

The BlackBoard of West Contra Costa

**THE BLACKBOARD OF WEST CONTRA COSTA'S
QUEST FOR A BETTER NARRATIVE FOR THE
EDUCATION OF AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS IN THE
WEST CONTRA COSTA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT (WCCUSD)**

Presentation at the El Cerrito NAACP meeting, March 18, 2017

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MISSION STATEMENT

The **BlackBoard** is an organization of parents, students, and community members who advocate for equity in educational funding, programs and highly qualified teachers. We believe it is important for all students, particularly African American students, to have a quality education that is based on their needs, not on their social economic status.

The **BlackBoard** believes community advocacy and support programs are vital in securing an appropriate education for African American students in the public schools.

Our goal is to enhance the quality of life in our community and the larger society by producing well-rounded and educated students, by forming partnerships with local schools, business and community organizations.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to summarize the work of the Blackboard in our advocacy for African American student achievement. The **BlackBoard** began its quest to understand the achievement gap of Black students in 2013 and convened its initial public forum in March 2014. The purpose of the public forum was to gather and discuss academic data and to seek improvements in academic programs and services for all students, in particular, African American students. We were also seeking assurance that the improved academic programs and services would be based on the students' needs, not on their race or socio-economic status. The Forum was well attended by parents, students, and other community stakeholders, with presentations by many West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) staff persons, Educational Trust-West, UCSF and SFSU professors. There were many questions from the audience, as well as follow-up questions from the **BlackBoard**, given to the District for written responses (see Appendix E).

The **BlackBoard** believed that with the change to the Common Core, the enactment of the Every Student Success Act (ESSA), and the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF); parents, teachers, and the District would have an opportunity to outline and implement an educational system for all WCCUSD students. Dr. James Taylor, UCSF, the moderator for the Forum echoed our sentiments by stating, "We believe, through dialogue with the communities, the educational institutions, and focused strategic efforts, we can collectively improve the achievement of African American students and other underserved populations." Dr. Taylor went on to state that, "As members of this community, we believe community advocacy has power and is vital in securing an

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appropriate education for African American students in public schools. History has demonstrated that advocacy in education and social justices are powerful components of change, and we as a community cannot ignore the need”.¹ The **BlackBoard** not only endorses Dr. Taylor’s analysis but also believes that another major goal is to enhance the quality of life in this community and the larger society by supporting and nurturing well-rounded, educated students by forming partnerships with local schools, businesses and community organizations.

The March 2014 Forum and the follow up in May 2014 “Think Tank” meeting produced many concerns and directions for parents, teachers and the community including the following:

- The need to more thoroughly understand what is meant by parent engagement, what it should look like, and how to advocate for change.
- The academic and support services for students with special needs that would encourage and assist them in preparing for college or a career.
- The high percentage of graduating students performing below the necessary entry level for college readiness is completely unacceptable.
- Creating a mutual climate of trust and respect between students, parents, teachers, communities, and District administrators is essential.
- Understanding the implementation of the LCFF and providing training for parents to fully participate.
- Nothing will change without focusing resources on supporting the underperforming students.

¹ *Richmond Post*, March 26-April 1, 2014.

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RESEARCH OVERVIEW

In October 2015, the **BlackBoard** attended an excellent presentation by the Education Trust-West, entitled Black Minds Matter at the California Legislative Black Caucus Conference. Their Panel and Report discussed in great detail many of the barriers facing African American students in California's public education system. The Report stated "our goal is for Black Minds Matter to serve as a rallying point for engagement, discussion and action".² After attending the conference the **BlackBoard** decided there was a definite need to host a series of events that would analyze and discuss the WCCUSD data. We initiated conversations with Education Trust-West and GO Public Schools West Contra Costa (GO WCC) about the possibility of planning a similar event in the WCCUSD. GO WCC, in collaboration with the **BlackBoard**, contacted Education Trust-West, other community organizations, and WCCUSD to plan the first in a series of events.³

In the WCCUSD, there have been many discussions and presentations on the District's data in terms of performance gaps, but very little sustained action to improve student outcomes. One has only to read the Education Trust-West Report to understand the problems and how a District can begin to close the achievement gaps by focusing on early interventions, affordable preschools, and family engagement programs.

² The Education Trust-West, *Black Minds Matter*, California Legislative Black Caucus Conference, Sacramento, California, (2015): 3. <https://west.edtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2015/10/Ed-Trust-West-Black-Minds-Matter-FINAL-PDF.pdf>.

³ <https://gopublicschoolswwcc.org/contact>.

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Furthermore, the Report listed five strategies that work:

1. Offering and ensuring academic relevance, rigor, and supports.
2. Ensuring equitable access to effective educators.
3. Extending learning time.
4. Improving school climate and fixing school discipline.
5. Providing a broad range of health, wellness, and socio-emotional supports.

The Blackboard believes that students must be engaged in their learning; therefore, *teaching should be effective and relevant to the students. Students must believe they are important; and understand how an education can move them from where they are to where they wish to go. Students must know that their teachers will be there for them, and that they will not have to experience a revolving door of different substitute teachers.*

The **BlackBoard** has been trying to ascertain how student data is used to improve student performance in the District; whether the District is aligning teacher instruction and supports around the needs of the whole child; and is the State, District, parents and teachers working systematically to address the whole child and whole community?⁴

Therefore, the **BlackBoard** decided that it would be of great value if the District would hold a Board Study Session to openly discuss data outcome, programs, and

⁴ Scottie Smith, BlackBoard of WCC, Emails to WCCUSD Nia Rashidichi and Todd Grove, *African American Achievement in WCCUSD*, November 06, 2013.

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services at the school site level that were being implemented for underperforming students. The District did hold the Study Session; however, no information was provided regarding our specific concerns on how or whether targeted funds were being used to provide supports to improve educational outcomes for African American students. The Study Session's review of achievement data for African American students illustrated that the results were dismal. Furthermore, the design of the session did not promote productive community engagement. As an example, the Study Session Panel was composed of Board Members, administrators, and consultants (approx. twenty [20] people). We sat at a very large, oval-shaped table, with many of the panel members backs to the audience. Therefore, many of the attendees, parents and community persons, thought the Study Session was designed to exclude their participation, particularly African Americans. The Board Study Session was a complete failure due to inadequate community participation and poor meeting design.

