

UPDATE

Week of October 27, 2008

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

AALA, in its continuing effort to keep LAUSD on track, is publishing this list of unfinished business facing the Superintendent and Board of Education.

High Priority Schools Initiative – It has been almost two years since this initiative was begun, and, to our knowledge, the identified schools are still waiting for their promised support. **In addition, WASC accreditation was built into the accountability for the initiative, but instead, the District is embarking on another "school report card."** Formal accreditation is the most creditable form of accountability for schools at any level, and it is already in place so why reinvent the wheel.

Promising Practices – For over two years, the Superintendent has stressed the need to share promising practices exemplified in schools with demonstrated success. While we have seen glimpses of these practices mainly when they are highlighted in the newspapers or on television, no organized or concerted effort has been made within the District to share these successes in a collegial manner. **Rather, we have seen outside consultants hired to tell us what we are doing wrong and what we should be doing differently. AALA has always contended that our greatest professional development asset is the collective educational wisdom of District personnel. AALA is still requesting a structured District system for sharing this wisdom.**

Foster Care Initiative – The needs of foster care children has been an area of concern for many years. To date, apparently no effort has been made to bring the District and the County of Los Angeles together in a true partnership to assist the neediest of our students. **Social workers assigned to foster children could be assigned to schools where they could monitor the care for significant groups of foster children and truly serve as guardians as the Courts decree. Again, AALA is looking for the Superintendent and the Board of Education to provide the leadership to address this societal need.**

Senior Staff Development Program – For over two years, AALA members have been promised a senior staff development program so that qualified LAUSD individuals could have a transparent pathway for administrative leadership and promotional advancement. **The Superintendent has acknowledged the talent within the District; however, no system for administrative development has been put into place. Instead, the District still seems to place a greater value on individuals from outside the District.** The paraeducator career ladder, teachers academy, and principals academy are examples of what could be done with coaching and mentoring for the highest administrative levels. Again, actions speak louder than words.

Performing Arts High School – AALA is still waiting for the donations from **Eli Broad** and his colleagues in the Grand Avenue Partners to pay for the enhanced cost of the "waterslide" high school at 450 N. Grand Avenue. The cost escalated from 78 million to 230 million based on an agreement (can you say arrangement?) with Broad and his shadowy associates.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS (Continued)

We are still waiting for the money, which could be used to refurbish older schools and pay for any maintenance costs currently coming out of the general fund budget. And, AALA is still waiting for the transparency that this “verbal” agreement deserves.

Support for Principals – AALA continues to address instances of inappropriate interference in school activities by a small number of Local District and Central office administrators, who appear to have lost sight of their primary purpose-to assist and support rather than meddle. **Mr. Superintendent, please reinforce your statements at your opening administrative meeting where you stressed the need for local school initiative and the rendering of support for principals.**

Health Benefits – **When will District leadership recognize that health benefits are an inalienable right of all eligible employees? Employees are overly stressed with the lack of good faith bargaining and the seemingly unwillingness of District leadership to support an agreement so carefully initiated by former District Superintendent William J. Johnston and supported by all subsequent superintendents through good times and bad.**

AALA will continue with these reminders until this unfinished business is undertaken, monitored and completed.

UNIONS UNITED FOR HEALTH CARE

The eight employee unions including AALA, representing approximately 100,000 school workers, are currently in coordinated contract negotiations with the District regarding health care benefits. Access to affordable health care is not only essential for school employees who are in direct contact with hundreds of students every day, but also a key factor in recruiting and retaining experienced teachers, teaching assistants, administrators and other staff.

It is unfortunate that the District is considering significant cuts to health care benefits when it continues to spend resources on unnecessary consultants, administrative perks, and personal contract upgrades.

School workers will be setting up informational picket lines at schools and offices throughout the Los Angeles area. We are reaching out to parents and community members to call attention to the District’s misdirected priorities. More resources need to be properly placed into classrooms and campuses in support of students.

As one of the Los Angeles community’s largest employers, LAUSD should be setting a standard and investing in staff that support our students. A stable workforce enhances a safe and secure learning environment for all Los Angeles Unified School District students.

