

Our Children, Our Families Council
Summary of the Mayor's Education Leadership Council
(Last Updated 6/18/15)

Goals of the Effort

The purpose of the Mayor's Education Leadership Council (MELC) is to elevate the visibility and importance of education-related programs, partnerships, and initiatives for San Francisco's students. The council's ultimate goal is to ensure San Francisco's higher education institutions are collaborating with SFUSD and with one another to share best practices and develop strong partnerships that benefit San Francisco's youth and encourage post-secondary completion.

Focal Population of the Effort

The MELC is focused on improving higher education outcomes for San Francisco's youth. The MELC pays particular attention to improving matriculation and graduation rates among low-income, minority, and first-generation college students, who have college completion rates lower than those of their San Francisco peers in other demographic groups.

Impact

A number of successful initiatives have come out of the MELC, owing to the influential members of the small council. After discussing the need to bolster college and career pipelines, the MELC created the UniteSF initiative, which is supported by the SF Chamber of Commerce. Similarly, after President Obama launched his My Brother's Keeper program, the MELC supported an effort in San Francisco to ensure the right youth were getting connected and supported with strong mentors. Moreover, the MELC ensured the San Francisco program was expanded to My Brother's and My Sister's Keeper. Lastly, the MELC met to ensure San Francisco's institutions of higher education were aligned with SFUSD's Vision 2025 effort.

Challenges

Scheduling times for members of the MELC to convene is a continual challenge. Because the council consists of many leaders in education, all of whom balance many responsibilities, finding a date and time that works for every member is always difficult and sometimes impacts the frequency of MELC meetings.

Origins of the Effort

The MELC was created by Hydra Mendoza-McDonnell, the Mayor's Senior Advisor on Education and Family Services, in 2014 to bring together post-secondary leaders in San Francisco and the district's superintendent to help improve the transition for San Francisco's youth transitioning from high school to post-secondary institutions.

Leading the Effort

Hydra Mendoza-McDonnell has taken the leadership role in the MELC since creating it in 2014. Hydra serves as Mayor Lee's Senior Advisor on Education and Family Services and also sits on SFUSD's Board of Education as an elected member. There is no funding attached to the MELC, however, and every member of the council volunteers his or her time to the cause.

Members of the Effort

The MELC consists of 11 members, most of whom represent a post-secondary educational institution located in San Francisco. Members include:

- Mayor Ed Lee
- Hydra Mendoza-McDonnell, Mayor's Senior Advisor on Education & Family Services
- Richard Carranza, Superintendent of San Francisco Unified School District
- Laura Moran, SFUSD Chief of Development
- Interim Chancellor Susan Lamb, City College of San Francisco
- President Dan Angel, Golden Gate University
- President Leslie Wong, San Francisco State University

Chancellor and Dean Frank Wu, University of California, Hastings College of the Law
Chancellor Sam Hawgood, University of California, San Francisco
President Paul Fitzgerald, University of San Francisco
President Pamela Eibeck, University of the Pacific

Structure of the Effort

The MELC convenes quarterly to discuss common problems in higher education outcomes and brainstorm solutions. Every member of the MELC attends the quarterly meetings, and when 100% attendance isn't possible, the meeting is postponed until everyone can attend.

The Role of Data

The MELC doesn't collect its own data, but the members of the council have access to a wealth of data on education outcomes. The MELC looked at both higher education and SFUSD's data when planning UniteSF and the My Brother's and Sister's Keeper program. The Superintendent and the chancellors and presidents brought data from their schools to inform the discussion and implementation of these initiatives.