In the **BlackBoard's** review of the National Urban League's Report, Building Better Narratives in Black Education, it was noted that many of the questions **we** have been asking of the District are not new; yet they are not being addressed systemically in the WCCUSD. As written in the *Urban League Report*:

While Black students educational attainment is often the topic of various policy initiatives, the voices within their community are not often incorporated in a meaningful way. In fact, some may even align to the myth that the Black community is apathetic toward education – something we found to be

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unequivocally false. The findings reveal that Black parents and caregivers are tired of the negative tone in education, and the language and key messages around educational improvement matter to them in real ways.

Despite some misconceptions, the findings indicate that the African American Community is very knowledgeable and informed about key aspects in education policy.... Overall the data reveal that the African American community wants an equity-centered, quality education for African American students that will prepare them for college and promising careers.⁵

The **BlackBoard** has and continues to call for a better narrative that is not one-sided and lacking transparency about things that are working at schools, be they traditional public or public charters schools.⁶ The community must be able to have trust that the District leadership is willing to seek out and implement programs that will move African American students toward success. We believe as stated in the Urban League report that:

Building a better narrative involves not only underscoring educational inequality, but truly celebrating success. While there are considerable inequalities in education, there are successful approaches around the country that are striving toward academic success for all students.⁷

⁵ Meredith B. L. Anderson, "Building Better Narratives in Black Education", *National Urban League Report* (2016).

⁶ Scottie Smith, BlackBoard of WCC, Email and presentation to the Superintendent Harter and Board, *Letter of No Confidence*, November 17, 2015.

⁷ Anderson, "Building Better Narratives in Black Education", *National Urban League Report* (2016).

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BLACKBOARD INSIGHTS

Again, data are good, and **we** have plenty, but **we** do not have, nor have **we** seen a comprehensive plan from the District, cities, parents, teachers and community organizations; that aligns all of the puzzle pieces together to educate all groups of underserved students.⁸ Rather than consistently highlighting the achievement gap, “**tell us what you are doing to close the gap**”. **We** have asked numerous times about program outcomes for the **millions of dollars** that are being spent, but the District is unable to quote any successes.⁹ Given that the WCCUSD spends millions on consultants, tutoring and other supplementary programs, there should be some examples of improvement to *justify the spending* for such programs. The spending should be based on a student’s academic needs, which should be evaluated via clearly defined metrics that use pre-and-post enrollment data upon entry and completion of a program.

While the **BlackBoard** was focusing on the needs of African American students, the District also began to develop its Strategic Plan Report, 2014-19, Whole Child, Whole Community. The Strategic Plan Report was a comprehensive response to WCCUSD’s Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT). Its analysis provided insight into the District’s areas of opportunity and potential challenges moving forward. The SWOT Report outlined seven priorities for the District that summarized the root causes of the majority of the WCCUSD’s challenges.

⁸ WCCUSD Data Dashboard, <http://www.wccusd.net/dashboard>, GO West Contra Costa, *West Contra Costa Kids Can 2016 Report*, California Department of Education, West Contra Costa – Report, <http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/DQReports.asp?CDSType=D&CDSCode=0761796>.

⁹ Scottie Smith, BlackBoard of WCC Emails, to WCCUSD Nia Rashidichi, *African American Achievement Board Study Session*, April 5, 2016, and May 18, 2016.

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1. Achievement Gap – The District is not adequately serving its African-American and Latino students, particularly the males, as this demographic is far underperforming compared to their White, Asian and Filipino counterparts.
2. Insufficient Professional Development for Teachers – Teachers in the District are not receiving the support and development they need to become great teachers. Lack of development and training negatively impacts instruction, curriculum development, teacher collaboration, and student achievement.
3. Weak Talent Recruitment and Retention – The District is unable to recruit or retain top talent, especially at the principal level which inhibits instruction and management and negatively impact school culture.
4. No Sense of Urgency – Though many within the District want to see change, there is little sense of urgency to see that change happens now. Until there is true motivation and collective action to enact change, the status quo will prevail.
5. Low Trust – Internally and externally, far too many individuals and organizations assume the worst of the District bringing an unhealthy level of skepticism into every District initiative and interaction.
6. Poor Communication – Without a clear vision and a defined communication strategy, the District is unable to communicate effectively with its internal or external stakeholders.

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7. Lack of Program Alignment – There are numerous successful programs operating within the District, but there is little coordination between the efforts. Lack of alignment leads to poor investments, miscommunication and ineffectiveness.¹⁰

In the **BlackBoard's** research and conversations with parents, teachers, and community organizations, it is clear that the data analysis is more than sufficient to show that parents are making decisions on where to send their children (public, private, or charter school) because of the data reported in the:

- Student report cards,
- STAR Reading and Math scores,
- CAASPP (California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress)
- Parent/teacher conference,
- Student observation and homework,
- The School Site Council (SSC) plan for their school,
- The California Department of Education's data analysis on school ranking, attendance, academic achievement, gender, ethnicity, suspensions and expulsion, and the enrollment for each school within the District. These are used on a regular basis by parents, businesses and communities at large.¹¹

The **BlackBoard** has discovered through Parent Forums, Advocate, Community, and District meetings that issues impacting Black students' learning and parents' lack of trust in the District are often a result of students being sent home from school for a day or more

¹⁰ *Strategic Plan Report, 2014-19, Whole Child, Whole Community*, p.13.

¹¹ California Department of Education, West Contra Costa – Report.
<http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/DQReports.asp?CDSType=D&CDSCode=0761796> .

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without proper suspension notices; the school typically calls the parent and the student is picked up without any documentation. Furthermore, parents have voiced their concerns about Black students, particularly males, who are sent out of class to sit in the hallway on the floor by themselves with the class door closed. Another concern is centers on Black students who are sent to the office to sit for hours; while everyone walks by and treat them as if they do not exist. The voices of parents have been stated in public forums and at Board meetings about practices that humiliate students of color in terms of disciplinary practices that removes the students from the learning environment. Thus, African American students are more prone to reduced instructional time, an action that has a profound impact on academic performance.

