

**PAPER**



## Case Study

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# ***San Jacinto Schools Use 24/7 Tutoring to Increase Graduation Rates***



**Paper is what we didn't know we needed.**

— Janet Covacevich, Director, Secondary Curriculum and Instruction,  
San Jacinto Unified School District

# Key takeaways and results

Administrators in the San Jacinto Unified School District (CA) sought an academic support solution that would be easily accessible to their students — many of whom work or take care of siblings after school, speak Spanish as their primary language and can't get extra help at home. They chose Paper's unlimited, multilingual 24/7 tutoring platform.

Students leaned on Paper tutors for help at all hours of the day and night — even 2 and 3 o'clock in the morning. Teachers appreciated Paper tutors' Socratic approach that reinforced lessons and didn't simply give students the answers. Administrators counted on data and reporting from Paper to better assess student needs and adjust instruction and curriculum.

In its first school year in use:

- ✓ The district exceeded its adoption target with **26% of all students active** on Paper
- ✓ Learners engaged in nearly **7,000 learning moments** with Paper tutors
- ✓ With Paper's help, **180 of 200 at-risk seniors graduated on time**

# About San Jacinto USD

Tucked up against the San Jacinto Mountains, San Jacinto Unified School District (SJUSD) encompasses both the suburban areas of nearby Riverside and a highly productive agricultural sector. The district serves a diverse population of more than 12,000 students. Around three in four of SJUSD's students are of Hispanic or Latino origin, and more than one in six is an English language learner (ELL).

In a town where almost one in five people live at or below the poverty line, SJUSD is strongly committed to its mission to “provide equity and access to ensure each and every student achieves high levels of learning while developing cultural responsiveness and social responsibility.”

While fewer than one in ten parents of SJUSD students have attended some college, they want to provide educational opportunities that were not available to them. However, for a range of reasons the parents and students needed extra help to achieve that.

“A large majority of our students aren’t able to receive a lot of academic support from their parents, often because they are single parents or working several jobs,” says Janet Covacevich, Director, Secondary Curriculum and Instruction at SJUSD.


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The one thing that parents ask for loud-and-clear is academic support for their kids, something they can't provide because they are working so hard.

— Janet Covacevich

To bridge this equity gap, the district was committed to finding creative ways to provide individualized learning help to all students who needed it.

## San Jacinto USD at a glance

|   | Enrollment | English Learners | Socioeconomically Disadvantaged |
|---|------------|------------------|---------------------------------|
|  | 12,468     | 17.6%            | 79%                             |

# ***The Dilemma***

## Traditional tutoring out of reach for students in need

Many of SJUSD's high school students were struggling to meet graduation requirements.

Despite SJUSD's commitment to providing academic support to its students, traditional delivery methods weren't yielding the kinds of results the district wanted for a number of reasons.

For example, SJUSD teachers were already stretched thin. "We just didn't have the resources to provide individual, 1:1 services to all the students who needed them," says Covacevich.

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Even when teachers were available, most students couldn't take advantage of them. Many students work after school, lack transportation or have responsibilities at home like caring for younger siblings. As a result, students could not remain on campus after school hours to get the help they needed.

# ***The Solution***

## Individualized academic help when students need it, how they need it

When the COVID pandemic hit, the need for extra academic help dramatically increased. In a class with under 500 students, about 200 seniors were in danger of not graduating.

In search of a solution, the district discovered Paper. Paper delivers unlimited, 24/7 high-dosage tutoring. With Paper, students get homework help, writing feedback and study support on demand. And importantly for SJUSD, Paper provides tutors that can teach in the students' primary languages.

"Paper is probably something we wouldn't have considered pre-pandemic," says Covacevich. "But suddenly we had to become so technology oriented, and that opened new windows and doors and portals."

For many reasons, the solution looked like an ideal fit for SJUSD, especially since students can get help whenever their schedule allows, rather than at a fixed place and time. And the district has actually seen students getting help from Paper tutors at two or three o'clock in the morning. "Our teachers can't be available at three o'clock in the morning," says Covacevich.



***Paper is so accessible.  
I just don't know how  
else we'd be able to  
fill that gap.***

— Janet Covacevich

"I just don't know how else we'd be able to fill that gap. It's what we didn't know we needed," she says.

Covacevich and her colleagues also liked that Paper could provide such a wide range of services, so that they didn't worry about all the complexities of managing multiple providers. This simplicity would also make adoption easier for students, parents, administrators and teachers alike.

To help speed adoption, Paper provided the district with a range of resources including flyers, handouts, prerecorded YouTube videos in both Spanish and English, and on-site professional development for teachers and administrators. Paper's partnership with the district helped get the word out and win buy-in from parents, teachers and students alike.

# Results

Increased graduation rates, fewer skipped assignments and satisfied teachers

In its first year, approximately 26 percent of SJUSD students were regularly accessing Paper — exceeding the district’s year one target. Learners engaged in 6,981 learning moments including 6,123 on demand tutoring sessions and 858 essays submitted by students for expert writing feedback.

Since adopting Paper along with several other initiatives, SJUSD has seen a range of measurable positive outcomes. Of 200 at-risk seniors, 90% managed to graduate on time, despite all the challenges that the COVID pandemic posed. There was also a measurable decrease in assignments not submitted.

After seeing how Paper was helping high school students, elementary schools wanted in. “The director of elementary education reached out and said, ‘Hey, can you provide me with the contact for Paper, because we’re interested,’” says Covacevich.

In addition to administrators, teachers have also been impressed. According to Covacevich, one math teacher wrote the principal to say, “This Paper thing, whatever it is, is amazing.” Teachers especially appreciate Paper’s commitment to the Socratic method. “They’re able to see that the kids are getting help, not the answers,” says Covacevich.



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## Learning Moments

**6,981**

Learning Moments

**6,123**

Sessions

**858**

Essays

**1,774**

Students Active

# Results

Besides supporting their students, Paper is also freeing up teachers from having to be constantly on call all the time. “Teachers don’t have to stay connected to their email all day long to support students’ differing needs,” says Covacevich. “And they don’t have to stay for three hours providing after-school tutoring anymore.”

The data provided by Paper is even giving administrators and teachers greater insight into specific student needs. For example, when learning was completely online, the district had a way to gauge whether the district was giving too much task oriented work, where students complete assignments on their own.

“Paper is a full package deal,” she adds.

## **What’s Next: Getting the Word Out to Increase Access to Students in Need**

The district is already planning more initiatives that will help increase usage of Paper resources. For example, Covacevich wants teachers to add a link to Paper in their email signatures. She also plans additional outreach to principals, who are critical in getting teachers to incorporate Paper into their teaching practices.

Getting buy-in from parents is also a key piece of the puzzle.

“I want to make sure that every single one of our parents knows the support we’re providing for students, and where we’re spending money to directly serve our students and provide the individualized help they need,” says Covacevich.

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*Paper partners with K-12 schools throughout the U.S. and Canada to give every student an equal opportunity to excel academically. Our educational support system (ESS) provides learners with unlimited 24/7 homework help, writing feedback, and study support at a predictable fixed cost. Paper's specialized tutors deliver on-demand, 1:1 academic support in four languages across more than 200 academic subject areas—so students always have access to expert extra help exactly when, where, and how they need it.*

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