

UPDATE

Week of April 18, 2011

WELCOME, SUPERINTENDENT DEASY (. . .and Farewell, Mr. Cortines)

ALA welcomes **Dr. John Deasy** to his new role as Superintendent of the Los Angeles Unified School District beginning Friday, April 15, 2011. Since last summer, when he became Deputy Superintendent, AALA leadership has met regularly with Dr. Deasy to inform him about LAUSD's vibrant history, learn about his educational philosophy and discuss the critical issues facing AALA members. Thus far, while we agree with him on some things and disagree with him on others, we have found him to be straight-forward in expressing his views about the concerns we have raised.

Dr. Deasy is well aware that he is becoming LAUSD Superintendent during the most challenging fiscal period in memory. Since 2009-2010, our District has suffered \$1.5 billion in budget cuts. The projected deficit for 2011-2012 is upwards of \$408 million. As we previously wrote in *Update* (week of August 2, 2010), last year AALA saved over 150 administrative positions by accepting 12 furlough days for members over a two-year period and identifying alternative funding cuts which better served the District than those recommended by senior staff.

Since 2007-2008, our active membership has been reduced by 717 people (25%). Of these, 22% are school-based; 33% are supervisory. These cuts have had a significant negative impact on student and staff safety, the supervision of instruction and overall ability of administrators to be accountable for the multitude of tasks assigned. The workload of AALA members has increased considerably, threatening their health and well-being. Despite these immense challenges, LAUSD schools have managed to increase student performance dramatically, in large part due to administrative leadership and support.

The projected deficit could devastate public education in Los Angeles, through no fault of the hard-working employees who serve LAUSD students. We wrote last week about Dr. Deasy's negotiating proposals, which he indicated could save approximately 80% of the positions slated to be cut, including those of AALA members. Our bargaining team is keenly interested in which positions he proposes to preserve, given the anticipated deficit. **While negotiations with the District took place on Monday, April 11, 2011, and Dr. Deasy says he wants a tentative settlement in place by May 1, there is nothing of substance yet to report.**

The Health Benefits Committee, which represents all bargaining units including AALA, will continue its separate negotiations on Thursday, April 14, 2011. Undoubtedly, the HBC will discuss Dr. Deasy's proposal that the HBC loan the District some of the health benefits reserve to help fill the deficit.

One of the greatest challenges for AALA members right now is the fog of uncertainty they face every day about their own future, and the welfare of students, teachers, and classified employees. Given Dr. Deasy's new role as Superintendent, AALA wonders what support he will provide principals and

WELCOME SUPERINTENDENT DEASY and FAREWELL MR. CORTINES (Continued)

assistant principals to help them continue improving education in their schools. What resources will he make available to administrators to enable them to do their jobs effectively?

In the spirit of collaboration, AALA pledges to continue working with our new Superintendent. In return, we ask him to negotiate a fair and reasonable contract. We also ask that he make decisions based upon what is best for our schools, not political expediency. We hope his daily practice confirms what he has said many times in public, that he truly values the work of school leaders, who play the pivotal role in transforming education for our students. Time will tell.

LIP SERVICE OR ACTION?

During a budget presentation to the Board of Education on Tuesday, April 12, 2011, incoming **Superintendent John Deasy** shared facts regarding the District's current budget crisis. Toward the end of the presentation, he said, "LAUSD is pursuing all available options for generating more revenue to support school operations. Some of the options include:

- The Governor's proposal seeks to identify sustainable solutions, including new revenues for public education
- Re-focus on attendance recovery
- Seek full funding of federal obligations, for example, fully funding IDEA, Special Education funding
- We need to explore local options, including:
 - Parcel Tax
 - Mello-Roos Districts
 - Local Occupancy/Bed Tax
 - Foundations and philanthropic organizations
- Seek other funding opportunities, e.g., Mandated Costs and Cost recoveries."

While AALA appreciates these options, two revenue sources were notably absent from Dr. Deasy's presentation. First is **Governor Brown's** proposal to abolish more than 400 local Community Redevelopment Agencies (CRAs), which would redirect billions of dollars in property taxes to support schools, police agencies and fire departments. The second potential funding source that went unmentioned is the District's loosely coordinated Public School Choice program, which has allowed tens of millions of dollars to be allocated to deregulated independent charters and other private entities.

AALA continues to request that the Board of Education address these two vital revenue sources in a nonpolitical fashion to truly support students, parents and staff. Mayor Villaraigosa initiated projects to quickly encumber over a billion dollars of CRA money and therefore keep these funds away from schools and other much needed public services. One need not wonder whether the Board of Education is supporting the Governor or the Mayor!

