TO: Members, Board of Education   **DATE:** August 9, 2011

FROM: Dr. John E. Deasy, Superintendent

SUBJECT: RELEASE OF GRADUATION AND DROPOUT STATISTICS

The attached report presents the preliminary Four Year Cohort Graduation data for the 2010-11 school year for LAUSD. Additionally, the California Department of Education (CDE) is releasing dropout and graduation statistics for the 2009-10 school year on Thursday, August 11. **The state data is embargoed until Thursday.**

The graduation and dropout statistics create the baseline for the indicators on the performance meter. Different calculations for graduation rates are presented in the informative, as the state is transitioning to a cohort graduation rate based on student level data. The NCLB graduation rate will be used for the last time this year. Regardless of the methodology used, the different calculations highlight incremental increases in the District's graduation rate. However, the sobering reality is that the graduation rate for LAUSD is too low. I have asked for an audit and a study as to why so few youth in LAUSD are not graduating in four years. I want to understand all the factors that impede progress toward graduation.

The dropout statistics indicate that we are heading in the right direction as we have decreased dropouts compared to the previous year. However, nearly a quarter of our students are leaving our high schools without a diploma. I will be working with staff to implement an aggressive plan to affect this data.

In spite of the District's financial crisis, we must continue our efforts at every level to identify students at-risk and provide them with the supports they need to graduate. Although the entire state is facing fiscal challenges, other urban districts are graduating a larger percentage of their youth. We must continue our mission to graduate every student college prepared and career ready.

c: Local District Superintendents
   High School Principals

INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE
Los Angeles Unified School District

TO: Members, Board of Education
             John Deasy, Superintendent

                                                    **EMBARGOED UNTIL AUGUST 11

FROM: Cynthia Lim, Executive Director
             Office of Data and Accountability

SUBJECT: GRADUATION AND DROPOUT RATES

This informative provides statistics on the preliminary graduation rate for the 2010-11 school year, as well as dropout and graduation statistics as compiled by the California Department of Education (CDE) for the 2009-10 school year, which will be released on August 11. **This information is embargoed until August 11.**

The statistics show:

- **LAUSD's Four Year Cohort Graduation rate increased one percentage point from the previous year, from 55% to 56% at comprehensive high schools.**

- **The state calculated a cohort graduation rate for the first time for the 2009-10 school year. The state's calculation of a four year cohort graduation rate yielded a higher graduation rate than LAUSD's internal calculation.** The CDE estimated the 2009-10 cohort graduation rate at 64.2% while LAUSD calculations indicated a four year cohort graduation rate of 55%. Our analysis indicates that the discrepancy may be due to the number of records that were identified as "first time ninth graders" at the state level since 2006-07 was the first year that student level data was collected by the state.

- **The graduation rate used for federal accountability purposes increased slightly, from 69.6 to 70.4.** This formula estimates the number of graduates over four years, rather than following a cohort of students.

- **Dropout rates in LAUSD decreased between the 2008-09 and 2009-10 school year.** The 4-Year Derived dropout rate for LAUSD decreased from 29.6% in the 2008-09 school year to 24.5% in the 2009-10 school year, a decrease of five percentage points.

LAUSD's Preliminary Four Year Cohort Graduation Rate for 2010-11

At the end of the 2010-11 school year, graduation data was collected via each school's Secondary Student Information System (SSIS). Schools were instructed to run their year-end process and make necessary corrections to graduation status as of June 30, 2011. Graduation data was then used to calculate a four year cohort graduation rate which tracks the number of students that graduated from comprehensive senior high schools in four years. **The**

preliminary graduation rate for the 2010-11 school year is 56%, up one percentage point from the previous year.

