

PRESS RELEASE
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Contact: Isabel Alegria, Public Advocates, ialegria@publicadvocates.org ; 510 541-5428 (cellphone)
John Affeldt, Public Advocates , jaffeldt@publicadvocates.org
Sandra Hernandez at ACLU Foundation of Southern California, 213 977-5252,
shernandez@aclusocal.org

Statement on LAUSD's Misallocation of Funds Intended for High-Need Students

Statement from Public Advocates, ACLU Foundation of Southern California, and Covington & Burling LLP, the legal team representing plaintiffs in Community Coalition of South Los Angeles and Reyna Frias v. LAUSD as well as in their complaint to the California Department of Education regarding the misallocation by the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) of \$450 million intended for new or improved services for low-income students, English language learners and foster youth in Los Angeles:

Regarding the LAUSD proposal to increase spending by \$304 million in its 2016-17/Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP):

“We are pleased that LAUSD is considering a \$304 million increase in its 2016-17 spending plan for services to high-need students. The district is finally beginning to face up to its obligation to increase and improve services for these students as a result of a recent CA Department of Education (CDE) ruling. We have been making the district aware of this very significant obligation for two years now yet it has consistently ignored, rejected and sought to delay resolution of these very serious claims. We are confounded, however, by the district's decision to suspend allocation of 80% of those funds pending further review of the CDE decision. State education officials have issued a final decision. LAUSD cannot continue to drag out this process while it continues to circumvent the Local Control Funding (LCFF) finance law. Too much is at stake for students who have already been hurt by the district's decisions. It's time for LAUSD to correct its actions and respond immediately to meet its obligations to low-income students, English language learners and foster youth who generate for LAUSD the funds that are in play.”

Regarding statements by LAUSD official that complying with the law would hurt kids by forcing district to cut base programs they intended to restore:

“Contrary to statements by the district claiming the sky will fall on us all if it has to comply with the law, LAUSD has many options for how to spend funds more equitably on its high-need students. We point to the CLASS LCFF Report Card Findings and the accompanying UC Berkeley Background Report released June 13th. Both reports call on LAUSD to invest in a more coherent, targeted way into services for high-need students and the most concentrated schools. They find that LAUSD is on autopilot trying to restore pre-recession staffing patterns with LCFF funds even where that means adding staff such as assistant principals to higher performing schools with fewer high need students. The UC Berkeley Report also points out that LAUSD has significantly greater funds at its disposal than it did pre-recession. With more money and fewer students to serve, the report concludes, LAUSD has gone from \$9,361 per pupil in 2006-07 to \$12,144 in 2015-16. What is clear is that LAUSD will only work its way out of the bind it

created for itself by being fully transparent in its spending and fully inclusive of all community stakeholders as it works to come up with the most effective, equity-minded plan moving forward.”

Regarding statement by LAUSD that the district would have to cut 2,000 teachers in order to follow the CDE’s order:

“Sadly, LAUSD is now threatening in a letter to involved parties to increase class sizes, defund other programs and get rid of 2,000 teachers in order to comply with the law. Such statements do little to address the problems the district created for itself and instead, aim to inflame and divide the community. There are many ways for LAUSD to comply with its obligations aside from mass dismissals. It’s time for LAUSD to use the broad flexibility afforded by this law and provide the required services to high-need students.”

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