REDEVELOPMENT OFFICIALS ARE OFFERING A PIG IN A POKE

We have received permission from the Sacramento Bee and Mr. Dan Walters to publish the following article, which reflects AALA's position to support the elimination of the California Redevelopment Agencies (CRAs).

When **Gov. Jerry Brown** proposed to abolish more than 400 local redevelopment agencies and redirect billions of dollars in property taxes, the state's redevelopment industry shifted into political overdrive.

Redevelopment officials claimed that abolition would devastate efforts to improve local economies and cost hundreds of thousands of jobs.

However, independent analysts agree that redevelopment, while lucrative to subsidy-seeking developers, provides no substantial improvement to the state's overall economy.

The agencies skim more than \$5 billion a year off the top of the property tax pot each year, and the state must make up about \$2 billion of that hefty diversion in extra payments to schools.

Brown is saying, in effect, that the state can't afford to subsidize local development schemes and wants the money back.

His proposal is a major issue in the budget stalemate and fell barely short of passing the Assembly. That has redevelopment officials worried, and they've conjured up an alternative – allowing redevelopment agencies to voluntarily shift some funds into schools in return for being allowed to extend redevelopment projects that are expiring.

John Shirey, who runs the California Redevelopment Association and is the field general of the war against Brown's plan, calls it "a reasonable compromise for all involved" that would give the state about \$2.7 billion in budget relief over the next decade.

The CRA plan would provide only a small fraction of the money that Brown envisions, but the real clincher is giving redevelopment projects an automatic extension, a variation of a scheme that some redevelopment groups have floated for several years.

The key word is "blight."

Cleaning up urban blight was the rationale for the state's authorizing redevelopment agencies six decades ago. But over the years, redevelopment agencies adopted very creative definitions of "blight" to justify subsidies to private developers of hotels, auto malls, big box stores and other commercial ventures.

One city, for instance, declared land blighted because it was "subject to periodic flooding," thereby justifying its redevelopment. The land in question was a marshy reach of San Francisco Bay that was home to birds and other wildlife.

The use of redevelopment became so far-fetched that the Legislature tightened up state law, eventually decreeing that for projects to be extended, local authorities had to prove the continued existence of real blight, not the imaginary kind.

That requirement put many projects in peril, and redevelopment officials have been desperately seeking ways to change or repeal it. Now they hope to make a silk purse from a sow's ear by offering, in effect, a bribe to the state to allow extension of marginal projects.

It is, however, merely a pig in a poke.

HEALTH BENEFITS FAQ

Topic: Health Benefits Committee Progress Report

What's the HBC's schedule for reviewing, renewing, or adopting new plans for 2012?

Generally, from April through August, the HBC reviews all medical plans and obtains new premium quotes, based on renewing existing plans with no significant changes and alternative options with related premium costs. Insurers also present any modifications to existing plans, such as narrowing network choices as implemented by Anthem HMO Select in 2010.

This year, the HBC will also receive quotes for the following plans: IMED Vision plan, prescription coverage for Anthem Blue Cross EPO and HMO plans, and MetLife Dental plans (PPO and DMO).

When will the 2011 plans be adopted?

The HBC deliberates on all quotes and plan details over a three-month period. With the higher than normal contracts to review for 2012, the HBC hopes to finalize all plans by September, in time to prepare for the annual Open Enrollment process.

What are the trends for health care costs for 2012?

Projected increases are similar to 2010, with some rates slightly lower. According to The Segal Company's annual cost trend survey, medical plan cost increases are projected between 10.2 to 11.2%. Prescription cost increases are projected between 7% for Medicare Advantage plans and up to 9.2% for actives and retirees under age 65. Vision and Dental plan increases are projected between 3.2% and 6.6%. Segal is the benefits resources consulting company contracted to provide services to the HBC.

What happens if a new budget is not negotiated and plan decisions must be made to meet Open Enrollment timelines?

According to the 2009-2011 Health and Welfare MOU, if agreement isn't reached with the coordinated unions, the District must continue funding at the 2011-budgeted amount.

2011 Segal Health Plan Cost Trend Survey,

<http://www.segalco.com/publications-and-resources/surveys-studies/?id=1519>

ATTENTION, ACTIVE MEMBERS:

Voting for AALA Directors and Vice Presidents ends at midnight, April 15. If you haven't yet voted, access your ballot by checking your April 4 e-mail from survey@aala.us.

THE BLUEBERRY STORY: The Teacher Gives The Businessman A Lesson

Permission to reprint this story is freely granted by the author.

“If I ran my business the way you people operate your schools, I wouldn’t be in business very long!”

