Stakeholder Engagement in SFUSD's Local Control and Accountability Plan
Summary Report of Findings and Requested Action Steps

The LCAP Task Force includes district staff and representatives of advisory groups, labor partners and community organizations, who work collaboratively to support transparency related to SFUSD's Local Control and Accountability Plan, or LCAP. This spring – in the fifth year of LCAP engagement – members of the Task Force led a series of community conversations with district stakeholders to inform the budget process and help shape the LCAP, with these objectives:

- Share information about the state's Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and SFUSD's tiered approach to allocating resources, services and supports to schools;

- Identify stakeholders' priorities for maximizing our resources, as state funding slows;

- Encourage families to participate in site planning at their children's schools.

The LCAP Task Force uses multiple approaches to reach stakeholders. Over the past five years we have spoken with **nearly 1,900 people**, including students, families, district staff, and community partners. This spring we heard from **350 participants** through **24 separate conversations**:

- **School-based conversations** connected with the site planning process, including sharing discussion prompts with all participants at the district's annual School Planning Summit;

- **Focus groups** with SFUSD advisory committees, school and district staff, public agencies and community organizations serving students and families;

- **Public forums**, hosted by the Community Advisory Committee for Special Education and Support for Families of Children with Disabilities, and the Community Partnerships Network.

- In a parallel process, the district's **Student Advisory Council** is conducting **surveys and focus groups** to identify student priorities and will present the *Student Voice* findings separately.

This year we **prioritized outreach to the Superintendent's PITCH schools** and **communities intended to be served by LCFF funding and SFUSD's approach to resource equity**: English Learners, low-income students, youth in foster care, African American students and students receiving Special Education services, as well as families experiencing homelessness. As a result, we succeeded in hearing from families reflecting the diversity of SFUSD's students across differences in language, ethnicity, learning needs, schools, neighborhoods and socioeconomic background.

During the conversations we described the **district's overall budget context,** and asked participants to share their **ideas and priorities for maximizing resources** to improve student outcomes. We also highlighted **intersections for focal students,** where **multiple factors impact their educational outcomes**, to surface the need for holistic approaches to support them.

This year, while some new themes emerged through this process, on the whole participants **reinforced the concerns and priorities we have heard during five years of LCAP engagement**.

What We Heard: Major Themes from Stakeholder Engagement

As in previous years, we found that **participants widely agreed with district priorities** outlined in the LCAP. However, many said they **did not see these priorities or strategies in place** in schools. Participants asked **what actions SFUSD is taking to accelerate achievement** for African American, Latino, English Learner and other focal students, while holding high expectations for *all* students. They wondered how district leaders are supporting sites to **strengthen implementation of key practices** and want to understand **how schools are held accountable** to improve student outcomes.

While people shared examples of what is working in some schools, in general **participants prioritized addressing what needs to be improved** – in part because we intentionally reached out to hear from SFUSD's focal student communities, and specifically invited their perspectives on ways to **interrupt patterns of systemic inequity** across the district.

As a result, much of the discussion and feedback from stakeholders was not about the LCAP as a document, but focused on **how to improve implementation of priority actions and services** reflected in the district's LCAP and strategic plan.

During five years of stakeholder engagement we have heard these consistent themes:

- School site leaders, central SFUSD staff, families and community partners all had **questions about how decisions are made when allocating resources**. They expressed concerns about budget and staff allocations for next year and asked for more clarity and transparency about these decisions.

  > "We have all of the focal students with needs and because we have experienced staff, it seems like we get penalized with our budget. We had to fight for a full-time social worker this year, and now again the position has been reduced to half-time."
  >
  > *Elementary School Site Council member.*

  > "There was a group of middle schools and high schools that came together at the Retreat and came up with how can this be more transparent with the budgets – understanding the WHY of this… So you say x% of the budget is being cut – but be more transparent about why my school is getting cut but that central office position is being added."
  >
  > *Middle school administrator.*

- Participants are also concerned about children's **academic progress,** reducing **chronic absenteeism,** and addressing challenging **student behavior**. They identified fundamental connections between school climate, behavior supports and students' academic outcomes, and **valued investing resources to support students' social and emotional well-being.**

  > "We need to identify struggling students earlier. Don't wait for 3rd grade standardized testing to get started."
  >
  > *Parent of a student receiving Special Education services.*

  > "We know some students are hard to teach. They have so much going on outside of school. Schools need to be able to connect with our kids, to know what's going on for them."
  >
  > *Parent at a community-based focus group.*

- In conversations with African American, Latino and other focal populations, families expressed the need for schools and teachers to **build positive relationships** with students, families and their communities - to better meet the needs of their students.

