

UPDATE

Week of August 3, 2009

"PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE": SOME QUESTIONS

Two weeks ago we wrote about a Board of Education resolution called "Public School Choice," which was first presented at the July 14 Board meeting and was postponed for consideration until August 25. If you watched that July Board meeting, you probably noticed that the Boardroom was packed with parents and others, bused in for the occasion. Most of them castigated the District and trumpeted charter schools as the solution to the District's failures. In fact, the major sponsor of the resolution, **Yolie Flores Aguilar**, continues to assert in public statements and in print that "50% of our students are failing." District data reflects otherwise.

Her resolution, cosponsored by **Mónica García** and **Dick Vladovic**, originally proposed to solve the problem by offering "internal and external stakeholders," including independent charters, the opportunity to operate all 56 new schools that will open in the next three years. In the past two weeks, Ms. Flores Aguilar's motion has been revised at least two times. The most recent version adds to the mix the more than 200 Program Improvement 3+ schools.

When asked last week what she hoped to achieve, Ms. Flores Aguilar told us that her goal is to pressure the District to improve student achievement, and competition is the solution. **While agreeing with us that AALA needs to be at the table during the implementation of all Board policies involving our members, she was noncommittal on the point of honoring our union contract. In fact, no version of her resolution mentions our Association or our role in educating students.** Need we remind the Board that AALA members hold the District together?

Evidently, collective bargaining agreements were considered, at least for some bargaining units. The second version of the resolution stipulates that "...any external partner selected to operate an LAUSD school must employ LAUSD classified personnel..." Interestingly, this language is gone from the third version. The replacement statement says, in part, "...as a condition of facility use, any proposals from external stakeholders must include a commitment to fair labor practices, including prevailing wages, health and welfare benefits, and safe working conditions."

Why are we concerned about the refusal of resolution sponsors to honor AALA's contract? Doing so is a violation of our legally binding agreement with the District. Turning over as many as 300 LAUSD schools to independent charters and other entities could result in the loss of numerous positions currently held by skilled and experienced AALA members. Why gamble with the lives of students when Districtwide data reflects consistent academic improvement over time? There is no evidence that the exclusion of our collective bargaining rights improves student academic achievement.

"PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE": SOME QUESTIONS (Continued)

Here are questions for the sponsors of this proposal and our answers:

Q: By what standards do you consider a school to be failing?

A: No standards are cited in the resolution.

Q: What evidence is there that 50% of our students are failing?

A: This is a false premise with ample evidence to the contrary. The August 4, 2009, issue of the *L.A. Times* (Page A3) states that the dropout rate for 2007-08 declined 17%, while the graduation rate rose nearly 8%, to 72.4%. District data from the Planning and Assessment Division (July 9, 2009) indicates that LAUSD's API growth scores have steadily increased for the past three years. In 2007-08, our growth of 21 points was higher than the statewide growth of 14 points.

Q: How does inviting charter school operators and other outside groups to bid to operate LAUSD schools improve student academic achievement?

A: The resolution does not explain. The longitudinal *Stanford Study* found that 37% of charter schools nationwide deliver learning results significantly worse than in traditional public schools and only 17% do better. (<http://credo.stanford.edu/reports/MULTIPLECHOICE CREDO.pdf>)

Q: Who will be responsible for a school when a charter or another entity fails to meet minimum criteria to support students?

A: One version of the motion states, ". . .if sufficient progress is not made by the implementation team or new schools' stakeholders in a timely manner, and/or if the work stalls due to an unwillingness of stakeholders to collaborate or move the work forward, the Superintendent is directed to independently continue the effort to ensure that an appropriate operational plan is adopted for the new school or schools in question." In other words, LAUSD picks up the pieces!

We will continue providing information about this resolution in future issues of *UPDATE* and will address such issues as the leadership role of administrators in student academic performance, the purpose of collective bargaining and how a strong union contract benefits students!

AALA MEMBERSHIP/ACCESS SAVINGS CARD

The AALA Membership/Access Savings Card will expire at the end of December 2009. At this time, AALA does not plan to renew the card due to lack of use of the card by the AALA membership. AALA incurs a monthly fee to maintain the use of the Access Website for the membership to view participating merchants and receive promotional e-mails from Access. In order to renew the card for January 2010, AALA would need to enter into another contract with Access and incur the expense of Access printing all new personalized cards for the entire membership active and retired and the charge for Access to mail the cards (postage/envelopes/labor). We welcome any feedback you may have regarding the Access Savings Card.

