

UPDATE

Week of September 22, 2008

IF IT ISN'T WRITTEN, IT WASN'T SAID

The LAUSD Staff Relations Office has repeated the mantra for years, "If it isn't written, it wasn't said." However, it has come to the attention of AALA that some senior staff have had meetings with employees who have complaints against principals, without following accepted protocols for those complaints. The accepted protocol should be to request that any complaint be in writing and then follow up through appropriate line-staff procedures, to investigate the complaint and take appropriate action, if needed.

Parent and/or community complaints are often sent to Board of Education members or the various superintendents, thus bypassing the local administrator. When a Board Member is contacted, a Board Rule 133 Complaint is recorded and passed along to the appropriate Division Head or Local District Superintendent for investigation and response. In addition, parents and community members can utilize the services of a local district ombudsperson to register complaints to be investigated or moderated.

School employees with complaints against their supervisors have legal due process procedures based on their union contracts with the District. Teachers can grieve every aspect of their entire contract. Complaints of a personal nature that are outside the grievance process are usually addressed in the same manner as parent or community complaints.

When the highest levels of senior staff meet with complainants without requesting the complaints in writing and forwarding them for appropriate investigation, the system fails. When complaints are poorly investigated, the system fails. When complaints are not handled in a timely manner, the system fails. When negative allegations are made and are not shared with the person accused, the system of due process and fairness fails! When complaints are not investigated in a fair and impartial way, the system fails. In order for a system of accountability to be respected, basic protocol standards must be followed. Unfortunately, it is expeditious "to cave" to political pressure instead of consistently following the rule of law and providing due process.

Our AALA/LAUSD Contract outlines procedures to follow regarding written complaints both signed and anonymous (Article VII, Section 5). AALA expects District senior staff to adhere to the Contract provisions and to request that oral complaints be put into writing so that proper investigative protocols can be followed. District accountability for all employees will only work if protocols are followed. Anything less would mean that the system has been politicized and the squeaky wheel is getting the grease. Trust is a fragile commodity and should not be undermined by self-serving individuals who are either politically expedient or plain old lazy. **Does the LAUSD Board of Education and Superintendent want Salem-type witch hunts or genuine due process?**

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT THAT DESERVES ITS DUE

by Ramon Cortines, Senior Deputy Superintendent, Los Angeles Unified School District

In recent years, the Los Angeles Unified School District has been the target of unrelenting criticism for a variety of issues from poor academic performance to a lack of accountability. Many of these criticisms were hard to argue.

As accomplishments this past year demonstrate, it is obvious that our students are beginning to reap the benefits of change that is occurring in a number of important areas. It is a disservice to the hundreds of hard-working teachers, principals, staff, and quite frankly to our students and our families that these important advancements are going largely ignored by the mainstream media.

It is now time to celebrate accomplishments that cannot go unnoticed. We have much to be proud of at this time.

There are five major test results that have been released in the past month and in each of them, LAUSD has shown growth that deserves attention.

>The California Standards Tests showed LAUSD students increasing at nearly every grade level in English Language Arts. There were also increases in nearly every area of Mathematics, Science and Social Science as well as higher proficiencies in Algebra.

>On the state's Academic Performance Index (API), the District's gain of 21 points exceeded the state's growth of 14 points. One of the traditionally low performing high schools jumped 59 points! This is truly remarkable. English Learners and Students with Disabilities increased substantially.

>CAHSEE (California High School Exit Exam), a mandatory test required for students to graduate. Eighty-eight percent of this year's class passed. We expect more than 90% to pass next year. Hispanic and African American students increased their passage rates measurably.

>On the STAR tests (Standardized Testing and Reporting), students in the District increased in almost all subjects and grade levels.

> Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) - the number of students taking the test is increasing. This is a test colleges use to evaluate students for admission.

Many of our schools have demonstrated they can move forward. Students and staff have made this happen. These people deserve recognition for their accomplishments. They are to be celebrated, not denigrated. It is time to recognize the hard work it took to achieve these positive results.

I have been meeting directly with teachers, staff from magnet schools and humanitas programs, not through local superintendents, but by frankly asking them to identify schools and classes that have

DESERVES ITS DUE (Continued)

earned the right for autonomy and flexibility from the perceived onerous bulletins and policies that emanate from the downtown Beaudry building. Again, this brings those who work at the schools the opportunity to take part in the decision-making process and on a substantive issue.

