

Sacramento City Unified School District
Board of Education Meeting

Public Comments

Name:	Tara Thronson
Comment:	<p>Hello,</p> <p>I'm writing in my capacity as a parent of two children in SCUSD regarding return to full in-person school in September 2021. My children enjoyed the Summer Matters program and needed that in-person experience more than I realized. Through that experience we saw, at a small scale, how in-person learning can be safely offered in SCUSD schools. Now as we are preparing for a larger return, I have some outstanding questions that were not addressed in the District's recent email. Specifically:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How will our children safely eat lunch? In the summer program the kids ate outside. Will this continue in the regular school year? What happens on rainy days? Our kids need an opportunity to eat lunch without sharing air space unmasked with other children.2. The District email references a robust testing program. What does that look like? With COVID funds, and the highly contagious delta variant in our community, I would feel more comfortable as a parent with weekly surveillance testing of ALL students and staff on campus (with an opt-out option, rather than opt-in) to assure cases are identified proactively to prevent spread. <p>I recognize we continue to live through unprecedented times and are facing new challenges. Yet, I expect all our decision-makers to work in partnership to develop solutions that will provide our children with the quality in-person education they deserve.</p> <p>Best regards,</p> <p>Tara Thronson</p>

Speaking as: Parent/Guardian

Email

Tel:

Date/time Stamp: 8/3/2021 8:33:35 PM

Sacramento City Unified School District
Board of Education Meeting
Public Comments

Name:	Nicole Gustafson
Comment:	<p>With 2021 school year start coming quickly upon us, it sadden me we do ill prepared for the new in person year.</p> <p>With covid in the rise, he we are again will limited information on the new school year and no solid agreed terms with our labor partners. Question outlining if my child has covid exposure at school they then have to do independently study? If I opt out of in person learning do I loose my current spot at my school? Are you going to require mandatory testing for children and staff regularly to be proactive? What will lunch time look like? And what about Rainy days and bad air quality days? Will buses be fully running this year? Has teachers caught up on all the outstanding EAP's from last year? So many questions as a parent, can't imagine how many questions teachers and staff have too.</p> <p>Will so many questions I hope the board can start really pushing for district staff to produce quality answers and work with the labor partners to come to agreement so our children can have in person teacher successfully and safely this year.</p>

Speaking as: Parent/Guardian

Email

Tel:

Date/time Stamp: 8/3/2021 9:23:00 PM

Sacramento City Unified School District
Board of Education Meeting

Public Comments

Name:	Catherine Warmerdam
Comment:	<p>School opens four weeks from today and families still have many questions about how safety will be achieved in light of the recent Covid surge. Families need more details about how the district will carry out a layered approach to prevent spread of the virus. Specifically, how will the district achieve the robust surveillance testing we have been promised? Last spring, getting a student tested was confusing and not well publicized. I knew of very few families who opted to have students tested, with many not even knowing that testing was available. The nurse at my students' campus confirmed that a small minority of families participated in the testing program. If we are to keep kids and staff safe, testing must be easy, accessible and administered on an opt-out basis only. I urge district personnel to explain to parents how they will improve upon last year's underdeveloped testing program, and to do so quickly so that families can make informed decisions about their child's return to school. We also need more details about how independent study works and how safe lunchtimes will be achieved on campus. Thank you.</p>

Speaking as: Parent/Guardian

Email

Tel:

Date/time Stamp: 8/3/2021 11:35:20 PM

Sacramento City Unified School District
Board of Education Meeting

Public Comments

Name:	Elizabeth Campbell
Comment:	<p>I am deeply concerned about the inadequacy of the “independent study” option provided for families who are concerned about sending their children to school as Covid cases skyrocket in Sacramento and a vaccine remains unavailable for children under 12. Last spring many families, particularly in the hardest-hit areas of Sacramento, chose to keep their children home when schools resumed in-person learning, but now with case numbers much higher than they were in spring and the delta variant prevalent in Sacramento, those families are left with no good choices and little information or support from the district.</p> <p>The information provided by the district leaves these important questions unanswered:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Will students who opt for independent study be required to unenroll from their current schools? Will they be able to return when they feel it is safe to do so?2. Will high school students in specialty programs have to choose between those programs and safety, if they live with vulnerable family members and are not yet able to return to in-person school? Will independent study allow them to take the necessary coursework for their programs?3. How will independent study programs address learning loss and social-emotional learning concerns? The district’s framework appears to provide students who choose this option with very little contact with their teachers and none at all with peers. How does the district justify providing the most vulnerable students who have suffered the most with less social-emotional support than they received last year? What are the plans to address these inadequacies?4. If students do choose to attend in-person but become sick or have to quarantine, what meaningful supports will be provided by the district? After over a year of distance learning, addressing these inevitable absences with independent work at home seems woefully inadequate. <p>We need answers to these questions. More importantly, we need a distance learning option that allows students who need to stay to home to remain with their peers in their chosen or assigned schools, that allows for a smooth transition after the crisis has passed, and that provides the flexibility our students, teachers, and schools require during these highly uncertain times.</p>