I stood before an auditorium filled with outraged teachers who were becoming angrier by the minute. My speech had entirely consumed their precious 90 minutes of in-service. Their initial icy glares had turned to restless agitation. You could cut the hostility with a knife.

I represented a group of business people dedicated to improving public schools. I was an executive at an ice cream company that became famous in the middle 1980s when *People Magazine* chose our blueberry as the “Best Ice Cream in America.”

I was convinced of two things. First, public schools needed to change; they were archaic selecting and sorting mechanisms designed for the industrial age and out of step with the needs of our emerging “knowledge society.” Second, educators were a major part of the problem: they resisted change, hunkered down in their feathered nests, protected by tenure and shielded by a bureaucratic monopoly. They needed to look to business. We knew how to produce quality. Zero defects! TQM! Continuous improvement!

In retrospect, the speech was perfectly balanced - equal parts ignorance and arrogance.

As soon as I finished, a woman’s hand shot up. She appeared polite, pleasant—she was, in fact, a razor-edged, veteran, high school English teacher who had been waiting to unload.

She began quietly, “We are told, sir, that you manage a company that makes good ice cream.”

I smugly replied, “Best ice cream in America, Ma’am.”

“How nice,” she said. “Is it rich and smooth?” “Sixteen percent butterfat,” I crowed.

“Premium ingredients?” she inquired. “Super-premium! Nothing but triple A.” I was on a roll. I never saw the next line coming.

“Mr. Vollmer,” she said, leaning forward with a wicked eyebrow raised to the sky, “When you are standing on your receiving dock and you see an inferior shipment of blueberries arrive, what do you do?”

In the silence of that room, I could hear the trap snap.... I was dead meat, but I wasn’t going to lie.

“I send them back.”

She jumped to her feet. “That’s right!” she barked, “And we can never send back *our* blueberries. We take them big, small, rich, poor, gifted, exceptional, abused, frightened, confident, homeless, rude and brilliant. We take them with ADHD, junior rheumatoid arthritis and English as their second language. We take them all! Every one! And that, Mr. Vollmer, is why it’s not a business. It’s school!”

THE BLUEBERRY STORY (Continued)

In an explosion, all 290 teachers, principals, bus drivers, aides, custodians, and secretaries jumped to their feet and yelled, "Yeah! Blueberries! Blueberries!"

And so began my long transformation.

Since then, I have visited hundreds of schools. I have learned that a school is not a business. Schools are unable to control the quality of their raw material, they are dependent upon the vagaries of politics for a reliable revenue stream, and they are constantly mauled by a howling horde of disparate, competing customer groups that would send the best CEO screaming into the night.

None of this negates the need for change. We must change what, when, and how we teach to give all children maximum opportunity to thrive in a post-industrial society. But educators cannot do this alone; these changes can occur only with the understanding, trust, permission, and active support of the surrounding community. For the most important thing I have learned is that schools reflect the attitudes, beliefs and health of the communities they serve, and therefore, to improve public education means more than changing our schools, it means changing America.

Jamie Robert Vollmer © 2011

*Jamie Vollmer is a former business executive and attorney who now works to increase public support for America's public schools. His new book, **Schools Cannot Do It Alone**, is available at www.jamievollmer.com. Because Mr. Vollmer wrote this story several years ago, AALA asked if his views have changed. He responded, "My views in this regard have not changed. I still speak around the country for meaningful change, but in defense of public schools."*

BOARD DISTRICT 5 ELECTION UPDATE

On Tuesday night, the Los Angeles County Democratic Committee endorsed **Bennett Kayser** for Board of Education District 5. Mr. Kayser received over 60% of the vote of the nearly 200 members present. He impressed the group with his wit and wisdom, explaining that he would be the first disabled member of the District's governing Board. Former Board member, **Jackie Goldberg**, spoke on behalf of Mr. Kayser and echoed his comments that the current direction of the Board appears to be to privatize LAUSD schools. The election takes place on May 17, 2011. The neighborhoods involved include Atwater, Los Feliz, Silverlake, parts of Echo Park and Highland Park, Eagle Rock, parts of El Sereno, Hermon, Monterey Hills, City Terrace, East Los Angeles, the southeast cities and Monterey Park.

IN MEMORIAM

MARGIE CAHN – Former Principal of Pacific Palisades, Westport Heights, Overland and Bellagio Road schools. She retired in 1978, and passed away on April 1, 2011. Memorial donations may be made to Vitas Foundation, Hospice Care, 990 West 190th Street, Suite 120, Torrance, CA.

