



Alliance for a Better Community



October 18, 2011

Members of the Board of Education,



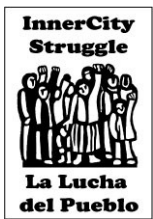
Over the past three years LAUSD has seen a number of policy initiatives that have sparked improved achievement and innovation in the district. Initiatives such as the Teacher Effectiveness Task Force, the Public School Choice Resolution, and the continuing emphasis on implementing the A-G curriculum have all created opportunities to help meet the needs of our students.



While the graduation rate is still unacceptably low, the increase in that rate from 48% to 56% in the same three years indicates that these policies are helping to improve student academic performance.



The common thread in these initiatives is that Board leadership, working closely with community stakeholders, took bold action to tackle an important issue.



The Board of Education took an important step in convening the Teacher Effectiveness Task Force on April 28, 2009 with the Board Motion 'Quality Leadership and Teaching to Ensure a World Class Education For All.' The Board went even further in releasing a set of principles to guide school improvements based on the Task Force's findings.



With the re-opening of contract negotiations between LAUSD and UTLA, we have a rare opportunity to further empower teachers and create more opportunity for students to achieve academically. I'm sure you all agree that we must put the needs of students ahead of those of adults. Each of you has an obligation to those who elected you to protect students' right to a quality education and we support you in that pursuit.



We call on UTLA and LAUSD to quickly complete negotiations on a new contract.



Congressman Esteban E. Torres (Ret.)

This new contract must:

1. Expand opportunities for teachers, parents and community members to work together to bring their vision for a quality school to life.



- Lift the cap on teacher-led school structures like Pilots and Expanded School-Based Management Model (ESBMM) that foster a range of innovative and high-performing school settings.
- Engage parents as true partners in school-based decision making.
- Give parents more quality school choice options through effective innovations such as Zones of Choice.



2. Empower teachers and principals to make the best decisions for their schools.



- Eliminate "must-place" hiring practice and move to a system where schools and employees agree on an assignment (mutual consent) based on what is best for students.



Watts Century Latino Organization

- Include consideration of school/program needs and teacher performance when implementing personnel decisions, including Reductions in Force, transfers, displacements, assignments, and return rights.
- Guarantee that every school can vote on agreements that clearly state what is expected for employees at each school site (elect-to-work agreement), and that any school whose staff votes for such an agreement is allowed to implement it.

3. Identify and support strong leadership and teaching at every school.

- Conduct principal evaluations that recognize the critical role of the school leader. These should be based on multiple measures, with emphasis on a principal’s impact on student learning and his or her ability to support teacher development.
- Provide multiple measure evaluations to teachers, in which observations by academic leaders, student “academic growth over time” data, and stakeholder (teacher, parent, and student) feedback, and a teacher’s contribution to the school are used to evaluate teacher quality.
- Closely connect appropriate professional development to teachers so they may use the evaluation data to improve their practice.
- Teachers and principals should receive additional compensation for being effective, not for taking additional courses.

We call on the School Board to provide weekly updates at School Board meetings on the progress of contract negotiations embodying these principles.

It is time for both parties to move forward at a pace that reflects the urgency we feel to improve our schools.

Teachers want it. Students Deserve It. Parents Expect It

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