Speaking as: Parent/Guardian

Email

Tel:

Date/time Stamp: 8/4/2021 8:32:55 AM

Sacramento City Unified School District
Board of Education Meeting

Public Comments

Name:	Tami Hackbarth
Comment:	My child is in the Mandarin Immersion Program. She is not old enough to get the vaccine. I would like the district to offer a distance learning option for kids under the vaccine age until they have an option to get vaccinated. I do not want to choose between educating my child and keeping her safe during a public health emergency.

Speaking as: Parent/Guardian

Email

Tel:

Date/time Stamp: 8/4/2021 9:53:26 AM

Sacramento City Unified School District
Board of Education Meeting

Public Comments

Name:	Alice Liu
Comment:	<p>I have a lot of concern that there is little being done to address how to manage students if there is a concern with them going back in-person school, and or if there becomes larger outbreaks throughout the school.</p> <p>There has been little to address how outbreaks in the schools would be managed or what distance learning options may become available, if anything it is actively not being talked about.</p> <p>If a parent is dealing with a higher risk household the only option would be to do "independent study" and it seems woefully inadequate. There is no information on if a student could switch to independent study but still return to their school or if they are stuck in some offset with no options.</p> <p>With the lack of vaccines for children under 12, the issues with the fast spread of the Delta variant and the new possibility of the Lambda variant being vaccine resistant, it seems irresponsible not to plan for what could eventually be another outbreak.</p> <p>The vaccine is currently not required in schools and less than 40% of 12-19 year olds are vaccinated. No information has been provided on how anyone will be informed of outbreaks within the school, let alone how lunch or other similar collective activities that may require masks be taken off, will be handled. Also addressing when things will be mandated would help calm fears (like after FDA approval).</p> <p>The independent study option is very unclear, from if it takes a student out of their school, especially the high school specialty programs and if they can return, let alone if the work they receive will actually be enough to keep them up to pace in their classes. Same goes for if a student is quarantined. How will the 10 day or more gap be handled, will they just fall behind? Is there a plan for this?</p> <p>Distance learning, though not ideal, was workable for at risk families, taking away this option with the thought that no one will need it, is purposely looking away from a serious issue. These students and families do not deserve to be forgotten about.</p> <p>And this option maybe needed again by the entire district, a plan should be put in and it should be a viable option for students that want to stay at their school but don't want to risk family members or themselves because of Covid. This plan should be scoped to include everything in case things get worse. Pretending this isn't a possibility is will ignorance at this point.</p>

Speaking as: Parent/Guardian

Email

Tel:

Date/time Stamp: 8/4/2021 10:49:16 AM

Sacramento City Unified School District
Board of Education Meeting

Public Comments

Name:	Catie Turner
Comment:	I am concerned about our children going back to school with covid cases increasing. A choice of in person or distance learning, like we had last spring, would be preferable. Students and teachers will undoubtedly become infected and it may end up being necessary to go back to some version of that model anyway. Is there a chance the district could offer families that same choice between remote learning and in person learning this coming school year?

