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BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

Date: November 13, 2015

SUPERINTENDENT – JOSÉ L. BANDA

BC NO.	FROM	REGARDING
S-94	José Banda	School Services of California's Sacramento Weekly Update
S-95	José Banda	Highlights of Calendar for the Week of November 16

CHIEF BUSINESS OFFICER – GERARDO CASTILLO

BC NO.	FROM	REGARDING
CBO-49	Gerardo Castillo	Response to Question About Unfunded Liability for OPEB



**SACRAMENTO CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD COMMUNICATION**

BC NO: S-94

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM - <i>(Check a Box)</i>	No:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Yes:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Date: 11/13/2015
Approved by: José L. Banda, Superintendent						
To the Members of the Board of Education						
Prepared by: José L. Banda, Superintendent					Contact Email: Superintendent@scusd.edu	
Subject: School Services of California's Sacramento Weekly Update						

Attached is the weekly update from School Services of California for your review.



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DATE: November 13, 2015

TO: Jose Banda
Superintendent

AT: Sacramento City Unified School District

FROM: Your SSC Legislative Team

RE: ***SSC's Sacramento Weekly Update***

During the hiatus that is the recess of the regular legislative session, many legislative committees will continue to meet outside of the Capitol for informational hearings on various topics. The subjects of these hearings provide an early indicator of what is on legislators' minds and legislative interests for the coming year that may result in the introduction of bills on the topics in question.

A review of the current legislative calendar for the months of November and December—and a little of January—show that interests are wide ranging. Although the importance of topics under consideration may be shared by members of both the Republican and Democratic parties, the agendas for these hearings generally will reflect the policy focus of legislative Democrats since they typically are the committee chairs in a Legislature that continues to have Democratic Party majority.

The Assembly interim hearing schedule includes gathering information on a variety of topics, including:

- The state's role in closing California's opportunity gap
- Water resource management
- Impacts of the drought on agriculture
- Child care and transportation as barriers to work for women
- Latino worker health and safety issues
- Regulation of the daily fantasy sports industry
- Seismic safety
- Medical marijuana

Not to be outdone, the Senate also will be hearing testimony over the coming months on many issues for possible action next year, including:

- Environmental issues, including the Refugio oil spill
- Housing in California
- Impacts of the drought on California
- The role of climate policy in addressing the drought, competitiveness, and traffic
- California's water challenges in the 21st century
- The future of the California Children's Services program
- Workers' compensation
- Wildfires caused by powerlines

With water (or the lack thereof), jobs, the economy, labor issues, climate change, wildfires, and earthquakes on legislators' minds, where is education among the priorities of the interim recess?

Select Committee Sets Hearing on Biliteracy and Learning Strategies

In the area of K-12 education, the Senate Select Committee on Biliteracy and Dual Immersion in California, chaired by Senator Tony Mendoza (D-Cerritos), will be holding an informational hearing on "Biliteracy and Effective Learning Strategies in an Internationalized California" on Tuesday, December 1, 2015. The hearing will be at the Excelsior High School-Norwalk Adult School in Norwalk starting at 9:00 a.m.

California State University and University of California Focus of Interim Hearings

In the area of higher education, on Monday, November 16, Assembly Member Shirley Weber (D-San Diego) will be convening an informational hearing of the Assembly Select Committee on Campus Climate to hear testimony on "food insecurity and student homelessness on San Diego's higher education campuses." The hearing will be held beginning at 1:30 p.m. on the San Diego State University campus at the Conrad Prebys Aztec Student Union Theatre. And on Tuesday, December 1, Assembly Member Kevin McCarty

(D-Sacramento) will hold a meeting of the Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2 on Education at King Hall on the Davis campus (Room 1001) of the University of California to "continue the zero based budgeting of the University of California by looking at a specific campus' budget." This hearing starts at 1:30 p.m.

Hearing schedules do change, and we'll keep you posted on any additions or deletions specific to education over the coming weeks.

Nancy LaCasse
Robert Miyashiro

Note: Reportedly, the number of pages used to document Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs) exploded in 2014-15, prompting the State Board of Education to look at options that would make the LCAPs more accessible.

