



# Connecting the Dots: Report of Findings and Considerations Community Conversations about the SFUSD Local Control and Accountability Plan

April 14, 2016

**Community Engagement in SFUSD’s Local Control and Accountability Plan:  
Findings and Recommendations**

**April 2016**

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## Community Engagement in SFUSD's Local Control and Accountability Plan: Connecting the Dots

Over the past two school years SFUSD has convened district staff and representatives of advisory groups, labor partners and community organizations to work collaboratively and support transparency related to the district's Local Control and Accountability Plan, or LCAP. This spring members of the **LCAP Task Force** helped design and conduct a series of community conversations to hear participants' questions, suggestions and priorities, through:

- **Community conversations** in schools, connected with their site planning process;
- **Focus groups** with SFUSD advisory committees, community organizations working with families and serving students, and United Educators of San Francisco;
- Three **forums open to the general public**, co-hosted by SFUSD with Parents for Public Schools, the Second District PTA, and Support for Families of Children with Disabilities.
- SFUSD's website also provided **an online survey** and the information presented through the forums and conversations, for people who couldn't attend in person.
- In a parallel process, the district's Student Advisory Council is conducting **online surveys and focus groups** to identify priority needs and services from student perspectives. Findings from the Student Voice campaign will be presented in May.

Our approach intentionally linked LCAP community engagement with school-site Balanced Score Cards and the district's overall budget planning process. The goals with the conversations were to engage our district's students, families, educators and community members to:

- Understand the state's Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and SFUSD's tiered approach to allocating resources, services and supports to schools;
- Share ideas about programs and services that are working, and identify priorities for supporting SFUSD students to be successful; and
- Help shape the district's updated Local Control and Accountability Plan and inform the district's overall budget process.

From mid-February to April **we heard from over 360 participants in 26 conversations**. By actively reaching out to hold conversations at schools and in trusted community settings, we succeeded in hearing from participants reflecting the diversity of SFUSD's students and families across differences in language, ethnicity, neighborhood and socioeconomic background.

We also intentionally **prioritized outreach to communities intended to be served by the state and SFUSD's approach to resource equity**: English Learners, low-income students, youth in foster care, African American students and students who receive Special Education services.

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR SFUSD'S REVISED LOCAL PLAN

Through themes that emerged across many of the conversations **we identified several goals and measures** to be strengthened or incorporated into SFUSD's revised LCAP for 2016-2017:

1. Include **measures and set goals for student achievement in Science and Art**, in addition to goals for *Smarter Balanced Assessment* (SBAC) proficiency in English Language Arts and Mathematics.
2. Include specific goals/targets for **SBAC proficiency for students in foster care and students with Individual Education Plans** who receive Special Education services.
3. Include specific goals/targets for **improving graduation rates** for African American, Latino, English Learner, Foster Youth and students receiving Special Education services.
4. Strengthen the existing LCAP goal by **including specific targets to reduce suspensions** for African American and Latino students.
5. Include **goals for reducing out-of-class referrals**, while increasing the number of sites providing data about out-of-class referrals.
6. Include **goals to establish school-site African American family affinity groups**.

We also identified a number of **actions, services, and resources** related to achieving current LCAP goals that were prioritized through many of the conversations, and which community members want to see articulated in the updated LCAP for 2016-17:

1. Articulate specific strategies and include resources to **accelerate learning for students below grade level** – including Foster Youth, African American, English Learner and Newcomer students, as well as students with interrupted formal education.
2. **Expand opportunities for credit recovery**, including specific opportunities for English Learners, Newcomer students and Foster Youth.
3. **Expand Ethnic Studies courses** in all high schools and middle schools, and incorporate these concepts throughout SFUSD's general curriculum beginning in elementary grades.
4. Provide sufficient **English Language Arts/English Language Development instructional materials** for every classroom, aligned with state standards and our Core Curriculum.
5. Expand **teacher training, ongoing coaching and supports** in key areas:
  - Cultural competence
  - Behavior supports and classroom management
  - Trauma-informed practices
  - English Language Development and a focus on literacy for English Learners.

