

On Saturday, November 4, 2017 the **Black Parallel School Board (BPSB)** hosted a Listening Session entitled “Special Education and African-American Students.” More than 30 parents, students, educators and community members attended and participated, and share their rich stories, challenges and ideas to improve the educational outcomes for Special Education and African-American Students.

Below are the recommendations gathered from the listening session:

1. All Special Education forms should be written in layman terms to create the likelihood that parents will understand what they are reading and signing.
2. SCUSD should establish and Special Education Oversight Committee to meet with parents and families (especially African-American parents) regarding services to their children with Special Education needs.
3. Service providers should be identified to assist parents by attending meetings, helping them to understand the process, provide a non-biased perspective, and ensure that parents and the student’s legal rights are not violated.
4. SCUSD should create a Special Education Resource Guide that spells out the special education process from beginning to end. This information should be posted in conspicuous places where parents can see and review them outside of the normal internet and school campuses.

These public notices should include the following information:

- a. When enrollment paperwork is being distributed
 - b. When Open House meetings are schedule
 - c. The dates, times, and locations of meetings where parents could potentially attend
 - d. Posted information on SCUSD web pages
 - e. Personal phone to parents and providers
 - f. Automated calling and text messaging to parents
5. Ensure that all Special Education Teachers are properly credentialed and post that information for parents to easily review.
 6. SCUSD should have monthly special education staff development training classes for regular teachers on how to engage and support special education students who are mainstreamed into their classes.
 7. SCUSD should hire and train a cadre of special education parent liaisons who are specifically earmarked to work with special education students and their families.

8. Twin River's African American community should establish a Black Parallel School Board to assist and support parents who have children in the district.
9. It is recommended that SCUSD create a stakeholder taskforce to review and make service and/or program alterations to not only improve services but to simplify paperwork, make sure parents understand their rights, and cease the once-in-never-get-out phenomenon in special education programs.
10. To improve services the district might want to create a stakeholder task force with the responsibility to make alterations in the program to simplify the paperwork, fully provide parents their rights, and stop the once-in never-get-out phenomenon
11. Provide staff and principal training to reduce the population of African-American males presently enrolled in large numbers in special education programs across the district.

Thank you for the opportunity to share the Black Parallel School Board's recommendations and we look forward to working with the district in the future to implement our recommendations.

Black Parallel School Board

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