Westside Public Education Community Meeting on 10-26-15 from 6:30-8pm
Westchester, Playa del Rey, Playa Vista, Del Rey, Mar Vista, Venice, and Westside Village

The Westside Community’s Questions for Education Representatives and Elected Officials

99 Questions Hand-Written by the Audience or Emailed in Advance

Questions organized by topic alphabetically; *Contact information available; ***Direct response requested

**Adult School** (16 questions)

- Why is the Adult School being moved from a campus used by hundreds of students morning, noon and evening? 8am – 9pm

- Why do Charter School students have priority over an Adult Program that has been serving the Community for 30+ years?

- Who is representing the needs of [LAUSD] adults/concurrents?

- Doesn’t Adult Education matter? Educated Adults EQUAL Educated Children

- I would like to ask the panelists if they support retaining Emerson Adult Learning Center as one of the few stand-alone adult schools that serves hundreds of disadvantaged students per year. Los Angeles has the highest number of immigrants in the United States. The need for these immigrants to learn English, earn a High School Diploma and have access to low cost Career Training is essential! Immigrants are the life-blood of any economy, they are mowing our lawns, babysitting our children, cleaning our houses and running our gas stations! In fact, immigrants start new businesses at a higher rate than non-immigrants! Immigrants who learn to speak English can help their children in school and participate in our society at a higher level. We need a school within our community that serves this population.

  Los Angeles also has the highest homeless population of any major city. We have homeless now everywhere we look, even in Westchester. The rising rents and disparity between the rich and the poor is being seen right here! Many of those without a high school diploma cannot keep up economically; they are more at risk of joining this homeless population. Let’s do what we can to prevent homelessness and continue to provide a safe campus for students to study at.

  LAUSD has had a 30 - 40% drop out rate for the past decade, hundreds of those students reside right here in the Westchester area and utilize our campus to remedy this. They realize that they need a basic education and come to our campus morning, afternoon and in the evenings, around their work and parenting schedules. We need more classes on our campus to meet the demand for classes!

  Which of the panelists does not support keeping the Emerson Adult Learning Center that serves the hundreds of students right here in the Westchester area that NEED OUR SERVICES? *Name/Email available.

- Try living in Los Angeles without your High School Diploma! It is hard to hold two jobs to provide for just the basics. On top of that we attend school to finish our diploma, and just when we find a school that helps us, someone with more money and influence steps in to take our site. Affluence and influence should not be the currency used when it comes to our education! Why would you want to close an adult school that is so effective, that so many students attend?

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**Program Panelists:** LAUSD Chief Deputy Superintendent Michelle King; LAUSD Instructional Area Superintendent Cheryl P. Hildreth; LAUSD School Board President and District 4 Representative Steven Zimmer

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· Los Angeles has the largest immigrant population of any major city. The educational community and those responsible for directing it need to care about this large population. This entails allowing us to stay in a long-term stable environment, one that is close to our work and homes. This program not only teaches English, but allows us to go on to a high school diploma and low cost career training. We currently have this at the Emerson Learning Center. Why do we have to move?

· I am concerned about the detrimental environmental effects of children (some who already have asthma and other health concerns) being placed at the Emerson Adult Learning Center. The Emerson Manor Elementary School previously located at the site was closed due to noise and air pollution and the effect it has on children’s health. The EPA’s most recent report on the air quality around LAX stated: “Key toxic contaminants are benzene, butadiene and diesel particulates…fall out samples depict greater abundance of larger then PM10 sized combusted oil soot particles then is observed at most other locations in the south Coast Air Basin”. They go on to say, “The EPA has concluded that diesel exhaust ranks with the other emissions that the 2005 NATA suggests pose the greatest relative cancer risk” (U.S. EPA 2007). Don’t you agree that a school site that is just feet from the LAX Northern Runway, could endanger the health of children? *Name/Email available.

· Why is there no mention in the flyer or the press release (The Argonaut) of the proposal to move an adult school (Emerson Learning Center) that has helped the community's undereducated and underemployed for the last 30+ years? *Name/Email available.

· Subject: Temporary closure EMERSON. Why did you dismantle an adult program that has been in existence for 35 years just for a temporary fix for a student population that will be at Emerson only temporarily?