The **Blackboard** finds, as outlined in the Strategic Plan, there has not been a sense of urgency that drives the District leadership to be accountable for programs that would show *what is-or-not working for low performing students*. Furthermore, there has been no sense of urgency to enact major changes to the structure of programs used throughout the District that would result in systemic academic improvements in achievement.¹² If systemic changes do not occur in programs, services and discipline, then the status quo mindset of blaming the victims will prevail. Continually of adding more layers of consultants and their programs has yet to produce the desired academic results.¹³

¹² Scottie Smith, Vice President BlackBoard of WCC emails to Superintendent Matthew Duffy and Nia Rashidichi, *Follow up on Board Study Session, African American Students*, July 27, 2016.

¹³ Gloria Scoggins, President BlackBoard of WCC email to Supt. Bruce Harter, Nia Rashidichi, and Board Members, *Board Study Session Failed to Provide Specificity on African American Student Achievement*, May 21, 2016. See Appendix G

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The achievement gap will continue as long as there is not a coordination of services that address the needs of **all** underperforming students. African American students and others will not achieve their full potential in a system that does not respect or focus on their needs. Students will continue to underperform if all the widgets to support them are operating independently of a solid foundation or with a support structure that is not student centered.

Furthermore, with little accountability from District leadership, and without honest, open dialogue with parents and teachers, the system will continue to lackluster implementation and poor outcomes. There must be transparency in the decision making process on the selection of base and supplementary programs and services, as well as evaluation on their effectiveness in supporting academic achievement for students who are functioning below grade level. There must be a new narrative that the students, teachers, parents, and community can support that moves us of the long standing belief that an overall two percent increase annually in school test scores is the best that can be accomplished.

Communication and transparency are very important if the District wishes to change its narrative. The District must communicate with the community regarding changes of policies. It cannot continue to unilaterally attempt to change polices as it did with the transfer policy for students in underperforming schools without transparency or proper legal advice.¹⁴ As long as things are done in what some would call an

¹⁴ West Contra Costa Unified School District School Board Agenda, January 18, 2017, *Revised Board Policy 5116.1, Intradistrict Attendance Open Enrollment*, Item F3.

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underhanded way, there will be little trust in the system's ability to educate all students fairly.

The **BlackBoard** believes the District leadership must evaluate whether members of the current cabinet have the competency and suitability to truly lead in the particular departments they are assigned before it adds to their head count or responsibilities another layer of bureaucracy. The District should not add another layer of bureaucracy unless it directly serves the needs of the students, teachers and sites. It should evaluate its progress in terms of the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP), Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) and the extensive Strategic Plan that was commissioned to develop goals and objectives that were written as a result of community engagement by 31 focus groups, 11 town halls, 50 one-on-one interviews and 831 survey respondents. The development of the Strategic Plan included District staff, District leaders, community members, businesses and community-based organizations, who took the time to offer their perspectives on the District.

Again, African American students and others will never reach their full potential in a system that does not respect or focus on their needs. Students and teachers will continue to underperform when they are deprived of decent facilities, while at the same time others are getting new and repulsively larger facilities, as they continue to squander in unsafe and unhealthy learning environments. The District can no longer expect parents to be silent when it approves spending over twenty-one (21) million dollars for a

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football field at El Cerrito High¹⁵ and a facility and funding for a new Mandarin school, while students at Wilson and Lake Elementary Schools among others, are trying to learn in unsafe and unhealthy learning environments in Richmond and San Pablo.¹⁶

CONCLUSION

Students will underperform in a system that creates new programs to enrich a few, while failing to develop an infrastructure that will educate and focus on the masses. Providing a good education for all students should be compared to building or renovating a house. The District leaders should heed the recommendation of the Strategic Plan in the same manner as an architect would heed an inspectors report regarding holes, cracks and a seismically unsafe foundation before it “willy-nilly” starts adding new programs and schools. The District should develop and perfect what is needed for the masses of students before trying to placate the whims of the few. The data we already collect should be used to develop individual learning plans for all our students; plans that address their present levels of performance and include benchmarks and annual goals for achievement. Again, there must be a true sense of urgency and accountability for the progress of every student, in particularly, those that left behind because their parents are not in a politically active subgroup or have the economic means that will allow them to leave their jobs and participate on varies committees.

¹⁵ VLS Forensic Audit, West Contra Costa Unified School District Bond Program, September 16, 2016, <http://www.wccusd.net/cms/lib03/CA01001466/Centricity/domain/1723/final%20phase%20ii%20forensic%20accounting%20investigation%20report/WCCUSD%20Final%20Report%20Phase%20II%20%2009162016.pdf>.

¹⁶ West Contra Costa Unified School Board Agenda, February 15, 2017, Item F2, *Location Recommendation Mandarin Immersion School*

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To continue on its current path of robbing from the poor to satisfy those that have stronger voices and more economic means can only perpetuate divisiveness, inequities, flight by those who can leave the District schools, and insurrection by those left behind.

The **BlackBoard** will continue to advocate for systemic changes in the District. **We** will continue to be a voice for African American students and all other students that are not receiving a quality education. **We** do not accept the continued nullification of *Brown vs. Board of Education* as it relates to an equal education.¹⁷ Furthermore, **we** will not stand quietly as interest divergence is applied to distract from the real educational needs of African American students.¹⁸

¹⁷ Albert L Samuels, "All But Overturned: America's Nullification of Brown v. Board of Education" *National Political Science Review*, Volume 18(2017).