TRIBUTE TO WALKER BROWN

Former AALA Executive Director **Walker Brown** passed away on October 24, 2008. Walker was one of the founders of AALA, and he was instrumental in bringing together the four administrative groups that came to be Association departments. In October 1990, Walker wrote, “*Meeting the Needs of the Nineties*” in the AALA newsletter. The following is an excerpt from that article:

*Ten years ago, representatives of the various administrative associations – adult, elementary, secondary, and supervisory – committed themselves to establishing a single association representing the concerns and interests of **all** certificated management personnel. A proposal, describing the new organization as a single administrative association to meet the needs of the ‘80’s, was drafted and submitted to the members of the respective associations. With their approval, the Associated Administrators of Los Angeles was established.*

Now, ten years later, we stand at the threshold of yet another major change in the way in which administrators and supervisors are represented. After a year-long review of management vs. supervisory status and after strong support of several steps of the process leading toward supervisory status, the membership has recently voted over 5 to 1 to petition the Board of Education for supervisory status for certificated management personnel.

AALA members will forever be indebted to Walker Brown for his role in forming the Association and for converting it to a union to better represent the interests of LAUSD administrators. It should also be noted that he was responsible for the name and the logo of our Association. Walker was always straight forward and an imposing presence; a big man in both his physical stature and his strength of character. All of us who had the opportunity to work with him will treasure those memories. We offer our condolences to his wife, Phillipa, and his family. May he rest in peace.

REMINDER

What Makes the Media Tick?

A WORKSHOP FOR AALA SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

4:30 – 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 6, 2008

Recent negative campaigns by disgruntled parents or teachers against school principals have underlined the importance of forcefully presenting the views of school administrators in the public debate. This two-hour media workshop will begin to give AALA members the tools to feel confident, even under the glare of intense media scrutiny. **Steve Weingarten**, AALA Media Consultant, will conduct the workshop, and it will feature a working reporter as guest speaker. News clips of recent events in the harbor area will be dissected and discussed. In addition, development of positive public relations will be emphasized.

Participation is limited to the first 25 enrollees.

Call the AALA office at 213-484-2226 or email cvacca@aala.us to reserve a seat.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Daily News

October 27, 2008

The concept of 20 students in a class is great. However, students do not enroll in neat little packages of 20. Funding for schools is averaged by class. LAUSD and many other organizations have tried, unsuccessfully, to get the State Legislature to create one average across all classes in grades K-3.

With the budget deficit, we must also be fiscally prudent. At \$1,071 per student, the District stands to lose up to \$21,420 for not creating a combination class. Without 842 combination classes Districtwide, the District could lose up to \$1.8 million.

Therefore, if parents and the Daily News want to truly make a difference for all students, they need to implore State legislators to change the average from each individual class to average the entire K-3 span.

Dr. Angel J. Barrett

Vice President, Elementary Department

AALA

RUMOR CONTROL

A number of members have contacted the office regarding “Golden Handshake” retirement options and other similar early retirement programs. This is the current status of that discussion.

On Monday, October 27, staff from AALA joined by some field-based administrators met with representatives from Human Resources and Staff Relations to discuss various possibilities. It was a productive first meeting, but there are a number of considerations that still need to be researched and explored.

The District is talking to union reps from all its employee groups, certificated and classified. The bottom line is that any plan of this nature has to actually produce significant cost savings for the District; otherwise there is little point in pursuing the matter.

Be assured that we will keep you closely apprised of any developments as they emerge.

CONGRATULATIONS, IT WORKED!

Bill Lambert received the following article, which appeared on a Washington Blog, from **Mark Reischling**. It indicates that Senator **Barak Obama** is reaching out to the NEA and hundreds of thousands of educators.