## How We Got Here: Information We Shared Through Community Conversations

In each conversation we presented information about the Local Control Funding Formula and the focus of Supplemental and Concentration Grant funding, as well as the LCAP's goals of equity, transparency and accountability. We organized the LCAP information through three themes, similar to school-site Balanced Score Cards: ***Student Access & Achievement***, ***Student Engagement & School Climate***, and ***Family Engagement/School-Family-Community Ties***.

Through small group activities we shared examples of goals described in SFUSD's current LCAP, and information about the tiered levels of support the district provides schools. Then we asked participants to share ideas about the services, interventions and approaches that are effective, and the resources they think are the most important to support students to succeed.

A new element this year was sharing examples about the **impact of previous community feedback** on the current LCAP, including specific goals, services and resources to support better student outcomes. Providing this framework of collective impact up front helped build a more positive, solution-oriented dynamic across the conversations than we heard in conversations over the previous two years.

We also took this opportunity to ask participants to share their ideas for classes and training for both families and district staff, to be provided through a new ***Family Academy*** program.

## What We Heard: Major Themes from the Conversations

Students, families and staff shared many concrete examples of important resources and services that work to support students, and those that need to be expanded. A few major themes about priorities emerged from these conversations in many different communities:

- Participants in the conversations want to create **more inclusive school communities**, where families and teachers learn together and there are structures to welcome, orient and support new students and families.
- Schools need concrete tools and **support to improve communication, bridge the gaps and build relationships** among students and families in different program strands, **across diversity** of culture, ethnicity, language and socio-economic background.
- Students and families need **support for important transitions**: rising to middle school and high school, and for Newcomers and Foster Youth placed in new schools.
- SFUSD needs to increase opportunities to **strengthen cultural competence** of teachers and school staff across the district, by expanding training and ongoing coaching.
- Transportation issues emerged in many conversations. Participants urged SFUSD to work with the City to **address transportation needs**, especially for students who are struggling – including Foster Youth placed outside the city, students who are chronically late or absent, and families with students in multiple schools traveling on public transportation.

While the overall tone of most discussions was focused on resources and solutions, participants in every conversation had **questions about how funds and services are being monitored and evaluated**, and about the district's **mechanisms for accountability**.

### **What's Working and Should Be Expanded**

Most of the conversations held at school sites were linked directly to their site planning and Balanced Score Card development process. Throughout these conversations, and echoed across the community-based events, strong themes emerged about resources that are working, and that participants want to see expanded:

- Literacy, Math and Science specialists at school sites
- Investing in teachers to reduce class size, from grades 4/5 up through high school
- Bilingual staff to support students and families (including classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, Family Liaisons and office staff)
- Assistant Principals at larger elementary schools and multi-site K8 schools
- Social Worker positions increased to full-time
- Mental health services and supports, provided by SFUSD staff and community agencies
- Wellness Centers – expand to serve elementary and middle schools, and provide additional prevention services in high schools
- Restorative Practices – increase the number of coaches available to support sites to implement Restorative Practices school-wide
- School events and meetings being held at different times of day, to accommodate the different schedules of families (for example, alternating morning and evening meetings)
- Family Liaisons – increased to more school sites
- Use of texting and social media to communicate with families.

## **Findings Related to Three Major Themes**

Beyond the themes, actions and services already mentioned, additional themes emerged across our conversations about the needs of students, school staff, and families. These are shared below, organized by the three primary categories of ***Student Access & Achievement***, ***Student Engagement & School Climate***, and ***Family Engagement***.