  > "When I didn't show up, not many people at the school reached out."
  >
  > *Student in foster care.*

  > "I don't have children but thinking of myself – a caring adult at my high school would have made a big difference. I ended up dropping out of high school."
  >
  > *Community partner serving homeless students.*

- Across focal populations there is a resounding emphasis on the need to **promote cultural humility and cultural competence** among school and district staff. This was highlighted as a key element of high-quality instruction, to **improve academic outcomes**, **support social-emotional success** and **reduce** persistent disciplinary **referrals and suspension**.

  > "It's not an achievement gap for Black kids. It's a love gap."
  >
  > *African American high school parent.*

  > "The system is killing our spirit as a Black family."
  >
  > *Parent at a community-based focus group.*

  > "Sometimes I want to say something in Spanish but no one understands, so I say nothing."
  >
  > *English Learner student in foster care.*

- Participants recognized that **teachers cannot do it alone**, and need **additional support** to meet the needs of all their students. They highlighted the importance of **district and site support** staff, as well as **collaboration** with **community organizations and families**.

  > "We need more staff in the classrooms. Not just for Special Education – students are at different levels and need to be supported, need more adults in the room like paras or teachers aides to focus on small groups."
  >
  > *Parent at a community-based focus group.*

  > "Often the burden falls on the teacher and they get too stressed; and if kids aren't getting what they need they'll protest or act out and that can disrupt the whole class. So if the student is given what they need that will help create better space for the rest of the class and also support the teacher overall."
  >
  > *Community partner serving homeless students.*

- We continue to hear that while site **planning in some schools was inclusive** and transparent, **in other schools families experienced significant obstacles** to being involved, or felt their input was ignored or disregarded.

  > "We fight to make sure the resources that are supposed to be dedicated to supporting specific student populations – SCG funds – that it's actually going to help those students."
  >
  > *Spanish-speaking parent at community-based focus group.*

  > "I have questions about the SSC – ideally parents would get involved but a lot of families can't because of working multiple jobs, or there are language barriers for them."
  >
  > *Community partner serving families.*

A few new themes stood out during conversations this year.

1. **Families want to be connected, with their children's schools and with each other.**

    -   During the conversations many families expressed their **commitment to support all students**, beyond their own children. They **value affinity groups**, such as English Learner Advisory Committees (ELAC), Black Student Unions, and African American parent groups – and they want to **connect with each other across differences of race and culture**.

    -   Families in schools with multiple programs and language pathways urged schools to **intentionally build community** among students and families across these differences. In several conversations Spanish-speaking families acknowledged the need for site leaders to facilitate stronger ties specifically between African American and Latino families.

2. **Participants shared examples of what's working.**

    -   In many conversations participants emphasized the **importance of literacy skills** and identified **successful interventions** for students who are reading below grade level.

    -   Across multiple conversations participants identified **Second Step** as an important social-emotional learning curriculum, especially for students receiving Special Education services.

    -   Many families advocated for consistency in the use of **Restorative Practices,** to create positive school culture beyond focusing on specific conflicts. They also highlighted the need to ensure these approaches support students with disabilities and communication barriers.

3. **Conversations identified challenges for specific student populations.**

    -   Many participants highlighted the **importance of after-school programs** for focal students. **English Learner families**, in particular, rely on the homework support provided through after-school programs because they cannot navigate the English-language materials.

    -   Families identified challenges for **English Learners** who are not quite reaching the goals to be reclassified Fluent English Proficient. They felt students who are not *far below basic*, but not yet *proficient*, do not receive the **support they need** to achieve reclassification.