· Emerson ALC. The transfer of adults to the proposed location is a recipe for disaster especially for our adults who commute by bus as this proposed location will result in a ten (10) block walk from bus stop to school. Have you thought about this?

· WIOA Offices are on campus, which generates thousands of dollars a year toward adult education. Special Education Adaptive PE Offices that serve adaptive PE programs throughout LAUSD have offices on the site as well. An AWEC site that serves at-risk youth is located at this site. The site is also used for district-wide meetings and used by LAUSD janitorial services. Since this site is used for multiple programs with a significant investment in each office and program, how can you justify moving ALL of these programs and re-install equipment and needed supplies?

· Is WISH Charter hoping to move onto the Emerson Adult School campus for approximately 2 years during a period of time so they can have construction completed at another location so they can house their entire school at one location? I have heard that the Emerson adult school students would need to relocate to either WESM’s campus or Orville Wright’s or maybe both campuses. Adults need a place where they can attend schools to continue their education. The Emerson campus also benefits students at WESM who need to make up classes that are not readily available during the school day. *Name/Email available.

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- Why is the adult school being moved for a charter school who only wants to use the campus temporarily?

- Installing an Elementary School at the 8810 Emerson site will impact the quiet neighborhood that borders it on two sides. The daytime population will increase and the number of cars coming to drop off in the mornings and pick up in the afternoons will dramatically increase. Visitation School is right across the street and the timing of drop off and pick up will be doubled with their current traffic. Please have the panelists discuss if they have taken this into consideration. *Name/Email available.

- L.A. has a large immigrant population that needs attention. Emerson Adult School addresses this population. How do you see LAUSD continuing to serve this community’s needs in the future?

**Budget** (3 questions)

- My husband and I are both working parents. We are blessed as Mr. Zimmer mentioned that we do not live in a violent area and we are not severely impoverished. However, we do work very hard to make ends meet and it can be stressful. We have to constantly make sacrifices in the home to live here. LAUSD schools are severely falling short of the standards I expect for the sacrifices we as parents make. It is on the burden of parents to PAY or fundraise for PE, Art, Music, Librarians, teacher aides, janitors, etc. in our neighborhood school. I just don’t think that's acceptable. How are you going to make the changes necessary to raise the level of our public schools so we don’t feel forced to move or homeschool? How do you serve the needs of the struggling middle class?

- At my children’s school we have Art, Music, Garden, Technology and P.E. programs thanks only to fundraising. When will all schools have these programs?

- Will the district make a financial commitment to ensure the success of our neighborhood middle school for Playa Vista, Westchester, Playa del Rey?

**Charter Schools** (14 questions)

- How does the district decide on space? Why are good charter schools constantly being moved around or outside our community? *Name/Email available.

- Recently Steve Zimmer made negative comments about Charter Schools on 9/6 ABC Eyewitness [News]. Yet he claims to support [them] which is not in line with what he said on TV. What are your True feelings – Be honest.

- When will you look to successful schools as models for struggling schools? Also, among parents, there is no battle between neighborhood and charter schools: we are all putting our faith in the PUBLIC school system. Let’s support all successful public schools and their teachers and students!  P.S. Parent from Open Magnet

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Charter School diverse, successful and innovative since 1977! Great teachers, supported. Great staff. Involved families.

- How do you get big business/big non-profits out of the charter movement? Have charter schools get back to the original idea?
- Mr. Zimmer, How do charter schools fit in to your long term vision of school/education here on the Westside?
- If there wasn’t enough space on Orville Wright Middle STEAM Magnet for WISH Middle School, why now is space being offered to Playa Vista elementary?
- Also, WISH Middle was offered enough space at Cowan but we do not have it – where are the additional bungalows?
- Mr. Zimmer – What is your position on allowing WISH to stay on Orville Wright’s campus?
- When will the charter schools come out of the already established school and/or magnets?
- Do you believe students that attend charter schools should face discrimination and be treated like second-class citizens facing harassment as they walk to school and substandard facilities? If not, what are they doing to stop it?
- Since charter schools pay lease fees to co-locate, why is there so much animosity towards them, even though LAUSD receives money from charters?
- Why displace a program for a Charter that only needs temporary location?
- How are you planning to merge colocation school (public and public charters) to decrease friction and increase school reform?
- Why do you offer charters co-locations far from the families they serve? Are you just trying to make life difficult for charter families?