IN MEMORIAM

RICHARD JOHNSON –Former Principal of Rockdale and San Pascual schools. Retired in June 1982 and passed away on July 16, 2009.

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S RESPONSE TO

"A DIRECTOR REPRESENTS THE FEELINGS VOICED BY MANY"

(Update of July 27, 2009)

Dear Dr. Perez:

I want to share with you that I look at leadership individually. I have been extremely frustrated this past year with the instructional leadership and some Directors in various local districts who have known for years about the non- or low-performance of students in schools and have done nothing about it. Being a Director or an instructional administrator in a District office does not automatically result in a favorable recommendation when there is no evidence of what an individual has done to improve academic achievement, decrease the dropout rate in schools the individual has responsibility for, increase attendance, and/or increase parent involvement in our schools.

Just because a person has held a particular title does not make them necessarily eligible to be considered for a Superintendent position. The advice that you as well as myself should be giving aspiring superintendents is that their work needs to be based on **evidence** of academic achievement and other things surrounding the importance of the daily life at a school. Further, I know for a fact that all Directors who were principals were not necessarily successful at their schools. Many of them do not have evidence that shows that there was marked improvement in their schools.

The selection process is flawed. I believe that experience should be recognized but we must also consider evidence demonstrating former accomplishments. **I look forward to collaboratively working with AALA to develop a process that more closely demonstrates the talent and success of candidates.**

Thank you,
Ray Cortines

NEW! HEALTH BENEFITS FAQ

Beginning with the next issue, AALA Update will offer relevant information on health benefits, as well as updates on the Health Benefits negotiations process.

Questions will cover a variety of topics—especially those that have caused members the greatest problems.

Here are a few questions to test your health benefits “savvy”:

- **Do you know you have to report the birth of a child to the Benefits Administration Office?**
- **Do you know you have to verify your dependent’s student status if s/he is over 19 years old to maintain your dependent’s eligibility for health benefits?**
- **Do you know you have to enroll in Medicare just before age 65 even if you are NOT retired?**

Besides answering “yes” to these questions, the Health Benefits FAQ will provide detailed information to help maximize your benefits, prevent temporary loss of coverage, and save on unnecessary out-of-pocket costs when coverage lapses due to oversight, lack of knowledge, or incorrect assumptions.

The District’s Benefits Administration web page offers a wealth of information: <http://benefits.lausd.net>

RETIREMENT CELEBRATIONS

Name	Date, Time	Location	Contact
Mary Jane Collier	Friday, August 14, 2009 6:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.	Pickwick Gardens 1001 W. Riverside Dr. Burbank	SooJoon Choi soojoon.choi@lausd.net
Annetta Lawrence	Saturday, August 15, 2009 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Ayres Hotel 14400 Hindry Avenue Hawthorne	Rosamy Gross 310.762.6775 forheislord@sbcglobal.net
Robbi Bertz	Sunday, August 16, 2009 11:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Beverly Hilton Hotel Stardust Room 9876 Wilshire Blvd. Beverly Hills	Pam Sasada/Lainey Rogers 310.253.7100
Jean Batey	Sunday, August 16, 2009 11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Glendale Hilton 100 West Glenoaks Blvd. Glendale	Daniel Lam 213.241.3766
Rosalinda Ofalla	Friday, August 21, 2009 6:00 p.m. – 12:00 a.m.	The Castaway 1250 Harvard Road Burbank	Cressie Jones 323.664.1024
Annie Webb	Saturday, August 22, 2009 12:00 – 4:00 p.m.	Ports O' Call Restaurant 1060 Nagoya Way San Pedro	Jacqueline Olvera 323.932.2221 jacqueline.olvera@lausd.net Monica Webb 310.341.9648
May Arakaki	Saturday, August 22, 2009 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Pala Casino 11154 Highway 76 Pala, CA (San Diego County)	elaine.kinoshita@lausd.net lyamamoto@lausd.net mguerr3@lausd.net npaiz2@lausd.net
Clarence Lutter	Sunday, August 23, 2009 12:00 – 3:30 p.m.	Monterey Hills Steak House 3700 W. Ramona Road Monterey Park	Lupe Sarinana Trudy Hawkins 310.547.5551
Elois McGehee	Saturday, Sept. 12, 2009 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.	DoubleTree Hotel 2800 Via Cabrillo Marina San Pedro	Susan Price 310.354.3460 Connie Moore 323.755.8543
Carol Truscott	Saturday, Sept. 26, 2009 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Beverly Hilton Hotel Stardust Room 9876 Wilshire Blvd. Beverly Hills	Norma Berryman 323.242.1315 Faye Banton 310.631.7522

...AN AALA SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

As a part of AALA's outreach to the student community of LAUSD, scholarship funds are provided to the administrative special interest groups to be awarded to students of their choosing. Each group selects a student to receive the "AALA Scholarship." On June 6, 2009, the Council of Black Administrators (COBA) selected **Khajidah Williams** of Jefferson High School to receive the AALA Scholarship.