Speaking as: Parent/Guardian

Email

Tel:

Date/time Stamp: 8/4/2021 1:12:54 PM

Sacramento City Unified School District
Board of Education Meeting
Public Comments

Name:	shawnda westly
Comment:	<p>Transparency: What the district is proposing is not enough As parents, we should be kept apprised of ANY covid infection in our school at a minimum - not just the exposures closest to us. It allows us to see whether the system is working in real time. We should get alerts on ANY covid infection district wide to track the rise in schools and see whether some schools are more successful and ask why. The SCUSD reopening dashboard should detail how many infections at each specific school site in real time.</p> <p>Quarantine: These guidelines aren't considering how Delta (and now Delta-plus) can spread and should be rewritten. I understand the revised quarantine process originates from the CDC. But this was written in a pre-Delta mindset. Exposed students without symptoms should still quarantine. The science shows us now that it does not take 15 minutes of unmasked close contact for Delta to spread. It can spread in less than five minutes to seconds - and the quarantine process should reflect that.</p> <p>Safety protocol questions: We need answers on these questions Unvaccinated people should mask outdoors as well based on research on the specific Delta variant - will we do that? Are we still taking temps of anyone entering the school property? What is the status of our HVAC in each specific school and keeping windows open during school? Will students be tested regularly or only upon request? Or only if they are exposed?</p> <p>Independent study: There was a shocking lack of detail on this program If we choose this, is our spot saved at our school? If we choose this, will we be able to come back to school as soon as we feel its safe/vaccinate our kid? If our kids qualify for Gate, will we have that available through independent study? If we choose this, will we be forced to stay independent for the full school year? If we chose this, and the schools end up going back to distance learning due to another rise in covid - will our kids be able to go back to distance learning with their regular school ?</p>

Speaking as: Parent/Guardian

Email

Tel:

Date/time Stamp: 8/4/2021 7:51:01 PM

Sacramento City Unified School District
Board of Education Meeting

Public Comments

Name:	shawnda westly on behalf of 250 parents
Comment:	250 parents from these SCUSD schools support the mask mandate. Names available upon request Alice Birney Public Waldorf AM Winn Public Waldorf George Washington Carver School of Arts and Science Hubert H. Bancroft Bret Harte John Cabrillo Caleb Greenwood California Middle School CK McClatchy Crocker Riverside David Lubin Elementary Genevieve Didion Hollywood Park Elementary John F. Kennedy High school Kit Carson international Academy Leonardo da Vinci New Joseph Bonnheim Phoebe Hearst Elementary Rosa Park Rosemont High School Sequoia Elementary Sutter Middle School Sutterville Elementary Tahoe Elementary Theodore Judah Elementary Washington Elementary West Campus High School William Land

Speaking as: Parent/Guardian

Email

Tel:

Date/time Stamp: 8/4/2021 8:09:18 PM

Sacramento City Unified School District
Board of Education Meeting

Public Comments

Name:	E.J. Soliz
Comment:	<p>We would like to request the option to have distance-learning for the upcoming school year due to remaining concerns about COVID-19 and more recently the Delta virus exposure. Our unvaccinated children can quickly become carriers of the virus with wide spread potential for school staff and family. Our family has an immuno compromised member, and I'm sure this request captures the concerns shared by others regardless of comfort to express. Before the school year starts we are requesting the continuation of distance learning until an under 12 vaccine becomes available this Fall. The option of Independent Study sounds very isolating for those who are making conservative health choices. Distance Learning provided an opportunity to have engagement while learning. We would love nothing more than to see our children thrive with a traditional return - just not at the cost of potential harm to health as the Delta strain is infecting more young children as well as the double vaccinated.</p>

Speaking as: Parent/Guardian

Email

Tel:

