

Sacramento City Unified School District
Board of Education Meeting

March 4, 2021 Public Comments

Name:	Erin Duarte
Comment:	In reference to equity, diversity, and anti-racist training please reconsider how you are disseminating this vital information to each staff member - it should NOT be through a "train the trainer method". The training should be directly from the source and not filtered through previous listeners. Every staff member needs this training and they need it undiluted without what amounts to a game of "telephone". Despite the best of intentions we all look at information with our own lens and experiences so we need this to be in its most concentrated and brutally authentic form to have any sort of meaningful impact. Anti-racist training can not be skimmed on nor done without the intense time and effort it requires.

Speaking as: Parent, Teacher, community member, and alumni

Email

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Date/time Stamp: 3/2/2021 3:28:49 PM

Sacramento City Unified School District
Board of Education Meeting

March 4, 2021 Public Comments

Name:	Rebecca Gross
Comment:	<p>I am writing in support of Parent Participation Preschool. The loss of time in Ms. Tamara Toby's classroom is my family's most significant pandemic outcome. We look forward to "returning together," but cannot imagine what that looks like without preschool.</p> <p>One year ago, parents and preschool teachers who were just beginning to grapple with the COVID 19 pandemic spent countless hours meeting with board members and offering creative solutions for the PPP budget. The creative solutions offered by parents seemed to be all but ignored, and teachers ended up presenting a "self-funding" model, which raised prices substantially for parents and priced out many of the parents who most needed this program.</p> <p>As Superintendent Aguliar stated near the end of your last meeting, part of that solution was that the district would look into grants and other funding options beyond increased fees for all parents. (The goal was that these funds could be used to offer scholarships so that the program could continue to serve families that fell between qualifying for state preschool and being able to afford private preschool.) With the hit the pandemic has taken on families and the switch to distance learning, it's clear that the "self funding" model taken on by parents (who are now paying double what was paid in 2019 for a substantially different program) did not actually cover teacher salaries. So I am writing to ask: 1. Did anyone apply for grants/consider other funding sources over the past year? 2. Whose job was it to do so? 3. What was the outcome of those efforts?</p> <p>I suspect that Sue Gilmore SHOULD have been leading these efforts, but, as you may know, Dr. Gilmore, while the director of the Parent Participation Preschool program, does not see herself as responsible for it's continuation. She openly stated in meetings with parents and board members that she oversees the program but her job description does not include preschool so she doesn't expect her own performance to be judged on the outcomes related to preschool. (It should be noted that Sue Gilmore did not observe our preschool program during the 2019/20 school year. I'd be very interested to know when the last time she even set foot on the Tahoe Elementary campus was and expect this information could be found in sign in logs.)</p> <p>So if it is not the director's job to DIRECT the program, whose job is it?</p> <p>Additionally, It seemed that some of the board members who spoke in support of PPP at your last meeting might be open to listening to creative ideas from parents once again. I'll be the first to admit that we parents are TIRED. We are tired of needing to fight so hard for a program that we KNOW is good for the district and good for families. Tired of offering ideas at meetings attended only by people who can't make promises. But as tired as I am, I'd love to sit down (via Zoom!) with someone to talk about the ways I believe PPP is an under-leveraged program of SCUSD. I'll note two ideas quickly, but would</p>

also ask the board to consider looking at places in the budget you DO have money -- could this preschool program be eligible for some of that money if the benefits of preschool could be leveraged to meet BIG goals?

1. The district is very interested in reducing chronic absenteeism. I assume there are grants available/state money to address this issue. Why not reach out to families of chronically absent students in K-6 at Tahoe Elementary and offer the younger siblings of these students a free or reduced cost place in Ms. Tamara's preschool program? Lets assume a third grader is chronically absent, but now his 4 year old brother is in Parent Participation Preschool. Now, when the kids are not at school, the parents get a text from a FRIEND in the PPP program, concerned about why the 4 year old was absent. The parent has access to a community of other parents who can help with transportation. Or with motivation. The parent is connected to a community of adults at Tahoe Elementary and is more likely to bring BOTH children to school more regularly.

2. One of the biggest tragedies of the parent participation preschool program's precarious position in the budget for me personally is that Sue Gilmore oversees programs for adults with disabilities AND programs for preschoolers and their parents. As a special education professional and the mother of four children under 7, I am so disappointed that Dr. Gilmore was not able to bring these two programs better into alignment. Perhaps there is money available to teach adults with disabilities job skills or interpersonal skills that they could practice in a preschool classroom. I can't imagine a better marriage of programs than to move a preschool class into the McKlaskey center and form a partnership between adults with disabilities and parents with preschoolers.

