

Our Children, Our Families Council
Summary of the Parent Advisory Council (PAC)
(Last updated 5/11/15)

Goals of the Effort

The mission of the Parent Advisory Council (PAC) is to engage families to help shape education policy, and represent parent voices in the district's decision-making process. The PAC is committed to helping close the district's gaps in achievement and opportunity and to supporting SFUSD's strategic goals. Each year, they identify priorities to focus on in PAC community briefings and outreach campaigns. In the 2014-2015 academic year, the PAC's priorities were:

- Support the planning, design and implementation of the Family Academy (Parent University).
- Strengthen the implementation of the Lau Plan, supporting programs and services for English Language Learners, including increased access to district information in their home language.
- Support the momentum of Vision 2025, including the implementation of SFUSD's "Building the Digital District" plan.
- Strengthen the implementation of Restorative Practices, particularly building stronger connections with families to improve school climate and culture.
- Advocate for Racial Equity, especially in the delivery of Special Education Services, the implementation of Safe and Supportive Schools Initiative, and supporting African American achievement.
- Continue their work on the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP), including actively participating on the LCAP Task Force and reaching out to families for a community engagement campaign in the spring.

Focal Population of the Effort

The PAC strives to maintain a membership that is representative of the SFUSD student population. Thus, the parents on the council come from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, have children enrolled in different elementary, middle, and high schools, and live in diverse neighborhoods across the city.

Impact

The PAC has accomplished a great deal in its goals of keeping parents informed of recent development in the education landscape and increasing parental voice in decision-making at the district level. For example, last year the PAC surveyed hundreds of community members (parents, educators, and other stakeholders) about the new Local Control & Accountability Plans (LCAPs) and then presented their findings and recommendations to the Board of Education, which followed many of their recommendations related to the LCAPs. Similarly, the PAC was able to reach over 800 parents through community outreach to inform them about restorative practices being implemented in SFUSD schools. Much of this success is owed to the diversity within the PAC, which helps ensure all parent perspectives are heard.

Challenges

A lack of sustainable funding to support the PAC is a continual challenge. The PAC is currently funded strictly through private grants, most of which are one year-in length. Much of the director's time is spent applying for grants and private funding, which takes time away helping realize PAC's mission. The task of acquiring funding each year diverts valuable time, resources, and attention away from the effort for which the PAC was founded in the first place.

Origins of the Effort

In May 2003 the Board of Education established the PAC with Resolution No. 33-25A15. That resolution set basic rules and defined the Parent Advisory Council's mission:

"The mission of the Parent Advisory Council (PAC) is to advise the SF Board of Education on existing and proposed education policies, bring forth issues of concern, and make suggestions about changes that will

improve the achievement of students and the effectiveness of schools. The PAC will ensure parental input to the Board's decision-making through active outreach."

In 2008 the Board revised their rules to require that all their advisory committees work to support the district's strategic priorities of *access and equity, achievement, and accountability*.

Leading the Effort

Ms. Georgia Williams-Bratt currently serves as the coordinator of the PAC, and she is the only paid staff member on the council. She has served as coordinator for the last two years, and before that, she served as a parent member of the PAC. Her position, like the entire PAC, is funded by private grants. As noted below, the other members of the PAC are volunteers with children enrolled in SFUSD.

Members of the Effort

The Parent Advisory Council has up to 18 members, who are parents and guardians of public school students from diverse communities across San Francisco. Members are appointed by the Board of Education to serve a two-year term, beginning each summer, but existing members evaluate applications from parents in submit recommendations for incoming members to the Board of Education. Terms are staggered so that about half of its members transition every year. PAC members represent many cultures, languages, ethnicities and neighborhoods of the district's student body.

2014-2015 Membership on the Parent Advisory Council:

