

Cajon Valley USD's Winning Professional Development Formula



Challenges

- Teachers had to forego professional development
- Educators need coverage to hold IEP meetings
- Administrators struggled to provide coverage for an administrative designee when needed

Solution

Swing Education, which connects substitute teachers with schools and districts in need via an easy-to-use, web-based platform.

Results

- More PD opportunities for teachers
- More flexibility for IEP meetings
- Improved coverage for administrator absences

Swing Education has covered 420-plus substitute teacher days for Cajon Valley Union School District on a 94% fill rate in the months since the partnership began.

Teachers and administrators at Cajon Valley Union School District in Southern California have an extra spring in their step this school year thanks to the district's new resource for substitute teachers. Cajon Valley USD's partnership with Swing Education has allowed the district to improve coverage of teacher absences, freeing staff to take advantage of more professional development and growth opportunities.



About Cajon Valley Union School District

- Operates 28 schools in San Diego County, CA
- Educates 17,000 students
- Member of the Digital Promise League of Innovative Schools
- Launched the first district-wide TEDx and TED Ed Club in the United States

"We previously had to limit the amount of PD our staff could access because of a shortage of substitute teachers to cover absences," says Michelle Hayes, Cajon Valley's Assistant Superintendent of HR. "But now, we have a resource in Swing Education that has allowed us an alternative to saying 'No, you can't do that.'"





Getting Started with Swing Education

Before partnering with Swing Education prior to the 2018-2019 school year, Cajon Valley USD didn't have enough substitute teachers to cover all of its teacher absences, especially those associated with professional development days.

"At the last minute we were having to call back the teachers that had completed sub plans and prepared to attend the PD workshops," Hayes says.

"This also was a negative for our substitutes, because we'd pull them from one assignment to another, which was kind of upsetting the apple cart on multiple levels,"

Swing made it easy for Cajon Valley USD to get up and running with the company's services by holding an in-person training session for district staff at the beginning of the partnership. The Swing team has continued to be highly responsive to the district's needs in the months since.

"Swing has been very, very accommodating, very thoughtful in their approach, very understanding of our needs," Hayes says. "They were very patient in helping us through the process and alleviating our concerns. They've been very responsive to what we needed and how we wanted to make it work."

A Range of Benefits

Although Cajon Valley USD has primarily used Swing Education to cover absences related to professional development, the partnership has helped the district in several other important areas as well.

"Our teachers enjoyed more flexibility during the day to hold IEP meetings," Hayes says. "That was another challenge."

Teachers aren't the only ones who have benefited. Cajon Valley's administrators have also gotten a boost thanks to an improved administrator designee program, which ensures principal absences are covered by an administrator-in-training. (The administrator-in-training is a full-time teacher at each of Cajon's school sites; strong substitute teacher coverage ensures that the full-time teacher will be able to assume administrator duties for the day while their class is covered by a substitute.)

"It gives the principal peace of mind that somebody is on campus managing the campus while they're out, and it affords the designee the opportunity to step in the principal's shoes and gain valuable experience," Hayes says. "That's something that was very, very difficult before because we didn't have the coverage."

All told, the combination of timely coverage for teacher absences and superior support has created a winning mix for Cajon Valley USD -- so much so that it recently recommended Swing Education to another school district in the San Diego area.

"We're appreciative of the work Swing does," Hayes says. "I've really enjoyed working with their team. When another district reached out to me, I was able to very positively express our appreciation for their work and give Swing a great recommendation."

Visit [SwingEducation.com](https://www.swingeducation.com) for more information on how we can help your school with substitute teachers.