



Opposition of Proposed Mathematics Framework

June 1, 2021

Via Email: governor@governor.ca.gov

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, First Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

CC: Via Email: sbe@cde.ca.gov

State Board of Education
1430 N Street, Room 5111
Sacramento, California 95814

CC: Via Email: IQC@cde.ca.gov

IQC Subject Matter Committee
Instructional Quality Commission
1820 Wilshire Blvd,
Los Angeles, CA 90057

Dear Governor Newsom,

We are writing on behalf of the Beverly Hills Unified School District Board of Education and District Administration concerning the proposed Mathematics Framework. Last Monday, 5/24, the BHUSD Cabinet held a meeting in which we examined and discussed the proposed draft Mathematics Framework from the California Department of Education. We acknowledge the draft Mathematics Framework is designed to provide local districts guidelines and selected research-based approaches for implementing instruction to ensure optimal benefits for all students. Theoretically, schools should be prepared to meet *all* levels of learning and never to the detriment of any other student. We do not however believe that this Framework in its current form ensures optimal benefits for all students, specifically middle school students. Accordingly, it is important that we urge the California Department of Education to confirm that all facets of this Framework ultimately remain in local control to allow students to accelerate in their learning

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when multiple measures of data are used to ensure they are conceptually and developmentally ready. Our Board of Education then began a discussion regarding the Framework at our Board meeting on 5/25 and have correspondingly formulated the following letter to articulate our position opposing the Framework in its current form.

Please understand that the Board is not opposing the Framework in its entirety, but urges the California Department of Education to reconsider the limited options it provides to our middle and subsequently, high school students. In BHUSD we have worked hard over the past three years to develop new middle school mathematics pathways with open access opportunities for our students in the middle school classroom setting. We firmly believe in this work and have ample data exemplifying student performance and growth through these pathways which allow students access to Algebra and even Geometry as early as 7th grade.

We have read the Framework and FAQ comprehensively and appreciate that the FAQ states we can accelerate honors/ gifted students. However, should we implement the Framework in its current form, we would be limiting our Algebra and Geometry course opportunities to be taught only in our high school, not middle school. Theoretically, this would require school districts to transport students from middle school to high school during their already tight academic day to be accelerated to the next level of coursework. This disruption to a middle school student is not only detrimental to their social-emotional wellbeing but also negatively impacts their academic continuity. Should a family feel uncomfortable in sending their 7th grade child to the high school, that child would then miss out on reaching their academic potential. Consequently, we ask that the California Department of Education reconsider the proposed Framework denying access to Algebra and Geometry to middle school students who are appropriately assessed and equipped to succeed in our rigorous instructional offerings in the middle school environment. BHUSD can provide three years of longitudinal data to evidence both the academic capacity and readiness our students demonstrate prior to placement in these courses.

We agree wholeheartedly in the importance of teaching students to maintain a connection between mathematical ideas and meaningful contexts to successfully learn with deep understanding. We strive to meet our students where they are. Students must be able to both access and master fundamental concepts no matter which pathway they are placed. BHUSD has intentionally implemented multiple measures to only place students who are developmentally ready into more rigorous courses. We strongly believe that pushing students who are not both academically and emotionally equipped to take advanced classes can be harmful to students who

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may then experience undue burden and unnecessary failure, curtailing their potential at an early age.

We appreciate and agree with other areas of the Framework, especially in the support for students who struggle with Mathematics. However, we must not remove opportunities for our gifted students as this would be counterproductive to encouraging their honors trajectory and our BHUSD Mission and Vision. It is important that we establish the mathematical foundation appropriate to their learning environment to enable students to pursue any course of study that interests them, should they wish to participate in future academic post-secondary options.

We urge you to listen to your stakeholders from Students, Parents, School/ District Administration, and Elected Officials. We hope that you will encourage the California Department of Education to examine the impact on middle school pathways due to eliminating access to Algebra and Geometry for our most accelerated learners.

Sincerely,

Rachelle Marcus, Board of Education President

Tristen Walker-Shuman, Board of Education Vice President

Mary Wells, Board of Education Member

Noah Margo, Board of Education Member

Dr. Amanda Stern, Board of Education Member

Dr. Michael Bregy, Superintendent of Schools

Wade Roach, Assistant Superintendent, Business Services

Dustin Seemann, Assistant Superintendent, Education Services

Laura Chism, Assistant Superintendent, Student Services

Dr. Matt Horvath, Assistant Superintendent, Personnel Services

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