

**LAUSD PARENT ENGAGEMENT TASK FORCE MEETING
Parents' Bill of Rights and Responsibilities Working Group**

**February 23, 2011
333 S. Beaudry Avenue, Room 2-201
Los Angeles, CA 90017
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order by Kathleen Mooney at 9:10 a.m.

**Input, Discussion and Action on Draft Framework Template
of Three-Year Plans For Parents' Bill of Rights and
Responsibilities**

The group discussed previous versions of a Draft Framework and gave input into the recommendations outlined on the attached document.

Parent Bill of Rights and Responsibilities Working Group Report

Draft as of 2/23/11

BACKGROUND

The Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education passed the *Parents as Equal Partners in the Education of their Children* resolution on December 14, 2010. As a result of this resolution, LAUSD formed a taskforce of key stakeholders entrusted to develop four district tools to **engage and equip parents to participate in their children’s education at school and at home**. The taskforce consisted of four work groups, including a workgroup to develop a *Parent Bill of Rights and Responsibilities*.

The development of the *Parent Bill of Rights and Responsibilities* document was guided by the following principles as stated in the resolution:

- Parents are the first and lifelong teachers of their children;
- Parents are knowledgeable and critical advocates for their children;
- Parents are equitable partners in education requiring access to all pertinent information about their child’s school environment, instructors, and educational options and school site personnel;
- Parents are inseparable from the academic success of their children and;
- Parents are equally accountable for educational outcomes.

Beyond the principles outlined in the resolution, this document was developed with the understanding that LAUSD, as a **public** education system, is funded by taxpayer money. Therefore, staff has the responsibility – as servants of the public – to provide a quality education to *all* children regardless of race, gender, nationality, and economic status. Finally, this document is founded on the belief that an effective public education system is key to a vibrant democracy and a productive economy, fundamental to strengthening the vitality of our everyday lives.

OBJECTIVES

In order to improve student success by strengthening parent engagement, this document seeks to accomplish 3 objectives:

- Clarify the role of parents and the school system as equal partners in the education of students;
- Validate parents’ expectations of the public education system; and
- Underscore the responsibilities of parents in supporting their children’s education.

The document presents a framework of the core principles of an effective parent-school partnership and delineates the fundamental rights and responsibilities of a parent that has a child enrolled in a publically funded LAUSD school. It is important to note that this document

was informed by the local, state, and federal policies around parent involvement¹ and is not designed to usurp those legal rights but is designed to support and enhance the availability of the rights due to parents under the law. This document is **not** a summary of those legal rights², **nor** is it a comprehensive list of what parents and schools “**can or should**” do to support children’s education. As such, this document goes beyond a simple summary or “can do” list by describing the **core components** of an effective parent -school partnership. Finally, this document was created to inform the development and implementation of public education policies and programs that seek to **authentically** engage parents.

¹ LAUSD Title I Parent Engagement Plan, California Education Code Section 51100-51102, NCLB XXXXX

² For a summary of parent rights in local, state, and federal policy, see: the LAUSD bulletin Number BUL-2680, September 1, 2006, LAUSD Parent Student Handbook 2010-11, and see various federal laws and state education codes.

IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to ensure that this document triggers the institutional changes required to develop an authentic and effective parent-school partnership, the Work Group identified key recommendations on how to strengthen and use the *Parent Bill of Rights and Responsibilities*:

