

Parent Platform Proposal for LAUSD

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The Los Angeles Parent Leadership Team is preparing to submit this policy platform and action plan for adoption by the Board of Education of the Los Angeles Unified School District. What follows is a preliminary outline of the plan's primary elements. It is circulating in an attempt to improve, modify and refine it prior to presentation to the Board of Education.

1) Placing Parent Representatives on Board of Ed and various Committees. A parent from each Board Member's District (7) or their alternates should sit for one school year from July to June; they will be non-voting but will participate in discussions and policy making decisions and will each have the responsibility of gathering input from and communicating to their respective constituencies.

2) Immediate reinstatement of the Sunshine Committee - Prior to being disbanded in 2000, this central district committee provided the Board of Education with public feedback on collective bargaining proposals and was a legal requirement under the Rhodda Act which gave teachers the right to unionize. It analyzed and recommended positions to the Board on elements of labor negotiations.

3) Local Control must be given to schools via site-based governance councils with training to ALL participants as equal partners in decision making over resources (budget, staff). Providing local control over fiscal and staff matters cannot be accomplished without proper school site leadership and the skill sets to enable it, monitor it and evaluate it. Giving sites local control without building the capacity for it will result in failure.

4) A working Board Rule 133 complaint process and consequences for verified charges and complaints.

This is the process that was adopted (and amended by the Board of Ed in 2/02) for handling charges and complaints against employees. According to Board Policy, The Board President is to direct the Executive Officer of the Board to review complaints prior to forwarding them to the Office of School Operations for investigation. Once the investigation is complete, the Director of School Operations will forward the results to the Board President and the President will issue a letter to the complainant communicating the outcome. This system is inoperative and must be overhauled, implemented as designed, respected and followed or replaced with an efficient and effective mechanism to give parents a working process for resolving issues promptly and equitably.

5) Establish, Staff, Monitor & Evaluate Parent Centers

It has historically been the role of the District's Parent Collaborative to provide incentive grants to schools interested in starting parent centers at their sites. Traditionally, the Parent Collaborative budgets different amounts for elementary, middle and high schools that submit successful applications for Parent Centers in their schools. The Collaborative also traditionally has funded first time applications then considered second (and occasionally third) time applications on a case-by-case basis. There are a large number of new schools being constructed and coming on-line, many with designed and dedicated space for Parent Centers engineered into them.

The District is also said to be planning to fund these parent centers either in addition to or in place of the Parent Collaborative's role. A seamless system should be designed to fund only first time applications and should subsequently establish annual performance and evaluation benchmarks for parent centers.

6) Parent led and parent-centered regularly scheduled programming on KLCS-TV.

The granting of a license by the FCC to the District includes a duty to fulfill the requirement to serve the public interest. KLCS is being seriously under-utilized as a communications medium to and among the very parents it serves. Examples: parent programming could facilitate discussions around safety at schools, curriculum, parents rights and more including how to communicate with your school leadership and local district, who to contact with questions and how to navigate through the maze of LAUSD.

7) Real accountability for performance of employees

Employees of the District should not be given responsibility without authority nor authority without responsibility. The District must enforce consequences for criminal behavior.

8) Class Size:

Elementary (4 & 5) and Middle and High School classes must not exceed 30 students per classroom

9) Teacher Quality

Is LAUSD able to keep all it's teacher training programs straight? How do we know that we're actually making any progress with all of these programs (see sunshine committee)? How do we align teacher training resources and programs...Federal, State, County and District?

10) Transparency in the District's budget, general fund and all fiscal matters and clear fiscal accountability and oversight in all District financial matters, including construction and repair bond funds, any supplemental funds, Local District and local school site funds.

11) Appropriate funding and complete independence of the Office of the Inspector General to allow the office to proceed to root out waste, fraud and abuse.

12) Governance of LAUSD through Board of Ed Policies with systems in place to ensure that District practice adheres to District policy.

13) Expanding – not curtailing – opportunities for public input into District decision making bodies.

14) Heightened awareness of and full compliance with all Special Education issues and requirements. Responsive and equitable Individualized Education Program (IEP) process and elimination of the currently hostile environment for children and parents.

15) Renewed focus upon Gifted and Talented Programs (GATE) and Schools for Advanced Studies (SAS) to overcome inadequate testing and identification of children and inequitable development of the SAS program.

16) Program to address the insufficient magnet school seats and schools

17) Nutrition review:

*What are children eating at school (meals) & what is sold in school stores?
Why is there not enough time for all students to eat lunch?*