State Board Encourages Creativity in Summarizing Accountability Plans

By John Fensterwald and Michael Collier
EdSource
November 6, 2015

Members of the State Board of Education are encouraging school districts to use executive summaries, infographics and other ways to make districts' burgeoning Local Control and Accountability Plans more reader-friendly to parents and community members.

But the board took no action on the issue at its bimonthly meeting in Sacramento this week and has no plans to require new features or, at this point, to modify the template that districts must use to draw up the accountability and budget documents, known as LCAPs, that every district and charter school must write every three years and update annually.

State board president Michael Kirst expressed concerns that requiring an executive summary could make the LCAP even more unwieldy. "It would end up as a 100-page executive summary," he quipped.

Board member Patricia Rucker said a better strategy would be for districts to focus on improving the quality of the core LCAP itself, rather than mandating new features. She pointed out that districts already have the right to add any materials they would like.

Board member Trish Williams also did not favor imposing additional requirements, but said that rather an executive summary, which would have the difficult task of summarizing an entire LCAP, the focus should be on coming up with a "user friendly" document that parents could more easily understand.

An EdSource review of the state's 30 largest districts published last week found that LCAPS mushroomed in size and complexity in the second year, often to hundreds of pages.

Materials presented to the board by the California Department of Education listed examples of innovative ways that districts have used to summarize their LCAPs. These include infographics, blogs, and data "dashboards." The department also referred to an Educational Policy Improvement Center [report](#) that includes promising LCAP practices and creative ways to communicate key information to the public.

The Legislature required districts to write LCAPs in exchange for gaining more flexibility in deciding how to spend state funding. LCAPs must spell out district improvement goals, along with actions and expenditures to achieve them, for all students and for student subgroups, with special attention to English learners, and low-income, homeless and foster children who draw additional dollars.

Board member Sue Burr acknowledged that the LCAP, which in the two years it has been mandated is emerging as a comprehensive and often dense planning document for the district, "may not be a helpful a communication tool for parents."

“So the question is whether you need an infographic or some other mechanism,” Burr said. Another option is to convert or somehow adapt an existing document that every school must compile annually, the School Accountability Report Card or SARC, into a document that is more useful to parents. The state Department of Education plans to revise the SARC so that it more closely aligns with the LCAP.

Note: School suspensions are on the decline, but effective alternatives have not yet fully taken hold.

Why Some LAUSD Teachers are Balking at a New Approach to Discipline Problems

By Teresa Watanabe and Howard Blume
Los Angeles Times
November 7, 2015

In a South Los Angeles classroom, a boy hassles a girl. The teacher moves him to the back of the room, where he scowls, makes a paper airplane and repeatedly throws it against the wall. Two other boys wander around the class and then nearly come to blows.

“Don’t you talk about my sister,” one says to the other. The teacher steps between them.

When she tries to regain order, another boy tells her: “Screw you.”

It’s another day of disruption on this campus in the Los Angeles Unified School District, which has been nationally hailed by the White House and others for its leadership in promoting more progressive school-discipline policies. The nation’s second-largest school system was the first in California to ban suspensions for defiance and announced plans to roll out an alternative known as restorative justice, which seeks to resolve conflicts through talking circles and other methods to build trust.

The shift has brought dramatic changes: Suspensions districtwide plummeted to 0.55% last school year compared with 8% in 2007-08, and days lost to suspension also plunged, to 5,024 from 75,000 during that same period, according to the most recent data.

The district moved to ban suspensions amid national concern that they imperil academic achievement and disproportionately affect minorities, particularly African Americans.

But many teachers say their classrooms are reeling from unruly students who are escaping consequences for their actions.

They blame the district for failing to provide the staff and training needed to effectively shift to the new approach — and their complaints are backed up by L.A. schools Supt. Ramon Cortines. He said the new discipline policies, which were pushed through by the Board of Education and former Supt. John Deasy and which he supports, were poorly executed. He compared the implementation to the flawed effort to equip students and teachers with Apple tablets.