Strategy	Roles	Parameters
<p>A. Establish the Parent Engagement Ad-hoc Committee to monitor the implementation of the resolution and conduct an audit of all LAUSD departments to assess if parent rights (based on local, state and federal policy) are incorporated into all appropriate policies and practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LAUSD creates an Ad-hoc committee Superintendent and Board Members monitor progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ad-hoc committee should be chaired by LAUSD, Superintendent’s Office, and a nonprofit partner and should include internal and external stakeholders. Ad-hoc committee should report to the LAUSD board quarterly Support school site teams who want to monitor the implementation of these rights and responsibilities
<p>B. Invite stakeholders to endorse the Bill of Rights and Responsibilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LAUSD and community partners develop and implement a public relations campaign. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop consensus among stakeholders
<p>C. Develop a training module for parents on the Bill of Rights and Responsibilities to be included in the Parent/Family Center training toolkit.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LAUSD adapts the Parent/Family Center toolkit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interactive methodology
<p>D. Require that all LAUSD Board Members and employees sign the bill of rights and responsibilities; have parents and teachers sign the document every year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools Include the document as part of the “back to school night” activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create clear expectations from the moment employees join LAUSD; revisited every year as a foundation of a teacher-parent partnership. Insure that training is available every year to support the follow through needed after the signing of this document by staff The document, that will be signed, should state that engaging parents and supporting these parent rights and responsibilities is a part of the employees evaluation

<p>E. Develop parent-friendly summaries of parent rights as included in local, state and federal policy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAUSD develops materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Also to be included in the parent/family center toolkit. • Rights from LAUSD resolutions, state education code, and NCLB. • Incorporate this document into staff training on parent engagement and all school site council member trainings
<p>F. Adopt an official definition of parent engagement and parent involvement and identify “best practices” of authentic and exemplary models of parent engagement across LAUSD and from other districts. Develop these “best practices” into case studies to be shared across the district with staff and parents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAUSD conducts research or subcontracts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reference best practices already identified by research centers, think-tanks, and universities. • Best practices should focus on such practices as parent engagement training, creating a welcoming environment, etc.
<p>G. Develop an accountability structure to keep schools, not only Parent/Family Centers accountable for engaging parents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAUSD develops new procedures • LAUSD introduces resolutions if necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defines parent engagement indicators; collects data on the indicators and make it public,
<p>H. Include parent engagement as a key component of principal and teacher evaluations incorporating LAUSD parent engagement indicators.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAUSD develops new procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linking performance with accountability.
<p>I. Implement a clear process and structure for parents to submit complaints if they perceive their rights to be violated</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAUSD identifies a person or unit to collect and address the complaints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For example: School sites have a ‘parent complaint’ team made up of 2 staff and 2 parent leaders to review all parent complaints and respond and/or refer appropriately.
<p>J. Revamp parent engagement trainings for staff, teachers, and parents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAUSD works with teacher and administrator certification programs to Insure parent engagement training is in all certification programs • LAUSD insures that all in-place teachers and staff receive parent engagement training 	

<p>K. Revamp the selection, hiring, training, and monitoring of Parent/Family Center coordinators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LAUSD establishes new procedures with input from the ad-hoc committee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accountability matrix, more frequent reporting; evaluate knowledge and skill acquired by parents Clarity at each site regarding who the direct manager is of the Parent/Family Resource Center Coordinators Mandatory training for Parent Center Coordinator/Community Liaison Possible selection team change would include parents as 51% of the hiring team for all Parent/Family Resource Center staff
<p>L. Develop a glossary of terms to support the Parent Bill of Rights and Responsibilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ad Hoc Committee develops a glossary of terms to insure that people, as they read the Parent Bill of Rights and Responsibilities, are clear about what certain key terms meant to the people who developed the document. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
<p>M. Encourage schools to have a Parent Engagement Committee to develop plans, set priorities, assess parent engagement work, and identify funding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LAUSD develops criteria and tools to support the development of a Parent Engagement Committee at all schools which includes staff, parents, students, and community members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
<p>N. Provide easily accessible language training to educators in order to facilitate communications with parents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
<p>O. Assess the interpreting skills available at school sites to insure that translation and interpreting resources are available as needed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

PARENTS' RIGHTS

Parents are entitled to access a **free and high quality education** for their children in a safe, healthy and supportive learning environment that prepares students for college and 21st century careers. The school system is responsible for:

- Providing **tailored education programs** to all students including those with unique learning needs (gifted students, English language learners, special education students, students with special academic or social needs, etc);
- Ensuring that all educators are held **accountable** for the performance of students and for effectively engaging parents in ways that increase parents' involvement in the students' education;
- Embracing **family/community networks** that provide resources and services to support student learning and development;

