Honorable Board of Education President Dr. Emily Murase,

We are writing this letter in support of the San Francisco Unified School District Board of Education’s 2014 decision to implement the new math course sequence aligning with the state’s new Common Core Standards in Math. This new course sequence raises expectations for all students while effectively eliminating racially-biased tracking within our district.

Tracking by ability has historically, led to segregation of African-American and Latino students in classes with low-expectations, high teacher turnover and teachers with less expertise. This has resulted in a lack of access to quality instruction for many African American children and ultimately denied them opportunities to achieve college and career success. We are writing this letter to express support for the new course sequence due to the recent efforts of some SFUSD parents who believe the previous course sequence and tracking system benefitted their child’s academic success. Many of these aforementioned parents received unfair access to higher quality instruction for their children through programs like GATE and honors which tracked their students into smaller classes taught by more experienced teachers. Much of the resistance to the new course sequence arises from families who are attempting to pressure the school board to reverse the District’s decision to eliminate tracking and implement a new math course sequence.

We agree with the District Math team and the over 300 teachers who crafted the new SFUSD Core Curriculum in Math, that success in the 21st century requires an intentional focus on critical thinking and problem-solving. We believe the breadth and depth of the new math sequence will allow our students to engage more broadly and deeply in their learning of math concepts. We also know that students that miss the math train in particular are ruled out of competition years before college admission. We believe the new math sequence will level the playing field and allow a more equitable framework that is more inclusive and ensure success for all our students.

Again, we strongly support the full implementation of the new SFUSD Math Course Sequence and do not want SFUSD to return to the former math tracking system which resulted in a lack of representation for African-American and other historically underserved students in rigorous math courses compared to their white and Asian peers. All student lives matter, including Black student lives.

Sincerely,

African American Parent Advisory Council

cc: Honorable Matt Haney
    Honorable Sandra Lee Fewer
    Honorable Hydra Mendoza-McDonnell
    Honorable Rachel Norton
    Honorable Shamann Walton
    Honorable Jill Wynns
    Superintendent Richard Carranza