Our Schools, Our Voices: Mapping the Way to Success

Report & Findings from

Community conversations about San Francisco Unified School District’s Local Control Accountability Plan
Community Engagement Campaign: A Collective Effort

Parent Advisory Council & District English Language Advisory Committee
State requires input from a parent advisory group and English Learner advisory committee.

Community Based Organizations:
• Chinese for Affirmative Action
• Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth
• Mission Graduates
• Parents for Public Schools
• Second District PTA
• Support for Families of Children with Disabilities

District Partners:
• Office of Family and Community Engagement
• Foster Youth Services
• Office of Access & Equity
Our Approach

• **Community conversations** in schools, with focused outreach to specific sites & family populations (7 led in Spanish, 2 Cantonese, and several with interpretation)

• **Focus groups** with community organizations working with families and serving students (including youth in transition or foster care)

• **Three forums open to general public.** SFUSD co-hosted these with Parents for Public Schools, the PTA, and Coalition to Close the Gap
Objectives of Our Conversations

• To **share information** about how new state funding for public schools will support our students in San Francisco

• To **provide examples** of SFUSD’s goals and strategies to support students to succeed

• To **hear from families** about what is working, and what could be increased or improved, to help SFUSD’s students be successful – especially our low income students, English Learners and youth in foster care.
Who We Heard From

• Over 400 participants from 29 conversations

✓ 70% parents/guardians
✓ 6% students
✓ 11% educators/district staff
✓ 14% community members
Who We Heard From

Of the participants:

✓ **55%** speak a language other than English in their home  
  *(SFUSD = 25% English Learners)*

✓ **59%** of their children qualify for free or reduced-price meals  
  *(SFUSD = 61% qualify)*

✓ **16%** of their children receive Special Education services  
  *(SFUSD = 11% with an IEP)*

✓ **18%** were either foster parents or providers who work with foster youth
Who We Heard From

Home Languages of Participants

✓ 45% English Speaking
✓ 28% Spanish Speaking
✓ 19% Chinese Speaking
✓ 8% Other languages, including Arabic, Amharic, Eritrean, Japanese & Vietnamese
Who We Heard From

68 Schools Represented by Participants

- 36  PreK-5
-  5   K-8
- 12  Middle Schools
- 15  High Schools
-  5   Charters
Who We Heard From

Ethnicity of Participants' Children

- Latino: 33%
- Chinese American: 23%
- African American: 14%
- White: 14%
- Other Asian & Pacific Islander: 9%
- Other Non-White: 7%
Demographics of Participants’ Children
Compared with SFUSD
8 Priority Areas Required by LCAP

- **Basic Services**
  - Teachers
  - Books
  - Facilities

- **Common Core State Standards**
  - Implementation of Common Core for all students (including English Learners)

- **Access to Courses**
  - Access to required courses

- **Student Achievement**
  - Standardized Tests
  - College and Career ready
  - EL Reclassification
  - Advanced Placement tests

- **Other Outcomes**
  - Other indicators of student performance

- **School Climate**
  - Student Suspension Rates
  - Student Expulsion Rates
  - Other Local Measures

- **Student Engagement**
  - Attendance Rates
  - Chronic Absenteeism Rates
  - Dropout rates
  - Graduation Rates

- **Parental Involvement**
  - Efforts to seek parent input
  - Promotion of parental participation
Main Themes of Priority Areas

Student Access and Achievement

Student Engagement and School Climate

Family Engagement
# Our Process: How Participants Shared Ideas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority Theme: Student Access and Achievement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A</strong> What’s working?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong> What more could be done? How could SFUSD increase or improve these services?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C</strong> What would success look like?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**A**

The teachers at my school really know the subjects they’re teaching

**B**

Examples of ideas people have shared

We need more computers for students to use

**C**

Every school has a computer lab & wireless internet for all students & teachers

Please share specific ideas!
Sharing What We Heard: Content

Themes From Chart B...

What more could be done?
How could SFUSD increase or improve these services?

Top Questions that Emerged
We shared preliminary findings on April 24th to:

- Allow district staff to reflect on how parents’ ideas might inform their work and the LCAP draft;
- Provide an opportunity for district staff to highlight efforts in place to support student success and plans to improve and increase programs and services; and
- Foster two-way communication and encourage a mutual exchange of information, ideas and perspectives.

17 district staff leading key district initiative participated in this event and heard what families had to say through our community conversations.
Our Findings: Connecting Common Themes

- Participants recognize that many things are working well in schools – but they’re inconsistent across the district and connected to deeper inequities.

- Across all conversations participants expressed their desire for more & improved communication. It’s working in some places but also inconsistent, not systemic.

- Participants stressed the importance of schools creating a welcoming and inclusive environment – and that this isn’t true in schools across the district.
Our Findings: Connecting Common Themes

➢ Conversations with families of under-served students highlighted concerns about schools having low expectations for their children, not liking or understanding them, and not supporting them to achieve.

➢ Some participants expressed concern that LCAP doesn’t address supporting African American students who are not English Learners, low income or in foster care – but who still need additional services.

➢ Conversations with families of higher-performing students highlighted the desire for more challenging & differentiated teaching, again based on knowing each child’s needs & supporting them to go farther.
For Student Access and Achievement, people want to see an increase/improvement of...

