



SOAR

Support Office for Access and Resources



**For Assistance and Resources for students, please
contact the SOAR Office at SOAR@mdusd.org**

Foster Youth

Homeless Youth

Gender Support Planning

Newcomer/Refugee/Asylum Youth

Indian Education Program Youth

Human Trafficking



The SOAR Team



Vicky Conerly (Sr. Secretary)



Evelyn Mercado
(Community/Family Resource
Worker)



Rosie Reid (Program Specialist)



Medaja Elias (Counselor)



Vanessa Castillo (Social Work Specialist)



Yeganeh Mousseli (Social Work
Student Intern)



Estrella Estrada (Social Work Specialist)



Vision



The SOAR Program is committed to ensuring equitable access to education for every student in MDUSD. We work to remove systemic and situational barriers that impact students and families, using practices that are:

- Trauma-informed
- Linguistically responsive
- Culturally affirming



Student Basics

ANY family can come to the SOAR
Office from 7:30am-4:30pm
Monday-Friday for:

Clothes
Backpacks
School Supplies
Hygiene Kits
Glasses
Food Resource Referrals
Public Assistance Referrals



Student Groups Served

01

Mckinney-Vento

Students who lack access to fixed, regular, adequate housing

02

Foster Youth

Students who have entered the Child Welfare System due to abuse or neglect

03

Empowerment

Students who are involved with the criminal justice system

04

Newcomer/Refugee/Asylum

English learners who have come to this country within the last three years and/or refugee students who were not born in the U.S.

05

LGBTQIA+

Students requiring gender support because of their LGBTQIA status

06

American Indian Education Program

Students enrolled in the Local American Indian Education Program

07

Human trafficking

Students who have been commercially trafficked for labor or sexual activity

08

Other

Students with extreme needs who do not fall into these categories (no promises, but we'll try)



Support Office for Access and Resources

Identification Process



McKinney-Vento	SOAR staff screens family and does a needs assessment
American Indian	Family self-certified by application
LGBTQIA+	Students or families self-identify
Human Trafficking	By students, families, and staff
Other Students with Extreme Need	Student, families, and staff referrals
Foster Youth	Notified by CWS, Foster Focus, caregiver, staff
Justice-Involved	Notified by court school student, family, CCCOE, staff, YEIP,
Newcomer/Refugee/Asylum	In Ellevation by criteria



Fixed

This arrangement is not likely to change on a moment's notice

Regular

The arrangement is all in one location

Adequate

The living arrangement is “substandard” (reasonable capacity based on occupancy, safe and hygienic, all basic utilities, working kitchen and toilet)

(Extreme Financial hardship)



Chronic Environmental Trauma

- Inability to meet basic physical and psychological needs
- Lack of privacy or personal space
- Concern for safety of belongings
- Struggle to access to medical and dental services
- Higher exposure to violence and emotional stress





Their Reality- Shelters





Their Reality – Hotel/Motels



Michael M.

13 6 3

over 5 years ago

I wouldn't come here if I were you!! This is the worse of the worse. Rooms drastically need to be upgraded, mattresses are terrible rooms stink and u have cockroaches and bed bugs as roommates.

Please take my word for it, spend the extra 10 bucks and hi elsewhere. This place gives new meaning to roach hotel.

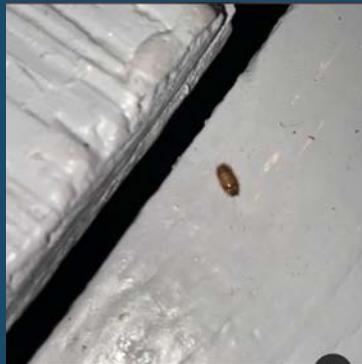


Steve B.

0 14 3

10 months ago

Do not ever go here!! I booked a room here late, right when you walk in the room you can tell it has not been cleaned. The walls were yellow, carpet missing under the beds, mold around the tubs and a small tv to accommodate for two beds. In addition, the small fridge is rusted the white paint is chipping from it!! This is definitely the worst hotel I have booked.