¹⁸ Derrick Bell, *Silent Covenants: Brown v. Board of Education and the Unfulfilled Hopes for Racial Reform*, New York: Oxford University Press, (2004).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- School Site Plans need to highlight supplementary programs that are embedded in the classrooms with an in depth academic data analysis, targeted interventions, number of students serviced and cost.
- There must be a correlation between the Strategic Plan, School Site Plan developed by the School Site Council (SSC) and the LCAP adopted by the Board on improving academic achievement for all subgroups.
- The District must develop a public document that summarizes **all** new programs, number of students enrolled, staff development and how they correlate with classroom instruction and outcomes.
- The District must develop and disseminate a list of best practices for discipline, they should list unacceptable practices that discriminate, humiliate and has the appearance of targeting students based on race or gender, (i.e., sitting students in hallways or office and sending students home without documentation).
- The District must publicly summarize the continuum of grade level achievement programs for students that have not met grade level standards in the current year, and following years until the student meets grade level standards. i.e. summer school, and after school programs.
- The District must develop and publicize a list of all After School programs with number of students, cost, staff and how they bridge the academic gap between class instruction and the metric for assessing the programs and students.
- The District must develop individualized lesson plans for underperforming students that lists types of supplemental program supports used with progress reporting dates for teachers and parents, as well as follow-up methods and strategies.
- The Superintendent and staff must provide to the Board and public, a presentation of supplementary programs, with implementation dates, academic outcomes; the number of students served and names of schools or afterschool programs working with students and the cost.

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Letter to Superintendent Duffy, from Ryse Youth Center, BlackBoard of WCC and Public Counsel, March 29, 2017.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

BLACKBOARD FORUM QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS, MARCH 22, 2014 (Written Questions Submitted to the District)

1. Will there be a forum for parents and children who are failing in school?
2. Summer school; students should have classes on subject they are failing, math, English, reading, writing. They take only that particular subject only.
3. Parents should take a course in what their child is failing.
4. Parents should be informed when the curriculum changes well in advance.
5. Suspension, I have a wonderful idea for a lot of children who have been suspended from school.
6. Great idea for tutoring program.
7. There is an effort to ensure that African American students don't achieve, what I would like to see is an achievement program that works specifically w/AA students, similar to METAS; Puente which has changed the data of Latin students. School is a lifestyle not a place you go to learn.... Let's build learning communities....

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Appendix A (continued)

8. Too many choices on teacher's parts – They need demands on them.
Teach or get out!!! When are we going to move from what we already know to doing something? Making people accountable for their behaviors in classroom? We are still giving choices of what they should be doing when it comes to African American students. Google, HP, Yahoo, Chevron would "Fire" these people if they did not produce.
9. Parents should not be intimidated by teachers. We have to say, this is my child and this is what they need. Then hold the teacher accountable, as you also do your part at home.
10. PTA. More African American parents need to join the PTA. Ca State PTA has a direct connection to our policy makers. (from: A parent, teacher, and PTA member).
11. Why hire coaches that have just teaching credentials? Raise the bar and expectations – minimum requirements of district coaches:
Leadership/Admin. Credentials.
12. Idea for Solutions: (1) after school academic enrichment programs. (2) Structure "Summer School" where it's perceived as "Enrichment" for all students.

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Appendix A (continued)

13. Regarding Suspension: Instead of sending a child home for 3-5 days, can there be a room where these children can complete their assignments and something else if necessary. My taxes pays for schooling not time at home.
14. Why no WCCUSD students on the panel? In my opinion that is one of the most important groups we never heard from this evening.
15. Where is the respect for the community that wants to be involved in the process of LCFF from the Superintendent?
16. How do you help a child that comes to school who just witness a murder?
17. How can we insure that various learning styles are considered when lessons are presented to students? Our presentation as teachers must be done in a way that meets the learning styles and needs of all students.
18. This was a great Forum; nice beginning, however at some point this/there needs to be an “All Black” brainstorm to come up with recommendations that are owned by our participation. – Asians have their own networks. – Latinos have their own in which we do not participate. – We need our own....
19. How do we better support teachers and administrators? How do we change mindsets, set high expectations, and train/support/develop staff in working toward this?

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20. How do we change teacher's mindset around discipline? How do we support them? What interventions can be put in place to support those children whose behaviors put them at odds w/the culture of the classroom?
21. The LCAP identifies programs that are being expanded to different schools but doesn't explain how schools will be selected to receive these programs. When will that be made transparent?
22. What specific programs, strategies, initiatives are in place to specifically address African American male achievement in WCCUSD schools?
23. How do you effectively use data and say it is real if you expect teachers to be on a District pacing guide and the students are already behind grade level?

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Appendix B

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS TO BLACKBOARD FORUM QUESTIONNAIRE, 3/22/14

1. Less data focused, more action and planning.
2. How do we address changing cultural attitudes, re: Excellence academic success?
3. (Q 9) Required for SS, who are regularly suspended, behavioral issues.
4. The data presented in the two PowerPoints was the same and it would have been more beneficial to use one of those presentations in a different, new way.
5. We were presented with a lot of mundane data. The allotted time could have been spent on real conversation getting to the real nuts and bolts. Ed Trust-West speaker – quite boring and repetitive. Your forum would have been better in group discussions and presentation later.
6. Audience, not enough time to talk.
7. Too many speakers on panel were difficult to understand the focus of this event. I am disappointed that we did not begin to discuss how one can engage solutions & change outcome. Why not shrink the Q & A and leave space for audience to participate in break out groups. There is clearly a desire to talk. (b) Maybe a theme specific event would have been more fruitful. (c) Would have liked to have heard from WCCUSD youth.

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Appendix B (continued)

8. Unfocused, never really on schedule. Spent 3.5 hours w/o being given a chance to hear others around me or to respond.
9. Q & A w/panel – not organized or focused. Format confusing. Next steps – non-existent. Forum served to list issues but very very short on how to address them or improve.
10. I love Mr. Hill's energy. He has a great career in leadership ahead of him. His comments however really came across as anti-teacher and divisive. I wonder if he understands the complexity of the issues facing schools, administrators, teachers, and staff.
11. Suggestions: BlackBoard of WCC help organize an action group of concerned parents/schools for positive change. – Continue to involve Kyle Hill, James Taylor & parent members; they were excellent and full of ideas/knowledge that needs to be put into action. – Question, The next step...? Comment: thank you for organizing this event. Found out about it from another parent yesterday, and from district announcement.
12. The audience needed to be able to talk earlier on, to speak to each other to be more involved. I think the Black National Anthem should be sung. I think Dr. Harter's data presentation was excellent and the Ed Fund West woman data presentation was redundant. That could have been removed. Next time have a mini presentation by a teacher on suggestion, classroom practice,

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Appendix B (continued)

and parent workshops, break out, they can choose from a menu of topic, too much siting.