In an October 22 letter, Senator Obama expressed his clear support for repeal of the Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision. In his letter directed specifically to NEA members, Senator Obama states, "Nobody should be penalized for serving our children, and that's why I support repealing the GPO/WEP and will work to do so as President....the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset have a serious detrimental impact on hundreds of thousands of educators and their spouses. That's why as a Senator I co-sponsored the Social Security Fairness Act, which would repeal these provisions...I believe that we have a responsibility to take care of workers who have devoted their lives to public service and that we shouldn't discourage young people from working in these essential jobs at a time when so many teachers are at or near retirement age and we're struggling to replace them."

"I will work to repeal GPO and WEP, but I won't stop there. We need to think now about how we provide retirement security for today's retirees and workers retiring 20 or 30 years down the road. Let me tell you about my comprehensive plan. It starts with protecting Social Security. It is one of the most successful social programs in American history, and we need to preserve and maintain it, without risky privatization plans. Improving retirement security for educators will be a high priority for me as President."

"I greatly appreciate the support I have from the NEA, and I look forward to working with you as President to create the changes we all want to see in our country."

ALA extends congratulations to **Bill Lambert** and **Jack Moscowitz** who have led the fight for this needed repeal of the unfair Social Security provisions with the reminder that the fight is not over until the bill to repeal becomes law.

HOPE

"To sit patiently with a yearning that has not yet been fulfilled, and to trust that, that fulfillment will come, is quite possibly one of the most powerful "magic skills" that human beings are capable of. It has been noted by almost every ancient wisdom tradition."

... Elizabeth Gilbert

GROWING OLDER

To celebrate growing older, I once wrote the 45 lessons life taught me. It is the most-requested column I've ever written. My odometer rolls over to 70 in August, so here goes:

1. Life isn't fair, but it's still good.
2. When in doubt, just take the next small step.
3. Life is too short to waste time hating anyone.
4. Don't take yourself so seriously. No one else does.
5. Pay off your credit cards every month.
6. You don't have to win every argument. Agree to disagree.
7. Cry with someone. It's more healing than crying alone.
8. It's OK to get angry with God. He can take it.
9. Save for retirement starting with your first paycheck.
10. When it comes to chocolate, resistance is futile.
11. Make peace with your past so it won't screw up the present.
12. It's OK to let your children see you cry.
13. Don't compare your life to others'. You have no idea what their journey is all about.
14. If a relationship has to be a secret, you shouldn't be in it.
15. Everything can change in the blink of an eye. But don't worry; God never blinks.
16. Take a deep breath. It calms the mind.
17. Get rid of anything that isn't useful, beautiful, or joyful.
18. Whatever doesn't kill you really does make you stronger.
19. It's never too late to have a happy childhood. But the second one is up to you and no one else.
20. When it comes to going after what you love in life, don't take no for an answer.
21. Burn the candles, use the nice sheets, and wear the fancy. Don't save it for a special occasion. Today is special.
22. Over prepare, then go with the flow.
23. Be eccentric now. Don't wait for old age to wear purple.
24. The most important sex organ is the brain.
25. No one is in charge of your happiness, except you.
26. Frame every so-called disaster with these words: 'In five years, will this matter?'
27. Always choose life.
28. Forgive everyone everything.
29. What other people think of you is none of your business.
30. Time heals almost everything. Give time, time.
31. However good or bad a situation is, it will change.
32. Your job won't take care of you when you are sick. Your friends will. Stay in touch.
33. Believe in miracles.
34. God loves you because of whom God is, not because of anything you did or didn't do.
35. Don't audit life. Show up and make the most of it now.
36. Growing old beats the alternative--dying young.
37. Your children get only one childhood. Make it memorable.
38. All that truly matters in the end is that you loved.
39. Get outside every day. Miracles are waiting everywhere.
40. If we all threw our problems in a pile and saw everyone else's, we'd grab ours back.
41. Envy is a waste of time. You already have all you need.
42. The best is yet to come.
43. No matter how you feel, get up, dress up, and show up.
44. Yield.
45. Life isn't tied with a bow, but it's still a gift.

