

Comments by David Fisher, President of the Sacramento City Teachers Association (SCTA), to the Sacramento City Unified School District (SCUSD) Board of Education, Public Comment (Report of SCTA), Agenda Item 10.1

December 10, 2020

Good evening. I'm David Fisher, president of the Sacramento City Teachers Association.

Last Friday we met with the District to discuss how to move forward with in-person special education assessments.

There are two significant impediments, both within the District's control, that are keeping our students from getting the services they need.

The first is the workload. By our estimate, which the District has not challenged, there are approximately 70,000 hours of additional work hours needed to complete the overdue assessments and other updating to students' IEPs. Much of this work can be done virtually, but the District hasn't invested in the materials to expand our virtual capacity. The District has confirmed that those additional hours can be paid out of COVID or CARES dollars. We asked what were higher priorities than spending those dollars on our students with special needs and the District literally had no answer. So we put that question to you, the school board. What District priorities are higher than providing these much-needed services to our students with special needs?

The second impediment is ensuring that our workplaces are safe. The number of classrooms equipped with the appropriate ventilation system in our District is appallingly low. The school board approved over \$6 million for air purifiers provided by Ultra Violet Device Inc, rather than the standard HEPA portable filtration devices most experts recommend. When we asked Nathaniel Browning which experts he was relying on to make such an important decision he told us it was representatives from UVDI and Johnson Controls, who just happen to be the representatives from the very same company Sac City Unified is making this purchase. Our scientific experts will be presenting our questions and concerns to the District by next Wednesday. We had asked for a follow-up meeting, which the District rejected, and asked us to put our concerns in writing, which we now are doing. We would ask this board to delay the completion of this \$6 million purchase until there is a greater understanding of the potential risks contained in the UVDI.

With all this in mind, SCTA along with 10 other CTA locals in Sacramento County will be holding a townhall on Monday to discuss how to Safely Reopen Our Schools. We have a full panel of experts who will be able to provide useful information on testing, contact tracing and ventilation and filtration systems. The details can be found our Facebook page.