So I challenge you to consider what goals you have, what metrics you need to meet, and what money you have earmarked for other programs when thinking about funding Parent Participation Preschool. This program creates an army of involved parents who WANT to do good in this district. Put us to use... but fund us, and commit to funding us long-term, so we can stop using our energy to fight SCUSD just to stay alive, and we can start using our energy to fight for the same goals you're pursuing every day.

Thank you, Rebecca Gross

Parent to Ellis (18 months), Daphne (3 years), Ada (4 years) and Edison (6 years)

Speaking as: Parent/Guardian

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Date/time Stamp: 3/3/2021 5:54:25 PM

Sacramento City Unified School District
Board of Education Meeting

March 4, 2021 Public Comments

Name:	Rebecca Wiegand
Comment:	<p>I am writing today to encourage the board to vote to preserve the parent participation preschool program within the district. As a parent of a former student at the Tahoe Elementary location, the parent participation preschool program was an invaluable beginning to my child's education.</p> <p>I know it was on the chopping block last year and needed to prove it could pay for itself. Tahoe's program was completely, fully-enrolled for the 20-21 school year before the end of last school year. It would have paid for itself this year had COVID not kept schools closed, meaning many of families had to unenroll due to needing in-person childcare elsewhere.</p> <p>The parent participation preschool program deserves the chance to prove that it can sustain itself when schools are back in-person in the fall. Ms. Tamara has already done an amazing job of recruiting enrollees for the 21-22 school year, so let it fill up and serve the kids in our neighborhood and community who need it!</p> <p>Preschool is the foundation for success and we know that children who attend preschool programs are much more likely to successfully graduate from high school, go on to college, and become successful contributors to their communities. Our city needs these programs. Tahoe families need it. Our children deserve it. Thank you.</p>

Speaking as: Parent/Guardian

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Date/time Stamp: 3/3/2021 9:20:04 PM

Sacramento City Unified School District
Board of Education Meeting

March 4, 2021 Public Comments

Name:	Che Geiser
Comment:	For continuity in our children's education I strongly encourage the district to not force any students to change teachers this late in the school year. Our teachers have worked very hard to build strong relationships with our children despite the difficulties imposed by distance learning. These relationships lead to student 'buy in' and trust, and this is critical to our students success. Any change in teachers would be highly disruptive, especially to those children opting to remain in distance learning as they would not have the benefit of building in-person connections.

Speaking as: Parent/Guardian

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Date/time Stamp: 3/3/2021 11:17:34 PM

Sacramento City Unified School District
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March 4, 2021 Public Comments

Name:	Nicole Freedman
Comment:	<p>Since the day schools closed last spring, SCUSD knew that they would reopen. On February 26, nearly a year after the closures, the district released a return plan that is unacceptably tardy and inadequate.</p> <p>First, SCUSD and SCTA should be embarrassed by the repeated failure to compromise. Other districts across the region, state, and nation have reached MOUs and are operating effectively. Bad rancor between the district and the union only hurts the students. A leadership change may be needed.</p> <p>Second, the return proposal makes a bad situation worse. Concurrent teaching will not be effective for younger learners. Teachers will be unable to balance the needs of children in person and at home so both groups will suffer. Other districts in this region such as San Juan and Twin Rivers are not utilizing a concurrent system, SCUSD should follow their models.</p> <p>And, third, the proposed three-hour schedule is unreasonable for younger learners. Three hours of zoom instruction with only a 10-minute break would be difficult for an adult, not to mention a K-2nd grader. Further, without recess, the three-hour slog will reduce learning retention, social development and well-being, and take away the one thing children like about school.</p> <p>The pandemic brought immense challenges to all sectors of society. SCUSD educators have been forced to rethink long practiced ways of teaching. Recognizing these unprecedented times, we have attempted to give grace to the district as it adapted to these circumstances. But at one year into the pandemic the district and its union partners have succeeded in one aspect; falling below already low expectations. Our children have risen to the occasion and adapted to the current environment, when will SCUSD?</p>

Speaking as: Parent/Guardian

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Date/time Stamp: 3/3/2021 11:58:52 PM

Sacramento City Unified School District
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March 4, 2021 Public Comments

Name:	Daniel Garcia
Comment:	Parents including myself are reaching boiling points with schools continuing to remain closed. Our local and state officials need to stand up to the teachers unions and do some thing about this. The CDC has come out with guidelines for a safe return to school for children and teachers. Stop holding our children hostage as they suffer from staying at home. If some children need to stay home due to the risks than they should be taught by the same teachers whom are affected by the risks from Covid as well. Please please please stop using my children as bargaining chips in this cruel game to gain power!

