.

For other inquiries, contact Penny Pyle, Search Support Specialist, at ppyle@leadershipassociates.org.

Applications must be completed and returned via email by 12:00 noon, Monday, August 17, 2026.

Consultants:

Peggy Lynch, Ed.D.

William Banning

Leadership Associates

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