

UPDATE

Week of November 30, 2009

ADIOS, WORKFORCE STABILITY TASKFORCE

The final meeting of the Workforce Stability Taskforce was held on Nov. 30, 2009. Established through an amendment to the Public School Choice Resolution, the Taskforce was to “. . . develop guidelines and a process for recommendation to the District to apply when evaluating staffing requirements for operational plans from external operators . . .” In other words, the goal was to suggest ways to retain District jobs considering that 36 LAUSD schools may be taken over by outside charter operators during 2010-2011. The Taskforce’s recommendations will be presented for consideration at the Board meeting on December 8, 2009.

The coalition of unions, in which AALA has played a leadership role since July, prepared its own set of recommendations to the Taskforce. (The Taskforce and union recommendations are posted on the Public School Choice web page.) Unfortunately, the majority of Taskforce members viewed their responsibility in the narrowest possible way and considered only classified staff. Only **Maria Elena Durazo**, Secretary-Treasurer of the L.A. County Federation of Labor, focused on the total LAUSD workforce, including AALA and UTLA members. AALA submitted the following memo and two recommendations to the Taskforce, which they assured us would be submitted to the Board:

DATE: November 30, 2009
TO: The Workforce Stability Taskforce
FROM: Dr. Judith Perez, President, AALA
SUBJECT: AALA’S RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE RESOLUTION DATED AUGUST 25, 2009

During the past month, various LAUSD departments were invited to make presentations to the Workforce Stability Taskforce on ways District positions could be preserved while the Board’s Public School Choice Resolution is implemented. These presentations, which were organized within the general categories of operations, facilities and instruction, focused on a menu of services the District proposes to offer to outside charter operators who may be selected to operate the 12 focus schools and 24 new schools. Notably, even during the “instruction” meeting, the pivotal role of school administrators was ignored altogether. This is unfortunate, considering the fact that over 500 LAUSD administrative positions were cut between June and September 2009, and more could be eliminated this year if school leadership is outsourced to independent charter operators.

AALA’s view is that school improvement depends upon effective administrative leadership, and LAUSD has developed outstanding leaders who deserve District support and recognition. The focus schools, for the most part, have new principals, who have served at their sites for two years or less. In recent years, these schools have been characterized by a frequent turnover of administrative and teaching staffs, which is harmful to students and their families. All schools, particularly the focus schools, require leadership stability. The District needs to provide the support necessary to enable school

AALA'S RECOMMENDATIONS (Continued)

leaders to make long-term commitments to the improvement of their respective schools. Educational research has shown repeatedly that an effective principal and his/her team is the most critical component in ensuring student achievement.

Improving student performance requires skilled leadership over a period of years. There is no quick fix. There is no evidence that replacing District-hired administrators with individuals selected from outside with minimum or no administrative experience will make a positive difference. Excellent school leadership is site-specific, is built upon trusting relationships and must be nurtured. What do excellent school leaders do?

- Oversee the instructional program
- Supervise and evaluate teachers and other staff members
- Organize and deploy resources, including people, to make the best use of time
- Communicate clearly
- Embrace accountability for student performance
- Make sure that the unique needs of individual students are addressed (Special Education students, English Learners, gifted and talented students)
- Ensure safety and security for students and staff members
- Create a positive, welcoming learning environment
- Engage parents, students and staff members
- Serve as the point of contact for students' families and community members

The strongest leaders are visionaries who collaborate with and inspire school communities to improve continually. No school leader works well in a vacuum. That is why District support is essential. The District needs to ask school leaders what kind of support is helpful. The District needs to include the suggestions of administrators in any improvement efforts. AALA's recommendations to the Workforce Stability Taskforce follow.

AALA's Recommendations **Regarding Implementation of the Public School Choice Resolution**

1. Assignment of students to schools under the Public School Choice Resolution:

The District shall assign 100% of the students to existing and new schools regardless of whom or what entity is operating them. The new schools, in particular, were funded from State and local funds designed to help critically overcrowded school districts relieve that overcrowding.