### **Student Access and Achievement: What's Needed**

- Accelerate development of curriculum that's more hands-on, innovative and relevant to students, including project-based and service learning opportunities.
- Create pipelines to recruit, train and support teachers of color and bilingual teachers.
- Provide more centrally funded instructional materials for classrooms, including English Language Arts/English Language Development materials aligned with state standards and the district's Core Curriculum.
- Provide more materials in the language of instruction for Bilingual, Language Immersion and World Language program strands, including Chinese, Spanish and other languages such as Arabic, Tagalog and Vietnamese.
- Develop strategies to increase enrollment of African American students in advanced placement classes, and provide supports to ensure their success.
- Provide more individualized supports to students who are struggling, such as attendance plans, mentoring and tutoring (during the school day and after school).
- Provide more support for African American and English Learner students at schools with a small population of these student groups (where enrollment doesn't automatically trigger centralized resource allocations).
- Establish a point person at each school, and provide guidance and resources to focus on the needs of Newcomer students and Foster Youth.
- Provide more supports for teachers with large classrooms, including paraprofessionals.
- Reduce class size.
- Work with community partner organizations and City agencies to expand the capacity of site-based afterschool programs to serve more students.

### **Student Engagement and School Climate: What's Needed**

- Expand teacher training, coaching and ongoing supports for behavior and classroom management.
- Create structures at each school – including staff and peer leaders - to welcome, orient and support new students and families.
- Strengthen collaboration with community-based organizations and agencies to help provide direct services, bring cultural expertise that can support student behavior, and reinforce trauma-informed practices.
- Ensure general education teachers understand specific needs and experiences of students receiving Special Education services, Foster Youth, and Newcomer students.
- Create opportunities for school staff to better understand the experiences of students and families who are homeless, living in transitional housing, public housing and SRO (*Single Room Occupancy*) hotels.

### **Family Engagement: What's Needed**

As in previous community engagement initiatives, **improving two-way communication with families** was a common thread throughout the conversations. Specific ideas included:

- Start by building relationships, so communication is not only about problems.
- Expand use of School Loop, texting and email to provide more information about school events, opportunities to participate, and resources.
- Require schools to communicate with families when students are struggling academically or socially, or are getting a grade below a C in any subject.
- Establish a family engagement point person at each school, especially where there's a large population of African American and/or English Learner students.
- Provide concrete tools and support for schools to bridge gaps and build relationships among families in different program strands, across diversity of culture, ethnicity, language and socio-economic background.
- Expand the district and school-site capacity to support language access for families, including more bilingual staff.
- Provide resources to support home visits to families, to support building relationships as well as to address issues such as chronic tardiness and absenteeism.
- Provide paid time for teachers to communicate and engage with their students' families.



We also asked participants to share ideas for workshops, classes and training to be provided through a new ***Family Academy***. We found that families and staff want to participate in workshops together, to strengthen relationships as well as learn new skills and strategies. They also want more systems to support peer-to-peer learning.

We heard many suggestions for specific workshops and training, related to these themes:

- Communication and Relationships
- Navigating SFUSD
- Understanding Your Rights and Advocating for Your Child
- Supporting Student Learning at Home
- Leadership Skills and School Governance
- Child and Youth Development
- Life Skills, Personal Growth and Self Care
- Accessing Services and Resources

## Findings Related to Specific Student Populations

While many students thrive when offered similar resources, both the state’s funding formula and SFUSD’s tiered approach **recognize that specific student populations have additional needs and require additional resources and supports to do well.**

Each box shared in the pages below focuses on a specific student population, bringing together concerns and suggestions we heard across different conversations. Many of the issues apply to multiple student groups, and are repeated in several sections. ***These are not intended to be comprehensive recommendations*** for serving these student groups, but an effort to share findings from conversations that raised issues about these specific students and their needs.

The following sections focus on English Learners, Newcomer students, youth in foster care, African American students and students receiving Special Education services.