13. This district needs an all-boys school, 3rd to 7th grades. - Funded by the school board for ten years. That should open in the next two years.

Targeted funding bring in Wade Nobles to set the curriculum for the school, and other professionals. - Help the district to start Saturday school for parents. -- Help parents from the district become teachers. Promote African Americans to learn a second languages. - Promote social workers into elementary school. - Set a meeting with teachers' union and parents to talk to the unions about helping students' achievements. Help the parents learn about Core Curriculum Standards. – Please email me. PS. Let's get My Brother's Keeper to fund seed money for these issues.

14. Some panel members didn't speak to questions and answers were too long. Would have like time for breakout session.

15. Regarding the forum Answers were too long and not on point.

Lots of questions to be addressed.

16. Dr. Taylor Excellent!! The statistics were repetitive.

17. Want More of This!

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Appendix C

What are some clear areas for growth?

Subgroup data shows further gaps. For example, suspension rates for African-American and Latino students are rated as orange. Additionally, achievement in both English Language Arts and Math for African-American students are rated red, two color levels below the District. Students with disabilities scored orange or red on all indicators. *

Overall, there is still a great deal of work to be done to ensure every student in our community can thrive in school and beyond. Understanding areas of growth across various indicators and for our diverse student subgroups, is a critical first step towards meaningful improvement.

WCCUSD Student Group Report

State Indicators	All Students	English Learners	Foster Youth	Homeless	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	Students with Disabilities	American Indian	Asian	African American	Filipino	Hispanic	Pacific Islander	Two or More Races	White
Chronic Absenteeism		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Suspension Rate (K-12)			N/A	N/A										
English Learner Progress (K-12)		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Graduation Rate (9-12)			N/A	N/A			*					*	*	
College / Career Available Fall 2017. Select for Grade 11 assessment results.		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
English Language Arts (3-8)			N/A	N/A			*							
Mathematics (3-8)			N/A	N/A			*							

Performance Levels: Blue (Highest) Green Yellow Orange Red (Lowest)

* Source: <http://www.ed-matters.org/headlines-from-new-school-performance-data/>

THE BLACKBOARD OF WEST CONTRA COSTA

Appendix D

Demographics SBAC Results 2015/16

OVERVIEW				DEMOGRAPHICS							SBAC RESULTS			
School Name	Type	Grade	Total Enroll	FRL* 2014-15	ELL* 2014-15	White	Asian	AA/Black	Hispanic/Latino	ELA - Met or Exceeded Standards	ELA - Delta from 2015	Math - Met or Exceeded Standards	Math - Delta from 2015	
Amethod: Richmond Charter Academy	Charter	Middle	231	85%	40%	2%	4%	2%	92%	49%	2%	40%	-4%	
Amethod: Richmond Charter Elementary-Jenito Juarez	Charter	Elem	405	77%	80%	0%	1%	2%	95%	28%	-12%	28%	-24%	
Aspire Richmond Ca. College Preparatory Academy	Charter	High	232	N/A	N/A	2%	6%	22%	65%	59%	11%*	29%	9%*	
Aspire Richmond Technology Academy	Charter	Elem	251	N/A	N/A	2%	2%	12%	78%	37%	N/A	33%	N/A	
Bayview Elementary	District	Elem	606	95%	53%	3%	10%	21%	62%	19%	2%	13%	-3%	
Caliber: Beta Academy	Charter	Elem	608	80%	42%	4%	2%	14%	75%	34%	0%	27%	-9%	
Cesar E. Chavez Elementary	District	Elem	569	99%	72%	2%	2%	5%	90%	19%	-3%	13%	2%	
Collins Elementary	District	Elem	359	54%	25%	18%	13%	22%	29%	36%	-2%	35%	6%	
Coronado Elementary	District	Elem	424	95%	44%	2%	3%	27%	64%	25%	5%	16%	-3%	
Crespi Junior High	District	Middle	530	73%	21%	13%	13%	23%	42%	40%	7%	21%	3%	
De Anza High	District	High	1329	70%	19%	10%	13%	23%	44%	30%	-6%	13%	3%	
Dover Elementary	District	Elem	740	97%	71%	1%	4%	5%	89%	24%	-1%	14%	1%	
Edward M. Downer Elementary	District	Elem	607	96%	69%	3%	3%	7%	86%	21%	4%	17%	2%	
El Cerrito High	District	High	1429	51%	14%	20%	18%	28%	27%	48%	-7%	24%	-6%	
Ellenhorst Elementary	District	Elem	357	39%	19%	31%	10%	12%	38%	46%	6%	40%	4%	
Fairmont Elementary	District	Elem	556	55%	40%	18%	2%	15%	35%	44%	8%	32%	1%	
Ford Elementary	District	Elem	485	93%	65%	4%	5%	7%	81%	27%	3%	15%	-2%	
Fred T. Korenatsu Middle	District	Middle	589	57%	17%	29%	18%	21%	28%	48%	-1%	35%	1%	
Grant Elementary	District	Elem	519	98%	76%	1%	3%	6%	88%	17%	6%	11%	4%	
Hanna Ranch Elementary	District	Elem	469	29%	13%	6%	22%	15%	26%	63%	2%	64%	10%	
Harding Elementary	District	Elem	392	31%	21%	37%	18%	10%	24%	52%	4%	46%	4%	
Helms Middle	District	Middle	985	93%	38%	1%	4%	10%	81%	23%	-3%	13%	1%	
Hercules High	District	High	980	41%	11%	7%	19%	27%	19%	64%	2%	31%	1%	
Hercules Middle	District	Middle	632	45%	15%	5%	23%	26%	20%	42%	3%	28%	1%	
Highland Elementary	District	Elem	484	94%	45%	4%	11%	24%	55%	44%	2%	31%	0%	
John F. Kennedy High	District	High	858	79%	37%	2%	5%	25%	64%	17%	-5%	3%	-3%	
Kensington Elementary	District	Elem	534	8%	8%	57%	13%	5%	11%	86%	2%	78%	2%	
Lake Elementary	District	Elem	421	98%	65%	3%	7%	13%	71%	24%	7%	9%	2%	
Leadership Public Schools: Richmond	Charter	High	511	95%	22%	0%	2%	6%	91%	74%	20%	30%	12%	
Lincoln Elementary	District	Elem	436	98%	58%	2%	1%	27%	67%	11%	4%	7%	2%	
Lovonya Dejean Middle	District	Middle	529	89%	38%	2%	5%	23%	68%	7%	-5%	5%	0%	
Lupine Hills Elementary	District	Elem	383	38%	20%	9%	19%	25%	23%	39%	-2%	30%	-9%	
Madera Elementary	District	Elem	489	19%	14%	38%	26%	8%	16%	72%	-1%	67%	4%	
Making Waves Academy	Charter	M & H	759	83%	19%	1%	1%	10%	86%	41%	1%	27%	-1%	
Making Waves Academy (11th only)	Charter	High	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	68%	N/A	46%	N/A	
Making Waves Academy (5-8th only)	Charter	Middle	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	37%	N/A	24%	N/A	
Manzanita Middle	Charter	Middle	135	76%	27%	5%	1%	14%	75%	28%	6%	20%	7%	

