

Public School Choice: A New Way at LAUSD

Whereas, The Governing Board of the Los Angeles Unified School District is responsible for ensuring that the District provides all students a high quality education, which enables them to graduate college-prepared and career-ready;

Whereas, The Board must do everything it can to enhance the educational opportunities provided to students attending District schools;

Whereas, School transformation efforts are needed to address the longstanding opportunity gap in academic performance in schools across District;

Whereas, While there are indications of growth in District schools, given the chronic academic underperformance of a significant number of public schools in the District, parents and communities have expressed a strong interest in playing a more active role in ensuring that students have more choice and access to high quality instructional programs;

Whereas, There has been a recent movement of parents communities, and labor partners throughout the entire District demanding better schools and expressing a desire to play a more active role in shaping and expanding the educational options provided in their communities;

Whereas, The District is committed to engaging parents and the community in the quest to create diverse options for high quality educational environments, with excellent teaching and learning, for students' academic success;

Whereas, The District has many outstanding schools that are setting a gold standard for excellence (traditional schools, pilot schools, iDesign schools, charter schools, small schools, magnet schools and others); schools whose high quality academic, collaborative, inclusive, and innovative practices should be replicated at other schools to improve educational outcomes and allow more students and families to benefit;

Whereas, The Belmont Zone of Choice and its pilot schools model provides an example of what can be achieved with strong internal support and planning within teacher and administrator teams, and with robust collaboration with external partners, incorporating alternative collective bargaining agreements and other innovative collaborations;

Whereas, Developing an open process congruent with the ideas present in No Child Left Behind (NCLB) for school communities and internal and external stakeholders to submit plans to operate new schools and Program Improvement 3+ (as authorized by NCLB), as well as a transparent and consistent process for selecting the plan that best meets the needs of students and families, supports the replication of successful schools and District transformation;

Whereas, the Board respects the importance of employee rights and protections and expects that any plan proposed by the Superintendent will continue to protect workers' rights to freely organize into collective bargaining units;

Whereas, New schools provide a unique opportunity to establish a school's culture and lay the groundwork for students' academic success;

Whereas, Program Improvement 3+ schools require immediate attention and creative reform efforts, under strategies identified and authorized in NCLB, in order to provide an improved foundation for students' academic success;

Whereas, More than fifty new schools will open in the District in the next three years, with twenty scheduled to open in the 2010-11 school year; and, more than 200 schools are in Program Improvement 3+ status;

Whereas, These new schools are intended to relieve overcrowding at existing schools, thereby enabling the existing schools to return to a traditional school year; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That through the Superintendent, the Los Angeles Unified School District will invite operational and instructional plans from internal and external stakeholders, such as school planning teams, local communities, pilot school operators, labor partners, charters, and others who are interested in collaborating with the District to operate the District's new schools and PI 3+ schools (as identified by the Superintendent and authorized under NCLB, beginning with PI 5+), in an effort to create more schools of choice and educational options for the District's students and families;

Resolved further, That the Superintendent shall develop a plan to ensure existing internal stakeholder teams are positioned and supported to develop and put forth viable designs for new and existing schools identified;

Resolved further, That all providers who submit plans must be non-profit, public organizations open to all students;

Resolved further, That any plan submitted must guarantee that the new school will enroll the requisite number of students from the impacted campuses that the new school is intended to relieve, and that students coming from the attendance areas of the designated, overcrowded schools will be served first and foremost;

Resolved further, That the student composition at each new school must be reflective of the student composition at the schools it is intended to relieve (in terms of demographics, including but not limited to race/ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, English Learners, Standard English Learners, Special Education, foster care placement), with ongoing review mechanisms in place to ensure retention and student composition at each school continues to reflect that of the overall school community;

Resolved further, That any plan submitted must address how the identified new or existing school will improve retention, graduation, and college-going rates among the student population identified above, by articulating evidence-based strategies for student retention and dropout prevention (including but not limited to early and comprehensive identification of student needs; academic intervention for struggling, English Language Learner, Standard English Learner and Special Education students; a personalized learning environment; positive behavior support and other student-centered school discipline frameworks; shared decision-making and inclusive governance; college and career preparation and entry); and parent and community

engagement and participation- including proposals to coordinate with existing local parent and community organizations;

