



High Tech High in Brief

High Tech High (HTH), a public charter school organization in San Diego, combines challenging academic curriculum with project-based learning, performance-based assessment, digital portfolios, and internships for all students. The HTH design principles—personalization, adult world connection, common intellectual mission, and teacher as designer—signal a radical departure from conventional high school structures and practices.

High Tech High has achieved success with a diverse student population, admitted by lottery. The 532 graduates in the Class of 2011 (from our five high schools) were admitted to college at a 97% rate, with 68% planning to attend a four-year university. Of 1,928 HTH graduates since 2003, 77% have graduated or are still enrolled in a post-secondary institution, with 25% of the college graduates holding degrees in STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, or mathematics). In contrast, only 17% of California college graduates earn degrees in STEM.

Much of this achievement stems from High Tech High's emphasis on creating the conditions where students and teachers can work and learn effectively. Teachers collaborate in teams that serve the same cohort of students. They arrive at school an hour before the students each day to plan the program and discuss students in teaching teams, academic departments, study groups, and the faculty as a whole. The curriculum is rigorous, providing the foundation for entry and success at the University of California and elsewhere. Assessment is performance-based: students develop projects, solve problems, and present findings to community panels.

All HTH students use technology to engage in scientific, mathematical, literary, historical, and artistic pursuits. This technical-academic integration extends to the broader community: all students must complete junior-year internships in local businesses or non-profit organizations.

From its beginning as one high school in September 2000, and spurred by public demand, HTH now operates five small high schools, three middle schools, and two elementary schools in San Diego County. The latest of these, an elementary and middle school, opened in Chula Vista in September 2011, bringing the number of students served in HTH schools to over 4,600.

As a cluster of schools spanning kindergarten through grade 12, HTH affords a rich clinical context for educator training. In 2004, the state approved HTH to certify its own teachers in an internship program, now available to other area schools as well. Then, in 2007, HTH received approval to open the HTH Graduate School of Education, offering Masters programs in Teacher Leadership and School Leadership. These programs position HTH to have an impact on teacher and leadership training far beyond the confines of the current school sites.

For further information, visit the High Tech High website at www.hightechhigh.org

For information on management resources and facilities: www.hightechhigh.org/resource-center/

For materials used in training new staff: www.hightechhigh.org/newstaff