

# Efficiency Unlocked

Palm Springs Unified / Riverside County, CA

**27**  
SCHOOLS

**20,000**  
STUDENTS

**98%**  
SOCIOECONOMICALLY  
DISADVANTAGED

**28%**  
ELL

## District Overview

Palm Springs Unified School District (PSUSD) is deeply committed to equity, serving over 20,000 students across 27 schools in Riverside County. Acknowledging that 98% are socioeconomically disadvantaged and over a quarter are English Language Learners, PSUSD deploys comprehensive programs, like specialized instruction and Career Academies, dedicated to preparing every student for success in higher education and their chosen career.



## The Challenge

PSUSD's expanded learning team, which Dr. Amber Gascoigne leads, is small and mighty. The Palm Springs five-person expanded learning staff manage 21 school sites, work with about 15,000 families, and spearhead intervention, enrichment, and intersession programs. For registrations, they used ParentSquare, which was familiar to families. But, since the platform lacked features for custom forms, attendance tracking, and roster management, they had to also rely on Google Forms. This fragmented, dual system created a massive amount of manual work for the already busy team.

## Our Solution

PSUSD adopted Hero ASSIST, centralizing all expanded learning data in one place. The transition was smooth, especially given that Hero ASSIST integrates with their SIS, Synergy. This allowed parent registration data to be pre-populated, and it removed friction. PSUSD customized the ActivityHero platform to fit their unique needs, adding digital waitlists, and individualized reports, by activity and student, for example. Now, their roughly 100 teachers can take attendance across devices, and they have the data needed for their attendance recovery efforts.

“For us, it was about organization. Everything is in one platform, and I really appreciate that. I’m not sad that we don’t have to look at a million different Google sheets! I’m excited that I can pull up one website and have everything that I need in that platform.”

- Amber Gascoigne, Director of Expanded Learning

## Lessons Learned

One of the benefits of working with a boutique company like ActivityHero is that we’re there for our district partners to listen to, and meet, their needs. This was one of the keys to PSUSD’s success. To ensure that we understood their data collection pain points and how we can customize our platform to better serve their needs, we set up standing weekly meetings. This keeps us attuned to what’s working and what’s not, and it cultivates a strong partnership, with ActivityHero as an extension of the five-person expanded learning team. The collaboration is about more than just software, it’s about the team’s – and ultimately the students’ – success.

