

## UPDATE

Week of April 4, 2011

### EDUCATING OUR CHILDREN IS A COMMUNITY AFFAIR

by Marguerite Poindexter LaMotte

*Marguerite Poindexter LaMotte represents Board District 1 of the Los Angeles Unified School District. This article appeared in a slightly different form in the Los Angeles Sentinel on March 25, 2011, and is published here with permission.*

In what appears to have been a carefully orchestrated performance, the Board of Education voted last Tuesday, to give away seven of our schools (new and existing) to outside charter agencies during its discussion of Public School Choice (PSC). The Board's action was appalling, and its willingness to easily turn schools over to private operators represents an ominous sign for the future of public school education.

The March 15 agenda included six additional schools, which were split between charter operators and district administrations. The three existing schools, Henry Clay, Horace Mann and John Muir middle schools, are located within Board District I and are represented by my office. Each of these schools had submitted plans, written by teachers and administrators, to maintain District control of their schools. Each plan was written with the full understanding of community demographics and psychosocial dynamics. Each plan included provisions for special needs students who require professional services that are best provided by a unified school district. Despite the best efforts of teachers with experience working in communities with social conditions that frighten some, the Board found it necessary to vote contrary to my wishes. In one case, they voted against the recommendations of the Superintendent, a professional educator, who is ultimately in charge of the District.

During the March 15 meeting, some of the Board members appeared to have met in advance to write and rehearse scripts. During the Board meeting, they recited lines, complete with accompanying emotions and phony smiles. I stated that I felt the Board majority was voting in lock-step with City Hall. One school, formerly known as South Region Elementary School #6, recently renamed after the late community activist **Juanita Tate**, was given away to Aspire Public Schools, a move that has infuriated members of the local community as well as me. Located on a soccer field previously owned by Tate, the school is scheduled to open in September. Imagine the horror now being felt by the community, including Tate's children, after the Board's unprecedented action to award a new, named school to a charter operator with no sense of the culture or history of Mrs. Tate's work in our community. Another partner, MLA, has been approved to "assist" John Muir. As the educational partner of several schools, including Manual Arts, in Board District 1, MLA has no magic panacea either. Despite being under an abbreviated union contract, teachers at Manual Arts have expressed a desire to get out of MLA.

In the case of Henry Clay, where the Superintendent had recommended a shared campus between the existing administration and Green Dot Public Schools, the Board voted to totally disregard the school-based plan and gave the school entirely to Green Dot. This unsound political move was unheard of and smacks of blatant discrimination. How dare they award another school in South Los Angeles to a partner with questionable results in our community? Despite reports to the contrary, Green Dot has had dismal results in our community with



**PENNY WISE and POUND FOOLISH**

*The District's most successful reform effort is the magnet program, which consists of 24 magnet schools and 148 magnet centers. Since 1977, LAUSD has been in the forefront of offering students the opportunity to participate in a Court-ordered voluntary magnet integration program while pursuing their academic interest. AALA has received many letters, e-mails and phone calls regarding the horrific budget cuts supported by the Mayor's majority Board of Education members. Students' safety and instructional accountability will assuredly be at risk by the reduction-in-force of principals, assistant principals and other AALA members and school staff. One of the most ridiculous cuts was the elimination of 80% plus of the funding base for magnet schools and centers. Two outstanding principals, **Fern Somoza**, Paul Revere Affiliated Charter Middle School, and **Robert Burke**, Affiliated Open Charter Magnet School, have permitted AALA to share their thoughts on this subject.*

Eliminating the Magnet Coordinator position is the first step to the dismantling of the integration program in LAUSD. I have worked for this District for 38 years and saw the growth of magnet schools and the opportunities they have afforded students. It is unbelievable that the only solutions the Budget Services Office can offer is to eliminate essential positions at the school site. Requesting funds from parents at this time is an unsafe plan. It does not stabilize the funding deficit; only adds to the uncertainty. There is no way a stipend can cover the sheer amount of time, work, and effort required for the coordinator position. The more you add to the principal's plate the less success you will see. Some programs will suffer and the District will place the blame on the single administrator for inaction or lack of professionalism. Maybe it is time to look at the successful programs and review why they are successful. The school site should be the last place the Central District should cut and eliminate positions that further the few successes we can actually point to with pride.