“I will compare it to the iPad,” Cortines said. “You cannot piecemeal this kind of thing and think it is going to have the impact that it should have. Don’t make a political statement and then don’t have the wherewithal to back it up.”

Alex Caputo-Pearl, president of United Teachers Los Angeles, said the union backs the new approach and that teachers with sufficient support have used it effectively at such high schools as Augustus Hawkins in South L.A. and Roosevelt in Boyle Heights. But widespread complaints from teachers without such support have prompted union plans to start its own training.

“We’re now carrying the consequences of ... not enough staffing to make it work and a lot of frustration,” Caputo-Pearl said.

The most assertive supporters of restorative justice on the school board are Steve Zimmer and Monica Garcia. Both said the effort is essential to improving academic achievement, as important as instructional practices and financial management.

“This literally changes kids’ lives and their experience in school,” said Zimmer, the board president. “We have to get this right.”

Zimmer questioned reports of deteriorating discipline, saying such problems existed before the policy was enacted two years ago and resulted from numerous factors at a school.

But board member Richard Vladovic said a hasty rollout had the potential to make things worse.

“We have not provided all the training we should, but that’s been historic in education,” he said. “It’s called the devil in the details. Sometimes it means stopping what you’re doing and then do it right in a few places, and then do it right everywhere.”

Only 307 of the district’s 900 campuses have so far received training under the district’s five-year restorative justice plan, according to Earl Perkins, assistant superintendent of school operations. Last year, the district only budgeted funds for five restorative justice counselors until community pressure pushed officials to increase that to 25. This year, 20 more counselors were added for a total \$7.2 million in spending.

But that covers less than a third of the district’s 181 secondary schools, where discipline problems are the most acute.

Community groups that monitor the issue say it is unclear how schools are coping with unruly students under the suspension restrictions — in part because the district has not released data on how many, for instance, are referred to the administrative office and what happens to them afterward. At Manchester Elementary and Markham Middle School in South L.A., principals reportedly sent disruptive students home without recording them as suspensions, but Perkins said no such reports have surfaced this year.

Sylvester Wiley, an L.A. Unified police officer for 32 years, said schools are increasingly calling police to handle disruptive students. “Now that they can’t suspend, schools want to have officers handle things, but we constantly tell them we can’t do this,” he said. “Willful defiance is not a crime.”

At Los Angeles Academy Middle School in South L.A., teachers have asked for an after-school detention program, but one has not yet been established. They say they are overwhelmed by what they consider ineffective responses to students who push, threaten and curse them. The stress over discipline prompted two teachers to take leaves of absence in the last two months.

“My teachers are at their breaking point,” Art Lopez, the school’s union representative, wrote to union official Colleen Schwab in a letter obtained by The Times. “Everyone working here is highly aware of how the lack of consequences has affected the site. Teachers with a high number of students with discipline issues are walking a fine line between extreme stress and an emotional meltdown.”

Lopez wrote that many teachers felt that administrators were pushing the burden of discipline onto instructors because they can no longer suspend unruly students and lack the staff to handle them outside the classroom. Associated Administrators of Los Angeles, which represents principals and others, declined to comment.

Michael Lam, an eighth-grade math teacher, said he has seen an increase in student belligerence under new discipline policies.

“Where is the justice for the students who want to learn?” he said, speaking at a recent forum held as part of the process to select the next superintendent of schools. “I’m afraid our standards are getting lower and lower.”

Cortines, 83, said he broke up a fight between students last year at Markham Middle School, which he said was “out of control” toward the end of the school year.

“There were just a lot of problems” and not only with restorative justice, he said. “I don’t think we provided the proper support for the administration. I don’t think we did proper monitoring.”

Cortines said the situation has improved at Markham. Principal Luis Montoya said change would take time, but that progress should pick up this year because the district has provided a full-time staff member for the restorative justice program and a teacher has been named to help lead the efforts.

But some teachers are dubious, in part because high staff turnover has stymied efforts. A highly regarded restorative justice counselor was let go in January because foundation funding ran out, and 10 of the 11 teachers on the school’s restorative justice task force last year have left the campus.