When Khajidah enrolled at Jefferson High in the fall of her junior year, she was determined to stay put. This was a tall order, for Khajidah was homeless. She commuted daily from an Orange County armory. Her wakeup time was 4:00 a.m., and she returned to the armory at 11:00 p.m. She maintained a GPA of just under 4.0, participated in the Academic Decathlon, the debate team, and the track and field team.

How did she make it to this point in her life? For as long as Khajidah could remember, she floated from shelters to motels to armories along the Pacific Coast with her mother. She attended 12 schools in 12 years; lived out of garbage bags among pimps, prostitutes, and drug dealers. Every morning she upheld her dignity, making sure she did not look disheveled or smelled. She learned her survival skills on the streets.

When she was a third-grader, she was tested, placing in the 99th percentile on the state test. It meant that only 0.01 students tested better than she did. Her teacher marked the nine-year-old as gifted. In the years that followed, when the money ran out, the shelter closed, or her mother didn't feel safe, they packed what little they had and boarded buses to find housing in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Ventura, San Diego, San Bernardino, and Orange County. They stayed for months, at most, in one place. She finished only half of fourth and fifth grades and skipped sixth grade. Seventh grade was split between Los Angeles and San Diego. Eighth grade consisted of 2 weeks in San Bernardino. At each school, she pushed to keep herself in the school's gifted program. She was an outsider, often bullied for being poor, different, and reading too much. Khajidah began to seek out organizations and mentors to help her, for she realized she needed help to succeed. The Upward Bound Program, Higher Edge LA, and South Central Scholars, counselors, teachers, and college alumni networks all helped her to enroll in summer community college classes, gave her access to computers and scholarship applications, and taught her about networking.

On June 19, 2009, Khajidah graduated from Jefferson High with high honors. She was accepted at more than 20 universities nationwide, including Brown, Columbia, Amherst, and Williams. She chose a full scholarship to Harvard. On June 20, 2009, she left for Harvard. They will provide what she needs to make the transition successful. They will connect her to faculty members and a host family to check in with every so often. She will also attend a Harvard summer program at Cornell University to take college prep courses.

It is the kind of story that makes us rejoice! ...**And YOU (AALA) had a hand in it.**

*(Thanks to **Esmerelda Bermudez**, Los Angeles Times, who wrote the front-page story on June 20, 2009.)*

LEADING EDUCATION ASSOCIATIONS SUPPORT COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS INITIATIVE

A partnership of 17 major national education associations released the following statement:

The Learning First Alliance Supports the CCSSO/NGA Common Core State Standards Initiative

The Learning First Alliance supports steps taken by the Common Core State Standards Initiative to develop a common core of state K-12 standards in mathematics and English language arts.

"The Common Core Standards Initiative has the potential to move us closer to a compelling shared vision for what students should know and be able to do to succeed in the 21st century," said **Brenda Welburn**, Learning First Alliance Board Chair and Executive Director of the National Association of State Boards of Education. "By benchmarking them against standards in the world's top-performing countries, states can make the common core standards a critical resource in their efforts to prepare students for a global age."

"A robust, voluntary common core of standards can help states share resources and practices for improving teaching and learning for all children," said Learning First Alliance executive director **Claus von Zastrow**. "Because states are taking the lead, the initiative honors differences among states while affirming their common commitment to high standards for every student."

To be successful, the initiative also needs to be supported by aligned curriculum and aligned assessments. The federal government can offer resources to support such assessments. As required by federal law, however, the federal government should not be directly involved in their development or require the implementation of any particular assessment. Educators will need the time, professional development and resources to ensure that they can use the standards effectively in the classroom.

(The Learning First Alliance is a permanent partnership of 17 leading education associations with more than 10 million members dedicated to improving student learning in America's public schools. Alliance members include: the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, American Association of School Administrators, American Association of School Personnel Administrators, American Federation of Teachers, American School Counselor Association, Association of School Business Officials International, Council of Chief State School Officers, National Association of Elementary School Principals, National Association of Secondary School Principals, National Association of State Boards of Education, National Education Association, National Middle School Association, National School Public Relations Association, National Staff Development Council, National PTA, National School Boards Association and Phi Delta Kappa International. The Alliance maintains www.publicschoolinsights.org, a website that features what's working in public schools and districts across the country.)