In your hurry to decrease the deficit, do not lay waste the programs that build student academic knowledge, strengthen their self-esteem, and demonstrate that LAUSD supports the integration policies so hard fought while I was growing up in the 1960s.

Thank You,

Fern Somoza, Principal  
Paul Revere Affiliated Charter Middle School  
Sent: Monday 3/28/2011, 7:08 AM

I must agree with Fern's point regarding District programs suffering and blame placed on site administrators for inaction or lack of professionalism. With Beaudry and local districts experiencing drastic cuts, the central offices are placing more and more responsibility on the site administrator, not recognizing that all the other central offices are doing the same thing. If more responsibility is being placed on the site administrators, then more school level support is needed.

My other concern is for smaller, full magnet schools. Next year, smaller elementary schools will have one principal, one office manager, and one office technician. How are these schools going to manage CST testing, which occurs around the same time as budget development, which happens to be during the magnet enrollment period? A prudent principal cannot delegate enrollment or budget to office staff or classroom teachers.

**PENNY WISE and POUND FOOLISH (Continued)**

My other big concern for smaller, single administrator schools is safety and who is in charge when the principal is off campus. What happens when a principal is at a District meeting and there are magnet bus problems or other serious problems that occur during the school day? I believe there is a point where these cuts truly begin to impact safety, and I fear we are nearing that juncture.

Sincerely,

Robert Burke, Principal  
Open Magnet Charter School  
Sent: Monday 3/28/1011, 10:57 a.m.

**ANOTHER AVERAGE DAY IN THE LIFE OF A PRINCIPAL  
(Or: "What if Mr. Wilson was assigned to cover two schools and he wasn't available?")**

Last night I was reading over the bulletins for bus safety and late buses, so when I was informed about a bus issue this morning, I thought, "Not a problem, I'm completely prepared because I have read the bulletin!" With great confidence and Reference Guides 4466.1 and 909 fresh on my mind, I walked out to the bus area ready to handle any issue.

It turns out that the substitute bus driver had picked up the wrong child and didn't realize it until he arrived at our school. This would normally be an easy fix, but the child in question was severely autistic and couldn't communicate any of his information. Luckily, his name was on the backpack, and I quickly relayed the information to bus dispatch. Unfortunately, they couldn't find him in the system. I suspected there would be more information in the backpack, but the child screamed and clung to the backpack and would not release it without a major fight that put him at risk for hurting himself.

I gathered a list of all the bus stops the substitute driver came from and told bus dispatch to find a list of the students who get picked up there to locate the boy's name. They said they would try but weren't sure if they could. They would call me back.

Back out at the bus, I knew I had to get into the backpack. I took out my iPhone, brought up the Angry Bird app and handed it to the child. Suddenly, we got the first vocalization and a reaffirming, "Angwy boods!" With him distracted, I was able to get into the backpack. I found a number scribbled on the lunch box, but it was illegible for the most part. I quickly used every combo that made sense and left messages for the child's family around multiple unsuspecting homes in the 818 area. Unbelievably, I hit upon one Spanish-speaking person who actually knew the kid and his mother. Luckily, I speak Spanish, got mom's cell, located the school, contacted the local supervisor, and got the kid back to his family and school. I cleaned my phone from the tears, drool, and runny nose drips and went back to my office to restart the day.

Bus dispatch sent a message a bit later. They thought they had located his school.

"All's well that ends well," as some old English guy once said.

Funny thing though. I never once needed the bulletin information. Go figure.