Date/time Stamp: 8/4/2021 10:48:55 PM

Sacramento City Unified School District
Board of Education Meeting

Public Comments

Name:	Samantha Brown
Comment:	<p>Board, You have failed in holding this Superintendent and Christine Baeta accountable for the achievement of Black and Brown students. You have failed in holding them accountable for how they treat and mistreat Black and Brown leaders of color. They have engaged in a course of firing those who speak out on behalf of Black and Brown students, BIPOC leaders and families. You failed in reinstating Dr. Simms and Dr. Mackey, 2 women of color who fought for the rights of those BIPOC people in SCUSD. We have not forgotten and will not give up our fight for them and those that they sought to protect. The community is gearing up to fight against your ineptness as school board members to really put marginalized people FIRST and we will not stop. There is no plan to improve Black student achievement. There is no plan to effectively support students with disabilities and/or English Learners. People are jumping ship from this titanic of a school district and you all know why. You continue to allow this Superintendent to blind your eyes and tickle your ears with what looks and sounds good but no substance behind it. You are all fools and the community is working to make sure that we have new board members who actually mean what they say and say what they mean in advocacy of our children. It was a loss to our children and families to not have Dr. Simms and Dr. Mackey remain in their positions. The politics is unreal in this district. But you can no longer play politics with our kids. You need to ACT NOW in support of BIPOC students and BIPOC leaders who support them. You all need to put Dr. Simms back as an Assistant Superintendent and beg Dr. Mackey to return. They are huge losses to our district. The only losses that you need to make sure happen are losing Aguilar and Christine Baeta since they are the reasons we have not seen any positive outcomes for our BIPOC students and families. SCTA may not be right on a lot of things but they are right in protesting Aguilar being here and the lack of experience of Christine Baeta. She is fake and everyone in the community sees it. She knows nothing about how to help our kids and is threatened by anyone who knows more than her. Ask Aguilar why an Assistant Principal is being paid off for her silence. . . Because she had evidence of his shady ways. We the people all know the truth. Why don't you? Ask the hard questions and demand answers and evidence. This Superintendent is a joke and so is Baeta. You all will be a joke if you don't do what's right.</p>

Speaking as: Community Member

Email

Tel:

Date/time Stamp: 8/5/2021 10:34:31 AM

Sacramento City Unified School District
Board of Education Meeting

Public Comments

Name:	Gary Williams
Comment:	<p>Dear Board Members,</p> <p>I am writing to you because I would have hoped that you reinstated Dr. Simms and Dr. Mackey based on the bogus antics that Aguilar used to get them out. At the last Board Meeting you heard from over 15 parents and community members supporting them and asking you all to investigate. To date, none of you have followed up. You all act like you answer to Aguilar when it is the other way around. You all gave him a positive review when you all know that he has done nothing to improve the academic outcomes for all kids specifically Black and Brown, students with disabilities and English Learners. While their attendance drops and their grades drop, Aguilar and his team get raises that you all approve. Instead of asking for details and plans to improve the quality of education and services to our students, you have allowed him to talk a good game and not produce real results. This summer we saw the highest number of COVID cases in schools and that was for summer school. What do you think is going to happen when all kids are going to return in just 3 weeks? Where is the plan for virtual academy for those students that do not want to return in person? And even if there is a plan, Aguilar and his team are poor executioners of plans which further put our kids at risk. The incompetence from Aguilar and all of you as Board members is astonishing. I will be advocating for the voters to choose differently when each of you end your terms. I will be working with community advocates to remove this Superintendent immediately. I will be supporting the reinstatement of the 2 women of color who were the only ones with the true experience and education necessary to make effective and real change for our kids. Its not too late for any of you to do the same.</p>

Speaking as: Parent/Guardian

Email

Tel:

Date/time Stamp: 8/5/2021 11:31:25 AM

Sacramento City Unified School District
Board of Education Meeting
Public Comments

Name:	Roger Dix
Comment:	<p>My name is Roger Dix. I have been teaching at the District for 17 years. My grandfather was a teacher and principle for 30 years. I have a good understanding of how education has changed over the last almost 50 years. Teachers are no longer respected nor valued as they were when my grandfather was a teacher. Teachers pay has suffered to the point that many are leaving the profession.</p> <p>The District's bargaining employees are quitting at an alarming rate. Most recently one of the districts most active employees, Matt Turkey, left, giving the Teachers Union only hours notice that he was no longer part of the school districts bargaining team. He was often referenced as having the answers. I believe he and others left because Superintendent Aguilar was putting them at risk of being sued. It floors me every time I attend a meeting that Superintendent Aguilar is never, I mean never present. Its no surprise that 96% of teachers recently voted no confidence for Superintendent Aguilar leadership.</p> <p>The distrlict has had a record surplus of millions every year, yet they claim imminent danger of being taken over by the state, only to be discovered to have a budget surplus. This has to be illegal? The district is again untruthfully stating a budget deficit, which in reality is an even greater budget surplus due to additional federal and state covid fund money in the amount of \$313 million. In addition to untruthfully stating a budget deficit, class sizes are being increased from 24 to 28:1, they are proposing reducing lunchtime for teachers, and reducing teacher prep time.</p> <p>The district now has \$300 million in federal and state covid funds to add to its budget surplus. It is rumored the district has been offering \$14-1/2 million to recruit quality teachers at a time they are decreasing current teachers salaries, lunch times and prep times. This too must be illegal or at least highly unethical. This and other school district behavior is adding to the astronomical legal defense. It does no student, parent, teacher or tax payer any good to have the district so blatantly deceptive and put the school district in a position to have to retain and hire high-priced attorneys to defend their obvious illegal activity. I guess if it is not their money, they don't care. It is my understanding that they are currently paying attorneys \$500,000 a month for legal defense.</p> <p>It is disturbing that school starts for some on August 9th. Many parents are understandably uncomfortable with sending their students to school and still there is no plan that has been communicated from the district, after much concern by the teachers union.</p> <p>Last year the only people in the district I know of who got raises where Superintendent Aguilar and Ms. Ramos. Ms. Ramos received \$36K and Superintendent Aguilar received \$35 to 40K, in addition to his perks which total in the thousands. In addition Mr. Aguilar used over \$700K on his office remodel. The students lost preK by \$500K</p>

