

Sacramento City Unified School District
Board of Education Meeting

April 22, 2021 Public Comments

Name:	Monica Harvey
Comment:	<p>8.6 Special Education Assessments</p> <p>Dear Superintendent Aguilar and School Board,</p> <p>At the start of the school closures in March 2020, we wondered how to do our jobs, which included assessments and therapy.</p> <p>On November 5, 2020, I sent an email to my-then-supervisor asking for digital assessments.</p> <p>On February 24, 2021, the issue of digital assessments was discussed at the administrators meeting.</p> <p>On March 25, 2021, we were told that the purchase process for digital assessments had been started.</p> <p>On April 8, 2021, we were told that the order was placed with Pearson for the Digital Assessment Library.</p> <p>It is now April 22, 2021.</p> <p>We still do not have access to digital assessments.</p> <p>School board, please ask these questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How long does it take to make a purchase?2. If a purchase order (P.O.) was made on April 7, 2021, how long does it take to get to the company?3. Once Pearson receives the P.O., shouldn't SCUSD have access within 24 hours?4. What is the purchase order number?5. Has Pearson received this P.O?6. Who is the account manager?7. When will the special ed staff have access to the digital assessments?8. Why did the district not act sooner to get us digital assessments? The Digital Assessment Library has been around since December 2019 and Q-Global since 2014. <p>Monica Harvey, Language, Speech, and Hearing Specialist</p>

Speaking as: Employee

Email

Tel:

Date/time Stamp: 4/22/2021 11:38:50 AM

Sacramento City Unified School District
Board of Education Meeting

April 22, 2021 Public Comments

Name:	Mona Tawatao
Comment:	<p>It is unconscionable that the District has flouted the CDE's ruling earlier this year (which the District did not dispute and claimed to have taken steps to comply with) that the District clear its backlog of Special Education Assessments and provide these assessments in a timely manner. This violates federal and state law and continues to cause great harm to District students and families. The Equal Justice Society stands with Disability Rights California in demanding that the District: 1) Hire non-District, outside assessors within 15 days to reduce the District's outstanding assessments at a minimum of 1/3 per month; 2) complete all outstanding initial and triennial special education assessments by July 31, 2021; 3) provide immediate written notification to every District family that states that (a) students suspected of having a disability have a right to appropriate special education assessments, (b) that these students never lost this right during the pandemic-related school closures, and (c) families can request compensatory education during IEP meetings for students found eligible for special education after months of delay or for students who did not have appropriate IEPs because of delayed special education assessments; and 4) publish the number of outstanding initial and triennial special education assessments the District has completed or completes each week from February 12, 2021 through July 31, 2021 on the District's Reopening Dashboard.</p>

Speaking as: On behalf of civil rights advocacy organization Equal Justice Society

Email

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Date/time Stamp: 4/22/2021 11:42:34 AM

Sacramento City Unified School District
Board of Education Meeting

April 22, 2021 Public Comments

Name:	Atasi Uppal
Comment:	<p>I provide this comment on behalf of the National Center for Youth Law. The District's noncompliance with CDE corrective actions regarding special education is extremely concerning. This noncompliance follows over a year of inaction on the District's part, during which it has failed to timely assess hundreds of students who are struggling to succeed in school. The District's continued failure to provide for the needs of students with disabilities is unacceptable, not only because of the harm to individual students, but because this failure could result in the loss of funding to support those very same students in the future.</p> <p>We stand with District families, Disability Rights California, Equal Justice Society, and Western Center on Law and Poverty and urge the District to act immediately, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Hiring non-District, outside assessors within the next 15 days to reduce the District's outstanding special education assessments by—at minimum—1/3 per month;- Ensuring that all outstanding initial and triennial special education assessments are completed by July 31, 2021;- Providing a letter to every District family that states that (a) students suspected of having a disability have a right to appropriate special education assessments, (b) that these students never lost this right during the pandemic-related school closures, and (c) families can request compensatory education during IEP meetings for those students found eligible for special education after months of delay or for those students who did not have appropriate IEPs because of delayed special education assessments; and- Publishing the number of outstanding initial and triennial special education assessments the District completes each week from February 12, 2021 through July 31, 2021 on the District's Reopening Dashboard.

Speaking as: Community Member

Email

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Date/time Stamp: 4/22/2021 11:50:01 AM

Comments of SCTA First Vice-President Nikki Milevsky to the Sacramento City Unified School Board, April 22, 2021.

Agenda Item, 8.6. Special Education Assessments

Just yesterday, late in the afternoon, we received a letter from Superintendent Aguilar concerned about the District's inability to address the backlog of special education assessments based on a complaint filed with the California Department of Education.

The letter exemplifies Superintendent Aguilar's approach, which is to write letters for an outside audience as a means to divert attention away from the District's continued failure to provide services to students with disabilities.

Superintendent Aguilar has ignored the recommendations from the report from the Council of Great City Schools that dates back several years.

Superintendent Aguilar made little effort to reach an agreement with us on special education assessments back in November 2020 and waited until the end of February to agree to essentially the same proposal we had on the table in November. Mr. Aguilar made no mention of the CDE complaints to us until late January 2021, even though the District was discussing potential settlements with the CDE in December 2020.

The District has been slow and largely uncooperative in providing essential data to us on the backlogged assessments. Unfortunately, the District's lack of transparency is even more appalling based on the recent CAC meeting we attended on Tuesday.

Mr. Aguilar's letter to us dated April 21, does not disclose scathing letter from the CDE dated April 8, 2021 in which the District's refusal to abide by CDE directives is set forth in full view. Why wasn't this information shared with the board at its special meeting on April 15? Why didn't Superintendent Aguilar or Chief Academic Officer Baeta immediately call us to discuss this major problem? Instead, he sat on it for nearly two weeks, with no sense of urgency. We suspect it will lead to his statement that he has reached out to "labor partners" to discuss options, another box he can tick off that sounds right on paper but we all know is wrong in practice.

For too long, Superintendent Aguilar has treated students with disabilities as an afterthought and attempted to blame teachers for his failures. We're not having any of it.

We appreciate the invitation of the CAC to participate in the committee meetings because it is making much more difficult for Superintendent Aguilar to pit parents against teachers.

SCTA is opposed to MTSS? Wrong. We have a proposal to the District and have been trying to bargain the implementation of a robust program for over three years.

SCTA is opposed to restorative practices? Wrong. We developed a proposal with the Black Parallel School Board, had several discussions with Superintendent Aguilar, incorporated his specific suggestions, and he still refuses to agree.

SCTA is opposed to expanding inclusionary practices? Wrong. We made a proposal on this too. SCTA is standing in the way of SCUSD addressing the backlog of special education assessment? Wrong. As the more than 200 educators who have been directly involved in the process can tell you the lack of leadership coming from the District is appalling.

It's time for Superintendent Aguilar to stop the blame game to advance his own personal interest. The fact that he has never been directly involved in negotiations on these issues shows what a low priority they are to him.

Enough is enough.