

# LAUSD Parent Advisory Committee

## Chairperson's Report

*December 7, 2023*

Hello, colleagues:

To start off, new *and* returning members, *welcome to our Parent Advisory Committee!* I consider each of you to be a “parent leader,” so please try to be comfortable with this title, and get into the habit of graciously accepting it as a compliment when someone says this is who you are.

No matter how long we have served on this Committee, keep in mind that nearly all of our experiences as the parent or guardian of an LAUSD student come from our children's schools. While some of us have nothing but glowing reviews of the teachers, administrators, and staff there, too many others have seen and heard things that make them concerned. No matter which group you are in, remember that at the PAC level, all of us have what I believe is an obligation to reach out to parents at our kids' school sites to mentor them and help them solve problems. This is precisely what I've been doing for over 15 years now, and it's an activity I find very rewarding.

Now back to PAC: In March 2023, Public Advocates and ACLU of Southern California published *Realizing the Promise of LCFF: Recommendations from the First Ten Years*. This report uses 72 school districts as case studies to review implementation of the Local Control Funding Formula to offer guidance on improving equitable outcomes and community engagement in California.

While this report does highlight some bright spots, it also underscores the need for significant innovation in order to strengthen accountability measures that can ensure a comprehensive strategic-planning process and better engagement. Its top recommendations include these:

- More oversight, support, and authority for County Offices of Education (COEs) to hold school districts accountable
- Investing in an innovative, usable, web-based strategic planning platform that can make district and school site funding transparent and easier to understand
- Strengthening community engagement with families, students, and community-based organizations to meaningfully address disparities in student academic achievement and improve opportunities for all students, including Black, foster youth, and homeless

You can download *Realizing the Promise of LCFF: Recommendations from the First Ten Years* [here](#):

Another report released last month, *More to Be Done: California's Local Control Funding Formula After a Decade*, finds that despite some progress, due to shortcomings in this formula, CAASPP scores show that [alarming racial inequities in student outcomes have persisted](#) and progress for EL students has not improved, while family engagement and district accountability is lacking.

This report found that in the years since LCFF became state law in 2013:

- Academic outcomes for English learner students remain stagnant, and the gaps between them and their native English-speaking peers have widened.

- Persistently low student achievement data continue to show that many students of color, especially Black students, are still denied the support from schools and educators that they need to succeed.
- Achievement and outcomes for students experiencing poverty have improved some, demonstrating that money does matter in education, but even for these students, equity gaps have narrowed, though only slightly.

Download *More to Be Done: California's Local Control Funding Formula After a Decade* [here](#):

Item VIII (8) on our meeting agenda today will introduce you all to our seven current, standing subcommittees. Sessions of these groups are where the in-depth conversations and “heavy lifting” occur. I urge you to review the list and see if one or two subcommittees interest you. Also, I will be coordinating with SFACE to create two *ad hoc* subcommittees, *Title I* and *Budget*.

Our PAC will be ten years old in February. In that time we’ve created ten sets of LCAP Comments. For the past few years, we’ve been asking for a tracking system to show us which of these Comments were acted on by District leaders and actually made part of its practice. We are still waiting. But no more. It’s time to insist on knowing what’s been done with all the work we’ve completed in those ten documents. Many members have asked over the years, “What happens to all those LCAP Comments? Who is listening? Why are we here?” These are excellent questions that deserve answers. Our LCAP team, led by Dr. Erik Elward, has already been asked to provide an update on how our most recent set of LCAP Comments, from 2022-23, are being incorporated into what the District does in the process of educating students. Ask questions!

We join the PAC because we want to make a difference for students. We want to learn how a school operates, how a school district runs, how public education works. We all have our own reasons for being here now. That said, we owe it to ourselves to make sure we clearly understand our roles on the Committee in order to do the best possible job while we are members. We should also be communicating with families at our kids’ school sites to make sure they have some idea of what we do here. This is why our Two-Way Communication Subcommittee was formed.

In closing, parents are often reminded by LAUSD that we are “equal partners” in the education of our children. Yet sometimes what we see in our kids’ schools makes us wonder if our District, which is required by law to educate our children, believes this slogan and makes it a reality.

Here is a suggestion I hope you will take to heart: *We who give our time to improve outcomes for students and parents **must** be asking questions, and keep asking until we get answers.*

At your service,

Paul Robak

*Chairperson, 2023-2024*  
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