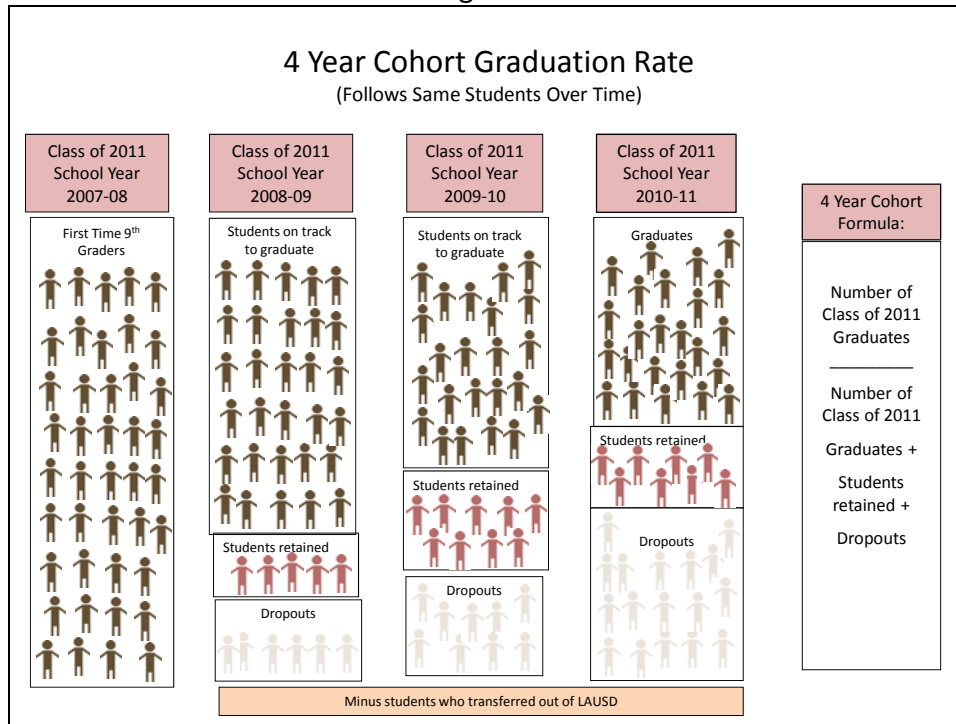Table 1: *LAUSD's Four Year Cohort Graduation Rate Has Increased since 2007-08*

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Number of First Time 9th Graders Four Years Prior	47,605	45,436	47,379	46,133
Percent that Graduated in Four Years	48%	52%	55%	56%

The preliminary graduation rate will be reported on the School Report Cards which will be published in October 2011.

The Four Year Cohort Graduation Rate uses LAUSD's unique student identifier to determine first time 9th graders, then tracks individual students to determine which students graduated four years later. Students who transferred to other schools and re-enrolled are subtracted from the cohort and students who transfer in are added to the cohort. At the end of four years, the graduation rate includes the number of students who began as first time 9th graders and the number of students that received a diploma.

Figure 2 illustrates the Four Year Cohort Rate, which follows the same group of students over time, beginning with first time 9th graders in 2007-08. In each successive year, students who transfer out of LAUSD are taken out of the cohort. Students who transfer into LAUSD are added to the cohort. Students who dropped out or are still actively enrolled remain in the cohort. At the end of four years, the graduation rate is determined by dividing the number of graduates in the cohort by the number of graduates plus students who have dropped out and students who remain enrolled for a fifth year.

Figure 2

4 Year Cohort Graduation Rate
(Follows Same Students Over Time)

| Class of 2011 School Year 2007-08 | Class of 2011 School Year 2008-09 | Class of 2011 School Year 2009-10 | Class of 2011 School Year 2010-11 | 4 Year Cohort Formula: |

First Time 9th Graders

Students on track to graduate

Students on track to graduate

Graduates

Students retained

Students retained

Students retained

Dropouts

Dropouts

Dropouts

Number of Class of 2011 Graduates
_____
Number of Class of 2011 Graduates + Students retained + Dropouts

Minus students who transferred out of LAUSD

CDE Cohort Graduation Rate for 2009-10

For the first time, the state is reporting a cohort graduation rate based on student level data collected through the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS). The same methodology used by LAUSD in counting first time 9th graders and following the cohort for the next four years was used. The state's cohort graduation rate was 64.2, higher than the 55% based on internal LAUSD calculations. The state placed students in cohorts based on enrollment dates submitted to the state. Our analysis indicates that the number of first time 9th graders identified by the state was much lower than internal LAUSD calculations, which accounts for the higher cohort graduation rate at the state level. Individual student level data was submitted to the state for the first time in 2006-07 so the state does not have a complete count of "first time ninth graders" in 2006-07.

Among urban districts in California cohort graduation rates ranged between 53% and 82%. LAUSD ranked lower than most urban districts at 64.2.