    -   In conversations focused on **youth in foster care**, students who have been **expelled** and youth involved with the **Juvenile Justice system**, participants emphasized the need to better **leverage existing services and systems** for support. This is crucial when students **transition between placements** or return to school - particularly to large, comprehensive high schools.

    -   In many conversations families and community stakeholders talked about the need to expand access to **tutoring and academic support** services – both during the school day and through community-based programs outside of school.

4. **We can improve access to community resources to support schools and students.**

    -   Many stakeholders highlighted the need to **strengthen coordination among schools, district departments, and service providers,** to connect schools, students and families with **services that are available**. They pointed out strategic opportunities to do this as SFUSD expands our **community schools model**, and as many organizations are being funded by the City's Department of Children, Youth and Families.

Strengthening Support for Focal Students

Across all conversations participants identified ways to support SFUSD's focal student populations, as well as **challenges with systemic barriers to meeting student needs** and the complexity of the **multiple intersections many of our students experience**. For example, the majority of students in foster care are African American while others are English Learners, and many in both populations receive Special Education services. Students experiencing homelessness or involved in the Juvenile Justice system navigate similar patterns of overlapping experiences – where **multiple factors impact their educational outcomes**.

In addition to themes addressed earlier in this report, participants highlighted challenges for specific student populations that are relatively small across SFUSD, but who face significant barriers to success and who are often left out of conversations about district priorities and initiatives:

- Students in relatively small populations (such as **American Indian, Pacific Islander, and African American** students in certain schools) feel they are overlooked, and often they are disproportionately represented among disciplinary referrals, suspensions, and dropouts.

- Conversations focused on **foster youth**, as well as **students in Court and County schools**, identified the need to hold and communicate high expectations for these students, and to provide support for them to achieve post-secondary success.

- Advocates asked that the district **prioritize foster youth for services**, given large caseloads for counselors and other staff. Foster youth themselves highlighted the need to support **LGBTQ youth** across the district, especially those in foster care.

- Stakeholders pointed out that **students in Court and County schools** have limited access to technical and career pathways, internships and workforce development programs – especially in terms of "seeing professionals who look like them."

Questions and Concerns about District Priorities and Budget Process

As in previous years, participants wondered **how the district evaluates programs and strategies**, to know if they are effective, and wanted to know **how decisions are made about allocating resources** to strengthen implementation of these strategies. They want practices that are working to be **highlighted and promoted** with other schools, and for this **information to be shared more publicly.**

In some conversations stakeholders expressed concerns about the **potential impact of staff reductions** at central SFUSD offices on direct supports provided at the school site level.

We also heard a **growing frustration** among families who have participated in previous community outreach initiatives, about not seeing changes or improved results for African American students, English Learners, Foster Youth and other focal student populations. A number of families said, "The District keeps asking us what we need, and we tell them, but we don't see anything changing."

Requested Actions to Improve Student Outcomes

Based on stakeholder input, we **request the following actions to strengthen consistency in implementation** of district services and actions, as well as to inform changes to the LCAP.

1. **Identify and highlight practices that are working** to improve student outcomes. Support sites across the district to strengthen these practices, as priorities in Balanced Score Cards.

2. **Provide adequate curriculum and appropriate materials** for teachers across all schools to support English Language Development for all English Learners.

3. **Provide consistent training and ongoing coaching for principals and teachers**. Emphasize the **expectation** that principals, teachers and other staff participate in **ongoing professional learning**, and support a **sustainable structure for this learning** in several key areas, to:

    •   Deepen cultural humility, expand cultural competence and address implicit bias

    •   Provide behavior supports, strengthen positive classroom management and expand trauma-informed practices to build a safe and supportive school culture

    •   Build capacity for teachers to differentiate instruction to meet the diverse needs of their students, including different learning styles and the range of skills that vary within a classroom.

4. Provide **training, tools, and support** to site leaders to intentionally **build community and strengthen relationships** – both between schools and families and among families – across differences in ethnicity, language, learning needs and socio-economic background.

5. Clearly **articulate concrete action steps** the district is taking to interrupt systemic barriers to equity, including **specific interventions** to reduce chronic absenteeism and improve attendance. **Improve transparency of the decisions about resources** allocated to schools and central district departments to achieve SFUSD's goals for student success.

