



Student Advisory Council

SCUSD Board Presentation

June 5, 2025

Agenda Item No. 10.2

Presented by:

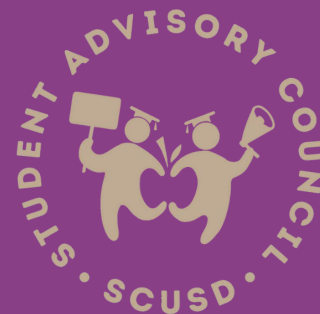
Youth Development Support Services and the
Student Advisory Council

AGENDA:

- **SAC Overview**
- **Summary of Collaborations**
- **24-25 Initiatives**
- **Moving Forward**

WHO WE ARE

The Student Advisory Council (SAC) is a year-round program that provides an opportunity for students to critically research and analyze the problems currently facing SCUSD youth, and organize to take action against those problems. The Student Advisory Council strives to promote student voice within the district, recognizing youth as key leaders and changemakers.



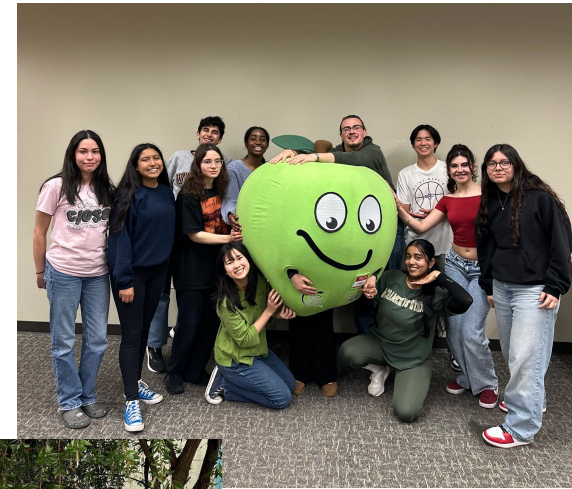
WHAT WE DO

Every year, the SAC develops policy initiatives, meets with district staff and committees, and works together to ensure student voices are represented. As youth advocates, they work together to build collective power and organize for transformative and systemic change in SCUSD.

SAC Representatives commit themselves to attending weekly meetings, refining their skills in critical thinking, college-level research methodologies, public speaking, and youth advocacy.

2024-2025 Cohort

- **Justine Chueh-Griffith**, Student Board Member
- **Casey Liang**, Council Representative
- **Maggie Kemper**, Council Representative
- **Miranda Grimberg**, Council Representative
- **Someya Islam**, Council Representative
- **Te'Arra Robinson**, Council Representative
- **Marianna Sosa**, Council Representative
- **Oliver Hsu**, Council Representative
- **Jack Irion**, Council Representative
- **Kasch Marquardt**, Council Representative
- **Jackie Amezquita**, Council Representative
- **Yessica Torres**, Council Representative
- **Nmah Bangura**, Council Representative
- **Sophia Edeliant**, Council Representative
- **Kennedy O'Gilvie Joplin**, Council Representative





Collaborations



2024-2025 Collaborations

1. **SCUSD Student Support and Health Services**
 - a. **LGBTQ+ Support Services Department**
 - b. **TUPE Staff**
 - c. **Safe Haven Workgroup**
 - d. **Director of Student Support Services**
2. **SCUSD Facilities Support Services**
 - a. **Facilities Planning Manager**
 - b. **Environmental Sustainability Manager**
3. **Board of Education Members**



Gender Neutral Restroom Task Force



Context of Concern

- Access to restrooms is a fundamental human right. We should not create an environment where students who do not identify with the gender binary must choose whether to use the male or female restroom.
- We should strive to make our campuses as inclusive and equitable as possible. We aim to create a safe space for all of our students.

Youth-Led Advocacy

- Resolution No. 3423: Gender Neutral Restrooms
- Continued to facilitate collaboration with LGBTQ+ Support Services and Facilities to improve bathroom conditions and access.
- Gave feedback on restroom progress across high school campuses and offered recommendations for improvements.

Recommendations

- Expand gender neutral restroom requirements to include **more campuses** across SCUSD.
- Continue collaboration and check-ins with Facilities and LGBTQ+ Support Services.
- Continue to monitor restroom progress through student surveys and intervene when issues arise.



Vape and E-Cigarette Use

Context of Concern: Surge in E-Cig Usage

- Students have experienced a wave of exposure and access to e-cigarettes, containing harmful chemicals like nicotine and tobacco.
- 6.4% of students in California use Tobacco products.
- Board Policy and resources regarding e-cigarette addiction for students is severely **outdated** and limited.
 - From the student perspective, surveys administered do not collect the most accurate information or responses, making it difficult to paint the REAL story of what our peers are experiencing.
 - I.E, Kelvin Survey, Cool Kids, CHKS Survey

Research on Existing Measures

Current Standards and Regulations:

- **Regulation 5131.6 in Education Code 51203, 51260**
 - “At all grade levels, instruction shall include a study of the effects of alcohol and other drugs upon the human system.”
 - “The Board desires to support recovering students in avoiding re-involvement with alcohol and other drugs by providing school activities and support services which enhance recovery.”
- **Regulation 0450: Comprehensive Safety Plan**
 - Promotes “prevention and intervention strategies” and support for “recovering students” to create drug-free schools.
- **Policy 3513.13: Last Revised in 2016**
 - “The products prohibited include any product containing tobacco or nicotine, including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, miniature cigars, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew, clove cigarettes, betel, electronic cigarettes, electronic hookahs, and other vapor-emitting devices, with or without nicotine content, that mimic the use of tobacco products.”