Table 3: *LAUSD Ranks Lower than Most Urban Districts in Cohort Graduation Rates*
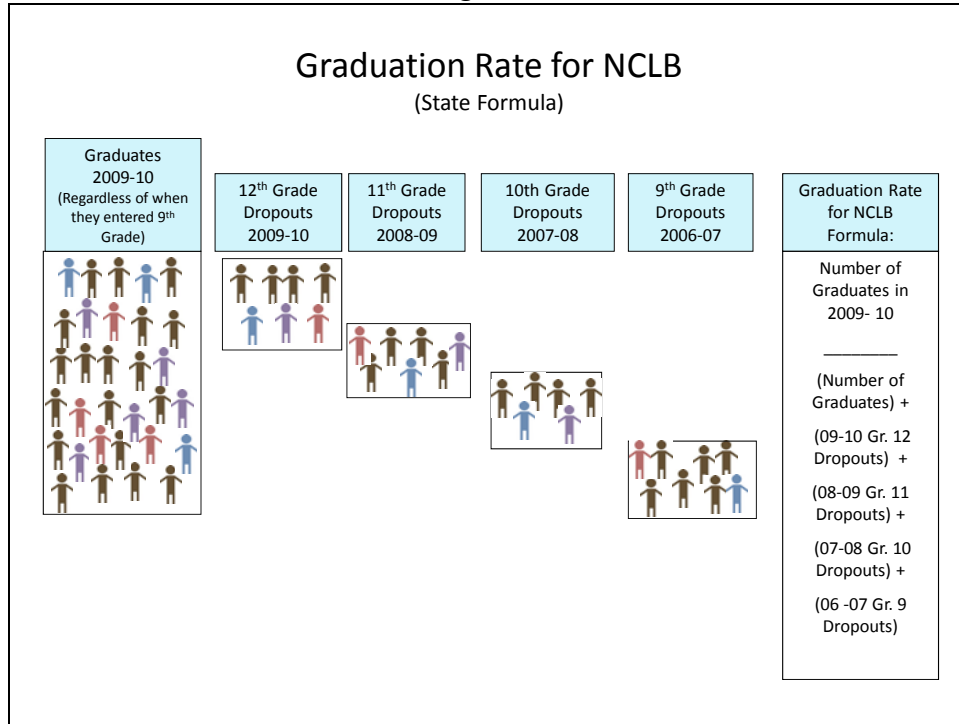
School District	2009-10 Cohort Grad Rate
San Francisco Unified	82.3%
San Jose Unified	81.9%
Santa Ana Unified	79.5%
Long Beach Unified	78.8%
San Diego Unified	74.9%
Pasadena Unified	73.8%
Pomona Unified	68.3%
Fresno Unified	66.0%
Sacramento City Unified	65.3%
LAUSD	64.2%
Oakland Unified	53.4%
California	Not Avail.

CDE Graduation Rates for NCLB Purposes 2009-10

The Graduation Rate calculated by the CDE and used for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) under No Child Left Behind (NCLB), counts the number of graduates in any given year, regardless of when they entered 9th grade and factors in the number of dropouts from the previous four years. This graduation rate yields a different statistic than the Four Year Cohort Graduation rate because of the way students are included in the formulas over the same time period.

The Graduation Rate for AYP purposes estimates how many students have graduated in four years. According to the CDE, this calculation usually provides a reasonable graduation rate estimate, but it can create invalid rates during periods of increasing or declining enrollment or moderate student mobility. During periods of declining enrollment, such as that experienced by the District during the past five years, the estimate may produce a lower graduation estimate because dropouts from four years ago were drawn from a larger student body than the student body providing the number of graduates in the current year. This formula does **not** track the same students over time. Figure 4 illustrates how the formula starts with the number of graduates in a given year, then works backward in time to add dropouts from different grade levels in previous school years.

Figure 4

Graduation Rate for NCLB
(State Formula)

Graduates 2009-10 (Regardless of when they entered 9th Grade)	12th Grade Dropouts 2009-10	11th Grade Dropouts 2008-09	10th Grade Dropouts 2007-08	9th Grade Dropouts 2006-07	Graduation Rate for NCLB Formula:

Graduation Rate for NCLB Formula:

$$\frac{\text{Number of Graduates in 2009-10}}{(\text{Number of Graduates}) + (\text{09-10 Gr. 12 Dropouts}) + (\text{08-09 Gr. 11 Dropouts}) + (\text{07-08 Gr. 10 Dropouts}) + (\text{06-07 Gr. 9 Dropouts})}$$

Although the CDE acknowledges that the Graduation Rate for AYP purposes should not be considered actual graduation rates, this graduation rate is used for federal accountability and in determining Program Improvement status. **This will be last year** that this formula will be used for federal accountability. Next year, the cohort graduation rate will be used. **The 2009-10 graduation rate for LAUSD, used for AYP purposes, increased nearly one percentage point, from 69.6 to 70.4.**

Table 5: *LAUSD's Graduation Rate is Lower than Most Urban Districts But Showed Improvement*

School District	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	One Year Change
San Diego Unified	84.3%	77.4%	86.7%	9.3%
San Jose Unified	86.1%	86.7%	86.5%	-0.2%
Santa Ana Unified	84.8%	84.6%	84.9%	0.3%
San Francisco Unified	84.4%	82.7%	84.8%	2.1%
Long Beach Unified	79.0%	76.9%	82.0%	5.1%
Pomona Unified	73.4%	74.6%	75.3%	0.7%
Pasadena Unified	75.1%	79.6%	75.2%	-4.4%
Sacramento City Unified	84.5%	79.0%	75.1%	-3.9%
Fresno Unified	69.1%	70.2%	72.3%	2.1%
LAUSD	72.4%	69.6%	70.4%	0.8%
Oakland Unified	69.0%	59.5%	60.0%	0.5%
California	80.2%	78.6%	Not Avail.	