NOTES FROM THE ISIS STAKEHOLDERS GROUP

ISIS, the Integrated Student Information System, is being implemented in elementary schools to handle attendance and grades. Multi-track schools began using ISIS for attendance this summer; and beginning October 12, over an eight-week period, it will be rolled out to the single-track schools - one or two local districts per week. Training will begin in August.

For secondary schools, electronic attendance certification is now implemented, so APSSSs no longer need to print attendance verification rosters (Teacher's Sign-Off Reports) each week.

In addition, MyData, a user-friendly front end for the Decision Support System, will be available when schools open. This will allow better access to data about student achievement and outcomes.

SAVE THE DATES

THURSDAY, AUGUST 27, 2009 – **ORGANIZATION PRESIDENTS – BREAKFAST MEETING** to be held at Taix Restaurant, 7:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. For information contact the AALA office at 213.484.2226.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 29, 2009 – **TEAM HEAL** presents the 5th Annual **Afternoon of Jazz** at the Wilshire Country Club, 301 N. Rossmore Avenue, Los Angeles. The 2009 honoree is Dr. **Frank Jobe**, co-founder of the Kerlan-Jobe Orthopaedic Clinic. Master and Mistress of Ceremonies are KNBC4 News Anchor **Chris Schauble** and 94.7 The Wave DJ **Pat Prescott**. For information, contact **Barbara Shields** at 310.645.8347 or teamheal@ca.rr.com.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 29, 2009 – **AMAE Pláticas: A Community Dialogue, "The State of Latino Education 2009-2010."** Event is sponsored by Los Angeles-AMAE (Association of Mexican American Educators) and CMAA (Council of Mexican American Administrators) at Elizabeth Learning Center, 4811 Elizabeth Street, Cudahy, CA, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. RSVP at 310.324.4454 or e-mail losangeles-amae@sbcglogal.net.

For updated information go to www.lausd.k12.ca.us/orgs/cmae/index.htm.

MONDAY, AUGUST 31, 2009 – **The CIF Los Angeles City Section Fundraising Golf Tournament** is being held at Porter Valley Country Club in Northridge. They are seeking golfers that like to have a good time as well as play golf! The fee is \$150 for one, with a discount for a foursome. Cost includes a continental breakfast, box lunch and seated dinner (Awards Banquet), green fees, cart, goody bag, and a Silent Auction. They are also looking for sponsors. For more information, contact **Vicky Lagos**, at 213.207.2200.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2009 – **ADMINISTRATIVE INTEREST GROUPS – BREAKFAST MEETING** to be held at Taix Restaurant, 7:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. For information contact the AALA office at 213.484.2226.

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.

PRINCIPAL, SECONDARY

Millikan Middle School (2) MST 45, 5041 Sunnyslope Avenue, Sherman Oaks, CA 91423
 Millikan is an E Basis school and Performing Arts magnet. For information and application procedures contact **José Rodriguez**, Director, Secondary School Services, at 818.755.5361. **Filing deadline is Monday, August 17, 2009.**

PRINCIPAL, ELEMENTARY

Ford Blvd. School (5) MST 42, 1112 South Ford Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90022
 Ford is an E Basis school. For information and application procedures contact **Maria Martinez**, Director, School Support Services, at 323.224.3172. **Filing deadline is Tuesday, August 18, 2009.**

THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS ARE AVAILABLE TO VIEW IN THEIR 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
Administrator, Special Education Support Unit-South, Division of Special Education, Temp. Adv., MST 43, A Basis. Contact Sharyn Howell , Executive Director, at 213.241.6701	5:00 p.m. Friday, August 14, 2009
Specialist, Due Process Department, Division of Special Education. Temp. Adv., MST 38, B Basis. Contact Lisa Kendrick , Administrative Coordinator, at 213.241.6718.	5:00 p.m., Friday, August 14, 2009

PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED POSITIONS STILL AVAILABLE

Position	Location	Deadline	Contact
Principal, Secondary	South Gate Middle School	08/14/09	323.278.3954
Director of Instructional and Operational Oversight	Charter Schools Division	UNTIL FILLED	213.241.2656
Instructional Specialist	Stevenson Middle School	08/10/09	213.922.9775
Instructional Specialist	99 th Street School	08/10/09	213.922.9775