



San Francisco Youth Commission Districts 9 & 11 Student Success Fund Listening Session

On Thursday, November 16th, 2023, the San Francisco Youth Commission held its second Student Success Fund Listening Session at the Mission Language & Vocational School for SFUSD students who live in Districts 9 and 11. The purpose serves to bring in student and youth input on how the Student Success Fund should be allocated at San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) public schools. The listening session also brought in Jennifer Ferrigno, legislative aide from Supervisor Ronen's office, to give updates on when and how the Student Success Fund will be enacted and distributed. Dr. Hill, Manager of Community Schools Initiatives from the Department of Children, Youth, and Families, also sent updates to be read at the community event. Charter schools are not part of the list of eligible schools. Below is a summary of what services and programs the youth participants who attended the D9 and D11 Listening Session indicated should be allocated towards.

There were three questions that guided the discussion for the group:

1. For your community/school, what programs do you think will benefit students the most?
2. What are some issues that today's students face?
3. What school areas do you think the funding should be spent on?

In Districts 9 and 11, there are several challenges that are present that contribute to the need for certain programs and services. One of the biggest characteristics of these two districts is the large population of first-generation and immigrant students. Some of these challenges include 1) lack of bilingual services, 2) lack of nutritional meals, 3) not enough emotional and mental health support, 4) the need for more after school activities, and 5) lack of academic support. Through the discussions, participants also identified the Mission, parts of Districts 9 and 11 with a large population of immigrant families, and District 10 as key areas that require additional funding.

To address these challenges, the youth participants suggested funding the following to improve the school environment and help the whole student:

- 1) Due to the demographic of students in both Districts, there is an urgent need for bilingual emotional and mental health support, programming, and staffing for students and families alike. Students have felt a disconnect from their peers and



school resulting from the lack of bilingual staff. Thus, they do not feel safe and motivated in their school environments. With additional bilingual services and programs, especially mental health support, immigrant and/or monolingual students can adapt in their school environments, be integrated with their peers, and build community.

- 2) In the same line as having bilingual services, programs, and support, a variety of modernized school programs and after-school activities can engage students and help them integrate into a new school environment. In the Listening Session, participants have expressed a higher level of stress and pressure to succeed and do well academically as first-generation students. While schools have been pushing academic-related activities and lessons for students, there's a need for different learning areas and classes that are up-to-date and culturally competent that students are interested in learning. In addition to in-school-related courses, after-school tutoring, sports, and extracurricular programs are essential to keeping students engaged with their peers and communities and ontrack with academics. There is a need for more enrichment field trips to expose students to different interests, summer bridge programs to ease the transition into a new country, school and community sports teams, employment and workforce development programs, etc.
- 3) To help students stay focused in classes, the basic needs of the student must be addressed, and the common point discussed is school meals. Many from families with working parents often go to school on an empty stomach. Schools should be a reliable source of providing nutritious meals to them. However, during the Listening Session, students have expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of diverse, fresh, and nutritious meals, which oftentimes are inedible.

The findings from Districts 9 and 11 focused mainly on addressing the needs of students from immigrant and/or monolingual working families, which included bilingual staffing, support, and programming, along with having more nutritious and fresh food.

This listening session was covered on Mission Local and can be read here:

<https://missionlocal.org/2023/11/with-new-funding-to-sfusd-youth-wants-better-school-food-among-other-needs/>.

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