- **Amy Merickel** has two daughters at Grattan Elementary School and lives in Cole Valley. She is an active member of Grattan's School Site Council, interns at Rosa Parks Elementary School helping with the implementation of social emotional learning and has a background in educational policy and research.
- **Angela Zhou** has a son at Garfield Elementary School and daughter who attends Galileo High School. She lives in Chinatown and has served on the Student Site Council (SSC) at her children's school in the past and is an active community and parent leader with Chinese for Affirmative Action. She speaks Cantonese and Mandarin.
- **Catalina Ramirez** has a son and daughter at Edison Charter Academy and a son who attends Hoover Middle School. She lives in the Mission and is actively involved with the English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC) and SSC at her children's schools. She also volunteers with Support for Families of Children with Disabilities. She speaks Spanish.
- **Carrie Banks (Alternate)** has a daughter at Denman Middle School and son at Gateway High School. She is currently the chair of the School Site Council at Denman Middle School and an active member on their PTA as well. Carrie lives in Noe Valley.
- **Esmeralda Michel** has a son at El Dorado Elementary School and lives in the Outer Mission. She has served on the School Site Council (SSC) and is an active member in the El Dorado community, especially supporting cultural events. Esmeralda speaks Spanish and English.
- **Gailyn Anderson** has two family members at Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School and lives in the Bayview. She is the program manager of the Carver Scholar (STEM) Program founded by California Alliance of African American Educators housed at Carver Elementary School. She also has experience in community government at military bases in the United States and abroad.
- **JoAnna Van Brusselen** has a daughter at Flynn Elementary School and is involved in their PTA. She works with parent mentors at Support For Families of Children with Disabilities and lives in Bernal Heights. JoAnna speaks English, Spanish and French.
- **Lourdes Alarcon** has a son and daughter who attend Fairmount Elementary School. She lives in Mission Terrace and has been involved with the organizations POWER (People Organized to Win Employment Rights), Parent Voices, and the San Francisco Health Plan Advisory Committee for years. She speaks Spanish and English.
- **Margaret Wilson** has two daughters at Bessie Carmichael K-8, a daughter at Bryant Elementary School, another enrolled at the Academy of Arts and Sciences at Asawa School of the Arts. She lives in the SOMA and has been actively involved with Parent Voices for years and is an advocate for children with special needs. She speaks English and Spanish.

- **Maricela Rodriguez** has two sons at Spring Valley Elementary School and lives in the Tenderloin. She actively volunteers at her children’s school and with Support for Families of Children with Disabilities. Maricela speaks Spanish.
- **Miranda Martin** has a daughter at Grattan Elementary School and lives in the Inner Sunset. She is a Restorative Practices site leader at her children’s school and works for Parents for Public Schools providing training to parents on school governance.
- **Starcia Cousar-Delacruz** has a daughter and son at Bessie Carmichael K-8 and a son on the wait list for pre-K. She lives in the South of Market neighborhood. She recently started a new PTA program and a group called, “Parent Collaborators” at Bessie Carmichael.
- **Tony Talarico** has a daughter at A.P. Giannini Middle School, and lives in the outer Sunset district. He is an active volunteer at his daughter’s school and with the Vietnamese community.
- **Vivian Lee** has daughter at Yick Wo Elementary School and another attending Francisco Middle School. She lives in North Beach and is an active volunteer at both schools as well as a member of the SFUSD’s District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC). She speaks Cantonese and Mandarin.
- **Warren Wong** has a son at Spring Valley Science School. He lives in the Outer Mission and is involved in the District English Language Advisory Committee (DELAC) and a member of the ELAC at his son’s school. He graduated from Chinese for Affirmative Action’s Parent Leadership Program. He speaks Cantonese.
- **William Chiang (Alternate)** has a daughter and son at Garfield Elementary School and is a member of the School Site Council. He volunteers at the San Francisco Food Bank and lives in the SOMA district. William speaks English and limited Chinese.

Structure of the Effort

The PAC holds monthly meetings for its members, and they conduct community briefings and outreach events on an as needed basis. Community meetings are often held in conjunction with the PAC monthly meeting. Members are responsible for speaking with families at schools and community centers, providing information about important issues in our district, and hearing parents’ questions, concerns and suggestions about district issues. They also meet with the Board of Education commissioners and school district staff to represent parent perspectives and recommendations for supporting student achievement.

The Role of Data

Especially because the PAC’s private donors require data-driven outcome measures, the PAC tracks data in the course of their work engaging with parents and members of the community. They keep track of attendance at the various community conversations and outreach events they host each year, and they track the demographics of the community members they reach through surveys, events, and other outreach initiatives. The PAC uses the data to continually reassess whether or not they are succeeding in their mission to engage all parents, specifically those whose voices are most underrepresented in education policy discussions.

Related Documents

- PAC’s official website < <http://pacsf.org/>>
 - Includes PAC’s Board of Education Reports < <http://pacsf.org/board-of-education-reports/>> and most recent meeting minutes < <http://pacsf.org/pac-meeting-minutes/>>, and other recent publications.
- Informational Pamphlet