2. Amendment to the Public School Choice Resolution:

Resolved further, That the Board directs the Superintendent to develop a plan to maintain continuity, quality, and consistency of administration and teaching, Special Education and English Language Development 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 either memoranda of understanding or master service agreements. The memoranda of understanding or master service agreements must include commitments to hire District personnel for the purpose of having District personnel as the default provider of school services for administration, teaching, Special Education and English Language Development. The memoranda of understanding or master service agreements would further provide that the District personnel must meet agreed-upon performance standards for such services as provided in the proposed administration, teaching, Special Education and English Language Development services menu (the "Certificated Services Menu"). These standards in the Certificated Services Menu must be met within an agreed-upon time frame. If the District fails to meet these Certificated Services Menu standards within this time frame, and a timely discussion (between the independent partners, the District, and certificated labor partners) does not resolve the identified issues, the external partners may then use its own employees for such services.

AALA BARGAINING BULLETIN – NO. 4

Negotiations Scheduled!

In response to AALA's request for immediate negotiations, Superintendent **Ramon Cortines** arranged for us to begin negotiating with LAUSD on December 14, 2009, shortly after the District sunshines its initial bargaining proposals. In addition to our three-year successor agreement, we will be negotiating the following items: the District's request that AALA members accept four (4) furlough days this year; the potential 12% pay cut for 2010-2011; the Superintendent's imposition of parking fees at the Beaudry Bldg. starting in 2010-2011; and any additional proposals sunshined by the District.

WE ARE STILL WAITING

November 24, 2009

TO: Ramon Cortines, Superintendent, LAUSD
FROM: Dr. Judith Perez, President, AALA
SUBJECT: LAUSD RESOURCES LOSS

AALA and other bargaining units appreciated the opportunity to interact with you regarding the District budget crisis on Wednesday, November 18, 2009. During the question and answer period, I asked, "What monetary loss does LAUSD suffer when a District school is taken over by an independent charter?" I followed up by asking whether or not this potential loss of funds would affect your decisions regarding the selection of proposals during the Public School Choice process.

You directed Megan Reilly to respond to AALA and other bargaining units regarding the loss of funding questions. Please know that I left a message for Mrs. Reilly this morning regarding this matter. To date, we have yet to receive a response.

AALA looks forward to receiving the requested information.

C: Megan Reilly
Dr. Jim Morris

FLASH! MEGAN REILLY finally called, at the Superintendent's request, to inform AALA that our questions will be answered by Friday, December 11, 2009.

BEAUDRY COMEDY ROUTINE? (or: Cuts Hurt!)

On a recent Wednesday, an AALA office staff member attempted to contact someone in the LAUSD Office of Demographics. The first step was trying to get the phone number from the LAUSD Information Line. Following is the real dialogue that took place:

AALA: Please give me the phone number for the Office of Demographics.

LAUSD Information Line: We don't have that number. Please call the School Information Branch. Here's their number.

AALA: Please give me the phone number for the Office of Demographics.

School Information Branch: (after unsuccessfully calling the number they had): They've moved and we don't know where. The line is disconnected, and there's no referral number.

AALA: So you have lost the Office of Demographics?

School Information Branch: No, we just don't know where they are. Who wants the number?

AALA: Dr. Judith Perez, President of Associated Administrators of Los Angeles

School Information Branch: We will research this and call you back with the number.

An AALA staff member called the Superintendent's office, and a friendly individual there looked up the Office of Demographics Branch phone number. AALA informed both the LAUSD Information Line and School Information Branch of the correct phone number. They were grateful for the assistance. AALA thanks the Superintendent's office, in turn, for being so helpful!

EL AUTHORIZATION ASSISTANCE

Board of Education policy requires all administrators to have English Learner (CLAD/BCLAD) authorization to make sure that the needs of students are addressed, to supervise teachers appropriately and to ensure a high-quality instructional program. **If you do not yet have EL authorization, it is critical for you to complete the requirements as soon as possible.** To apply or receive support for obtaining the EL authorization, go to http://teachinla.com/Contracts/pdf/ela_app.pdf. For information about District support for class work to earn the authorizations, go to <http://www.teachinla.com/mpvu/mptt.html>.

HOLD THE DATE!

The ACSA/AALA California Superintendent of Public Instruction Candidate Forum is scheduled for January 21, 2010, from 5:00-8:00 p.m., at Los Angeles Central High School #9 (the new arts HS), 450 North Grand Avenue, Los Angeles.

HEALTH BENEFITS FAQ

Topic: Understanding Deductibles, Copays, Coinsurance and Out-of-Pocket Expense Limits

What is the difference between copayment and coinsurance?

