

Sacramento City Unified School District
Board of Education Meeting
June 25, 2020 Public Comments

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| Name: | Sarah WilliamsKingsley |
| Comment: | <p>This is a response to the Sacramento City Teachers Association proposal titled, “Article on Whole Child Education” dated June 9, 2020.</p> <p>I object to the SCTAs efforts in this article to override District staff and the elected school board by putting in place committees to determine what education is offered to our students on a site by site basis. This approach basically makes each site its own governing body in violation of the intent of a school district with an elected board to provide oversight. It reinforces the existing opt-in culture that permeates our District and holds back improvement efforts. It reinforces inequity. It violates students’ rights to a Free, Appropriate, Public Education.</p> <p>I want to be clear with the Board that should you agree to this proposal, you will be taking steps backwards in the fight for progress for our students. Parents have called on the Board to remove Appendix D from the SCTA contract and applauded when you did so in 2017. Parents called on the Board to stop following the November 2016 MOU on Assessments on the basis that it violates the District’s Child Find obligations, and applauded when steps were taken in September 2019 to implement a robust assessment plan for all our students.</p> <p>I call on the Board and the Superintendent today to commit to refusing efforts to move this District backwards. I have prepared a written summary of my objections for the record.</p> <p>Details of my objections:</p> <p>“...Places less emphasis on standardized testing.” This framing of standardized testing as negative does not serve students or parents. How are parents to evaluate their student’s progress if there is no standard measurement? How are parents and communities to evaluate school effectiveness if there are no standard measurements?</p> <p>Part A of this plan assumes the November 2016 MOU on Assessments is included in this contract. The November 2016 MOU on Assessments disallowed most assessments in our classrooms. The CAC asked the District to invalidate it on the basis that it violates the District’s Child Find obligations. The Superintendent also shared with SCTA that it is in</p> |

conflict with the District's improvement plan for GATE access mandated by the United States Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights.

The plan calls for Arts and Music instruction but does not detail how much this will cost.

Part C calls for interventions to be decided on a site basis by a new committee. This means the quality of the education each child receives will be determined site-by-site -- making equity in education impossible. If sites can opt-in they can opt-out and that should not be allowed. The remedies are also not in line with student-centered interventions -- they are adult centered. If students at a school site needs more resource teacher support, there is a mechanism to get that already through the one stop staffing process. "Targeted extended day" means teachers are paid overtime to tutor existing students. Students need to be provided services within the school day and not expected to attend school before or after hours to accommodate the needs of the adults.

Part C also calls for funding for the new site-level special education committees. This work should be done as part of the due course of employment and not subject to bargaining. The cost of the committees is listed at \$74,114.05 per site with fewer than 400 students and \$148,228.10 for those larger than 400 students. Why would the District fund committees instead of services for students directly?

The plan shows a deep misunderstanding on the part of the SCTA about what Multi-Tiered Systems of Support actually means. They specifically ask that each school site have an MTSS committee that would take disagreements to the other committee they want to create, the Special Education Committee. MTSS is not a Special Education function.

Part D-- Parent Teacher Home Visit project -- Opt-in AGAIN.

Part E -- Restorative Practices Proposal is also misguided -- it once again calls for the creation of yet another committee with the power to opt-out at the site level. Disciplinary practices should not be bottom up instead of top-down. The District's opt-in culture has already led to site-level disparities in discipline and resulted in the District leading the state in suspensions of Black boys. The District has the statutory authority to set District-wide policies and does not need the teachers union's permission to do so. All of the metrics for oversight are supposed to be tracked by the pre-existing School Site Councils, which are already made up of teachers, staff and parents. If teacher's want a say in what happens on their campus, they should offer to serve on this committee.

Part F -- Special Education and Inclusive Practices

Special Education is not a negotiable item. Students have the legal right to a Free, Appropriate, Public Education and the District is legally obligated to provide it. This section is an attempt to place teacher's wants ahead of student's rights.

Part F, section 1 calls for teachers to be paid to serve on the Community Advisory Committee (CAC). The CAC is a state-mandated advisory committee that in SCUSD is parent-led. Teachers are invited to participate and join as regular members. Teachers can not be allowed to overtake or co-opt this avenue for parent input and oversight.

Creation of a District/SCTA committee (number 2 in this proposal) to guide special education services is both unnecessary as it duplicates existing workflow, and attempts to circumvent the District's ability to implement Board policy by removing their oversight ability. The SCTA is not elected to determine education policy for the District. The School Board is. They hire the District staff to implement their policies. SCTA has no legal right to intervene in that process.

Part F, section 3 -- School Site Committees on MTSS (committee number 3). My objections are the same as my objections to the other site level committee proposed in Part C. This work should already be done in the normal course of work and giving site committees the ability to override District policy is inequitable and usurps the Board of Education. MTSS is not a special education function.

Virtually all of the items listed in this section should already be happening and should not be subject to negotiations.

The exception is bullet 6. This is an effort to reinstate the illegal Appendix D that allowed teachers in the District to refuse to have students with disabilities in their classrooms for 20 years. The CAC begged the Board for years to remove this appendix from the SCTA contract. It was finally removed in 2017 and now SCTA is attempting to bring it back proposing that class sizes be modified "using a weighted plan" based on "individual differences." This is coded language that means teachers who have students with disabilities in their classrooms can have smaller class-sizes, assuming that students with disabilities are a burden.

This document highlights SCTA's deep misunderstanding of MTSS, special education services and the right's of our students. It also lays bare their attempts to usurp the authority of the duly elected Board of Education to set District policy.

Speaking as: Parent/Guardian

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