CDE Dropout Rates for 2009-10

A dropout is defined as a student who withdrew or left school and is not known to be enrolled in any school or program leading to a high school diploma. This is the fourth year that the CDE has derived dropout and graduation rates based on student level data submitted by school districts throughout California. Through the use of unique Statewide Student Identifiers (SSID), the CDE is able to track students across districts throughout the state as actively enrolled students, transfers, graduates, completers, or dropouts.

The dropout rate for LAUSD decreased by five percentage points in 2009-10, from 29.6 to 24.5. Dropout rates decreased among all major ethnic groups, with the largest decreases among African-American and Hispanic students.

Table 6: *Dropout Rates Decreased Districtwide and for All Subgroups*

	4-Year Derived Rate				1-Year Dropout Rate			
	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	*Change*	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	*Change*
LAUSD	26.4%	29.6%	24.5%	*-5.1%*	6.7%	7.6%	6.5%	*-1.1%*
African Am	33.1%	37.1%	29.8%	*-7.3%*	8.6%	10.1%	8.2%	*-1.9%*
Asian	11.6%	12.2%	10.0%	*-2.2%*	2.9%	3.1%	2.6%	*-0.5%*
Hispanic	28.0%	31.5%	25.7%	*-5.8%*	6.9%	7.9%	6.7%	*-1.2%*
White	16.6%	18.4%	15.2%	*-3.2%*	4.4%	4.9%	4.0%	*-0.9%*

Compared to other urban districts in California, LAUSD's 4-Year derived rate was the second highest at 24.5%. Oakland's dropout rate of 32.7% exceeded LAUSD's. Three urban districts increased their dropout rate from the previous year, while LAUSD decreased by five percentage points. San Diego decreased their dropout rate by 16 percentage points, Pomona decreased by 8 percentage points, and Oakland decreased by 7 percentage points.

Table 7: *Compared to Other Urban Districts, LAUSD's Dropout Rate was Among the Highest*

	4-Year Derived Dropout Rate				1-Year Dropout Rate			
School District	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	*One Year Change*	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	*One Year Change*
San Diego Unified	9.2%	23.5%	7.5%	*-16.0%*	2.3%	5.9%	1.9%	*-4.0%*
San Jose Unified	9.6%	10.3%	12.6%	*2.3%*	2.4%	2.7%	3.3%	*0.6%*
San Francisco Unified	17.9%	9.1%	12.9%	*3.8%*	4.5%	2.3%	3.3%	*1.0%*
Pasadena Unified	24.6%	19.9%	15.2%	*-4.7%*	6.7%	5.3%	4.2%	*-1.1%*
Santa Ana Unified	8.2%	14.2%	15.5%	*1.3%*	1.8%	3.5%	3.9%	*0.4%*
Long Beach Unified	16.1%	16.9%	16.5%	*-0.4%*	4.1%	4.3%	4.3%	*0.0%*
Pomona Unified	22.0%	26.9%	18.5%	*-8.4%*	6.1%	7.8%	4.9%	*-2.9%*
Sacramento City Unified	14.2%	25.5%	22.4%	*-3.1%*	3.6%	6.9%	6.1%	*-0.8%*
Fresno Unified	26.0%	23.0%	22.6%	*-0.4%*	6.3%	5.9%	5.9%	*0.0%*
LAUSD	26.4%	29.6%	24.5%	*-5.1%*	6.7%	7.6%	6.5%	*-1.1%*
Oakland Unified	28.1%	40.0%	32.7%	*-7.3%*	7.6%	10.8%	9.0%	*-1.8%*
California	18.9%	21.5%	Not Avail.		4.9%	5.7%	Not Avail.	

Attachment A displays school lists with the LAUSD Four Year Cohort Graduation Rates, the state cohort graduation rate, NCLB graduation rates and dropout rates. Additional information can be found at the following website after August 11: http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/dataquest.asp.

If there are additional questions, please contact me or Grace Pang Bovy at (213) 241-2460.

c: Jaime Aquino
   Matt Hill
   Michelle King
   Tommy Chang
   Local District Superintendents