

September 29, 2014

Hon. Dr. Richard Vladovic, President, District 7

Hon. Dr. George McKenna, District 1

Hon. Mónica García, District 2

Hon. Tamar Galatzan, District 3

Hon. Steve Zimmer, District 4

Hon. Bennett Kayser, District 5

Hon. Monica Ratliff, District 6

Superintendent Dr. John Deasy

Dear LAUSD Board Members and Superintendent,

Over the past six months, we have grown increasingly alarmed by LAUSD rumors and media headlines that threaten to shift our focus away from the needs of students. As the Superintendent faces his upcoming performance evaluation, we ask that you continue to focus on the following:

We are concerned that the exciting student achievement gains we have seen in recent years will be undermined by political conflicts and instability of leadership. We call on *both* the Superintendent and School Board to model for students and the public you serve an unwavering commitment to progress and equity. Individually, many of you have shown tremendous leadership that has resulted in increasing 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading levels; expanding transitional kindergarten and health services; increasing access to Advanced Placement classes; and placing more low-income students into gifted programs. As a result, we've seen reduced suspensions and expulsions and increased graduation rates. These gains are only a fraction of what can be accomplished through student-centered collaborative leadership.

Second, *both* the Superintendent and School Board must recognize the consequences that your decisions have on the hundreds of thousands of families and employees you serve. In response to community demands that our District treat education as a civil rights crisis, you have implemented groundbreaking changes—a funding formula linked to student needs, higher state education standards and the School Climate Bill of Rights. To continue to tackle these and future challenges, we need less finger pointing and more collaboration, less politics and more focus on policy design and implementation.

Third, real and honest change doesn't happen behind closed doors. Historically, our communities have been shortchanged by this kind of decision-making. We urge the Board to ensure a fair process for determining the parameters to review the Superintendent. We call for an open forum to better understand the perspectives of Board Members on leadership priorities for LAUSD. We also request that these

parameters be widely published to all families and employees to foster public trust and transparency.

Further, we believe that the parameters must focus primarily on how well his efforts and priorities have led to student improvements at LAUSD. Thank you for your leadership and consideration of these matters and the communities you represent.

With trust,

**Maria Brenes**

Executive Director

InnerCity Struggle (ICS)

**Elise Buik**

Chief Executive Officer  
United Way of Greater Los Angeles

**Oscar Cruz**

President and CEO  
Families In Schools

**Marqueece Harris-Dawson**

President and CEO  
Community Coalition

**Stewart Kwoh**

President & Executive Director  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice

**Ama Nyamekye**

Executive Director  
Educators 4 Excellence

**Nolan V. Rollins**

President and CEO  
Los Angeles Urban League

**Scott Washburn**

Interim Executive Director  
SEIU, Local 99