Source: California Department of Education, 2016

Data accessed: 8/24/2016

*Aspire Cal Prep was previously located outside of the district.

THE BLACKBOARD OF WEST CONTRA COSTA

Appendix D (continued)

Demographics SBAC Results 2015/16

OVERVIEW				DEMOGRAPHICS							SBAC RESULTS			
School Name	Type	Grade	Total Enroll	FRL* 2014-15	ELL* 2014-15	White	Asian	AA/Black	Hispanic/Latino	ELA - Met or Exceeded Standards	ELA - Delta from 2015	Math - Met or Exceeded Standards	Math - Delta from 2015	
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Making Waves Academy (11th only)	Charter	High	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	68%	N/A	46%	N/A	
Making Waves Academy (5-8th only)	Charter	Middle	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	37%	N/A	24%	N/A	
Manzanita Middle	Charter	Middle	135	76%	27%	5%	1%	14%	75%	28%	6%	20%	7%	

Source: California Department of Education, 2016

Data accessed: 8/24/2016

*Aspire Cal Prep was previously located outside of the district.

THE BLACKBOARD OF WEST CONTRA COSTA

Appendix E

Educational Demographics Unit

District and School Enrollment by Ethnicity 2015-16 • West Contra Costa Unified Report

(Note: Data for uncertified district schools will not be included in the district reports however, Independent Reporting Charters that have certified will be displayed on the district report even if the authorizing District has not certified their data.)

School	Code	Hispanic or Latino of Any Race	American Indian or Alaska Native, Not Hispanic	Asian, Not Hispanic	Pacific Islander, Not Hispanic	Filipino, Not Hispanic	African American, Not Hispanic	White, not Hispanic	Two or More Races, Not Hispanic	Not Reported	Total
Aspire Richmond Ca. College Preparatory Academy	0132100	151	1	14	0	7	50	5	2	2	232
Aspire Richmond Technology Academy	0132118	195	0	5	1	11	29	5	3	2	251
Bayview Elementary	6004600	378	0	60	8	10	125	16	8	1	606
Cesar E. Chavez Elementary	6114094	512	0	9	0	3	29	12	2	2	569
Collins Elementary	6004659	103	1	47	0	44	80	65	19	0	359
Coronado Elementary	6004667	271	0	12	9	5	114	7	3	3	424
Crespi Junior High	6061170	224	2	67	5	32	123	70	7	0	530
De Anza High	0732164	579	1	174	17	100	308	129	21	0	1,329
District Office	0000000	30	0	2	0	3	11	3	1	0	50
Dover Elementary	6004691	659	1	27	2	3	35	8	0	5	740
Edward M. Downer Elementary	6057210	522	1	19	1	2	41	20	1	0	607
El Cerrito High	0732941	390	5	262	10	54	395	288	23	2	1,429
Ellerhorst Elementary	6004733	135	3	37	2	10	44	111	10	5	357
Fairmont Elementary	6004758	195	1	119	2	16	86	100	36	1	556
Ford Elementary	6004766	391	0	22	5	9	34	18	5	1	485
Fred T. Korematsu Middle	6057244	167	0	105	5	13	125	168	4	2	589
Grant Elementary	6004774	455	0	16	4	1	33	6	3	1	519
Greenwood Academy	0733253	203	1	8	1	4	119	15	5	0	356
Hanna Ranch Elementary	6112015	122	0	104	6	91	71	29	46	0	469
Harbour Way Elementary Community Day	6114086	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
Harding Elementary	6004782	96	1	69	3	10	38	144	25	6	392
Helms Middle	6057228	799	2	44	3	21	100	11	1	4	985
Hercules High	0730598	190	1	183	7	252	262	69	14	2	980
Hercules Middle	6119515	128	3	147	4	137	164	34	14	1	632
Highland Elementary	6004741	264	0	55	6	13	116	18	9	3	484
John F. Kennedy High	0733659	546	0	47	8	15	217	18	6	1	858
John Henry High	0132233	118	0	1	0	0	3	3	0	0	125
Kensington Elementary	6004808	58	0	69	3	6	29	306	24	39	534

THE BLACKBOARD OF WEST CONTRA COSTA

Appendix E (continued)

Educational Demographics Unit

District and School Enrollment by Ethnicity 2015-16 • West Contra Costa Unified Report