Beaudry—meaning the central office—is not bad, and we have begun a plan for more service and support from these offices rather than "downtown directives" to local district superintendents and school and classroom personnel. I believe this will send the message that we value people in classroom leadership and field positions.

This emancipation will lead to greater entrepreneurial, creative education for all children and young people.

Public education is an essential right we owe our children, and it must be delivered in the most productive manner. Our society depends on graduates who can meet the needs of a today's changing world. It is our responsibility to ensure that our students will be college prepared and career ready for the workplace they face. We all—meaning the entire community—must participate in this process.

We should no longer pit charter schools, partnership schools, magnet schools, pilot schools, and other worthy programs against each other. It is time for us to communicate about the good things that are happening in Pre-K thru the 12th grade in all kinds of schools throughout this City and surrounding communities. The thousands of teachers and hundreds of administrators, counselors, and support staff deserve our community's recognition for their efforts.

No doubt we have a long way to go. We have just kicked off a new school year, and we will continue to push ourselves to meet and exceed higher goals. We are on a trajectory of progress for all students. I am proud and pleased to work with all of my colleagues in education regardless of their jurisdiction.

AALA ENCOURAGES MEMBERSHIP IN PTA

September and October are "PTA Membership Months." PTA support for children is critical for the future of California. **AALA urges all administrators to become PTA members.**

The California State PTA, with nearly one million volunteer members, has been instrumental in efforts to support small class size, bring arts and physical education back into our schools, and ban junk food at schools.

PTA provides members with free resources and training to build leadership and parenting skills. It also provides programs on a wide range of topics, including student achievement, childhood nutrition, and prevention of violence and bullying, to increase parent awareness of issues affecting their children.

For more than a century, the PTA has been supporting and advocating for public schools, children and families under the motto "Every child, one voice." The PTA is nonprofit, nonpartisan, and noncommercial. For more information about how you can join PTA go to www.capta.org and click on "Join PTA."

AALA encourages all schools to join either 10th District or 31st District PTA depending on your geographic location within the Los Angeles Unified School District. Representatives in either PTA District office can assist with forming a local chapter at your school. PTA supports public education and public educators should support PTA.

REPEAL OF SOCIAL SECURITY OFFSETS

The September 12, 2008, edition of the National Education Association's (NEA) *Education Insider* reported that the 2008 Democratic National Platform includes language calling for the elimination of Social Security offsets. Inclusion of this language in the platform is a major victory for AALA, ACSA, NEA, and many other public employee groups who have been pushing for years to repeal these unfair offsets. Ultimate victory in reaching our goal will depend on the election of a President and Congress committed to supporting public education and protecting retirement security for public employees.

NEA leaders and staff served on the Democratic platform committee and were able to push the committee to include in the platform language reading:

“We will end the penalty within the current Social Security system for public service that exists in several states.”

NEA also submitted comments to the Republican platform drafting committee that included a call for the repeal; however, to date there has been no positive response.

AALA congratulates **Bill Lambert**, retired UTLA government relations staff member, for his tireless efforts to bring this injustice to the attention of public employee groups in California and nationally. Bill was also instrumental in working with members of Congress to include the repeal on the congressional agenda. The repeal has broad bipartisan support led by Congressmen **Howard Berman** (D) and **Buck McKeon** (R). At the State level, Senator **Tom Torlakson** has championed the repeal.

AALA also congratulates **Jack Moscovitz**, ACSA Region 16 Executive Director, for his persistence in this fight for justice.

AALA urges all members, active and retired, to contact their representative in Congress in order to continue to push the issue. Tell Congress that those who have dedicated their lives to public service deserve better than the current Social Security penalties. They should act now to repeal the Social Security offsets. The fight for justice is not over, but the end is in sight. Keep up the pressure!

RETIREMENT CELEBRATION

Name	Date/Time	Location	Contact
Mary C. Harris	Saturday, October 25, 2008 12:00 p.m.	The Reef 880 Harbor Scenic Drive Long Beach	Juana Porter 626.337.9669 or 818.590.1701

IN MEMORIAM

JOHN McCANTS – Former Principal of Harbor Occupational Center. He retired on April 6, 1985, and passed away on September 8, 2008.