RICHARD BELMAN – Former Principal of Los Angeles Technology Center and Metropolitan Skills Center, Assistant Principal, Operations of Garfield CAS, Evans CAS and Venice Skills Center. He retired on June 30, 1993, and passed away on April 13, 2011.

CONGRATULATIONS: Robert Lewis Continuation High School

Robert Lewis Continuation HS has won First Place for the sixth time in a row in the Annual Los Angeles Regional Bridge Building Contest held at California State University, Los Angeles, on March 22, 2011. **Christopher Valladares**, a graduating senior, placed First and has received a \$3,000 internship at an engineering firm this summer. **Martin Rodriguez**, also a graduating senior, placed Third and will go on to represent the Robert Lewis team at the International competition in Chicago, IL, on April 30, 2011. Their sponsor, **Dr. Harald Holcomb**, a science teacher at Robert Lewis, will accompany Martin to Chicago. Robert Lewis HS Principal **Laura Hale** states, "As you can imagine, the school pride this generates is phenomenal. These are two fantastic young men."

SAVE THE DATES

TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 2011 – The **William Johnston** school-naming will be held at 1:00 p.m. in the Board Room at 333 S. Beaudry Avenue, Los Angeles. Board of Education Member **Richard Vladovic** is sponsoring the school-naming. You are invited to attend.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 2011 – **AALA Alumni Spring Luncheon** will be held at the Stadium Club, Dodger Stadium, 11:30 a.m. – 1:45 p.m. The featured speaker will be **Dr. John Deasy**, Superintendent, LAUSD.

THURSDAY, MAY 5, 2011 – **ACSA Region XVI Annual Administrators of the Year Awards Banquet** will be held 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. at Casa Italiana Restaurant, 1051 N. Broadway, Los Angeles. For information and reservations contact **Barbara Friedrich** at bfriedri@lausd.net.

MONDAY, MAY 9, 2011 - **Women in Educational Leadership Annual Mentor and Awards Dinner** will honor **Vivian Ekehian**, Chief Human Resources Officer, and **Tony Danza**, actor and star of the A&E series "Teach." For reservation and additional information, visit the WEL website at <http://www.w-e-l.org/> or contact WEL President **Dr. Janet Lew** at JLLewChu@aol.com.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 25, 2011 – **AALA Annual Scholarship/Community Awards Banquet** will be held from 5:30 – 8:00 p.m. at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel, 506 South Grand Avenue, Los Angeles.

Update will not be published during SPRING BREAK.

***The next issue of Update will be dated
the week of May 2, 2011.***

You may check Positions Available at www.aalausd.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.

CERTIFICATED POSITIONS AVAILABLE

INSTRUCTIONAL SPECIALIST (MST 40, Temp. Adv.)

South Region HS #4 (8), 4110 Santa Fe Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90810

South Region #4 is a B Basis school. For information and application procedures contact **Juan Flecha**, Principal Leader, at 310.354.3400. **Filing deadline is Monday, April 25, 2011.**

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 School-Based and Nonschool-Based positions and click on any position to view the specific flyer.

POSITION	LOCATION	DEADLINE	CONTACT
Principal, Secondary	Taft HS	04/22/11	818.654.3615
Principal, Secondary Small School	South Region Learning Complex #2 Site Operations Coordinator	05/06/11	323.242.1492

POSITION	DEADLINE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DIRECTOR, LAUSD CHARTER SELPA, MST 45 (Temp. Adv.), A Basis, Division of Special Education For information and application procedures contact Sharyn Howell, Executive Director, at 213.241.6701. 	5:00 p.m. Mon., Apr. 25, 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SPECIALIST, PSYCHIATRIC SOCIAL WORKER, MST 37 Temp. Adv.), B Basis, School Mental Health Services For information and application procedures contact Pia Escudero, Director, at 213.241.3841. 	4:30 p.m. Fri., Apr. 29, 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SECONDARY DIRECTOR (PRINCIPAL LEADER), MST 45 (Temp. Adv.), E Basis, Local District 3 For information and application procedures contact Dr. Brenda Manuel, Interim Superintendent, at 323.242.1337. 	5:00 p.m. Fri., May 6, 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ELEMENTARY DIRECTOR (PRINCIPAL LEADER), MST 45 (Temp. Adv.), E Basis, Local District 3 For information and application procedures contact Dr. Brenda Manuel, Interim Superintendent, at 323.242.1337. 	5:00 p.m. Fri., May 6, 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADMINISTRATOR, INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES, MST 45 (Temp. Adv.), A Basis, Local District 3 For information and application procedures contact Dr. Brenda Manuel, Interim Superintendent, at 323.242.1337. 	5:00 p.m. Fri., May 6, 2011