### Focus on English Learners

- Articulate specific strategies and include resources to accelerate growth for students below grade level in academic subjects.
- Conduct mid-semester reviews of students to assess if they’re on track for annual growth and reclassification as Fluent English Proficient.
- Expand options for credit recovery, including opportunities after school, on Saturdays, and through summer programs.
- Provide sufficient classroom curriculum materials, aligned with English Language Development state standards and our Core Curriculum.
- Provide an English Language Development Specialist for schools with a large population of English Learners.
- Expand training for teachers on English Language Development and literacy skills.
- Increase expertise for teachers in language of instruction – in Biliteracy, Dual Immersion and World Language programs.
- Increase number of bilingual Family Liaisons to work with families of English Learners.
- Provide more centrally allocated supports for English Learners at schools with a low number of these students (where enrollment doesn’t trigger automatic allocations).

### **Focus on Newcomer Students**

- Ensure general education teachers understand specific needs and experiences of Newcomer students.
- Teachers and schools need to understand the dynamics and issues related to family reunification, and support students and families through that process.
- Create structures at each school – including staff and peer leaders – to welcome and support new families.
- Articulate specific strategies and include resources to accelerate growth for students below grade level in academic subjects, and identify specific strategies to support students with interrupted education.
- Establish a point person at each school, and provide guidance and resources to focus on the needs of Newcomer students and their transition into the new school community.

We learned that the district's only high school for newcomers is struggling with specific challenges in meeting the needs of its student population, related to the school facility itself:

- The school has more classes than classrooms; the cafeteria and library are used as classrooms, and thus the library is only available one period a day for use as a library.
- There are no classrooms available for teachers during their prep periods, making it difficult to plan or collaborate.
- Because the school has no gym, the cafeteria is used for weight training, wrestling and other sports.
- The soccer teams have to practice in a public field at Franklin Square, which is dangerous as they are extremely vulnerable to gangs.

### Focus on Youth in Foster Care

- Ensure general education teachers understand the specific needs and experiences of students in foster care.
- Articulate specific strategies to support students with interrupted education.
- Create structures at each school – including staff and peer leaders – to welcome new families, and support their transition into the new school community.
- Expand options for credit recovery, including opportunities after school, on Saturdays, and through summer programs.
- Articulate specific strategies and include resources to accelerate learning for students below grade level in academic subjects.
- Establish a point person at each school, and provide guidance and resources to focus on the needs of youth in foster care and their transition into the new school community.
- Establish a district-wide Family Liaison focused on youth in foster care.
- The school site needs to know who holds Educational Rights for student, and include them in decisions – especially school placement – as well as general communication.
- Ensure better tracking of partial credits.
- Support students and school sites during the re-entry process for students who have been expelled or detained.
- Expedite the assessment process for eligibility for Special Education services while students are detained, so that it is less than 60 days.
- Students detained at the Juvenile Justice Center (*formerly known as the Youth Guidance Center*) often are eligible to leave but don't have a school placement yet – so they're stuck there. While SFUSD should more quickly identify school placements for these students, holding students in detention until they have a school placement is a City/County policy that is not found in other Bay Area counties.
- Review expulsion cases of students coming from other districts, as these students are often expelled for actions for which SFUSD would not require an expulsion.

### **Focus on African American Students**

- Increase opportunities to strengthen cultural competence of teachers and other staff, by expanding training and ongoing coaching, as well as strategies to recruit and retain African American teachers.
- Develop strategies to increase enrollment of African American students in advanced placement classes, and provide supports to ensure their success.
- Improve monitoring and provide supports to make sure students are on track to meet A-G graduation requirements.
- Articulate specific strategies and include resources to accelerate learning for students below grade level in academic subjects.
- Expand options for credit recovery, including opportunities after school, on Saturdays, and through summer programs.
- Provide more centrally allocated supports for African American students at schools where they are a small population (where enrollment doesn't trigger automatic allocations).