Letter to the Superintendent —

ASSOCIATED ADMINISTRATORS OF LOS ANGELES

1910 W. Sunset Blvd., Suite 510
Los Angeles, CA 90026
(213) 484-2226
FAX (213) 484-0201
www.aalausd.com

September 16, 2008

Mr. David L. Brewer III, Superintendent
Los Angeles Unified School District
333 S. Beaudry Avenue, 24th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90017

Dear Mr. Brewer:

I am compelled to write, yet again, about our intense dissatisfaction with the way public "bashing" of our members is allowed to run unchecked at open Board meetings, particularly when the insulting and unsubstantiated invective is televised to an unsuspecting public that deserves better.

We understand through past and current legal advice that principals are "public figures," and, as such, they can be criticized like any other public servants in high profile positions. But there have to be some limits when the attacks are insulting and demeaning.

We see it as joint responsibility of the Superintendent, the Board, the Board Secretary, and the General Counsel to draw the line when that line is crossed.

This is not an attempt to muzzle the right of speakers to criticize policies or practices of the District. It is a request to manage it in a way that allows legitimate contributors to the debate to have a chance to speak, and not have meetings disrupted and derailed by self-serving individuals with mysterious agendas.

And, you know who they are, but it continues.

I would again request that everyone in authority in the "horseshoe" be aware of this phenomenon when it occurs, and take steps to curtail it. That was always the past practice of this District and this Board in more civilized times, and a lot more useful work was accomplished without these pathetic diatribes at virtually every meeting.

Please review this matter in your discussions and take charge of your meetings once again. There is no time to waste.

Sincerely,
Mike O'Sullivan
President, AALA

SUGGESTIONS AND PREPARATIONS FOR HANDLING AN EMERGENCY

- ❖ How current is your Safe School Plan?
- ❖ How often do you review your Safe School Plan?
- ❖ Who do you call? 911, LAPD, LASD, School Police, Local District?
- ❖ Who should the Local District call? Office of Communications, Office of School Operations, Crisis Team, Human Relations Staff?
- ❖ Predetermined Personnel Actions
 - Who handles media?
 - Who addresses media?
 - Who authors script for person addressing media?
 - Who do you contact regarding legal questions?
 - Who authors letters for parents?
 - Who authors letters for staff and students?
 - Who authors script for personnel answering the phone?
 - Who prepares a message for parents for an automatic notification system?
 - Who assigns additional personnel to supervision?
 - Who coordinates parent room availability?
 - Who calls key community leaders to share factual information?
 - How do you evaluate the risk factor of an individual incident in a timely manner?
 - What are your short and long range plans to address similar situations?
 - Do you have backups for the key personnel assigned tasks?

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM (Tier 1)

The newest Educational Administration Program in the Charter College of Education at Cal State University, Los Angeles, is accepting candidates. **Please share with prospective administrators at your site.** This is a one-year program with final assessment designed for aspiring administrators who have at least two years of successful teaching experience with CA Professional Clear teaching credentials. Upon successful completion of the program, candidates receive a Master of Arts Degree in Educational Administration and the California Preliminary Administrative Services Credential. A Spring 2009 information/recruitment meeting has been scheduled as follows: Friday, October 10, 2008, from 4:20 – 6:00 p.m., King Hall D2077, at Cal State LA. Bring applications to the meeting. They may be downloaded at <http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/ccoe/docs/tier1app.doc>. For more information please call 323.343.4330 or visit www.calstate.edu/academic/edad.

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Last week's article seeking member volunteers to serve on various local and Districtwide committees engendered a very gratifying response from both active and retired members of the Association. It is certainly appreciated by your staff at AALA, and we thank you.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Minimum Qualifications: Candidates are responsible for making sure all the District requirements for administrative positions have been met. AALA is not responsible for errors in publication.

NOTE: Please do not contact AALA for information regarding administrative positions. Use the listed contact phone number, or contact LAUSD Human Resources Division at 213.241.6886 or via e-mail at http://certificated.lausd.k12.ca.us/admin_vacancies.