Don Wilson, Principal  
Wonderland Avenue School  
March 30, 2011

## SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT: THE TRUTH BEHIND PUBLIC EMPLOYEES, COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, AND THE FISCAL CRISIS

If you were beginning to believe the hype that public employee salaries, with their “generous” health and pension benefits are a major drain in the current fiscal crisis, take a look at a March 21, 2011, article in *UCLA Newsroom* (Kumar, 2011). Principal researchers **David Lewin** of UCLA's Anderson School of Business and **Thomas Kochan** of Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Sloan School of Management released new research comparing public sector employees and their private sector counterparts. The report is titled “Getting it Right: Empirical Evidence and Policy Implications from Research on Public-Sector Unionism and Collective Bargaining” (Lewin, 2011). The findings show “unequivocally” that public employees receive a lower salary and benefits package than private sector employees with similar education, training, and background:

- Public employee wages are 11.5% lower than the wages of comparably educated private sector employees.
- When factoring in health and pension benefits, private sector employees still earn 3.7% more than their public sector counterparts.

Related to collective bargaining, Lewin and Kochan’s report showed that:

- States with strong public employee collective bargaining laws and high levels of unionization achieve greater parity with private sector wages. California, New Jersey, and Ohio are examples of strong collective bargaining states.
- Collective bargaining has contributed to “service-enhancing innovations” through new roles and structures such as union coalitions, union-management partnerships, and shared responsibility and accountability. Innovations occurred even during times of severe adversity.
- Where innovations occurred, school districts were characterized by a culture of respect for unions, trust, integrity, and collaboration.

The researchers conclude that public employees are not overpaid. They have given up higher wages in exchange for job stability and benefits. Unions and collective bargaining have produced greater wage equity between public and private sector employees and dispute resolutions, processes that have resulted in fewer public employee strikes. The study recommends modernizing public sector bargaining laws and practices to build new labor-management relationships as catalysts for improving productivity and solving problems, based on shared interests.

AAALA hopes the District will read this important report as a first step away from adversarial bargaining to new working relationships, based on mutual respect, collaboration, and shared responsibility.

### Works Cited

- David Lewin, T. K. (2011). *Getting it Right: Empirical Evidence and Policy Implications from Research on Public-Sector Unionism and Collective Bargaining*. Employment Policy Research Network (EPRN).
- Kumar, N. (2011). *New research by UCLA Anderson professor examines public-sector collective bargaining*. Los Angeles: UCLA, Office of Media Relations and Public Outreach.

### HEALTH BENEFITS FAQ CORRECTION

In the March 28, 2011, issue of *Update*, it stated that student verification for dental and vision coverage was required for dependent children 19-25. This was an error. The statement omitted the word “retirees,” who must verify student status medical, dental and vision coverage for their dependents between the ages of 19-25. Student verification is not required for active employees with dependents to age 26.

## ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

On Thursday, March 24, 2011, AALA's Representative Assembly passed a motion to request that **Superintendent-Elect John Deasy** and his Senior Staff prioritize the responsibilities to be performed by principals and their administrative teams. AALA wishes to remind the incoming Senior Staff that the administrative team at many elementary schools will be made up of no more than a single administrator, while secondary schools will be reduced by 1, 2, or 3 assistant principals. Many Senior Staff on the 24<sup>th</sup> floor and adjacent floors have never served as a school-site administrator. AALA fervently requests that Dr. Deasy, and those Senior Staff with school-site administrator experience, take a careful look at the listed administrative responsibilities and eliminate many, designate others as optional and prioritize the remainder. The health of AALA members and viability of our schools are at stake.

