

November 10, 2020

Dear Superintendent Martin and SDUSD Board Members,

In my 16 years of working in Southeast San Diego I have seen some pretty amazing things happen. I have seen first generation high school graduates become first generation college graduates and move on to careers that they never believed could be in their futures. I have seen students come to class badly bruised after they have been jumped out of a gang so they can focus on their education and be a changemaker in their family and community. These are a few of the things that have kept me here at GPA as a servant educator for our community.

When I look back at my career and I see what we have done to take what was once a failing school to create a beacon of light and hope for the students of our community, I am incredibly proud.

I also look back and wonder why about a lot of things.

- Why has it been so hard to serve students in need?
- Why has the district not come to learn from us and take the work that we are doing here back to the neighborhood schools?
- Why would SDUSD, amidst a pandemic, ask our founders to make a decision that SDUSD knows very well has great implications on people's livelihood and could change the longtime successful structure of the leadership of GPA?
- Why would SDUSD, which has no financial implications from 4 on loan employees, 4 out of thousands, demand that this decision be made now?
- Why can't educating the most needy students in San Diego be something that is free of politics and free of obstacles that keep Black and Brown students in a cycle of poverty that will destroy another generation's ability to free themselves from the chains of poverty and keep them from access to a better life?

These are the questions I would like answers to from a school board that seems aimed at continuing to fail the students of Southeast San Diego.

As I look to the future I am worried. I am worried that all that has been done at GPA over the last 16 years could be undone because a school board is not strong enough to

stand up for the students of District E, not strong enough honor the on loan agreements for 4 leaders since being on loan has no significant negative impacts on the second largest district in California not strong enough to do what they know is right. SDUSD has an opportunity to be on the right side of history by “grandfathering” GPA’s four on loan employees and allowing them to continue doing their work at GPA that SDUSD asked them to do in 2005.

Thank you,

Pete Chodzko