Schools with enough staff and training, however, report success. At Jordan High School in Watts, for instance, suspensions have dropped to just one as of October compared with 22 during the same period last year. The school has launched a well-staffed program led by a dean and two counselors, who meet with troubled students in a designated room featuring posters offering pointers about the practice, such as speaking and listening with respect.

At Gardena High School, Principal Rosie Martinez said the school began using restorative justice last year, with all teachers asked to hold discussion circles to build a sense of community and trust. When students misbehave, they are sent to resolve their conflicts with coordinator Deborah Moore.

“It’s a slow process getting everyone on board,” said Daron Andrade, dean of students. But she added that the new approach seems to have reduced arguments and fights.

Students who have experienced the restorative practices say they have helped.

Nataya Ross, 17, and Maya Smith, 16, were both referred to restorative justice circles after getting into campus fights. The students took turns sharing their feelings about the conflict and how to make things right.

“When I first heard of the circle, I thought it was useless,” Nataya said. “Now I think it is good. Me and my best friend were in the circle, and we got good in two minutes. We just had to get a lot of stuff off our chest.”

Maya also thought the circle was “dumb” at first. “But it actually helped,” she said. “It made me mature just a little. I think I’m way better than how I was last year.”

The students said some teachers believe the new approach has exacerbated discipline problems. But they also said restorative justice has the potential to help all students, if they are exposed to it.

Full funding to spread the practice to every campus is the district’s ultimate goal, Perkins said.

“We have to teach our students how to be good citizens ... they don’t need to miss instructional time to make this happen,” he said.



**SACRAMENTO CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD COMMUNICATION**

BC NO: S-95

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM - <i>(Check a Box)</i>	No:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Yes:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Date: 11/13/2015
Approved by: José L. Banda, Superintendent						
To the Members of the Board of Education						
Prepared by: José L. Banda, Superintendent					Contact Email: superintendent@scusd.edu	
Subject: Highlights of Calendar for the Week of November 16						

Monday, November 16 – Wednesday, November 18

- Continuing Visit in China with Delegation from College Board

Thursday, November 19

- Board Meeting Day

Friday, November 20

- Meeting with Member Ryan
- Board Debrief Meeting
- 1:1 Meetings with Cabinet Members



**SACRAMENTO CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD COMMUNICATION**

BC NO: CBO-49

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM - <i>(Check a Box)</i>	No:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Yes:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Date: 11/13/2015
Approved by: José L. Banda, Superintendent						
To the Members of the Board of Education						
Prepared by: Gerardo Castillo, Chief Business Officer					Contact Email: Gerardo-Castillo@scusd.edu	
Subject: Response to Question About Unfunded Liability for OPEB						

A Board member recently asked how much we will have to contribute to the Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) trust each year to prevent the unfunded liability of \$611.4 million from growing.

Based on the latest actuarial valuation, we will have to contribute \$18 million to the trust per year to maintain the unfunded liability. We contributed \$10 million for FY 2014-15, not enough to keep the unfunded liability from increasing further. However, if we followed the actuarial report's schedule, at the end of the remaining 23 year amortization period, absent other unexpected changes, the unfunded liability would be paid off. One significant additional benefit of increasing the contribution levels is that the higher future expected trust earnings will allow the District to immediately report a lower unfunded liability. The unfunded liability could be \$100 million or more lower had we been able to increase our trust contributions to this level in 2014.

Below is an Account Summary as of 09/30/2015

- The initial contribution on 12/24/2012 was for \$3.05 million
- FY 2013-14 we finished with \$4.41 million in total assets
- FY 2014-15 we contributed \$10 million
- FY 2014-15 we finished with \$15.15 million in total assets

The \$15.15 million in total assets is just 2% of the unfunded liability.

We have a ways to go to fully fund our \$611 million OPEB liability. However, with your leadership, we tripled the contributions in this year.

With proper planning and your continued support we hope to continue investing in future years. This will also help us maintain our positive certification with SCOE that we started in 2014-15 and not pass the liability to future generations.

Please contact me if you have any questions.