



# Urging the State of California to Reclaim Its Leadership in Education by Increasing Investment in Our Schools

*Board Member Gonez, Co-sponsored by Dr. McKenna, Mr. Melvoin  
Adopted November 14, 2017*

Whereas, High-quality public education is an essential component of our civic society and democracy, enabling our residents to lead productive, fulfilling lives;

Whereas, Public education has the potential to provide equal opportunities for advancement for all, and our schools are tasked with meeting not only the academic but also the social, emotional, and civic needs of all students;

Whereas, California has the world's 8th largest economy, with a Gross Domestic Product of \$2.5 trillion annually, and leads the nation in public policy, business, and culture; and California faces a projected shortage of skilled workers by 2025;

Whereas, California has historically led the nation in its public education system, including elementary, secondary, and its system of public universities, but has fallen behind other states in terms of the funding of its preschool through 12th grade public education system; and, in 2017, ranked 46th in the nation in terms of per-pupil funding for K-12 education and 37th in education spending as a share of the state economy, spending just \$8,694 compared to \$18,191 in New York, while serving the highest rate of students in poverty in the country;

Whereas, Well-funded states, such as Vermont and New York, consistently outperform California in comparable assessments of student achievement, such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), highlighting that additional investment could lead to a tangible impact on student outcomes;

Whereas, Substantially increasing the amount of funding for public schools would allow the District to invest in 21st century educational tools, smaller class sizes, additional wraparound services to meet the socio-emotional needs of our students, better training for instructors, administrators, and staff to ensure every child has access to a great teacher, expanded transitional kindergarten to give thousands more students a strong start to their education, and targeted interventions for students who have fallen behind;

Whereas, Raising California to the top of states in education funding would enable the District to, for example:

- Significantly lower counselor to student ratios
- Reduce classes to 24 students on average
- Add four additional teacher trainings per teacher
- Employ a full-time nurse at every school
- Expand extended transitional Kindergarten programs to all elementary schools
- Provide high quality arts education for every child in every school



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Whereas, Education stakeholders have been highlighting the need for an increase in per-pupil funding for some time – including a call by our labor partners for the state to reach \$20,000 in per-pupil funding by 2020 – demonstrating that the education community is aligned around the need for additional State investment in public education;

and Whereas, California can and should restore its role as a national leader in public education, and only a significant increase in economic resources will bring the state to the level our students and families deserve; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Governing Board of the Los Angeles Unified School District calls on the State of California to fully fund our public education, from preschool through 12th grade, and directs that the Superintendent work with the Office of Government Relations and other appropriate District staff to advocate, using all available District resources, that the State dramatically increase the per-pupil funding in California with the goal of reaching to **\$20,000 by 2020 and \$25,000 by 2022**, with continued investment thereafter to raise California’s per-pupil funding to the highest level in the Nation and re-establish our position as the country’s leader in education investment. This advocacy should further seek to address the structural barriers that prevent California from funding education on par with other states. Such advocacy could include:

- Signing on to an open letter calling on the Legislature to increase education funding substantially;
- An advocacy day in Sacramento with District leaders, labor and other partners, educators, students, and families;
- A targeted media campaign coordinated around the Governor’s budget release in January
- Actively identifying a sponsor for legislation to increase education funding;

The Superintendent should keep the Board of Education informed of the progress of this advocacy effort on a quarterly basis; and, be it finally

Resolved, That the District work with our labor partners, community organizations, philanthropic organizations, businesses and trade associations, parents, families, and students to unite around this goal to urge the State of California and our elected leaders to make and act upon the commitment to propel our state to the highest education investment in the nation.