### **Focus on Students Receiving Special Education Services**

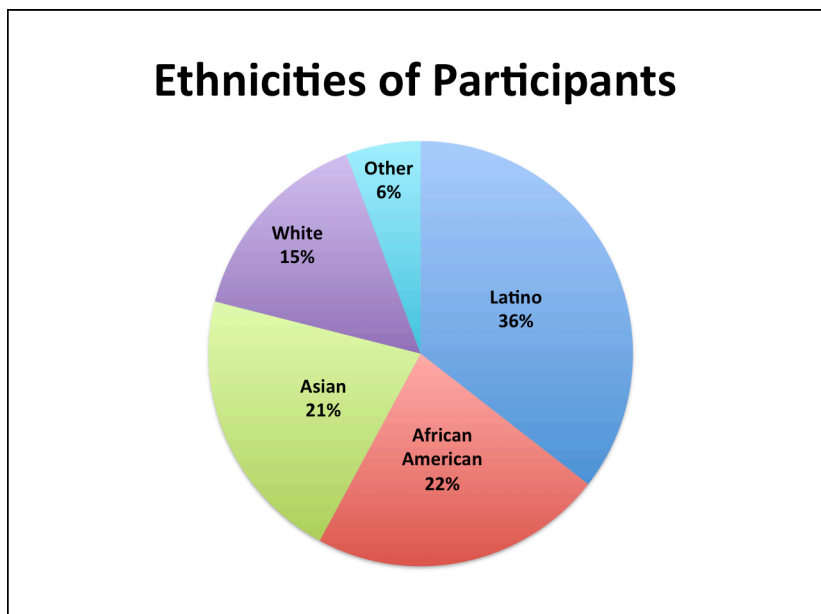
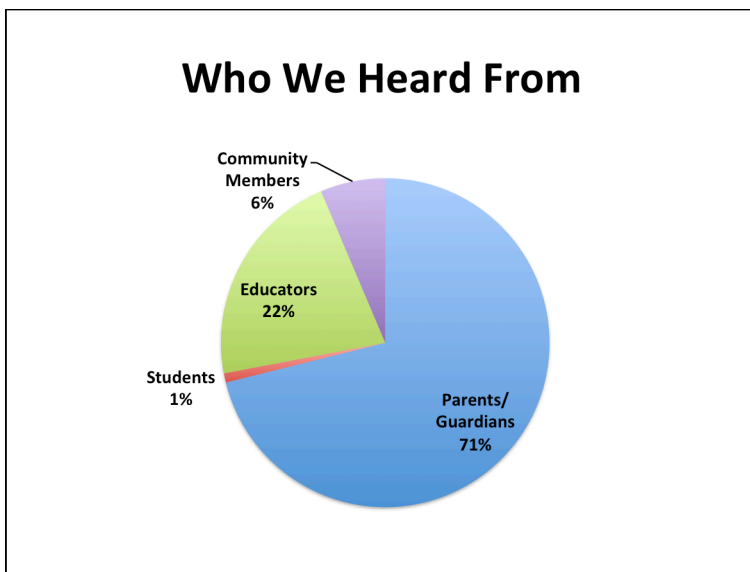
- Ensure general education teachers understand specific needs and experiences of students receiving Special Education services.
- Build more inclusive school communities, and ensure that Special Day Class teachers, students and families are welcomed to participate in school wide events and celebrations.
- Ensure that site governance and parent/family groups at schools include families of students receiving Special Education services.
- School sites need to know who holds the Educational Rights for students with Individual Education Plans, and include them in decisions as well as overall communication.
- Monitor students' Individual Education Plans to identify whether students are meeting the annual goals described within their IEP, and identify supports for those who do not meet these goals.

## Appendix I. Who We Heard from: Participants in Community Conversations

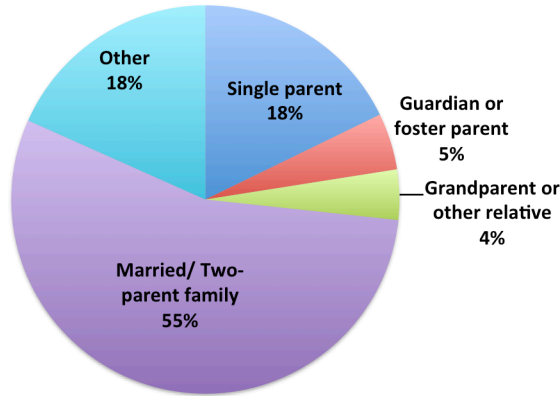
From mid-February to April **we heard from over 360 participants in 26 different conversations**, surpassing our goals for the number of conversations and participants. By actively reaching out to hold conversations at schools and in trusted community settings, we succeeded in hearing from participants reflecting the diversity of SFUSD's students and families across differences in language, ethnicity, types of schools, neighborhoods and socioeconomic backgrounds.