Speaking as: Parent/Guardian

Email

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Date/time Stamp: 3/4/2021 8:46:04 AM

Sacramento City Unified School District
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March 4, 2021 Public Comments

Name:	Brittney Houston
Comment:	As an employee I beg of you, please do not use a concurrent model. My worry with this idea is that if I'm teaching concurrently my attention will be split, which can lead to students losing out on learning and personal connection. Instead, I ask you to take into consideration the SJUSD model, which allows the teachers to focus on one group of students at a time. Thank you.

Speaking as: Employee

Email

Tel:

Date/time Stamp: 3/4/2021 9:25:52 AM

Sacramento City Unified School District
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Name:	Sarah Klapheck
Comment:	The schools should not be reopened without restrictions unless a large population can be vaccinated

Speaking as: Parent/Guardian

Email

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Date/time Stamp: 3/4/2021 11:02:22 AM

Sacramento City Unified School District
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Name:	Daniel Thorburn
Comment:	<p>We all know these are difficult times and there are no perfect answers. How exactly to weight the benefits of in-person learning with the mortal dangers the pandemic poses is a conundrum none of us can resolve without deleterious consequences. I understand there are no right answers.</p> <p>My concern is not with specific decisions that have been made, but by the lack of clear answers provided by the District. And I am referring to the District's own FAQs, offered at https://learn.scusd.edu/learning-options to supposedly answer questions parents and student have.</p> <p>One question asks, "What if my student's teacher is not available to come back in person?" The answer merely reads "Every student will have highly qualified teachers supporting them through their in-person or distance learning." That does not answer the question! The concern is that changing teachers so late in the year will disrupt even more what is already a disrupted educational experience. How likely is it that student will have to adapt to a new teacher with so little time left in the academic year? Who are the replacement teachers? What kind of training are replacement teachers receiving? The District wrote the question and then refused to answer it.</p> <p>Another question asks, "How will the teacher help students participating in distance learning if they are teaching students in person at the same time?" The answer uses a bunch of empty words--such as "whole class direct instruction"—without addressing the serious concern of the question: that it is impossible for a teacher to interact in a meaningful way both in person and online at the same time. The promise that "teachers will be given all the materials they need to teach concurrently" is empty, since the question is not about "materials" but the fact that engaging a bunch of people in person means the teacher is not staring at a computer screen where the rest of the students are found, and vice versa. One group or the other will be ignored. The only "materials" that would help in this situation would be a second teacher or at least a teacher's aid to monitor the computer and ensure equal attention to all students.</p> <p>I have been teaching for over 25 years using in-person, online, and hybrid models, but we never try to mix in a synchronous manner both in-person with online instruction. It is simply impossible. The notion that the District would try to impose this new and questionable instructional model on teachers and students so late in the year is bewildering and maddening.</p>

Speaking as: Parent/Guardian

Date/time Stamp: 3/4/2021 11:15:34 AM

Sacramento City Unified School District
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March 4, 2021 Public Comments

Name:	nina daya
Comment:	Questions - how big are class sizes [for high school], how will the schools track and resolve issues with social distancing/masking in mind; issues that arise unexpectedly. How will that be communicated and how often to parents? It seems additional people resources would be needed to achieve the goals above to protect our kids - how robust is the contact tracing efforts by the district as there have been repeated incidents of issues with food service at various school sites and Covid. Will there be adequate school nurse ratio to students and has that been considered? The most vulnerable children need emergency plans in place when will those come into play for kids with IEPs. We appreciate the efforts of the District and staff including our brave teachers.

Speaking as: Parent/Guardian

Email

Tel:

Date/time Stamp: 3/4/2021 11:40:36 AM

Sacramento City Unified School District
Board of Education Meeting

March 4, 2021 Public Comments

Name:	Angie Sutherland
Comment:	<p>As shared at the February 18, 2021 SCUSD Board of Education meeting in public comments, in Fall 2020, The Coalition for Students with Disabilities heard from 34 SCUSD parents or guardians of students with IEPs and 504 plans about their distance learning experiences. (Read more about our Community Survey) The students represent various school types (including regular public, dependent charter, independent charter, and nonpublic), classroom settings (including general education, inclusive/combo classes, and SDCs), student ethnicities, and grade levels (from 14 school sites, including elementary, middle and high schools).</p> <p>While some parents reported their children are doing well, the majority say their children with disabilities are suffering and falling through the cracks while trying to learn remotely.</p> <p>Parental input reveals inequities for students with disabilities on many levels:</p> <p>IEP & 504 Services, Supports, and Accommodations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Students not receiving their special ed. services (70.6%)- Special ed. service delivery not well suited to child's needs (91%)- Students denied an assessment for a disability or for an updated IEP (8.8%)- 1:1 Aides, Paraprofessionals, or Nurses- Lack of adequate support from 1:1 aides and/or nurses (70.6%)- 1:1 aides or nurses not allowed to assist child 1:1 in the home (91.2%) <p>Individualized Transition Plans (ITPs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Transition plans for children 16+yrs are due but have not been developed (57.1%)- Existing transition plans not implemented appropriately (42.9%) <p>Social & Emotional Health:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ed.-related mental health services (EHRMS) not implemented appropriately (70%)