- Audits (preparation & response )
- IEPs
- Raising student achievement
- Assessing & monitoring of the instructional program
- Data and test results analysis
- Improving teacher & student attendance
- Standards-based instruction issues
- Implementation of discipline at school site
- Revising and implementing school safety plans
- Addressing safety concerns at the site from holes in the pavement to earthquakes
- Posting asbestos notices
- Playground & cafeteria supervision (before, during and after school)
- Monitoring student trips
- Supervising after-school programs—drill teams, Youth Services, interscholastic athletics
- Providing support for teachers new to the school
- Parent education programs
- Addressing acts of vandalism
- Supervising volunteers
- Tutoring
- Supervising extended learning programs
- Cross age tutoring/literacy reading buddies
- Supervising intervention programs
- School improvement issues
- Bilingual mandates / Redesignation / monitoring
- Recruitment of staff
- Monitoring of categorical programs
- Monitoring of special education programs
- Program Quality Review (PQR)
- Coordinated Compliance Review (CCR)
- Establishing meetings of parent committees
- Implementing District's authorized discipline plans
- Holding parent conferences
- Holding teacher conferences
- ELL
- Mandated Community Meetings
- Implementing Chanda Smith Consent Decree and directives
- School-Based Coordinated Program
- Gifted plan
- Supervise itinerant personnel
- Develop plans for additional monies throughout the year, i.e., Standards-Based Instruction, literacy, block grants, etc.
- Common pages
- Compliance responses to plans
- Annual program survey
- Bilingual program survey
- EIEAP surveys
- Technology surveys
- School Accountability Report
- California Safe School/Assessment Program
- Literacy training
- 1086 training
- ESL/SDAIE training
- Effective practices
- School determined needs
- LASI program
- Reviewing District bulletins and memos
- Neighborhood Watch, Doves, volunteers
- Groups requesting use of campus
- Compensatory Education councils
- Bilingual Advisory Councils
- School Site Councils
- Government/Local School Leadership Councils
- Instructional cabinets
- Local District committees
- Consolidated Charitable Campaign
- Observing multicultural, ethnic, and community programs, holidays and observances at school sites
- Having knowledge of the Ed Code
- Special school programs for parents-e.g., Cinco de Mayo, Halloween, M. L. King, etc.
- Culminations/Graduations
- Purchasing of all materials for the school from toilet paper to textbooks and computers
- Dealing with multiple budgets
- Deciphering the BTS System
- Budget transfers
- Articulation Meetings
- Overtime requests
- Payroll certification
- Processing equipment and textbooks
- Monitoring P Card expenditures
- Needs assessment
- Budget planning – per pupil funding
- Staffing re: the budget
- Staffing matrix issues
- Staffing of paraprofessionals, office personnel, custodial personnel, etc.
- Dealing with UTLA and other bargaining units' issues
- Evaluation of teachers, paraprofessionals, office, cafeteria and custodial
- Dealing with maintenance issues, trouble calls, workmen on campus
- Construction and bond (BB) issues
- Monthly parent newsletters, calendars and other communications
- Weekly bulletins
- Grant writing

## ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES (Continued)

- Implementing grants when awarded
- Student competitions
- Assigning class coverages
- RTI Surveys and Meetings
- Create and maintain Master Program
- Student Assemblies
- Organize department meetings
- Supervising substitute employees
- Dealing with staff concerns—intra- and intergroup relations
- Fiscal oversight
- Plays, concerts
- Student dances
- Supervision of athletics, etc.
- Implementing a new staff Evaluation Process
- Testing calendars
- Getting equipment repaired
- Dealing with needs of children
- Senior Prom
- Student Body Budgeting and Fiscal Oversight
- Student Equipment inventory
- Student Body fundraising
- Decathlon, Science Bowl, etc.
- Back-to-School Night
- Securing equipment
- ESL classes
- Adopt-A-School and Partnership programs

## LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK SURVEY

The Leadership Academy encourages all administrators to provide input for the LAUSD School Leadership Framework. The framework, which will feature six major components aligned to the California Professional Standards for Educational Leaders, will guide the development of school-site administrators. The components include shared vision, supervision of instruction, investing in teacher quality, parent and community engagement, school operations/health and safety and culture of learning and professional behavior. All components of the framework are linked with the new Teaching and Learning Framework. The School Leadership Framework Survey is available by visiting:

[https://cogix.lausd.net/ViewsFlash/servlet/viewsflash?cmd=page&pollid=SUP!Sch\\_Ldship\\_Frame\\_Pub](https://cogix.lausd.net/ViewsFlash/servlet/viewsflash?cmd=page&pollid=SUP!Sch_Ldship_Frame_Pub).