We also **prioritized outreach to communities intended to be served by the state and SFUSD's approach to resource equity**: English Learners, low-income students, youth in foster care, African American students and students who receive Special Education services.

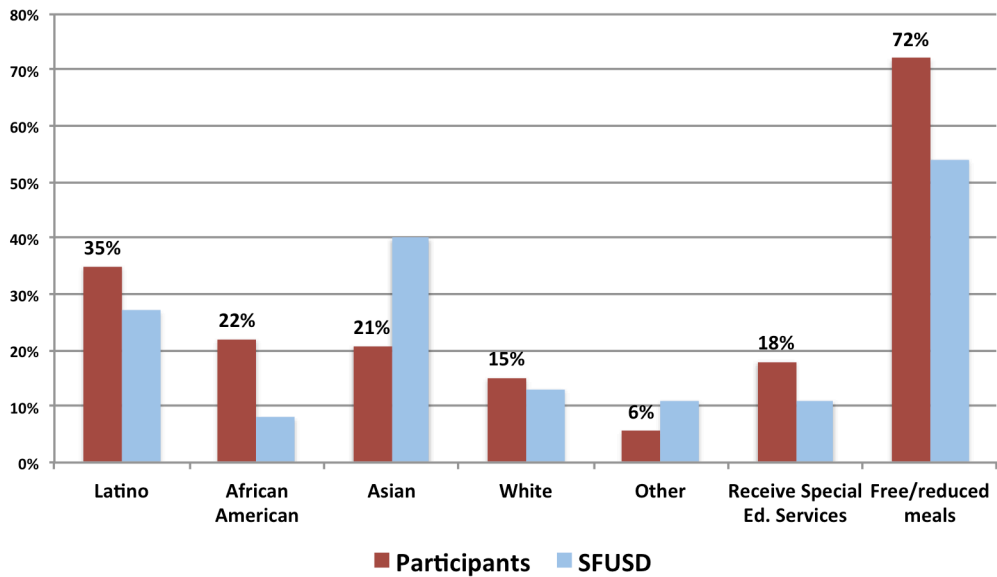
Based on surveys of participants:



## Participants Have Diverse Family Structures



## Participants Reflect SFUSD Students



### **Participants have children attending 57 SFUSD schools:**

**Early Education and Elementary Schools:** Alamo, Alvarado, Bryant, GW Carver, Cesar Chavez, Chinese Education Center, Clarendon, Cobb, El Dorado, Fairmount, Flynn, Garfield, Glen Park, Guadalupe, Bret Harte, Francis Scott Key, Lakeshore, Lafayette, Longfellow, Malcolm X, Marshall, Mission Education Center, Jose Ortega, Jean Parker, Peabody, Starr King, RL Stevenson, Sunnyside, Tenderloin, Tule Elk Park, Visitacion Valley and Daniel Webster

**K-8 schools:** Buena Vista Horace Mann, Bessie Carmichael, Paul Revere, Rooftop, SF Community and Alice Fong Yu

**Middle schools:** Aptos, Willie Brown, Denman, Everett, Giannini, Hoover, Martin Luther, King, Jr., James Lick and Roosevelt

**High schools and transitional programs:** Asawa School of the Arts, Balboa, Community Access and Transition Program (CAT), Galileo, Lincoln, Lowell, Mission, O'Connell, Wallenberg and Washington.

**Charter schools:** Kipp Bayview Academy and Gateway HS

### **Where we held the conversations and focus groups:**

**Public forums:** Events co-hosted with Parents for Public Schools, the 2nd District Parent Teachers Association, and Support for Families of Children with Disabilities.