Next Steps for Stakeholder Engagement

The LCAP Task Force is providing this report to the Board of Education; the Strategic Management and Allocation of Resource (SMART) team; and the Superintendent's Leadership Team, to inform the LCAP and budget development process. The report will be shared with schools and community organizations that hosted LCAP conversations and posted on SFUSD's website (in three languages), and excerpts will be included in the *Stakeholder Engagement* section of SFUSD's LCAP for 2018-19.

The African American Parent Advisory Council (AAPAC), Community Advisory Committee for Special Education (CAC), District English Learners Advisory Committee (DELAC), and Parent Advisory Council (PAC) will present a joint report to the Board of Education in late May, addressing these findings and suggested actions as well as their recommendations after reviewing the district's draft LCAP.

Members of the LCAP Task Force will follow up with district staff to explore how findings from this report might be used to inform implementation practices, support program fidelity, and ultimately improve student outcomes across San Francisco's public schools.

Appendix I.   Additional Details from Stakeholder Conversations

Building on What's Working

In conversations at schools, community-based focus groups and public forums, most participants offered **examples of what's working** to support students to succeed. Families and community partners often identified specific classroom teachers, principals, and other staff, as well as specific schools, as they shared these strengths.

They often highlighted **positive communication** between schools and families; **intentional efforts** by schools to value diversity and create an **inclusive and welcoming environment**, and **coordination and integration of services** among school staff and community partners:

- Peer support for teachers, especially new teachers

- Ethnic Studies courses and the use of a social justice framework

- Classroom teachers sharing information with families about their children's strengths, and where they need additional help

- Inviting community organizations that have relationships with students and families to support families at school - for example as part of Family-Teacher conferences and Student Success Team meetings

- A collaborative team of school staff and community partners strategizing to provide support services to students, including service providers such as a case manager, therapist or counselor, social worker, etc.

- In conversations that were part of the school planning process, participants identified successful academic and social-emotional supports specific to their schools - including both staff positions and partnerships with families and community organizations.

Appendix II.   Our Approach and Who We Heard From

This winter we began the stakeholder process by meeting with the Strategic Management and Allocation of Resources Team (SMART), SFUSD leaders who determine the district's budget and centrally-funded staffing allocations. We hoped to inform their budget process by highlighting themes from previous LCAP stakeholder engagement, and to identify district priorities or questions to incorporate into community conversations this year. We also met with the team of Associate Superintendents and their staff (referred to as the LEAD team), who supervise and support principals in cycles of continuous improvement. We shared our plans for stakeholder engagement and discussed ways to support schools to engage their communities in the site planning process.

From mid-February to April **we heard from over 350 participants** in **24 different conversations**. We conducted some conversations in Spanish or Cantonese and provided interpretation as needed in others. By actively reaching out to hold conversations in trusted community settings as well as schools, we succeeded in hearing from participants who reflected the diversity of SFUSD's students across differences in language, ethnicity, learning needs, schools, neighborhoods and socioeconomic background.

We intentionally **prioritized outreach to the Superintendent's PITCH schools** and **communities intended to be served by LCFF funding and SFUSD's approach to resource equity**: English Learners, low-income students, youth in foster care, African American students and students receiving Special Education services, as well as families experiencing homelessness.

In each conversation we presented information about the state's Local Control Funding Formula and focus of Supplemental and Concentration Grant funding, SFUSD's use of Weighted Student Formula, and the Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) approach to allocate resources to schools. We described the **district's overall budget context** and asked participants to share their **ideas and priorities for maximizing resources** to improve student outcomes.