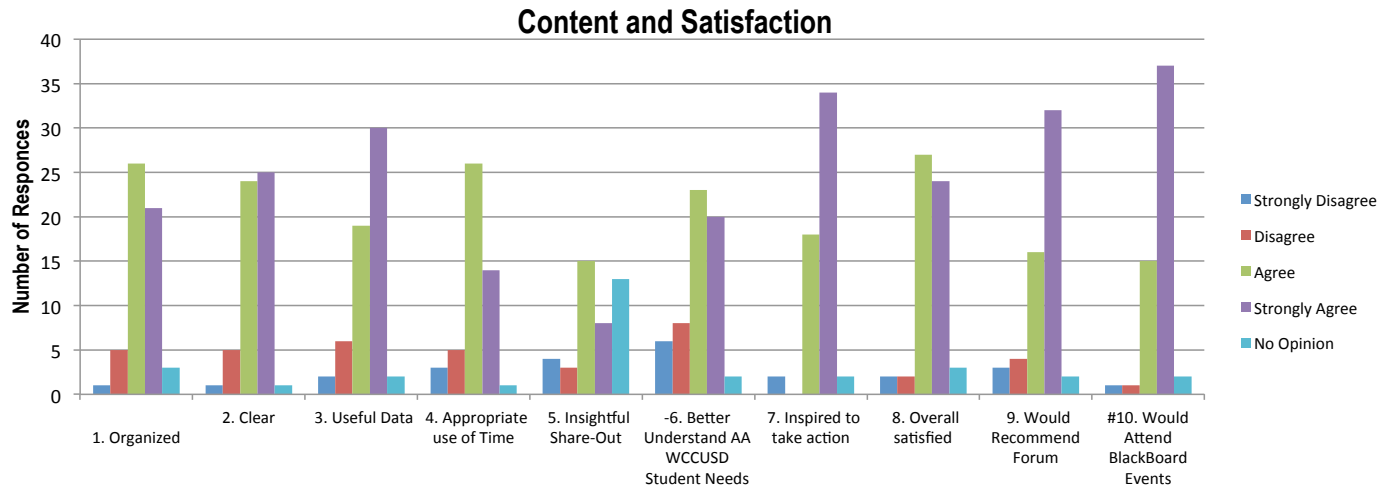
(Note: Data for uncertified district schools will not be included in the district reports however, Independent Reporting Charters that have certified will be displayed on the district report even if the authorizing District has not certified their data.)

School	Code	Hispanic or Latino of Any Race	American Indian or Alaska Native, Not Hispanic	Asian, Not Hispanic	Pacific Islander, Not Hispanic	Filipino, Not Hispanic	African American, Not Hispanic	White, not Hispanic	Two or More Races, Not Hispanic	Not Reported	Total
Lake Elementary	6004824	297	0	31	0	20	56	14	1	2	421
Leadership Public Schools: Richmond	0101477	464	1	9	0	2	33	1	1	0	511
Lincoln Elementary	6004832	290	3	3	2	4	116	9	1	8	436
Lovonya Dejean Middle	6120885	359	0	28	3	4	121	11	2	1	529
Lupine Hills Elementary	6097141	90	2	74	0	81	94	34	8	0	383
Madera Elementary	6004840	77	1	129	1	9	37	187	47	1	489
Manzanita Middle	6118368	101	0	2	0	4	19	7	2	0	135
Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary	6004915	266	1	24	2	2	153	22	5	1	476
Middle College High	0730291	142	0	36	5	16	61	16	2	0	278
Mira Vista Elementary	6004857	186	1	57	5	10	115	123	34	0	531
Montalvin Manor Elementary	6004865	298	1	40	4	16	55	21	1	1	437
Murphy Elementary	6004873	223	2	63	0	22	97	71	25	11	514
District Non-Public Non-Sectarian Schools	0000001	16	0	2	0	0	28	24	5	1	76
Nystrom Elementary	6004881	356	0	5	13	3	96	7	5	2	487
Ohlone Elementary	6099717	75	1	75	2	82	66	27	31	0	359
Olinda Elementary	6004899	96	0	73	5	26	55	61	6	1	323
Peres Elementary	6004907	404	1	10	1	5	104	4	4	3	536
Pinole Middle	6057236	234	2	62	6	48	112	97	8	4	573
Pinole Valley High	0735316	502	1	169	6	107	193	160	22	0	1,160
Richmond Charter Academy	0126805	213	0	9	0	1	4	4	0	0	231
Richmond Charter Elementary-Benito Juarez	0129643	386	0	6	1	1	7	2	2	0	405
Richmond College Preparatory	0110973	272	1	1	2	1	161	0	6	0	444
Richmond High	0735902	1,319	0	61	6	37	80	22	0	3	1,528
Riverside Elementary	6004931	234	2	40	5	21	63	30	6	0	401
Shannon Elementary	6004956	142	1	49	4	35	53	37	15	0	336
Sheldon Elementary	6004964	138	0	58	6	17	102	41	13	0	375
Stege Elementary	6004972	68	1	27	5	3	167	14	3	10	298
Stewart Elementary	6004980	154	5	67	3	42	107	82	11	4	475
Tara Hills Elementary	6004998	227	1	55	3	50	89	54	12	1	492
Valley View Elementary	6005003	82	1	57	1	18	55	117	8	3	342
Verde Elementary	6005011	261	0	5	4	0	39	0	1	9	319
Vista High (Alternative)	0730325	137	0	17	1	7	72	31	8	0	273
Washington Elementary	6005037	294	2	11	0	6	66	75	1	0	455
Wilson Elementary	6005045	312	0	63	7	8	70	21	8	7	496
Report Total											
West Contra Costa Unified	0761796	16,597	55	3,142	215	1,580	5,528	3,104	596	156	30,973
Contra Costa Total	07	60,992	570	21,326	1,139	7,393	17,101	57,501	8,954	1,437	176,413
State Total	00	3,360,562	34,704	551,229	30,436	156,166	361,752	1,500,932	192,146	38,810	6,226,737

