



San Francisco Board of Education Parent Advisory Council

Report to the Board of Education

November 14, 2017

The role of the Parent Advisory Council (PAC) is to represent parent voices and perspectives to inform Board of Education policy discussions. This report presents highlights from the PAC's most recent meeting, our response to Resolution 1710-10A1, *In Support of Further Reducing SFUSD Assessments*, and our participation in the planning of the upcoming SFUSD Data Forum.

PAC Input for the Special Education Department Leadership

At our PAC meeting on Wednesday, November 8th, Superintendent Vincent Matthews attended our meeting to gather input from PAC members regarding new leadership for the Special Education Department. PAC members appreciate Dr. Matthew's responsiveness to our request to provide feedback in the hiring process, which we expressed during the PAC report last month. We are grateful for the opportunity to share ideas about the most important leadership qualities and characteristics we prioritize for a new leader to serve SFUSD students with Individual Education Plans (IEP) and tasked with the responsibility of strengthening Special Education Services to be more inclusive in practice.

PAC members look forward to hearing Superintendent Matthew's 90-Day Report later this evening.

Questions, Concerns and Ideas about Resolution 1710-10A1

The PAC also had the opportunity to welcome Commissioner Stevon Cook at our recent PAC meeting, and appreciate the chance to express questions, ideas, and concerns about Resolution 1710-10A1, "In Support of Further Reducing SFUSD Assessments," which he co-authored with Commissioner Mark Sanchez.

In general, the PAC believes any resolution proposing major policy changes that directly impact student and family accountability, such as assessments, needs to include parents at the table from the very beginning to help inform the discussion, process, and solutions identified in such a proposal. It is concerning that nowhere in the resolution are families or parents mentioned, referenced, or considered. The omission of parent voice is a huge oversight as we are partners in our children's education. Furthermore, **the resolution does not to address how accountability to students and families will be upheld if assessments are optional**, especially for African American, Latino, and English Learner students, as well as students receiving Special Education services and youth in foster care, who are focal students in our district and historically have not been served well.

While PAC members might agree with the overall concept of re-evaluating the current district assessments, their alignment with curricula, and the supports needed for their effective implementation, the **PAC does not agree with the proposal to allow assessments to be opt-in only.** We acknowledge there may be challenges associated with the current assessments, and support the idea of exploring how to improve accountability tools that capture and monitor student progress. At the same time, the PAC believes SFUSD has a responsibility to keep its promises with students and families by monitoring student progress and ensuring accountability mechanisms exist for families to consult, including assessments.

Assessments are tools. They help gather information and tell a story. So perhaps the conversation needs to shift from making the tools optional to making sure we have the right tools in the toolbox.

- Which assessments *are* effective in monitoring student progress and informing instruction?
- How are sites and central offices utilizing assessment results to make *prompt data-driven* changes to the curriculum to improve student outcomes? And what tools will improve this process?
- What support do teachers need to implement them *effectively* and *consistently* across the district?

The PAC welcomes the opportunity to join this conversation and work toward solutions that serve all students. We respectfully request that a committee be formed, which brings all parties to the table to evaluate current assessment tools, assessment outcome data, and processes around data utilization, to jointly develop recommendations *prior to adoption of any changes in current requirements.*

PAC members hope Board of Education Commissioners will truly consider our concerns regarding this resolution this evening. Moreover, the fact that parents from various district advisories are speaking out in response to the proposed resolution speaks volumes to how essential it is to include parent voices and perspectives in any proposed policy that directly impacts accountability with students and families. Effective education policy needs to be informed by parents' questions, concerns, and ideas.

Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) Task Force Data Forum

The PAC has been working with members of the LCAP Task Force on the planning of the upcoming Data Forum, ***Telling the Story Behind the Numbers: Making Sense of District Data.*** This event is the third year the task force is bringing together parents, district leaders, and community partners to examine metrics identified in the district's Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) to see where our district is making progress toward its goals, discuss strategies that are supporting student success, and identify areas of work needed to improve student outcomes.

This event will be interactive and provides an opportunity to model the practice of looking at data to inform school planning and budgets. To this end, families will leave with resources in hand that will help them connect with data highlights from their children's schools and understand how supports are allocated to improve student outcomes. This forum will be hosted at James Lick Middle School on Wednesday, November 29, 2017. Dinner, childcare, and interpretation will be provided. Please join us!

The next PAC meeting will be on Wednesday, December 13th.

If you have any questions or comments about this report, or the PAC's work in general, please contact the PAC at (415) 355-2201, or at pac@sfusd.edu. You can also visit our website at www.pacsf.org