PRINCIPAL, EARLY EDUCATION CENTER (MST 38, A Basis)

Eastman & Murchison Early Education Centers (5)

Eastman and Murchison are LEARN centers. For information and application procedures contact **Manuel Caldera**, at 323.224.3100. **Filing deadline is 4:00 p.m., Friday, October 3, 2008.**

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL, SECONDARY

Manual Arts High School (7) MST 40, 4131 South Vermont Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90037

Manual Arts is a YR Concept 6 school and an MLA Partner Schools network member. For information and application procedures contact **Elsa Chagolla**, Chief Operating Officer, MLA Partner Schools, at 213.745.4928. **Filing deadline is Friday, October 3, 2008.**

Sylmar High School (2) MST 40, 13050 Borden Avenue, Sylmar, CA 91342

Sylmar is a B Basis school. For information and application procedures contact **José Rodriguez**, Director, Secondary School Services, at 818.755.5300. **Filing deadline is 5:00 p.m., Friday, October 3, 2008.**

EXTENDED/REQUIRED LEARNING ACADEMY ADMINISTRATOR (MST 40, B Basis)

Local District 7, 10616 South Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90047 323.242.1314

For Jordan High School. Responsibilities include assisting the principal and the Beyond the Bell Branch in the operation and administration of the Extended/Required Learning Academy, the Supplemental Educational Services, and all other academic intervention programs. Requires 5 years of successful full-time public school certificated service, with 3 years as a classroom teacher in a K-12 program, and 1 year of verifiable leadership experience, such as coordinator, instructional coach, dean, etc. For information and application procedures contact **Russ Thompson**, Director, School Services. **Filing deadline is 4:00 p.m., Friday, October 3, 2008.**

SPECIALIST, LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT, SEC. (Temp. Adv., MST 38, A Basis)

Support Unit Central-WEST, 3741 South La Brea Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90016 323.421.2863

Responsibilities include participating in the design, coordination, and implementation of collaborative programs that support Least Restrictive Environment. Requires 5 years of full-time teaching experience in a certificated K-12 teaching program in a school district and ability to travel. For information and application procedures contact **Bette Medina**, Secondary Administrator. **Filing deadline is 4:00 p.m., Friday, October 3, 2008.**

POSITIONS AVAILABLE (Continued)

SPECIALIST, LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (K-12) (Temp. Adv., MST 38, A Basis)

Support Unit-South, 1208 Magnolia Avenue, Gardena, CA 90247 310.354.3431

Responsibilities include participating in the design, coordination, and implementation of collaborative programs that support Least Restrictive Environment. Requires 5 years of successful full-time service in a certificated position and ability to travel. For information and application procedures contact **Don MacIntosh/Sharon Jarrett**, Administrative Coordinators. **Filing deadline is 4:30 p.m., Friday, October 10, 2008.**

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT FACILITATOR (Temp. Adv., MST 40, B Basis)

Local District 7, 10616 South Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90047 323.242.1314

For Jordan High School: Responsibilities include assisting in the planning, implementing, evaluating, and improving upon the school's redesign/improvement plan. Requires 5 years of full-time public school certificated service, with 3 years as a classroom teacher. For information and application procedures contact **Russ Thompson**, Director, School Services. **Filing deadline is 5:00 p.m., Friday, October 3, 2008.**

SUPERVISOR, COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMS (Temp. Adv., MST 39, A Basis)

Div. of Adult & Career Educ., 333 S. Beaudry Ave., 18th Fl., Los Angeles, CA 90017 213.241.3801

Responsibilities include supporting work experience education and administering youth employment programs. Requires 5 years of full-time certificated service, clear teaching credential, and ability to travel. For information and application procedures contact **Isabel Vazquez**, Career Technical Education Director. **Filing deadline is Friday, October 3, 2008.**

ROP CENTER INSTRUCTIONAL SPECIALIST (Temp. Adv., MST 37, A Basis)

Div. of Adult & Career Educ., 333 S. Beaudry Ave., 18th Fl., Los Angeles, CA 90017 213.241.3801

Responsibilities include developing and expanding ROP course offerings and providing technical assistance to instructors. Requires 5 years of full-time certificated service, with 3 years of full-time classroom teaching. For information and application procedures contact **Dominic Cistone**, Administrator. **Filing deadline is Wednesday, October 8, 2008.**

PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED POSITIONS STILL AVAILABLE

Position	Location	Deadline	Contact
Asst. Prin., SCS	Audubon Middle School EXTENDED TO	10/03/08	310.253.7156
Specialist, Least Restrictive Environment	Support Unit-East	09/29/08	323.932.2155
Coordinator, Secondary Literacy	Local District 2	09/29/08	818.755.5318
Coordinator, Intervention/Testing	Local District 4	09/29/08	323.932.2281