Stephen T. Elite '25

5 93 313

over 3 years ago

The adage, "you get what you pay for" applies to this establishment. Currently staying here for one reason...the price. It's not for the location, people or quality of the room. All of which appear pretty shady and bad. I should have known when I pulled in and was hit up for money while standing at the registration window. However circumstances dictated that I needed temporary housing and this is where I decided to stay.

Don't expect much at all. The room has a distinct smell, reminds me of my grandparents to be honest, very unwelcoming. The room is basic, a refrigerator and TV (only analog, no menu) with a broken remote. No coffee maker or microwave, so don't set you expectations high. It's as barebones as it gets. The bed quite "springy" during the night, but thankfully the air conditioner worked. About the only positive of the room.

Will I stay here again? Nope. Can't even recommend it. It's bad but it beats sleeping in a car. Although not by much.





- [illegible]

#8275199



Frequent Disruption

The Children's Law Center of California indicates that for children in foster care for 24 months or longer, 44% experienced 3 or more placements, and 15% experienced 5 or more placements.





Barriers to Education

Schoolwork/ Homework

- Lack of space to work quietly
- Lack of supplies at home

Behaviors

- Fatigue
- Hunger
- Hygiene
- Poor attention span
- Difficulty socializing
- Inappropriate school behaviors

Attendance

- Erratic attendance and tardiness
- Chronic absenteeism



OUR GOAL IS TO REMOVE THESE BARRIERS!

ELA

Math

All Students

All Students

State



Orange

18.3 points below standard

Maintained -2.1 Points

Number of Students: 14,621

All Students

All Students

State



Orange

45.5 points below standard

Maintained 2.1 Points

Number of Students: 14,660

Foster Youth

Student Group

State



Red

137.9 points below standard

Declined 18.6 Points Ⓢ

Number of Students: 29

Homeless

Student Group

State



Red

168.8 points below standard

Maintained -0.1 Points

Number of Students: 278

Foster Youth

Student Group

State



Red

156.2 points below standard

Maintained -2.5 Points

Number of Students: 29

Homeless

Student Group

State



Orange

137.2 points below standard

Increased 8.2 Points Ⓢ

Number of Students: 237

LEARN MORE
Suspension Rate

All Students

State



Orange

4.5% suspended at least one day

Increased 0.4% ⓘ

Suspensions



Chronic Absenteeism



All Students

All Students

State



Yellow

18.5% chronically absent

Declined 5.8% ⓘ

Number of Students: 21,951

Foster Youth

Student Group

State



Red

15.2% suspended at least one day

Increased 5.2% ⓘ

Number of Students: 99

Homeless

Student Group

State



Red

11.4% suspended at least one day

Increased 1.6% ⓘ

Number of Students: 852

Foster Youth

Student Group

State



Orange

33.3% chronically absent

Declined 15.1% ⓘ

Number of Students: 51

Homeless

Student Group

State



Orange

45.7% chronically absent

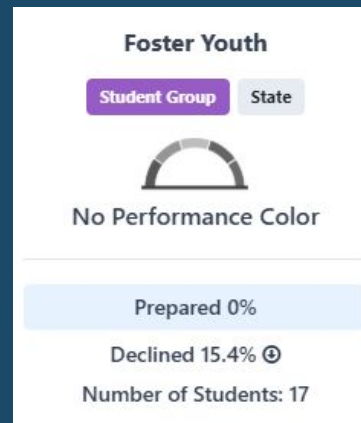
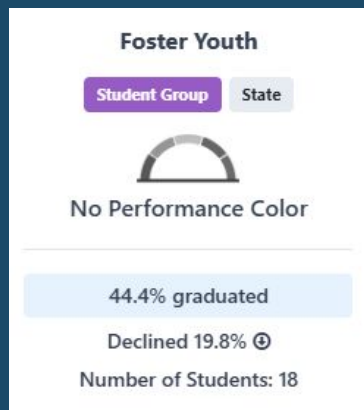
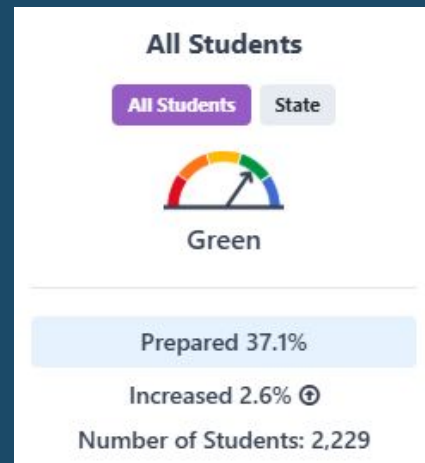
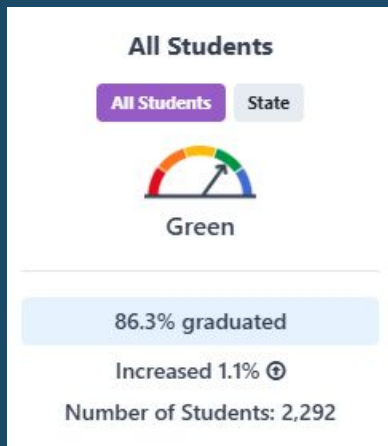
Declined 1.4% ⓘ

