



# Ask Dr. Rodriguez



## Ten Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Edition #13 2023-24 School Year – Week of November 13, 2023

Questions are quoted as I received them directly from our community.

**1. Are there any tickets left to see the movie on Saturday? How can I get them?**

As we were able to expand to 1,300 tickets, we have a few hundred tickets left for the screening on Saturday morning. You can still RSVP for the tickets through the following image: [goog\_1546926597]

EUGENIO DERBEZ

Latino Film Institute Spotlight Screenings  
&  
Youth Cinema Project

Invites you to a special screening of

# RADICAL

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18th

9:45am

ATHERTON AUDITORIUM  
5151 Pacific Ave  
Stockton, CA 95207

CLICK  
TO  
RSVP

@RADICALTHEMOVIE

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/invitation-to-spotlight-screening-radical-tickets-758403403997>

**2. Can I bring my family to the screening of the movie Radical?**

You can RSVP for up to four tickets which will allow you to bring family or friends to the event.

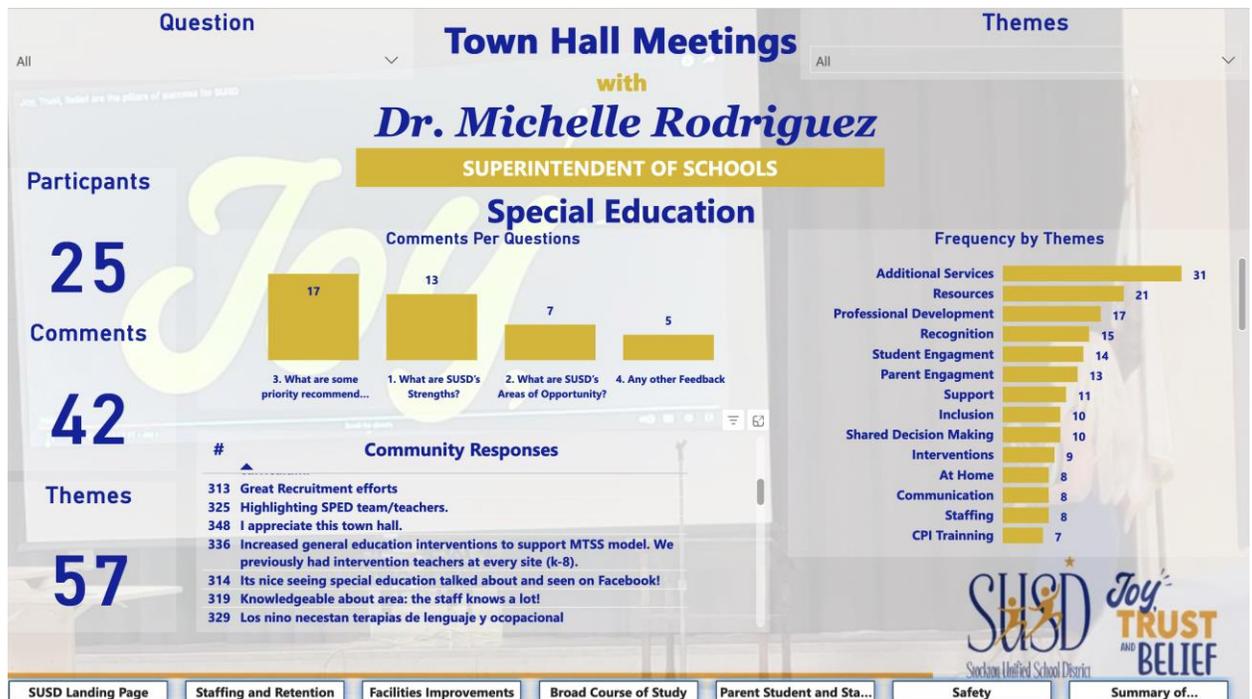
**3. There are 44 priority recommendations. How are you going to accomplish them all?**

We have dedicated divisions and departments throughout the district who are working together to achieve the 44 priority recommendations found in the State of the District. The recommendations will not be completed all at the same time. There are four

timelines for completion: accomplished 1) within six weeks, 2) within three months, 3) before the end of the school year and 4) progress will be made this school year but will extend into the upcoming year as well. To hold ourselves publicly accountable, I will release an update on the status of the priority recommendations at the 90-day mark, January 18, 2024.

**4. You held a town hall on Special Education. What type of feedback did you receive?**

We had 25 participants at the Special Education townhall who provided 42 individual comments. As you can see in the graphic below, the majority of the responses centered around additional services, resources and professional development. There were many positive comments that recognized staff and administrations’ contributions, commitment to and communication with students and families.