THE BLACKBOARD OF WEST CONTRA COSTA

Appendix F

Evaluation Results: African American Student Achievement Forum



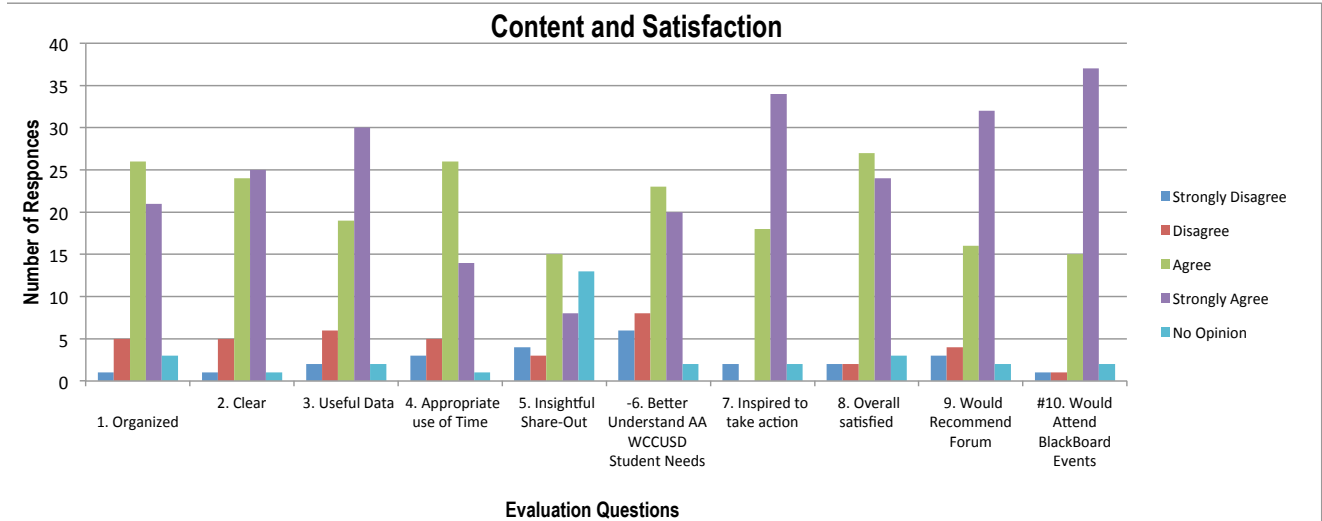
Evaluation Questions

Evaluation Questions: Content and Satisfaction	
1	The overall presentation of the forum, content and data was well organized
2	The content and data presented was clear
3	I understood the concepts and data presented in the forum, and found it helpful and useful.
4	Given the time allowed, the amount of material covered was appropriate
5	I found the brainstorming session and share-out insightful and progressive
6	Having attended the forum, I have a better understanding of what is needed for African American Student
7	Having attended the forum, I am inspired to take action and partner with the WCCUSD to ignite change in
8	Overall, I am satisfied with this forum, and find that it is a step in the right direction.
9	I would recommend this type of forums to my friends, family, colleagues and community.
10	I would attend other forums and/or events offered by The BlackBoard of West Contra Costa.

THE BLACKBOARD OF WEST CONTRA COSTA

Appendix F (continued)

Evaluation Results: African American Student Achievement Forum



Evaluation Questions: Content and Satisfaction	
1	The overall presentation of the forum, content and data was well organized
2	The content and data presented was clear
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9	I would recommend this type of forums to my friends, family, colleagues and community.
10	I would attend other forums and/or events offered by The BlackBoard of West Contra Costa.

THE BLACKBOARD OF WEST CONTRA COSTA

Appendix G

May 21, 2016 BlackBoard Letter to WCCUSD regarding the May 18, 2016 Board Study Session on African American Student Achievement

We believe that **The Blackboard's** efforts to ensure the Study Session was structured to meet the community's request to provide data to measure African American student's academic achievement was **not** successful.

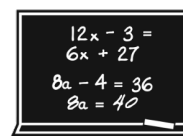
The BlackBoard shared **clear recommendations for the Study Session**, during planning meetings with district staff, and believed we were on the same page regarding the structure of the Study Session and clarity of information that would allow for evaluation of curriculum supports and measurable outcomes. We reviewed the brochure of consulting programs that the District is implementing and asked for the number of students, the implementation timeline, how programs are embedded in curriculum, as well as measurable data outcomes.

During the pre-planning meetings we discussed the need for real accountability for programs implemented to specifically address the needs of African American students. During a meeting with Dr. Jeff Howard and **BlackBoard** members it was clear that after several years of implementing *Efficacy* at Peres, Dr. Howard had **no** knowledge of data demonstrating African American students' performance. Obviously, there is data that he could have analyzed and presented to **The BlackBoard** (we presented some to him at the meeting) and that the district should have presented at the Study Session, to show measurable outcomes for African American students, attending Peres, as a direct result of participating in the *Efficacy program*.

It is our opinion that **no** program should be implemented at other schools without clear measurable outcomes for all subgroups. Until the District really evaluate the consulting programs, outcomes and cost, students will continue to lag behind. We should not be a District that uses consultants to tell staff how to do their jobs; rather, their services should be limited for staff development which would allow the staff to train each other. If this does not happen, and there are 2 or more years for the same consulting firm, the District has not promoted a sense of autonomy for the schools and staff. To rely on the same consulting firms year after year, creates a welfare system for consultants and does not allow for the growth and development for school staff. Furthermore, Dr. Howard inferred that **The BlackBoard** should just trust district administrations decisions regarding programs being selected for implementation within schools. We, nor should administrators and teachers rely on trusting consultants, but should base instruction on analysis of data and measurable outcomes for all students.

Please know that **The BlackBoard** wants to celebrate the success of African American students, and work with parents, administrators and teachers, but we do not believe that the District should be a continual welfare system for specific consulting firms. We support the notion, that you give a person a fish and he/she will have food for a day, but you teach them how to fish and they will have food for life. Food for life is what we want for our students and teachers, not handouts. We want to help build an education system that has transparency, trust and self-reliance, which will not only enable staff to achieve competency, but lifelong growth in academic achievement and self-worth for students. If we really begin to tie all monies and programs directly to the school sites; with clear actions and evaluation processes, students in WCCUSD will enter college and careers without spending time on remediation or dropping out of school and college. This can become the new WCCUSD if we are open to serious self-analysis of what we do for students and teachers.

Gloria Scoggins
President
The BlackBoard of West Contra Costa



THE BLACKBOARD OF WEST CONTRA COSTA

Appendix H

The BlackBoard Of West Contra Costa No Confidence Letter

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. Dr. Harter and WCCUSD Staff -2- 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.

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Appendix H (continued)

- 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.