and about 265 positions laid off. Why not use the \$14-1/2 million the district is using to recruit new teachers instead to use it to retain and provide security for the 265 being laid off. This make no sense. And as I mentioned earlier this puts the district in a position to be sued, making it necessary to continue to pay astronomical legal fees.

The district's annual surplus is now almost \$100 million and starting next year the state has mandated districts spend down to 10% or give it back to the state. The school district will do what it has regularly done in the past, at the last minute they will look for ways to frivolously spend down to 10% at the last minute. Why not just run the numbers and use it to retain our quality teachers and reward them with stability instead of creating insecurity and continued low wages that do not keep up with inflation. Teachers already make less money than many jobs that require no education.

Speaking as: Employee

Email

Tel:

Date/time Stamp: 8/5/2021 11:38:14 AM

Sacramento City Unified School District
Board of Education Meeting

Public Comments

Name:	Annamarie Norvell
Comment:	Since the situation with COVID-19 is fluid and we are going through cycles of surges, it seems that the safety plan should anticipate surges and take into consideration the highly contagious Delta variant and guarantee us that a mask mandate will remain in place for the entire campus- inside and outside until every child has had a chance to be vaccinated. Because covid 19 has mutated into a more contagious form and may continue to do so, and because infection rates surge every time the mask mandate and other safety protocols are lifted and there is still a substantial portion of the population that do not follow safety protocols the highest level of safety should be followed. Hand washing and cleaning are not adequate. Also once the vaccine is made available it should be required as other vaccines are. Please also provide details as to the independent learning option and assure those of us who believe it is necessary to keep our under 12 child home until they are vaccinated that their spot in the current school will be saved. Thank you.

Speaking as: Parent/Guardian

Email

Tel:

Date/time Stamp: 8/5/2021 11:48:01 AM

Sacramento City Unified School District
Board of Education Meeting
Public Comments

Name:	Lori Jablonski
Comment:	<p>This comment is a follow-up to the letter I sent on July 1st asking board president Pritchett, or any other board member, to attend a bargaining session with SCTA--not to bargain but to meet and LISTEN to the concerns of the SCTA bargaining team in an effort to head off the looming disaster of these contract negotiations. Faced with a district proposal that would eviscerate health benefits, drastically cut take home pay, increase work hours and responsibilities, and severely undermine teacher and staff participation in school site decisions, your teachers and certificated staff are both demoralized and very, very angry. The district bargaining team has been unable or unwilling to explain the rationale for most of these proposals, most specifically how this cruelty to your employees will improve academic and social emotional outcomes for our families. Without a significant change, this district will be at a labor impasse in less than two weeks, an especially irresponsible and tragic state of affairs given the uncertainty and fear of where we are with the pandemic and the hundreds of millions of state and federal COVID relief dollars, coupled with a mind-boggling surplus the district is sitting on. Why would you want such dysfunction after the pandemic hell we have all been through--and are still experiencing?</p> <p>"Every system is perfectly designed to get the results it gets." The Superintendent loves this Deming quote. Let me try to apply it here. As this district's elected trustees, you are presiding over a system perfectly designed by your employee, the Superintendent, to destroy labor relations and drive teachers and support staff away from this district. The results can be only more disarray and failure. This is your system. Your outcomes. Your responsibility. Thank you.</p>

Speaking as: Employee

Email

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Date/time Stamp: 8/5/2021 11:49:14 AM