- Children developing new mental health issues but not receiving any support (80%)

Children regressing in learning and behavior (50%)

Online Learning Access:

- Parents had to opt out of SCUSD due to the inconsistency of class schedules

- All children did not receive a device from their school (35%)

- Several children in one home having to share one device

- Slow internet speeds/difficult for students to follow along

Inequitable access to recorded video lessons (wide variance infrequency and length of lessons for each student)

Communication:

- Insufficient communications from IEP team addressing child's services (38.2%)

- No communication from teacher (5.9%)

- No communication from SCUSD about additional school resources that support their children with a disability (76%)

Student rights CANNOT be bargained! Doing so is illegal and immoral. However, this has been happening for decades. The District has continued to negotiate away student rights to SCTA! Political strife IS NOT a permissible reason to deny a student with disabilities the services that they are entitled to. The District MUST follow the law and remedy these issues! The District IS accountable for protecting students! Parent and student voices MATTER!

Accountability NOW!

Speaking as:

Coalition for Students with Disabilities, combining our time with Angie Sutherland, Angel Garcia, and Grace Trujillo

Email

Tel:

Date/time Stamp: 3/4/2021 11:55:39 AM

Sacramento City Unified School District
Board of Education Meeting
March 4, 2021 Public Comments

Name:	Palskissy@aol.com Munoz
Comment:	<p>I would like to bring up the continuing mental and emotional abuse that ms Steven's a P.E. teacher at rosemont high school is still being allowed to do to the children who attend her classes. I have been having this issue since the beginning of this school year and we are going on 7 months now with no actions. Through my search for a resolution to the continued bullying I have found a community thread on Facebook where parents have gone seeking advice and help and most dont even identify the teacher but when you see the comments EVERYONE knows exactly who it is. The children are having attendance and grades used against them. They are called losers, cry babies, and even told only Angel's can get an A in her class. She sticks them in isolation rooms as a time out for the duration of the class because of mic or camera issues. She assigns baiting essays to out kids who complain but tell the parents it's to make the class better. BUT when my child wrote her required 3 paragraph essay on how she felt unheard, disrespected and all around uncared for in the class the teacher private messaged her that she was blessed my child was the only one who felt that way. A completely dismissive comment made to make a child feel stupid. These is literally so much more examples to provide as proof of what I am saying. After calling the principal with no results I had to email the teacher where she gave me loads of half hearted excuses. Since then I have been sitting in on the class and documenting what she does. The list is very long and tiring. Christina pritchett a board member has been trying to help us her very best and that is how I ended up here tonight. This has been going on for at least 5 years that I am aware of with the teacher stateing she is untouchable and bulletproof. Enough is enough, just the fact that 3 kids that I am personally aware of having to go to counseling over this class ,my child included and watching my child cry every time she has this class and now her love of school is diminishing because of this mess. I have to say that after 5 years with nothing done that it looks to parents that the school board who are all aware of this on going problem are saying that they dont have the childrens best interest at heart and it is totally acceptable that teachers perform emotional and mental abuse on their students and no action but run around measures will be taken. Ms Steven's clearly has teacher burnout and needs an extended vacation and some support from her colleagues and since she is employing archaic practices in her position of power over these children that maybe she needs to revisit her child development classes. The things she is doing to the children are creating a hostile, emotionally destructive and mentally abusive environment which is not conducive for proper or dare I downgrade it to even basic bare essential learning. Further discussion on what is happening is a must and I am here with other parents to say that if nothing is done soon that we have to bring this to the medias attention. How can we as parent be expected to be ok with sending our children to someone who continues to make them cry. I have since looked up your guidelines handbook and have seen that this teacher has violated many of your zero tolerance rules of engagement. Think about your children in the same situation, what would you tolerate? If the district is actually here to care for the children that the parents entrust to</p>

	you for learning and development and such then you will stand up for these children and fix this issue immediately.
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Speaking as: Parent/Guardian

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