

Dr. Traci E. Miller
SUSD School Superintendent
Stockton Unified School District
56 S Lincoln St, Stockton, CA 95203

Dear Dr. Miller:

My name is Ashley Rojas, I am 15 years of age and a Sophomore attending Weber Institute of Applied Science and Technology. I have been a part of SUSD for more than 10 years starting in kindergarten and my experience with how the district handles student mental health was anything but positive. From my own personal experience and the experience of some of my peers, SUSD staff such as teachers and counselors don't respond to student's problems properly. Student morale and mental health is at a decline, students feel disconnected and unheard when it comes to school change and social activities. So I would love to suggest some changes from a student's point of view.

The main problem I have is the councilor system, counselors need to be trained based on students' situations not parents or teachers. Different situations call for different actions. Sometimes a student's home is not a safe place, so if they come asking for help, alerting the parents should not be an available option. My second concern is the way school's handle mental health. A way to check up on and increase student mental health should be implemented and further expansion on resources students are able to use when reaching out for help is a must. From personal experience I have lost many great friends who have had the school system fail them when it came to their mental health. They would still be around today if the school system treated student's mental health more seriously. I know I am not the only person who has had friends or family lost due to the lack of resources made available for those in need. If and once these changes are implemented, there should be a rise in trust for the school by the students. As a wise person once said "Trust takes years to build, seconds to break, and forever to repair" and I think it is finally time SUSD starts the process of rebuilding the trust of those it has failed.

Dr. Miller I would like to thank you for taking the time out of your busy day to read these suggestions. Implementing at least one of these ideas would definitely see a positive change in student morale. The main area of interest would be refining the student counseling system. These are only examples of a step in the right direction to help the school become a safer place for students to be in. It would be in your best interest to take them into consideration.

Sincerely,

Ashley Rojas
Student
Weber Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology
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