## AALA MEMBERS INTERACT WITH TOM TORLAKSON AT RECEPTION

At last week's reception for **Tom Torlakson**, California Superintendent of Public Instruction, at the California Science Center, AALA members, other union participants and Los Angeles civic leaders had an opportunity to meet and talk with Mr. Torlakson about their concerns regarding current issues impacting education in Los Angeles. An informal program began with the introduction of Mr. Torlakson by **Dr. Judith Perez**, President of AALA, the event's host, who thanked him for his strong support of public education in California and for his responsiveness to the concerns of Los Angeles public school educators. Mr. Torlakson, in brief comments, spoke passionately about his experience as a science teacher in a northern California public school and how he is committed to public education for all students. He stressed the importance of working together to guarantee that public education continues to thrive in California. The current budget problems were addressed, including the need to extend the taxes so that education does not receive additional cuts. He also encouraged working together to address the concerns being voiced regarding Proposition 39. The evening concluded with a brief question and answer period.

**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.

**CERTIFICATED POSITIONS AVAILABLE**

***SECONDARY PRINCIPAL, SMALL SCHOOL, MST 40, (Temp. Adv.)***

**SAGE Academy at Belmont HS (4)**, 1575 West Second Street, Los Angeles, CA 90026  
 SAGE is a D Basis, Linked Learning District Initiative Grant school. For information and application procedures contact **Rosa Maria Hernandez**, Director, at 213.241.0135. **Filing deadline is Monday, April 11, 2011.**

**Mendez Learning Center (PLAS)**, 1200 Plaza Del Sol, Los Angeles, CA 90033  
 School of Math and Science is a D Basis (+ A Basis supplement) school. For information and application procedures contact **Phyllis Bradford**, Senior Director, Human Resources, Partnership for Los Angeles Schools, at [employment@partnershipla.org](mailto:employment@partnershipla.org). **Filing deadline is Monday, April 11, 2011.**

The following positions are available to view in their entirety by going to the AALA Website, <http://www.aalasd.com>. By clicking on “positions available” to the left of the screen, you can select School-Based and Nonschool-Based positions and click on any position to view the specific flyer.

POSITION	LOCATION	DEADLINE	CONTACT
Asst. Prin., SCS	Bravo Medical Magnet HS	04/01/11	323.224.3173
Principal, Secondary	Valley Region #4 HS	04/08/11	818.654.3615
Principals, Secondary Small School	South Region Learning Complex #2		323.242.1492
	Communication & Technology School	04/01/11	
	Green Design Community School	04/01/11	
	Public Service Community School	04/01/11	
	Performing Arts Community School	04/01/11	
	Site Operations Coordinator	05/06/11	
Principals, Secondary Small School	Central Region HS #13		213.241.0100
	Los Angeles River School	04/08/11	
	ARTLAB Arts & Community Empowerment School	04/08/11	
	School of History & Dramatic Arts	04/08/11	
Principals, Pilot School	Central Region MS #7		323.224.3100
	Business & Technology School	04/08/11	
	School of Arts & Culture	04/08/11	

POSITION	DEADLINE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>SPECIALIST, SPEECH AND LANGUAGE (2 Positions), MST 38, B Basis, Division of Special Education</b></li> </ul> For information and application procedures contact <b>Elaine Shackelford</b> , Coordinator, Related Services, at 213.241.6200.	<b>12:00 p.m.                      Mon., April 4,                      2011</b>