

June 3, 2021 - CSWD public comments for SCUSD Special Board of Education Meeting

On behalf of the Coalition for Students with Disabilities:

3.1 Government Code 54957.6 (a) and (b) Negotiations/Collective Bargaining SCTA SEIU, TCS, Teamsters, UPE, Non-Represented/Confidential Management (District Representative Pam Manwiller)

As parents have stated many times, it has been disappointing, sad, and infuriating to watch things play out as they have for the past 10+ years in this district. The last straw was how special education assessments were halted for nearly a year due to collective bargaining disagreements.

Initial and triennial special education assessments inform students' goals, and the goals drive the services a student will receive. So without this information, we cannot imagine that many students received a fair and appropriate education. The district struggles in this area as it is.

The district had to decide what was worse... (A) serving students by unilaterally implementing contracts with outside providers who were ready and willing to conduct the legally mandated assessments and face SCTA filing a complaint -or- (B) caving to SCTA (again) by letting things sit and in the process hurting many individual students. This placed the district at risk for legal complaints and threats by CDE to a loss of special education funding. The district chose to appease SCTA. Students were not put first. Nor have they been put first over the past 10+ years from our view.

Coalition organizers and CAC members have over the years uncovered many instances where collective bargaining has harmed students and this board has already heard from us many times about this problem.

We humbly request that in future planning that you, the board of education, make decisions in the best interest of students.

Please end this vicious cycle of allowing SCTA's tactics that delay bargaining and dictate district programming to trample student rights.

Students are suffering from the impacts caused by the lack of collaboration. For many, being educated in SCUSD has taken a great toll on their mental health and well being.

Parents have been suffering too from the trauma of being in constant battle mode to fight for their children's rights to a quality and inclusive education.

The toxic and scary relationship is causing stress and anxiety in the SCUSD community as we are fearful for our students' futures.

Please do right by the students and put their needs front and center.

6.1 Proposed Implementation of COVID-19 Relief Funds (Rose Ramos)

Without having access to the PowerPoint presentation to see more specifics, it is challenging to devise a comment.

The District has been allocated approximately \$281 million in additional State and Federal COVID-19 relief funds for the purpose of addressing learning loss and mitigating the spread of Covid. The estimated funding balance is \$274M. These funds are restricted to the specific purpose for each award in order to address learning loss and mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

47% of funding has been earmarked for Learning Initiatives.

Access to summer learning Initiatives for students with disabilities is a concern: with regard to summer learning:

Communication to families - Communication in SCUSD has not been ideal. Special education communication in particular has been siloed and inadequate.

In the Coalition's fall parent survey,

- 38% said they received Insufficient communications from IEP team addressing child's services
- 76% said they received no communication from SCUSD about additional school resources that support their children with a disability

High-dosage tutoring was mentioned in summer plans and sounds good in theory but **what does high-dosage tutoring look like?** What is the methodology? Hopefully it is not the status quo reading and math methods that have not shown to close achievement gaps in our high needs district. We are hopeful that the **high-dosage tutoring** services go beyond typical instruction that is not designed to close achievement gaps, but instead are multisensory and explicitly designed to meet the needs of students who have difficulty with reading, spelling and writing, who are below grade level, and struggling.

Compensatory education - is there a planned action strategy? Or will it be reactive based on litigation.

In a fall 2020 the Coalition heard from a group of parents of students with disabilities who attend general ed classes, special day classes, and nonpublic schools about their children's learning

experiences.

- 71% of students did not receive their special education services in distance learning
- 91% of parents said special education service delivery was not well suited to their child's needs
- 57% of students did not have individualized transition plans although the plans were due
- 43% said transition plans were not implemented appropriately.
- 71% of students lacked adequate support from 1:1 aides.

If this is indicative of the larger population of students with disabilities, the district has some work to do to make things right for students. We recommend that SCUSD contract with an independent special education ombudsman to resolve these issues.

15% of funding will go towards Social Emotional, Mental Health & Other Support Services

Where is the District in its implementation of MTSS? Is the implementation stalled due to collective bargaining disagreements?

Will teachers and staff be prepared to handle all the different varieties of trauma such as anxiety and depression brought on or exacerbated by the pandemic.

There does not seem to be a line item for bullying prevention and intervention. This district lacks an adequate appropriate infrastructure to prevent and respond to bullying. We hope there is an intention to build in resources and staffing.

Thank you.

Signed,

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