Parents are entitled to a **welcoming environment** in which parents can develop productive and personal relationships with educators and staff to support their child's education. The school system is responsible for:

- Providing effective **training** to school administrators, teachers and staff so parents are welcomed, valued and respected as equal partners;
- **Communicating** with parents in a timely manner using parent-friendly and culturally-appropriate formats and multiple communication strategies (home visits, one-on-one meetings, phone calls, conferences, mailings, email, website, marquees, etc.);
- **Overcoming obstacles** that may prevent parent involvement at home and at school (language barriers, time limitations, lack of accessibility during normal school hours, child care needs, transportation issues, etc.);
- Ensuring that **decision-making and school procedures are transparent** and that key educational information (policies, school rules, student records, school plans, budgets, etc.) is easily accessible, in a format that parents can understand, and is proactively given to all parents;

Parents are entitled to a school system that proactively **involves/engages parents** and provides opportunities for them to undertake leadership roles. The school system is responsible for:

- Adhering to the spirit and intent **parent rights** included in local, state and federal law;
- Providing multiple and meaningful opportunities for parents to be **involved** and actively participate at school, local district, and district levels in such matters as governance, budgeting, school improvement, decision-making, and volunteerism;
- Providing all parents and all staff **sufficient opportunities** to work and learn together for the purpose of developing partnerships in support of student learning;
- Providing **learning opportunities** and necessary training to strengthen a parent's capacity to support their child's learning at home and at school (parenting skills, nurturing a learning environment at home, knowing how school works, understanding their child's academic status and the plans for improvement, etc.);

- Providing **leadership opportunities** and necessary training to actively develop a continual parent leadership team at each school;
- Maintaining **effective parent/family resource centers** that are accessible to parents, led by qualified and trained administrators with a staff of trained parent educators (chosen with parent input), and that provide multiple programs and services to address the specific parent needs of the communities they serve;
- Ensuring parents' understanding of **performance measures** and the school **options** available to them in seeking the best learning environment for their children.

PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES

In order to create a strong foundation for life-long success, parents should create a **supportive environment at home** that promotes the value of education, sets high expectations, and supports the learning taking place in school. Parents are responsible for:

- Developing **strong communication links** with each child such that a parent knows their child's needs, anxieties, and strengths;
- Being positive **role models** by exemplifying and instilling values of respect, good citizenship, discipline, healthy living, etc;
- Providing their children with a **rich learning opportunities** (reading at home, talking with children about their hopes and dreams and about how they are doing in school, visiting community events and significant community sites, accessing community resources such as libraries and afterschool/summer programs, etc.) ;
- Ensuring that their children **attend school** every day and that **homework is completed** and turned-in on time;

Parents have a responsibility to **communicate with administrators and teachers** to discuss how best to support their child's learning. Parents are responsible for:

- Participating in **learning opportunities** and differentiated training programs that increase a parent's capacity to support their child's learning at home and at school;
- Learning about school and student **performance measures**;
- Meeting with teachers and administrators and building cooperative relationships to **ask questions** and **discuss issues** regarding their child's progress and needs;
- **Responding to communication** from their child's school in a timely manner;
- Learning about **school rules and procedures**;
- **Attending school meetings and activities** regarding issues that impact their child and their ability to advocate for their child's academic success.
- **Choosing** the best school available to their child;
- **Being willing to take part in surveys**, focus groups and other activities to collect parent feedback and satisfaction levels;
- **When possible volunteering** at school events and in school committees and attending training to learn more about issues that impact the school, their leadership skills, and their ability to advocate for all students.

APPENDIX A

Glossary of Terms (to be developed at a later date)

- Entitlement
- Parent Involvement
- Parent Engagement
- Transparency
- Effective Parent/Family Resource Center
- Parent/Family Resource Center
- Tailored education programs
- Family/community networks
- Performance Measures
- Appropriate training
- Welcoming Environment
- Supportive Environment at Home

APPENDIX B

References (To Be Developed at a later date)