Resolved, further, That the Board directs the Superintendent to convene a Workforce Stability Task Force, composed of (a) the President of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce and (b) an attorney of his designation, (c) the Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, (d) an attorney of her designation, (e) a designee of the Superintendent, (f) a representative of the California Charter Association, and (g) an attorney of his or her designation to work collaboratively with all stakeholders to develop guidelines and a process for recommendation to the District to apply when evaluating staffing requirements for operational plans from external operators for schools not already subject to binding legal and contractual collective bargaining obligations and to submit the recommendation of said task force to the Board for approval within 60 days;

Resolved further, That the Superintendent secure local foundation funding to hire a lead person to assist with the implementation of this effort, so that General Fund resources are not used;

Resolved further, That the Board directs the Superintendent to work collaboratively with appropriate stakeholder and community over the next 30 days to report back with recommendations regarding the following:

- Identify existing reform models and/or innovations that could be implemented at new schools and PI 3+ schools (as identified by the Superintendent and authorized under NCLB) beginning with the 2010-11 school year, as well as previous impediments to implementation within the District and strategies for overcoming these obstacles;
- Identify alternative governance and contract options within the District for PI 3+ and new schools based on models from pilot schools, Expanded School-Based Management schools, and other successful national models;
- Develop a template and process for submitting plans to operate PI 3+ schools (as identified by the Superintendent) and new schools, which include sustainable and scalable financial plans;
- Develop criteria and accountability metrics for evaluating the plans submitted, including feedback from the appropriate local jurisdiction; criteria should include metrics for educational vision and leadership, instruction and curriculum (including how the school will serve all student populations, such as English Learners and Standard English Learners, and students with disabilities, including students with moderate to severe disabilities), staffing requirements, wrap-around services, community and parent engagement, prior experience and success, and others as appropriate;
- Collect community feedback on the template, process, and evaluation criteria for the operational plans of new schools.
- Develop an outreach strategy to educate and inform parents and communities, and sponsor forums that would allow for information, dialogue and engagement regarding: reform models, school governance options, and labor issues;
- Develop a process, including an advisory vote of all stakeholders, which includes, for each local district, committees composed of representatives of local parents, teachers, students, staff, administrators and community members – for school communities and stakeholders to evaluate the plans submitted and provide a recommendation to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will review all feedback and will make a recommendation that includes the results of the advisory vote to the

Board for their final approval. The process must be objective, transparent, fair, and ensure no conflicts of interest;

- Develop a process to engage all District bargaining unit employees to discuss the expansion of current reform efforts and development of new in-District school performance initiatives;
- Develop a reauthorization process for operators of new and existing schools that is based on regular performance evaluations that include, but are not necessarily limited to, the criteria and metrics listed above; and
- Develop a process whereby parents, communities, and educators can work with the Superintendent to initiate reforms for any school that is in Program Improvement 3+ status;

Resolved further, That the Board directs the Superintendent to develop a plan to maintain continuity, quality, and consistency of support services to all District schools, including those operated by external partners, by requiring that all external partners submitting school plans under the process described in this Resolution enter into a facilities use agreement. The facilities use agreement must include a commitment to contract with the District as the default provider of outsourced school facility support services, such as cafeteria, custodial, maintenance, security, supplies, and transportation services. The use agreement would further specify that the District must meet agreed-upon performance standards for competitive contracted services. These standards must be met within an agreed-upon time frame. If the District fails to meet these standards within this timeframe, and a timely discussion (between the external partners, the District, and classified labor partners) does not resolve the identified issues, then external partners may then contract with non-District providers for specified support services;

Resolved further, that all partners will agree to enter into discussion regarding the viability of master service agreements;

Resolved further, That the Superintendent report to the Board by September 30, 2009, with a transparent process for plans to be submitted, reviewed, and evaluated by internal staff and external stakeholders;

Resolved further, That the Superintendent will work with the Office of General Counsel to ensure compliance with state and federal laws and regulations, comprehensive labor agreements, the Modified Consent Decree and other court orders, and that innovation, reorganization and restructuring of schools must be accomplished in accordance with these mandates;

Resolved further, That every decision must be about student achievement and what is best for children and how to provide all students with the education they need and the future they deserve;

Resolved further, That by January 15, 2010, the Superintendent will submit to the Board internal staff and external stakeholders' recommendations for plans that should be approved by the Board for each new school opening during the Fall of 2010 and any PI3+ school designated by the Superintendent; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Superintendent report to the Board on a monthly basis to share progress made in accomplishing the specifics of this resolution.