We also highlighted **intersections for focal students** and the need for holistic approaches to support them. For example, the majority of students in foster care are African American while others are English Learners, and many in both populations receive Special Education services. Students experiencing homelessness or involved in the Juvenile Justice system navigate similar patterns of overlapping experiences – where **multiple factors impact their educational outcomes**.
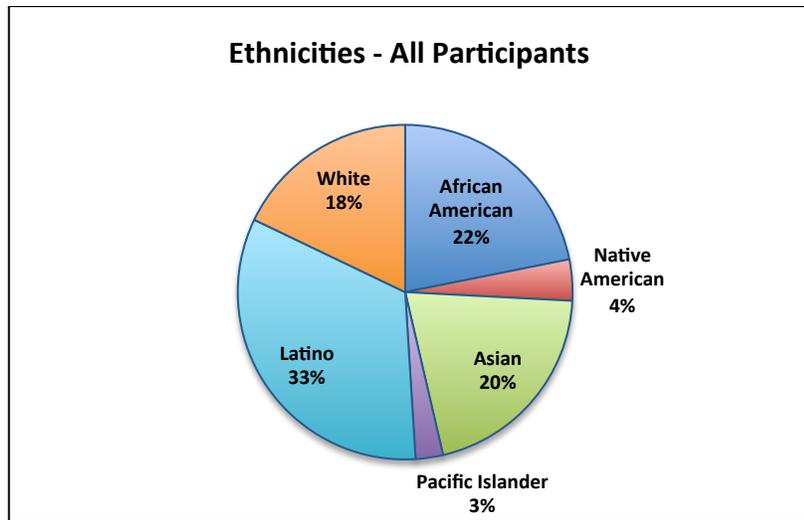
In most conversations there was time to facilitate small-group discussions around the themes of *Student Achievement, Social-Emotional Supports/School Climate*, and *Family and Community Partnerships* (reflecting the state's LCAP priorities and sections in schools' Balanced Score Cards). We asked participants to share ideas about what's working, and what needs to be improved. We also asked them to identify how they would prioritize these ideas based on existing resources.

While this approach successfully allows us to hear from many participants, by their nature these conversations tend to **elicit many questions and concerns** – in part because many participants feel this is a **rare opportunity to be heard** in expressing concerns about their children's education. In addition, we intentionally reached out to hear from families of the district's focal students, to invite their perspectives on **ways to interrupt SFUSD's patterns of systemic inequity**. As a result, **many participants prioritized addressing things that are not working** well.
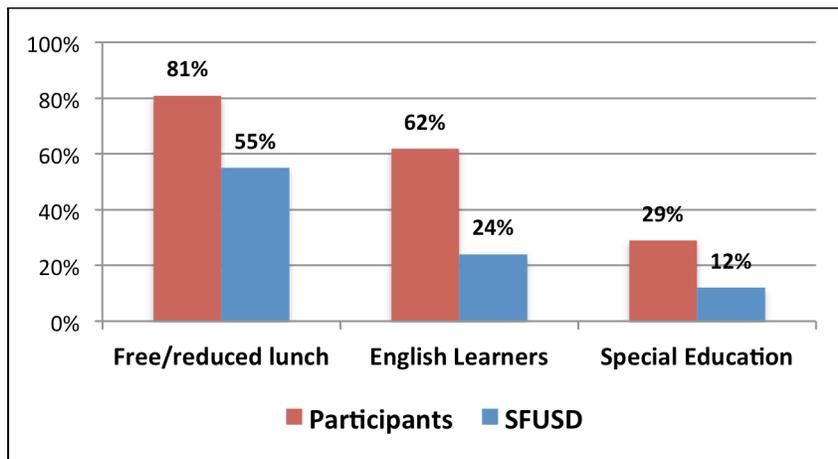
Based on surveys returned by 144 people, the following charts show demographic information about participants in the conversations.