A copayment is a fixed charge for a medical service. Coinsurance is the percentage you pay for the cost of a medical service. HMOs such as Kaiser, Health Net, Anthem Select and the Medicare Advantage all charge copayments for services. The Anthem Blue Cross EPO charges a coinsurance payment after the annual deductible amount is met.

How do deductibles work in our District-offered plans?

A deductible is the amount you must pay for covered medical expenses before your medical plan begins to pay. The District's HMO plans—Kaiser, Health Net, Anthem Select, and the Medicare Advantage plan for retirees have no annual deductible amounts. The Anthem Blue Cross EPO for active employees has a deductible of ½% of the employee's yearly salary with a minimum of \$100 and a maximum of \$800 per member. The Anthem EPO for retirees has an annual deductible of \$300 per member.

What is covered under “out-of-pocket maximum”?

The maximum amount of out-of-pocket expenses specified by each plan determines how much you must pay before all medical services are provided at no additional costs. The maximums vary by medical plans. For active employees, the maximum for Kaiser, Health Net HMO and Anthem Select HMO is \$1,500 per member. The Anthem EPO plan is \$7,500 for both active employees and retirees. Plans with no annual maximums include Health Net Seniority Plus and Secure Horizons by United Healthcare. Kaiser Senior Advantage has a \$1,500 maximum.

Do plan deductibles and prescription expenses count toward the annual limit on out-of-pocket expenses?

No, neither deductibles nor prescription costs count toward the limit on out-of-pocket expenses.

IN MEMORIAM

JEANNE HOLMES-REID – Former Principal of Cabrillo Avenue, Normont Street, and Second Street schools. She retired on October 18, 1988, and passed away on November 22, 2009.

DR. SEYMOUR "SID" SITKOFF - Former Elementary Science Specialist, Office of Elementary Instruction. He retired July 1, 1991, and passed away on November 23, 2009. There will be no services. Donations in his memory may be made to the American Cancer Society.

LACK OF EVIDENCE OR LACK OF RESEARCH?

A frequent complaint about the Department of Education under President **George W. Bush** was that it promoted "scientific research in education" but endorsed policies lacking solid research evidence. The new draft guidelines for economic-stimulus money and Title I aid have some critics asking whether much has changed under the Obama administration, writes **Debra Viadero** of *Education Week*. The issue, according to Viadero, is less ideological bias than lack of credible education research, which has long been underfunded in comparison with disciplines like medicine. "There aren't a whole lot of conclusive findings about different strategies for reform, so policymakers have to look at the best available evidence, even though the evidence might not be rigorous or powerful," explained **James Kohlmoos** of the Knowledge Alliance, a group that represents research organizations. "It's not their fault. It's a generation's fault for not paying attention to this." Lack of research for new education initiatives has disappointed some advocates, who'd been encouraged by the president's pledge to "give science its rightful place" in government decision-making. Two priorities in particular are lacking in research, they say: evaluating teachers based on students' standardized test scores, and promoting the growth of charter schools.

Read more:

http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/10/07/06research_ep.h29.html?tkn=XPBFw7hGi3u6eCrZqeeYsHa1yotLeYP8WEHi

A LOOK AT REMAINING DESEGREGATION PROGRAMS

A new report from the Teachers College at Columbia University is the first to comprehensively study the nation's eight remaining inter-district school desegregation programs, which were expressly created to enable disadvantaged black and Latino students to cross school district boundary lines and attend affluent, predominantly white suburban public schools. **The report finds that these programs help close black-white and Latino-white achievement gaps, improve racial attitudes, and lead to long-term mobility and further education for the students of color who participate.** One striking finding is that suburban residents, educators, school officials, and students grow to appreciate these programs the longer they continue. In fact, many former opponents are now defending these programs against threats of curtailment, even when continuation would mean reduced funding. *Despite these successes, education policies addressing segregation and inequality have generally been limited to within-district solutions, and reform focus has shifted to the use of standards, tests, and accountability systems to improve student achievement, along with school choice policies that allow alternative, private providers to compete for students and their public school funds.* The authors suggest that these newer strategies have not delivered, and inequality has grown in many states.

Read more: <http://www.tc.edu/news/article.htm?id=7233>

See the report: <http://www.tc.columbia.edu/news/article.htm?id=7232>

Ed note: Emphasis added

JUSTICES DECLINE APPEAL ON RELIGIOUS SPEECH AT GRADUATION

By [Mark Walsh](#), November 30, 2009, *Education Week Spotlight*

The Supreme Court today declined to hear the appeal of a public high school valedictorian whose diploma was withheld after she discussed her Christian faith at her commencement ceremony.