**Conversations at schools:** Bessie Carmichael K-8, Chinese Education Center, Cobb ES, Longfellow ES, Mission Education Center, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. MS, Peabody ES, SF International HS, Starr King ES, Visitacion Valley ES, Wallenberg HS.

**Focus groups with community partners:** Close the Gap Coalition, Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth, Family Engagement Network, Foster Parent Association, Foster Youth Services Program Advisory Council, Mission Graduates, and the Mo'MAGIC Collaborative.

**SFUSD advisory committees and labor partners:** African American Parent Advisory Council (AAPAC), Community Advisory Committee for Special Education (CAC), District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC), Parent Advisory Council to the Board of Education (PAC), and United Educators of San Francisco's Executive Board.



## **Appendix II. SFUSD's LCAP Task Force**

Based on recommendations from the Parent Advisory Council (PAC) and District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC), in 2014 SFUSD convened district staff and representatives of advisory groups, labor partners and community organizations to work collaboratively as the **LCAP Task Force**. Members of the Task Force designed and helped lead conversations for the LCAP community engagement process. Participants in SFUSD's LCAP Task Force include:

### **SFUSD Offices and Labor Partners**

- Access and Equity
- Family and Community Engagement
- Families and Youth In Transition (FYIT)
- Foster Youth Services
- Multilingual Pathways
- Policy and Operations
- United Educators of San Francisco
- Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA)

### **SFUSD Advisory Committees**

- African American Parent Advisory Council (AAPAC)
- Community Advisory Committee for Special Education (CAC)
- District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC)
- Parent Advisory Council (PAC)
- Student Advisory Council (SAC)

### **Community-Based Organizations**

- Chinese for Affirmative Action
- Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth
- Mission Graduates
- Parents for Public Schools-SF (PPS)
- Peer Resources
- 2<sup>nd</sup> District PTA
- Support for Families of Children with Disabilities

### **The purpose of SFUSD's LCAP Task Force for school year 2015-16 is to:**

1. Increase and improve transparency, accountability and communication about the Local Control and Accountability Plan (both the current Plan, and revisions for 2016-17)
2. Review specific elements within the LCAP for the current year (2015-16), for example:
  - Section 3 - Appendix A budget for 2015-16
  - Section 2 – Goals & measures, and whether these reflect/demonstrate student success
3. Support timely community engagement to inform revisions to the LCAP for 2016-17.

# For more information about the Local Control Funding Formula and Local Control Accountability Plans

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**SFUSD:** [www.sfusd.edu/lcflcap](http://www.sfusd.edu/lcflcap) - or email [budget@sfusd.edu](mailto:budget@sfusd.edu)

**Board of Education's Parent Advisory Council:** [www.pacsf.org](http://www.pacsf.org)

**African American Parent Advisory Council:** [www.sfusd.edu/aapac](http://www.sfusd.edu/aapac)

**Community Advisory Committee for Special Education:**  
[www.cacspedsf.org](http://www.cacspedsf.org)

**District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC):**  
[www.sfusd.edu/delac](http://www.sfusd.edu/delac)

**English Learner Advisory Committees (ELAC):** [www.sfusd.edu/elac](http://www.sfusd.edu/elac)

**Chinese for Affirmative Action:** [www.caasf.org](http://www.caasf.org)

**Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth:**  
[www.colemanadvocates.org](http://www.colemanadvocates.org)

**Mission Graduates:** [www.missiongraduates.org](http://www.missiongraduates.org)

**Parents for Public Schools-SF (PPS):** [www.ppssf.org](http://www.ppssf.org)

**San Francisco's Parent Teacher Association/2<sup>nd</sup> District PTA:**  
[www.sfpta.org](http://www.sfpta.org)

**Support for Families of Children with Disabilities:**  
[www.supportforfamilies.org](http://www.supportforfamilies.org)

**California state PTA:** [www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org)