- By **Regina Brett** of *The Plain Dealer*, Cleveland, Ohio

U.S. SAID TO BE WASTING MATH TALENT

Negative attitudes about girls involved in mathematics -- whether shown through teasing, ignoring, or ostracizing them -- are depriving the nation of some of its best math talent, says *Reuters* in reporting on research published in the *Notices of the American Mathematical Society*. The study challenges a widely held notion that females lack exceptional math abilities. It points to test results in elementary school showing that girls do as well in math as boys do, if not better than that. But the girls' results begin to lag in middle school and the male-female gap widens greatly in high school. The study also found that most women who become math or engineering professionals in the United States were born in other countries, particularly in Eastern Europe and Asia. Comments **Titu Andreescu** of the University of Texas at Dallas, one of the researchers who worked on the study: "Innate math aptitude is probably fairly evenly distributed throughout the world, regardless of race or gender. The huge differences observed in achievement levels are most likely due to socio-cultural attributes specific to each country."

Read more at:

http://www.boston.com/news/education/k_12/articles/2008/10/10/making_math_uncool_is_hurting_america_report_says

See the report at <http://www.ams.org/notices/200810/fea-gallian.pdf>

LATINO COLLEGE ASPIRANTS HURT BY INCOME SQUEEZE, ANALYSIS SHOWS

A growing income gap between Latino college students and their white counterparts is putting new pressure on Latinos aspiring to higher education, according to an analysis by UCLA's Higher Education Research Institute. Drawing on its annual survey of college freshmen, the institute says in a report that the number of Latino males entering four-year institutions is dropping in the face of financial pressures. While the household income of Hispanic students entering college has increased by five percent since 1975, the report says, the gap between their median household income and that of whites has increased fourfold (to \$32,965 in 2006). As a result, says **José Luis Santos**, assistant professor of education at UCLA, "adequate financial support remains critical to both college choice and persistence for Latinos." Meanwhile, the institute notes, the proportion of first-generation Latino students for whom neither parent had education beyond high school dropped from 69.6 percent in 1971 (when the proportion was 37.3 percent for non-Hispanic whites), to 38.2 percent in 2005 (compared with 13.2 percent for white students). The institute's director, **Sylvia Hurtado**, a co-author of the report, says Latinos are "just barely catching up to where non-Hispanics were in the 1970s, which is really scary. That means -- yes, everyone has seen some progress, but we're still in last place and we're running in place."

Read more at <http://www.newsroom.ucla.edu/portal/ucla/income-gap-increases-fourfold-64370.aspx>

See the UCLA report at <http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/heri/snippet.php?id=6>

For another take, go to <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2008/10/16/latino>

LOS ANGELES COUNTY HUMAN RELATIONS AWARDS

On October 23, 2008, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and the Commission on Human Relations presented its Annual Human Relations awards to deserving groups and individuals. Supervisorial District Awards were presented to: Homegirl Café (1st District), California African American Museum (2nd District), Juvenile Justice Task Force (3rd District), Hispanic Outreach Task Force (4th District), and CalArts Community Arts Partnership (5th District). Individual honorees were: Rabbi **Harold Schulweis**, Youth Radio, and **Shirley L. Harbeson** of Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company. AALA congratulates **Bill Lambert**, good friend of AALA, for serving as Vice President of the Commission on Human Relations.

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.

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL, SECONDARY COUNSELING SERVICES (SCS)

Jordan High School (7) MST 40, 2265 East 103rd Street, Los Angeles, CA 90002
 Jordan is a B Basis school. For information and application procedures contact **Russ Thompson**, Director, Secondary School Services, at 323.242.1492. **Filing deadline EXTENDED TO Friday, November 7, 2008.**

NOTE: Effective Friday, October 24, 2008, the District implemented a hiring freeze on all certificated school-based and nonschool-based positions.

PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED POSITIONS STILL AVAILABLE

Position	Location	Deadline	Contact
Principal, Small Schools	Bruin Community School	11/10/08	323.932.2002
Principal, Elementary	O'Melveny School	11/03/08	818.755.5312
Specialist, BTSA Induction Program	Local District 5	11/07/08	323.224.3195
Coordinator, K-12 Mathematics Program	Local District 5	11/07/08	323.224.3195