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**March 25, 2026, Board Meeting
Trustee Agenda Item Questions & Answers**

Equity & Access Guardrail (EA3)

Q: When we came up with this guardrail as the board, nobody said targeted universalism. We didn't really know there was such a name for it. Are other school districts using this?

A: Yes, other school districts are using targeted universalism, particularly in the Bay Area, including places like San Francisco, Oakland, and Hayward. The framework was introduced through learning from external districts and from work connected to UC Berkeley.

Q: How can we ensure that this guardrail is being successfully implemented just by having 90% or 100% of our leaders trained? How do we know training translates into action?

A: Training is only the first step. It establishes: Shared language, common understanding, and a foundational knowledge of targeted universalism. Training alone does not guarantee implementation. The long-term plan is to: Embed the work into the system, continue training new leaders as they enter, and create actions after the foundational phase to operationalize the framework. Training without action does nothing, so the goal is to make it part of the system, not a one-time event.

Q: How does this connect with the equity factor attached to how we fund our schools? How do we apply money strategically as an equity factor to get students closer to the outcomes we want?

A: This framework is not owned by one department; all leaders should approach their work through an equity lens, and resource allocation should be aligned to student needs rather than done as a blanket approach. One example is that operational decisions like bus routes should be considered through this equity-centered framework.

Q: We have five schools in one board area that do not receive funding in the same way as others, yet they serve students with very severe disabilities from across the region. How do we make sure those students are not being left behind if the school does not receive the same level of resources?

A: This is an important issue. Some schools may not receive the same funding because of formulas tied to student groups or equity multiplier dollars; this concern will be part of future action planning and funding decisions.

Q: How is the district ensuring that leaders and staff understand and implement Targeted Universalism consistently across schools?

A: The district is using the interim guardrail as a process goal, meaning leaders are expected to attend and complete the Targeted Universalism training. The purpose of the training is to build a shared understanding of an equity-centered decision-making framework that addresses the needs of all students. This approach supports the district's commitment to ensuring that no student is left behind while still achieving systemwide goals.

Q: Why is it important for the district to focus on Targeted Universalism as part of its equity strategy?

A: Targeted Universalism aligns district and school site efforts to improve student outcomes by using an equity-centered framework that addresses diverse student needs while maintaining shared goals. The training builds common understanding of both the concept and its practical importance for advancing equitable outcomes.

Q: What impact do district leaders expect this training to have on the broader school system?

A: The training is expected to create a shared language and common understanding of equity practices among staff. This alignment will strengthen decision-making, improve collaboration, and support more intentional strategies for addressing achievement gaps and supporting all students effectively.

Q: Will teachers see the targeted universalism video? Will it be shown beyond leadership, including families?

A: The district is starting with leadership first to build shared understanding and common language across the system. When the district moves further into implementation and community sharing, they will make the message more accessible for families and present it in a simplified way that parents can understand.

Q: What problem are we trying to solve with targeted universalism?

A: Staff stated that the district's current and historical data show persistent disparities and opportunity gaps for historically marginalized and underserved student groups. The district is responding to community voice and Board direction that it will no longer accept denial of access or opportunity for any student group. Targeted Universalism is intended to help leaders align resources, supports, policies, and decision-making so that district goals are achieved for every student, especially those impacted by systemic barriers.

Q: What is the implementation timeframe for training substitutes and parents on this work?

A: For the first two years, the district is focusing on leadership only in order to level set, establish common language, and ground the work internally. Staff also noted that Targeted Universalism could be embedded into orientation and onboarding processes for people entering the system, and that this will require coordination with the appropriate departments and implementation team.

Q: Are there lessons to be learned from other historical initiatives that are informing the Targeted Universalism initiative? How will we ensure it's successful by noting and not repeating past challenges?

A: This will be addressed during the presentation.

Health & Wellness Guardrail (HW1)

Q: Implementation metric: So for a school to be on track, 50% of the teachers at the school are teaching the social-emotional curriculum and teaching at least 60% of the lessons?

A: Yes, this is the threshold being used for the current measure. The district started from a very low implementation level. The current goal was set to be achievable and realistic and over time the rigor can be raised. The long-term aim is to reach something closer to 80% of teachers teaching 80% of the lessons.

Q: Does this include community class meetings?

A: The community-building circles, class meetings, and similar activities are separate. This guardrail is focused specifically on explicit social-emotional skill instruction, not general relationship-building activities alone.

Q: How are we ensuring that students receive consistent messages about conflict resolution and social-emotional learning from classroom teachers and administrators?

A: The district is prioritizing joint learning opportunities for teachers and site leaders so they are aligned in their approach. Staff such as Restorative Practice Counselors and Tier 2 Intervention Specialists have access to the same curriculum and collaborate as a team to ensure consistent instruction and messaging to students.

Q: How does the district support students who continue to struggle with conflict resolution or emotional regulation after receiving classroom instruction?

A: Students first receive Tier 1 instruction in social-emotional learning skills. If they continue to experience challenges, they may receive targeted support, Tier 2 from specialists such as Restorative Practice Counselors or Social Workers. These interventions help students develop skills like emotional regulation, focus, and adaptive problem-solving.

Q: Why is social-emotional learning considered essential for academic success?

A: Skills such as self-management and emotional regulation are critical for students to engage in learning tasks like problem-solving in math. When students can regulate their emotions and sustain focus, they are better able to participate in rigorous academic work.

Q: Will the district be able to track the impact of social-emotional learning (SEL) implementation on student outcomes, specifically questioning improvements in academic achievement, student grades, attendance, and behavior or overall social-emotional well-being?

Will the district be able to review this data over time to determine whether guardrail goals are effective or need to be adjusted or strengthened?

A: The district can analyze and report outcome data connected to SEL implementation levels at school sites. Backup materials include comparisons between on-track and off-track schools to help determine the relationship between SEL instruction and student performance indicators.

Q: Are there projected changes in staff that will impact the actions for implementation of TU or SEL?

A: This will be addressed during the presentation.

Q: Is restorative justice part of these SEL lessons, or does it only happen when there is a fight or serious incident?

A: Restorative justice is more of a Tier 2 or Tier 3 response, used when harm has occurred and needs to be repaired. In contrast, Tier 1 SEL instruction is designed to proactively teach students the skills to manage conflict, problem-solve, and resolve issues with peers on their own.