- Teacher & Principal quality and leadership
  
  “That IEPs are done on time and completed. Then make sure IEPs are followed up by the administrators and teachers.” —Foster parent

- Support for students – in general
  
  “Need more counselors to help the students that are dropping out or missing classes.” —Student from Youth Summit

- More staff in classrooms, to know each student & their needs
  
  “Reduced class size, especially in the upper grades and for disadvantaged youth; we need smaller class sizes for teachers to be able to reach/connect more deeply with students, and for teachers to be able to provide differentiated teaching.”

  —Parent from Sunset Elementary School
For Student Engagement & School Climate, people want to see an increase/improvement of...

- Engaging & relevant practices
  
  “More field trips to really help students understand important concepts in an engaging and interesting way.”  
  -Student from Youth Summit

- More consistent use of systems of Restorative Practices
  
  “We need more training on restorative practices to stop bullying.”  
  -Parent at the Close the Gap forum.
For Family Engagement, people want to see an increase/improvement of...

- Improve communication between school and families
  “Have more information for parents about the resources at the school (e.g. wellness, counseling, etc).”
  - Parent from Everett Middle School

- Acknowledge and address conflicts and build community
  “Increase diverse community interaction among students and adults.”
  - Parent from Rosa Parks Elementary School

  Improve the race relations and communication.”
  - Parent from Francisco Middle School
# Top 3 Questions

1. **Will my voice really be taken into consideration** as part of this planning process or will the district not listen to us and do what it wants to anyway? In light of previous planning processes where this was the perception of what happened, **how will this planning process be different?**

   “I’ve been going to meetings like this with the school district for two years, and I don’t see any change or even interest” –Parent from Latino Parent Club

2. **How is the district going to ensure transparency with families** regarding what is in the LCAP *once* it’s adopted? How will be parents involved in the **ongoing accountability measures** for the District regarding the LCAP?

3. **How will LCFF funds be divided among the schools?** Is it different than before? **Will any of the funds follow students?** If so, which funds?
Reflection

- We are pleased with the number of families and district staff who participated in the overall process.

- We recognize this is a new process for everyone.

- We know there is room to improve the process moving forward.

- We are concerned that stakeholder engagement did not meaningfully inform the content of the LCAP. There is a perception that it was based on existing, internally created documents.
Recommendations for the LCAP Community Engagement Process

- Ensure a community engagement process that is more transparent, intentional and timely for the LCAP process as well as the overall SFUSD budgetary process, in general.

- Demonstrate the ways in which stakeholder engagement helped shape the LCAP: District relied on existing, internally created documents to create the LCAP rather than engage stakeholders in development of the LCAP.
Preliminary Recommendations for the Content to be included in the LCAP

- **Commit resources to finish the Family Engagement Plan.** Allocate resources and identify specific strategies in the LCAP to implement the Family Engagement Plan, including **communication strategies** so that families feel more connected to their schools communities.

  “Teachers need to communicate with parents/guardians as soon as they see a student is struggling – close to failing a course – not wait for report card to go home.”

  –Parent from Indian Education PAC

- **Include designated resources for family liaisons**, and/or a point person at each school site to support family engagement.

  “Family liaisons at every school, fluent in language(s) of schools’ families.”

  -Member of the Parent Advisory Council
Preliminary Recommendations for the Content to be included in the LCAP

- Include the actions the district is taking to implement Restorative Practices and reflect the resources allocated to support this program.

  “Increase Restorative Practices – teachers/school staff should not dismiss students to the hallway if they are disrupting the classroom. Instead, staff should work with students to better engage.”

  -Member of the SFUSD Family Engagement Network
Preliminary Recommendations for the Content to be included in the LCAP

- Include specific strategies **to support community building** and **positive school climate**.

  “I hope that when my child goes to a new school, they will have programs for recent immigrants... opportunities for new students to interact with current students so that my child can make new friends in a new learning environment without discrimination or distinctions made among new and current students.”

  -Parent from Chinese Education Center
Preliminary Recommendations for the Content to be included in the LCAP

- Describe specific actions being taken to expand cultural competency among teachers and district staff as well as steps to deliver engaging and culturally responsive curriculum, academic programs and services that support the learning of all students. Include resources allocated and metrics for these programs.

  “More/better cultural competence training for staff (teachers, counselors, social workers, security guards, etc.)”

  – Participant at PPS Forum

  “Our kids need culturally and linguistically responsive teaching strategies.”

  -Parent from the African American PAC
Preliminary Recommendations for the Content to be included in the LCAP

- **Identify** specific strategies that are being implemented to support **African American students** and resources earmarked to support these strategies.

  “Focus on African American male students – college/career readiness, high expectations, learning strategies.”  
  —Participant from PTA Forum

  “More African American (A.A.) staff to intervene in discipline issues with A.A. kids; A.A. cultural representation at SSTs, IEPs, expulsion hearings, etc.”  
  —Provider who works with foster youth
Preliminary Recommendations for the Content to be included in the LCAP

- Provide details in the LCAP outlining how teachers will be supported to deliver differentiated instruction for all students.

“Teachers should know what the strengths of a child are, what kind of learners they are and how to support the kids.”

-Parent from the All Advisory’s Group
Conclusion

• We were able to gather a broad range of parent voices and perspectives in a short period of time.

• We are happy we had this opportunity.

• We look forward to an ongoing process to engage families to help shape the district’s priorities to support student success.
Many voices in many languages shared their hopes...
Thank you!  ¡Gracias!  謝謝！

Salamat sa iyo!

ありがとうございました！  Grazie!

شكرا لك  Спасибо!  감사합니다!

Obrigado!  Ua tsaug!  Merci!