Youth-Led Advocacy

- Researched existing Board Policies, resolutions, and resources for students struggling with e-cigarette addiction.
- Zoom meeting with Professor of Clinical Occupational Therapy to identify possible solutions to aid students going through active addiction.
- Interviewed students who use e-cigarettes at represented high-school sites.
- Drafted updated Vape-Use resolution.
- Met with SCUSD TUPE staff.

The following shows spoken and written testimonies from the following schools:

- School of Science and Engineering
- Hiram Johnson Senior High School
School
- C.K. McClatchy Senior High School

Recommendations

- More staff will be hired for TUPE and other anti-nicotine/tobacco efforts,
 - **AND** Training for educators (teachers, counsellors, administration) will be updated and increased for them to recognize signs of addiction, and on resources available.
- An emphasis will be placed on vape prevention education for elementary schools.
- **Board Policy will be revised, updated, and expanded** to match current addiction trends.
- Youth voice will be **continuously** sought and prioritized; the SAC will be intentionally collaborated with during **ANY** policy updates/changes.



Mental Health



Context of Concern

- In 2023, according to the Department of Health and Human Services, approximately 49.5% of adolescents have experienced a mental health disorder at some point in their lives.
- 40% of students reported persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness.
- 20% of students seriously considered attempting suicide, and nearly 9% attempted suicide.

Youth-Led Advocacy

- Comprised of 14 students across the school district
- Developed and produced a youth-led podcast, “Turn On The Lights,” about mental wellbeing with a variety of topics, such as self image, academic stress, and coping mechanisms.
- The podcast was created to bring a sense of community and social awareness among youth.

Recommendations

- Providing continued funding to support youth-led advocacy work, such as the Mental Wellness Council.
- Hire more school counselors and mental health professionals to support students throughout their academic journey.
- Advertise the resources available for youth related to mental health concerns and topics, such as free counselors or online websites



Undocumented Student Support



Context of Concern

- In January of 2025, Department of Homeland Security rescinded prior policy that prevented immigration enforcement agencies action in schools.
- Students shared increasing fear about the possibility of agencies like Immigration and Customs Enforcement targeting undocumented students and families on campus.
- A series of student walkouts and protests opposing the treatment of undocumented immigrants took place in the early months of 2025.

Youth-Led Advocacy

- Collaborated with District & community leaders as part of the Safe Haven Workgroup.
- Co-created the Safe Haven Resolution that passed in March, affirming that the district is a safe place for undocumented students and families.

Recommendations

- Continue to support undocumented students and families via the upholding of Safe Haven district policies.
- Provide informational support regarding immigration rights for students, families, and community members.
- Continue to train staff in ways to protect undocumented students, such as not sharing information regarding student immigration status.



Environmental Sustainability

Context of Concern - Green Schoolyards

- Modifications to infrastructure, buildings, and grounds can decrease a school's greenhouse gas emissions, enhance the school's readiness to maintain a safe and healthy environment under variable conditions, and enable the school to serve as a refuge for the community during extreme weather events, while reducing the long-term costs of operations and maintenance
- Urban schoolyards often lack sufficient green infrastructure, limiting opportunities for outdoor learning, play, and environmental education

Context of Concern - School Gardens

- School gardening is widely reported to improve health and well-being, increasing fruit and vegetable consumption and improving academic performance among students. Thus, school gardens and green spaces can improve morale and strengthen learning in schools.
- However, Sacramento City Unified school gardens often fall into disrepair, since school gardens must be maintained by the school community, including administrators, teachers, students, and volunteers, and are not solely the responsibility of the Facilities department.

Research and Accounts

- Vast majority of elementary students want a garden
- Garden health depends on volunteer support
- Schools don't have connections to support garden
- SPR process is hard to navigate (being streamlined)
- Summer maintenance rarely works
- There's not enough student engagement at garden sites
- Needs strong teachers to maintain garden programme
- Needs community resources for garden supplies

Hubert Bancroft Elementary Garden



Hubert Bancroft Elementary Garden



Leonardo da Vinci Elementary Garden



Leonardo da Vinci Elementary Garden



Leonardo da Vinci Elementary Garden



Sutterville Elementary Grounds



Earl Warren Elementary Garden



Earl Warren Elementary Garden



Recommendations

- Schools adopt individual plans to maintain gardens:
 - There are at least two staff capable and in charge of facilitating garden maintenance and planning activities. In the case that one staff forfeits responsibility, another shall be reassigned in the following three months.
 - School gardens shall be used by students at least twice per month through maintenance days, planting and harvesting events, or other activities.

Recommendations

- Create a garden network hub
- Integrate garden learning into curriculum (AB 285)
- Form connections with High School volunteers
- Find support from the ambassador and summer learning programs
- Formalize summer maintenance partnerships
- Develop a comprehensive garden policy and guide (similar to that of Oakland USD)
- Foster synergy with Facilities department

Recommendations

- Schools implement xeriscaping techniques to establish sustainable green schoolyards:
 - Xeriscaping is a landscaping technique that implements native and drought-resistant plants, and can help reduce water use from irrigation by up to 75%
 - The district shall actively seek alternatives to grass-based lawns and concrete surfaces to instead establish drought-resistant and native plant-based green spaces.



Moving Forward

Next Steps for the SAC...

Student Voice

The Student Advisory Council has finalized recruitment for next year. We will have a total of 20 student representatives, having grown exponentially in the past two years.

Continuing Representing Student Voices:

The Student Advisory Council will continue to work fully to represent the thoughts and voices of all students in the district. We will also aim to further develop relationships with various district stakeholders to bring to life our policy recommendations.

BOARD MEETING June 5, 2025 AGENDA ITEM NO. 10.2

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Kennedy O'Gilvie Joplin, Council Representative

Vanessa Reyes, Youth Services Specialist