



# The BlackBoard Of West Contra Costa

November 17, 2015

TO: Dr. Harter and WCCUSD Staff:

Thank you for meeting and discussing the District's education plans to eliminate the achievement gap with concerned community members on October 20th. After listening to the District and carefully assessing its plans, we, as community members, must express a vote of **"no confidence" that the plans outlined by the District will materially close the achievement gaps of students entering and leaving the District within the next 4-5 years.** Furthermore, we believe that the last seven (7) years of leadership has not produced the expected results that the District is moving in the right direction in the areas of achievement and school climate.

Our **"no confidence"** vote is based on the following:

- The results of recent District-wide testing clearly illustrate a large, sustained and yawning achievement gap for students of color, compared to other District students. The testing results show that the long-held achievement gap continues, whether one looks at the recent SBAC results or the results from previous testing.
- WCCUSD staff has failed to provide a convincing rationale that demonstrates how the District's piecemeal individual programs will be integrated into an overall strategic initiative that improves student learning at the classroom level, and how these programs, in aggregate, will deliver a measurable impact toward the success of all students and close the achievement gap.
- Past WCCUSD programs that the District has highly touted to the community have failed to narrow the achievement gap, including Linked Learning, the WCCUSD Strategic Plan, etc.

The reality is that the majority of students of color are not receiving an education that makes them career or college ready. Also, the signatories' patience has been exhausted. The District's Roots' Tree does not have a concrete foundation that shows how the implementation process will impact students from K-12, but rather a scattering of seeds without outlining through data analysis, the process of germination that will produce strong educational growth. Consequentially, we risk losing another generation of children to a substandard education.

- The WCCUSD has, in our opinion, failed to provide a safe learning environment for all its children, particularly, students of color. Despite the compliance agreement with the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights (OCR), we do not believe that the safety situation at school sites has materially improved. To date, schools still suffer from rampant bullying, violence, disruptive classrooms, and, as OCR identified, sexual violence. While the District claims that student safety is its first priority, that claim must be matched by action.

We, the signatories, further believe that the District's top-down approach to the classroom has failed to improve the education of WCCUSD students. We believe that this broken relationship must be mended if we are to improve classroom learning and close the achievement gap.

To this end, we call for a new vision for the WCCUSD. As a first step, we seek an **Educational Summit** that engages families, teachers, and administrators to develop real priorities to improve student learning and ultimately close the achievement gap. It is strongly suggested that the **Educational Summit** should be the outcome of a Board study session(s), to outline the parameters and responsibilities, and reinforcing District ownership. Necessarily, the **Educational Summit** will promote open and honest dialogue, without the constraints of the Board meetings.

As a second step, we recommend that the District focus on replicating its islands of excellence from one superior classroom to other classrooms throughout the District. To do this, the District must analyze data, identify the classroom or school-level successes, and then disseminate those successes throughout the entire District. We encourage the District to look at its own successful classrooms/schools, as well as those of local Charter Schools to solve this problem.

Signatories:

Gloria Scoggins 11/17/15  
Scottie Smith 11/17/15  
[Signature] 11/17/15  
Betty Davis

Aime Bachman 11/17/15  
Lucretia Boyer 11/17/2015  
Ben [Signature] 11/17/2015  
Ellie Hooper 11/17/2015

Cc: Todd Groves, President  
Randy Enos, Board Clerk  
Liz Block, Trustee  
Valerie Cuevas, Trustee  
Madeline Kronenberg, Trustee  
Joyce Tsai, Contra Costa Times Reporter