Who We Heard From

- Parents/Guardians 64%
- Community partners 23%
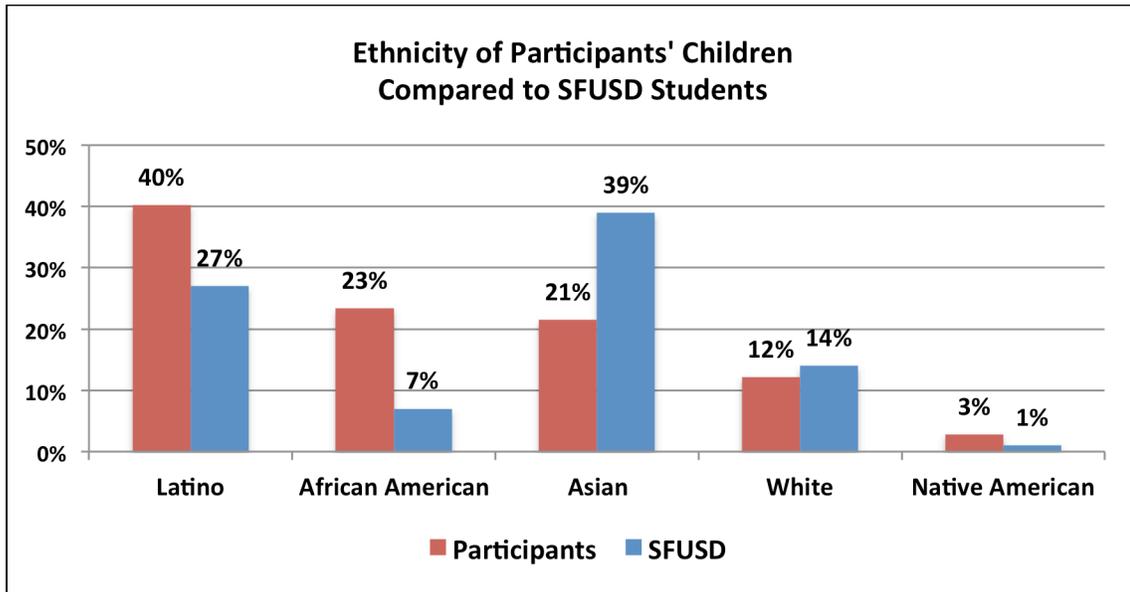- Educators 11%
- Students 2%
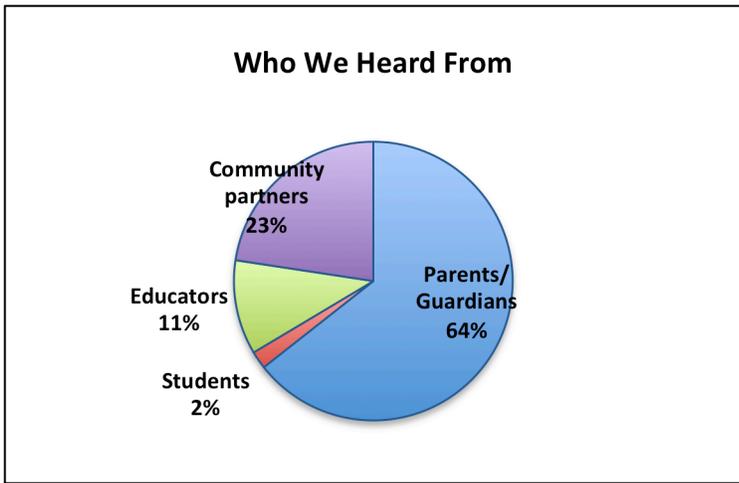
Participants speak many languages with their children in addition to English, including Arabic, Cantonese, Mandarin, Nepalese, Pampanga, Spanish, Tagalog and Vietnamese.

Ethnicities - All Participants

- African American 22%
- Native American 4%
- Asian 20%
- Pacific Islander 3%
- Latino 33%
- White 18%

Parents/Families Reflect Focal Student Populations:

	Participants	SFUSD
Free/reduced lunch	81%	55%
English Learners	62%	24%
Special Education	29%	12%

**Ethnicity of Participants' Children
Compared to SFUSD Students**

	Latino	African American	Asian	White	Native American
Participants	40%	23%	21%	12%	3%
SFUSD	27%	7%	39%	14%	1%

■ Participants ■ SFUSD

Where conversations and focus groups were conducted:

Public forums: An evening event co-hosted with the Community Advisory Committee for Special Education and Support for Families of Children with Disabilities; a morning event hosted by the SFUSD Community Partnerships Network.

Conversations at schools: Ruth Asawa School of the Arts (African American Parent Advisory Council and Latino Parent Advisory Council), Bessie Carmichael K-8, Bret Harte ES, Bryant ES, Chinese Education Center, Redding ES, Rooftop (African American Parent Affinity Group), Rosa Parks ES, Tenderloin Community School; at Civic Center Secondary School, stakeholders working with students who have been or are at risk to be expelled; at Woodside Learning Center, stakeholders supporting youth involved in the Juvenile Justice system.

