

Comments by Nikki Milevsky and David Fisher (combined time) of the Sacramento City Teachers Association (SCTA), to the Sacramento City Unified School District (SCUSD) Board of Education, Agenda Item 7.1, Budget Review Committee Waiver

November 5, 2020

Good evening. I'm Nikki Milevsky, first vice -president of the Sacramento City Teachers Association.

We urge you to reject the waiver request. Two of the three reported reasons for the decision to waive the budget review committee appear to be false.

First, in its justification for the waiver, the District writes:

“The District has been working well with the Fiscal Advisor.”

Objectively, the Fiscal Advisor appointed by Dave Gordon has been a total failure. Since Gordon has appointed a Fiscal Advisor, at least five additional budgets have been rejected. On Gordon's watch, the District forgot to count five schools as part of its enrollment numbers. The District provided budget projections in 2018-19 that were inaccurate by \$35 million; in 2019-20 the budget was again inaccurate by \$35 million.

The District now has a reserve fund of \$93 million. This is the largest reserve fund the district has ever had in its history. Apparently, Dave Gordon also approves the District parking \$101.3 million in its books and supplies line item, creating a deception that SCUSD will be deficit spending again in 2020-21.

Secondly, the District also writes it does not need to have a budget review committee because:

“The District has a working steering committee.”

We have asked for the identities of the members of the district's “steering committee,” dates of the committee met, and any minutes of their meetings, but have been told there are no responsive records.

This leads us to the question, does a steering committee actually exist? Why are there no members and no meeting dates?

For over two years, the District with SCOE's Fiscal Advisor continues to provide inaccurate budget data, consistently claiming to be on the verge of fiscal insolvency and yet here we are two years later with the largest reserve fund in Sac City history.

SCOE clearly lacks the expertise to provide the fiscal oversight our District so sorely needs. The district's budget needs more transparency, not less. The waiver should be rejected.