**5. My understanding is that any student that needs additional support beyond what the classroom teacher can provide has to have a SAP referral to get a CARE meeting. This process is lengthy and often the students do not get the help they need. There are many factors that disqualify students for the extra help which then widens the learning gap. How can the district support teachers and school staff to provide students with help during school hours?**

The Student Assistant Program (SAP) is a Tiered approach to supporting the whole child and is based on the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Framework. The referral process is based on a problem-solving team approach. Although the referral process may seem lengthy, this process is necessary to ensure that our students are receiving Tier 1 (best first instruction), whether it be academic, behavioral, or social emotional learning. Within this referral process a student's true need is identified. Many students around the country have been misidentified as needing special education services when they have not first received Tiers of support. Currently, professional development is being offered for academic, social emotional, and behavioral supports.

Classroom interventions utilizing specific strategies to address an identified issue do need to occur, along with progress monitoring, to measure the impact of the intervention. Progress monitoring occurs regularly during the 3 - 4 weeks of the intervention (15 - 20 school days).

Recently, SUSD has formed a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Team to work on ensuring continuous improvement with Multi-Tiered Systems of Support. MTSS is a framework schools use to provide targeted support to struggling students. The goal of MTSS is to intervene early so students can catch up with their peers. It screens all students and aims to address academic and behavior challenges. The goal of the Team is to improve the system, structures, and processes to provide earlier support. This begins in the classroom.

SUSD school sites have counselors, mental health clinicians, program specialists, and often coaches as well, to support strategies to address support needs. At times we do encounter students with significant needs, however evidence-based practices do still need to be implemented and measured for effectiveness. Please reach out to your principal for immediate assistance with your concerns.

**6. A fence was put up at Stagg High School after the incident. I heard that the fence was going to be removed. Is that true?**

The new perimeter fence will remain and will not be removed. A section of fence was removed for the necessary construction of the Stagg farm. All internal gates and fencing are still present. Once the construction is complete, that section of the fencing will also be replaced.

**7. I have completed the Catapult training. I travel to different sites throughout the day as a special education service provider. Will itinerant employees be attached to ALL school sites to ensure we are aware of emergencies and accounted for? Is there an additional step we will need to take to become attached to our various school sites?**

Itinerant employees are attached to all of their schools and will be notified when there is an emergency at any of the sites. Typically, there are no additional steps required from the employee. The district student information system (SIS) should capture all the staff's assigned site locations. However, if a staff member is not receiving alerts, they can contact their site administrator or Emergency Services Division, and be manually added to the system.

**8. In the event of a hard lockdown, it would be more safe to install emergency safety locks on the interior of the door. Many of our doors require you to lock them from the outside and this can be an issue in a real live emergency, such as an active shooter. Can the district look into purchasing and retro fitting our doors here at Chavez High School and other campus to keep staff and students safe.**

The Emergency Services division is piloting a locking device named Safebolt in two Elementary schools. Safebolt allows staff members to lock the door with one simple push of a button, assuring the teacher that their door is properly secured. If the pilot succeeds, the district plans to move the project to the entire district. Also, it is the district's current expectation that we keep classroom doors closed and locked during classroom instruction.

**9. I went to my child's school at Commodore Skills and they made me go through the Hall Pass process. Why did you change it from the normal sign in that we have done in the past?**

As we continue to improve safety at school sites, we are implementing new processes. In years past, we did ask families to sign in on a sheet in the office. Hall Pass is a school visitor management system which is a best practice by Homeland Security and the updated Safe Schools Initiative Act and is highly recommended.

Some of the benefits of using a visitor management system versus a simple sign in are:

- The ID is validated as an official government-issued ID.
- The information is checked against the National Sex Offender database and the School Visitor Restricted list.
- The Hall Pass visitor is updated with results from the visitor check-in.
- If "Passed," a badge is printed with time, date, reason, destination, and photo.
- If found on the National Sex Offender Registry or School Restricted list, a visual notice is given, and alerts are sent out.

**10. Can you provide insights into the district's approach to student retention and the factors considered when deciding NOT to promote retention, especially in the primary grades?**

It is crucial to acknowledge and address concerns related to student retention, as it directly impacts the educational experience and outcomes for our students. I want to recognize that student retention is a complex issue influenced by various factors. Research in the field of education suggests that the effectiveness of retention strategies can vary, and in some cases, it may not lead to the desired positive outcomes, especially as students' progress beyond a certain age. If you are going to retain, it is most effective in the very early grades.

Nevertheless, the majority of the studies indicate that the impact of grade retention diminishes as students reach adolescence. Beyond the age of 13, social and emotional factors become increasingly prominent, and students may face challenges in adjusting to an environment where they are older than their peers. This mismatch can result in feelings of alienation and disengagement, which may ultimately hinder academic progress and socioemotional development. In addition, the retention may not address the reason that led to the need to retain, resulting in on-going lack of progress over time.

A comprehensive approach to addressing the challenges faced by students, rather than relying solely on retention, is often more effective. Interventions such as targeted academic support, counseling services, and differentiated instruction play a crucial role in helping students overcome obstacles to their success.