The student, **Erica Corder** of Lewis Palmer High School in Monument, Colo., gave a 30-second valedictory message at the 2006 commencement that included her desire to tell her fellow graduates "about someone who loves you more than you could ever imagine."

"He died for you on a cross over 2,000 years ago, yet was resurrected and is living today in heaven," Corder's remarks continued, according to court documents. "His name is **Jesus Christ**. If you don't already know Him personally I encourage you to find out more about the sacrifice He made for you so that you now have the opportunity to live in eternity with Him."

The speech was different than the draft she had submitted for advance approval by school administrators. At the end of the ceremony, Corder was told she would not receive her diploma until she publicly apologized for her speech. She submitted a draft apology that said her statement reflected her own beliefs and were not endorsed by school officials. The principal required her to add this statement: "I realize that, had I asked ahead of time, I would not have been allowed to say what I did." The apology was then e-mailed to the school community and Corder received her diploma.

Corder sued the Lewis-Palmer School District and various officials, alleging that their actions violated her First Amendment rights of free speech and free exercise of religion and other claims. A federal district court ruled for the school district, and in May, a panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit, in Denver, affirmed the district court.

The appeals court said that a valedictorian's speech that is subject to advance school approval is a form of school-sponsored speech. "A graduation ceremony is an opportunity for the School District to impart lessons on discipline, courtesy, and respect for authority," the unanimous three-judge panel said in [Corder v. Lewis-Palmer School District](#). "And, a School District is entitled to review the content of speeches in an effort to preserve neutrality on matters of controversy within a school environment." The court also rejected Corder's claim that her forced apology was a form of unconstitutional compelled speech. "If the School District may censor Corder because her speech is school-sponsored rather than private, then so may the School District tell her what to say when she disregards the School District's policy regarding the school-sponsored speech, as long as the compulsion is related to a legitimate pedagogical purpose," the 10th Circuit court said.

In their appeal of that ruling to the Supreme Court, lawyers for Corder argued that the 10th Circuit's decision, that valedictory speeches constitute school-sponsored speeches, conflicts with the high court's precedents and with other federal appeals court rulings.

The justices declined without comment to hear the student's appeal in *Corder v. Lewis-Palmer School District* (Case No. 09-257)

SAVE THE DATE

FRIDAY, JANUARY 22, 2010 – The PDK-USC Chapter will host its Annual Emery Stoops Lecture Dinner at 6:00 p.m. (Social Hour at 5:00 p.m.), USC University Club (formerly the Faculty Center). Guest speakers will be Dr. **Angel Barrett**, California 2009 National Distinguished Principal, and Dr. **Karen Symms Gallagher**, Dean, USC Rossier School of Education. Cost is \$40. For questions and reservations contact **Teresa Miller** at TeacherTMM@aol.com.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Minimum Qualifications: Candidates are responsible for making sure all the District requirements have been met. Do not contact AALA for information regarding positions. Use the listed contact phone number.

THE FOLLOWING POSITION IS AVAILABLE TO VIEW IN ITS ENTIRETY BY GOING TO THE AALA WEBSITE, <http://www.aalausd.com>. BY CLICKING ON “POSITIONS AVAILABLE” TO THE LEFT OF THE SCREEN, YOU CAN SELECT NONSCHOOL-BASED POSITIONS AND CLICK ON ANY POSITION TO VIEW THE SPECIFIC FLYER.

POSITION	FILING DEADLINE
COORDINATOR, CHARTER SCHOOLS DIVISION, MST 41, B Basis, Charter Schools Division. For information and application procedures contact Aaron Eairleywine , Central Business Advisor, at 213.241.5516	EXTENDED TO Friday, December 11, 2009

PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED POSITION STILL AVAILABLE

Position	Location	Deadline	Contact
Director of Instructional and Operational Oversight	Charter Schools Division	UNTIL FILLED	213.241.2656

**"If there is light in the soul,
 There will be beauty in the person.
 If there is beauty in the person,
 There will be harmony in the house.
 If there is harmony in the house,
 There will be order in the nation.
 If there is order in the nation,
 There will be peace in the world."
 ...Chinese Proverb**