Number of Students: 497



Graduation Rate

College & Career Readiness





SOAR GROUPS AND COUNSELOR CHECK-INS

MCKINNEY-VENTO

Unhoused

FOSTER YOUTH

Child Welfare

NEWCOMER

EL $\leq$ 3 Years

OTHER

All Other Groups

Counselor Check-In
Required for All

Check-In Optional,
Not Necessarily with
Counselor; SOAR
Involvement for All
Tier 2-3



4 Check-ins Per Year (at Least)

Check-Ins are due by the following dates:

1. By October 15, preferably within the first 30 days of school
2. December 15
3. March 15
4. May 15

*More frequent check-ins may be needed on a case-by-case basis.





Counselor Screens

Transcript Review

- Credit Exemptions
- Partial Credits
- 5th-Year
- Tutoring Needs or Internal Academic Support



Behavior/Attendance/SEL Data Review

- CARE Team
- SART/SARB



Resources Needed?

Public Transportation

Backpack

Tutoring

School Supplies

Food

Medical

Dental

Vision

Internet

Extracurriculars



Clothes



Counselors Talk to Student About:

Attendance

Academic progress / need for tutoring

Disciplinary history (if applicable)

Extra-curricular participation

*SEL check-in (how student is feeling,
what's going well, challenges, how are
things going at home?)*

*Does the student or family need any
mental health supports, grief groups,
parenting classes, anger
management*





How did we get here?

Our Implementation Process



Empathy Interviews

A selection of interviews were conducted with FYS and MKV youth to understand barriers

LCAP Goals

1

All students will receive a high quality education in a safe and welcoming environment with high expectations and rigorous instruction in the California State Standards that prepare them for college and career.

2

Highly qualified, culturally proficient, and responsive staff will create a safe and engaging learning environment respectful of all students' backgrounds ensuring they are college and career ready when they graduate.

3

Families and community members will be informed, and empowered as partners with Mt. Diablo Unified to support student learning and improve student outcomes.

4

Focal scholars, specifically African American students, Foster Youth, students experiencing homelessness, students with IEPs and multilingual students, will experience culturally responsive practices and be provided rigorous instruction within an educational environment that builds trust and inclusive partnerships between the students, families, and staff.

5

All students at Crossroads High School and Olympic High School will demonstrate a 6% increase in attendance rate and a 6% increase in on-pace graduation rate by June 2026, leading to an increase of 6% in graduation rates.



Generate Buy-In at All Levels

- Chiefs of Pupil Services and Ed Services (Assistant Superintendents)
- Directors of Strategic Interventions, Elementary, and Secondary
- Counselors themselves



Follow-up, Accountability, and Support

- Counselors must submit by deadlines.
- If they have not submitted on time, they receive a reminder with a short extension.
- After the extension date, we CC the principal and Director of Strategic support on a follow-up reminder email.
- We make ourselves available to troubleshoot how to support families and provide resources.



Why it Works

MAKE A DIFFERENCE





Contact Me

Email

reidr@mdusd.org

Call

(925) 685-1011 ext. 62042

Website

SOAR Website