Focus groups hosted by community partners: Coleman Advocates, Foster Youth Services Executive Advisory Council, Families and Youth in Transition (FYIT) Council / SAFEH, Hamilton Family Shelter, Independent Living Skills Program, Mission Graduates, Mo'Magic Collaborative, Urban Ed Academy.

SFUSD staff and advisory committees: Community Advisory Committee for Special Education (CAC), Parent Advisory Council to the Board of Education (PAC), Superintendent's Fellows.

Participants work at and/or have children attending 47 SFUSD schools

Early Education and Elementary Schools (25): Alvarado, Bret Harte, Bryant, Carver, Cesar Chavez, Chinese Education Center, Cleveland, Dr. William L. Cobb, El Dorado, Francis Scott Key, Glen Park, Grattan, Guadalupe, John Muir, Lakeshore, Leonard Flynn, Longfellow, Marshall, Redding, Rosa Parks, Sheridan, ER Taylor, Tenderloin, Theresa Mahler, Zaida Rodriguez.

K-8 Schools (6): Bessie Carmichael, Buena Vista Horace Mann, Alice Fong Yu, Paul Revere, Rooftop, SF Community School.

Middle Schools (6): Everett, A.P. Giannini, Hoover, James Lick, Roosevelt, Willie Brown Jr.

High Schools, and Court/County/Alternative Programs (10): Ruth Asawa School of the Arts, Civic Center Secondary School, Independence, Lincoln, Lowell, Thurgood Marshall, Mission, O'Connell, Ida B. Wells and Woodside Learning Center.

As well as non-SFUSD schools (6): *Head Start, Edison Charter Academy, Gateway MS, Gateway HS, Kipp Bayview, KIPP SF College Prep.*

Participants reflect 12 SFUSD central departments

African American Achievement and Leadership Initiative, Communications, Court/County Schools, Early Education, Education Placement Center, Family Partnerships and Empowerment, Foster Youth Services, Policy and Operations, Pupil Services, School Health Programs, Special Education Services, Students and Families Experiencing Homelessness (SAFEH).

Participants represent 31 community organizations and public agencies

826 Valencia, American Conservatory Theater, APA Family Support Services, California Academy of Sciences, Coleman Advocates, Community Youth Center / Community Assessment & Referral Center, Compass Family Services, Cross Cultural Child Development Center, Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF), Edgewood, Generation Citizen, Hamilton Family Shelter - Transitional Housing, Hamilton Rec. Center, Hayes Valley Neighborhood Association, Homeless Prenatal Program, Huckleberry Youth Programs, Mission Graduates, Special Services for Groups-Occupational Therapy Training Program (OTTP), Peer Resources, Reading Partners, Riley Center, Salvation Army, SEO Scholars, SF Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), SF Education Fund, SF Human Services Agency, SF Juvenile Probation Dept., SF Public Defenders Office, SF Public Library, The Spark Program, YMCA of San Francisco.

Participants live in 23 zip codes within San Francisco, as well as 12 zip codes in Bay Area communities (in both the Peninsula and the East Bay).
The most frequent zip codes were 94124 (21), 94112 (17), 94110 (16), 94103 (9), and 94117 (9).

Appendix III.   SFUSD's LCAP Task Force

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

SFUSD Departments and Labor Partners
- Community Schools and Family Partnerships
- 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
- Peer Resources
- San Francisco / 2nd District PTA
- Support for Families of Children with Disabilities
- Urban Ed Academy

The purpose of SFUSD's LCAP Task Force for school year 2017-18 is to:

1. Increase and improve transparency, accountability and communication about the Local Control and Accountability Plan (both the current Plan and potential revisions for 2018-19)

2. Review specific elements within the LCAP for the current year (2017-18), for example:
   - Recommendations from stakeholders and written response from SFUSD
   - Goals/measures, and whether these reflect or demonstrate student success

3. Support timely community engagement to inform revisions to the LCAP for 2018-19.