

July 7, 2023

Linda Darling-Hammond
President
California Board of Education
1430 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Extending California Math Framework comment period

Dear President Darling-Hammond:

We represent nearly 50,000 families whose children attend schools of the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) and have been poorly served by some of the recommendations contained in the third draft of the California Mathematics Framework (CMF).

We urge you to extend the comment period for the proposed framework by at least 60 days -- to the beginning of the fall semester -- so that parents, educators, students, mathematicians, and other stakeholders have time to provide their input.

First, the limited time currently allowed – with a comment deadline on the week of July 4th – does not give individuals and families most affected by the recommended changes a sufficient opportunity to review and comment.

Second, there is concern that the CMF's third draft retains a controversial recommendation as the state mandate for curriculum and textbook publishers. The recommendation echoes the now-discredited math policy at San Francisco Unified School District. Beginning in 2014, San Francisco public school students were prohibited from taking Algebra 1 in 8th grade. This departure from the standard approach to math education was based on well-intentioned concerns about a racial gap in rates of successful completion of algebra. However, the most recent joint study between Stanford and SFUSD cast doubt on the validity of data supporting this approach. Preventing students from enrolling in Algebra 1 in 8th grade, forcing all children into a "common 9th and 10th grade mathematical experience," did not advance educational opportunities. Better-off families pursued costly workarounds while families without means – regardless of the student's readiness – had no option but to wait for algebra in high school. The State Board of Education must take these conclusions seriously and not rush a flawed framework into law.

California is a global leader in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Our State Board of Education has a special responsibility to ensure that public schools provide the educational support students need to qualify for creative and high-paying jobs for example in our world-renowned tech community.

Please extend the comment period so you can hear from families directly about what is at stake in version 3 of the California Math Framework and how the state can best support students' math potential through the next decade and beyond.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Wiener". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

SENATOR SCOTT WIENER

A handwritten signature in black ink. The signature is stylized and appears to read "Joel Engardio".

SAN FRANCISCO SUPERVISOR JOEL ENGARDIO

A handwritten signature in black ink. The signature is stylized and appears to read "Myrna Melgar".

SAN FRANCISCO SUPERVISOR MYRNA MELGAR