

To all Haddon Parents, From Revolutionary Parents of Haddon

Our children are not getting the education they deserve at Haddon Elementary. This is the reason we formed the organization United Parents of Haddon in August 2011. **We know that parents are stronger when we organize and work together.**

Since we started over a year ago, we have been fighting for a better education for our children. We have worked very hard to address the issues at our school through conversations with the current school staff and district leadership. By our count, we have had at least eleven formal meetings with the teachers, principal, and district staff over the past year in hopes of collaboratively improving our school. Unfortunately, although we have asked many times for the staff and district to help make the substantive changes our school needs, they have not been willing to do so yet.

There are many problems at our school that are hurting our children. Only 45% of our children are reading at grade level, meaning that most of them will leave Haddon unprepared to succeed in middle school. Our school is doing a very poor job of helping our students learn English – our reclassification rate is only 21%, far below LAUSD's already bad average of 29%.

Haddon's broken school culture is also hurting our students. There are serious bullying and behavior problems that are making our children feel unsafe, and are being dealt with poorly or not at all by school administration. In addition, we believe our school has low expectations for our students, and is not establishing the college going culture they need.

We have also talked to hundreds of parents about what they want to see changed at Haddon. We have taken school tours of other, higher performing schools in the area to learn from what they are doing. And we have studied what factors make schools like those successful.

From all this work, we have developed a vision for four substantive changes we want to see at our school. Those changes are:

- 1) Better school leadership
- 2) Better teaching
- 3) A culture of safety and high expectations
- 4) Put kids first in all decisions, so that we do not lose good teachers like Mr. Barragan just because they are new

We need to make these changes now. Our children are getting older every year, and they cannot wait any longer.

Our first choice is to work with our district, the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), and make these changes in collaboration with them. We are hopeful that they will be willing to work with us to accomplish the goals listed above, and we will keep trying very hard to work with them.

We have already been trying to work with them for an entire year. However, it has not worked. They have not been willing to make the type of meaningful changes we are asking for. If we want to make sure our children can definitely have a better school next year, we need a backup plan.

That is why we are asking for your signature today. We are gathering the petitions we need from Haddon parents that would allow us, the parents, to convert our school into a charter school next year if we want to. Turning Haddon into a charter school would mean that a new, non-profit organization would come in to take over and improve our school. It would still be the same school building with all the same exact students, but with new management.

We know that LAUSD does not want this to happen, and neither do we – we would prefer to work with LAUSD to achieve change together. But if LAUSD cannot help us achieve the changes that we are seeking for our children, we are willing to find a charter school organization that can. We have to gather these signatures now so that we can show the District we are serious, and so that we have enough time to use our backup plan (the charter school option) if necessary.

We do not know whether LAUSD can or will meet our needs and improve our school. We also do not know whether there are any charter school operators that can or will meet our needs and improve our school. That is why we are asking for your signature today, so that we can make sure that we, the parents, have as many options as possible.

Soon, we will hopefully have signatures from parents representing over 50% of our school. We hope that we will also have a proposal from LAUSD for how can fix our school. If that happens, we will have a vote amongst all the parents who signed the petition to decide whether we should:

- a) accept the LAUSD plan and throw out our petitions, OR
- b) reject the LAUSD plan and turn in our petitions to move towards the charter school option

We commit to you that this decision, whether to go with the LAUSD plan or a charter school plan, will be made by a vote of all parents who sign the petition, regardless of whether you have joined our organization as a member.

Our kids do not deserve a mediocre school that will not prepare them for middle school. They need an excellent school that will put them on a path to college and/or a career of their choice. Right now, Haddon Elementary is not that school. Our kids can do better and we can't wait. We are taking a very big step and we want your help. After you sign the petition please find out how you can help talk to other parents, get informed and let's make Haddon the best elementary school in the San Fernando Valley.

I have read and fully understand the above documents as well as the petition that I have signed. Dated _____, at Pacima, CA.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____