Class Size/Overcrowding (2 questions)
- I believe that a priority of the school board should be class size reduction. At some schools there are 37 4th and 5th grade and 27 in Kinder. Hamilton has many classes that are over 45. *Email available.

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· From K->12, it is NOT sufficient to offer "great" courses if teacher to student ratio is too high. Having 2 High schools in Westside leads to over-population. Must deal w/overcrowding by adding more HS choices. i.e. fund/support Charter School.

Counseling and Guidance Services (1 question)

· RE: Counseling and Guidance. Why are counselors in the school dealing with behavior and discipline instead of guiding all students? How can we insure each and every student has access and is seen (counseled) respectfully?

Curriculum (5 questions)

· Every school needs to have various tracks to match student abilities... Honors, AP courses for students who are serious about attending top Universities. Again, smaller classrooms is key to help [sic] every child. College credit in HS!!

· I believe that Critical Reading and Writing should also be a part of the Common Core with Critical Thinking. These components are essential for College Success. Do you agree or disagree and why.

· You mentioned technology and coding ... how many ACTUAL coding classes exist with OUR District?

· I've heard that in the Arts Branch, the Creative Network pilot is so popular with the schoolboard. None of the Westside schools want it. #1 priority for them is to keep music as a year-long program. Where do you stand? *Email available.

· Do you genuinely consider IB schools 11-20 miles away from here to be reasonable options for Westside families? If so, how about delaying schools start for Middle/High School 1 hr?

Diversity and Enrollment (4 questions)

· What percentage of families with children in Playa del Rey, Westchester, and Playa Vista ACTUALLY attend the district public schools?

· We need an INCLUSIVE High school. Any thoughts?

· What do you plan on doing to address the COMPLETE lack of diversity of the Westchester High School attendees? How are you going to put efforts into getting the community that surrounds the school to send their kids to the school?

· Will there be increased resources for SELs [Standard English Learners] as compared to ELs [English Learners]? And can you define SEL’s and EL’s for those of us who aren’t familiar with these terms?

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Early Education (3 questions)

- As a local TK/K teacher I want to know why we can’t have a Westchester TK site located at one school instead of so many split classes at all the schools? What is the plan with the Early Childhood Ed site at Kentwood that has been closed for years?

- Why does it seem that a lot of pre-school programs were cut? *Name/Email available.

- Why isn’t LAUSD looking at developmentally appropriate education? Why is it OK to test Kinder through second grades?

Education Mandates/Politics (8 questions)

- It seems that LAUSD decisions are based more on politics and action committees rather than what is best for children and programs that are successful. There seems to be a lot of words and talking and less progress while time passes. How can this be changed so that it benefits the children rather than politics?

- When do the children and their education supersede the Union and LAUSD politics?

- How will LAUSD mobilize to stop Eli Broad’s Plan to capture one half of the public school system and its resources? More to the point, is the District ready to fight back against this onslaught of billions of ego-driven dollars? Will the New Superintendent be selected to lead the fight – or to facilitate the collapse. *Name/Email available.

- What do you think of the Eli Broad Plan?

- How can we push the Broad agenda back?

- Is your increased animosity towards charters due to your upcoming election and the need for UTLA support? Are you trying to make up for your Teach for America background?

- Are you punishing Westchester/Playa for supporting Kate Anderson in the last election? We supported you the first time around, BTW, and got little to show for it. Why should any of us trust you or vote for you again, when almost every school in this area feels betrayed by you, whether they can say it publicly or not for fear of reprisal?

- Why do you think it is okay to accuse parents who want school choice of being racist or afraid of diversity? Why do our Board member and Beaudry administration insist that Westchester/Playa parents are racist, both in print and behind closed doors? Some of us just got here, we’re not responsible for things that happened in the 70’s, 80’s or 90’s!

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Learning Disabilities and ADA (3 questions)

· Why do you continue to publicly assert that charters don’t serve Special Ed, English learners and high need students when the data clearly say otherwise?

· My son uses a wheelchair. I was told that at Westchester High School, "we have a lot of stairs and we're an old campus". That was their only answer. Isn't that a violation of ADA?

· Why did you, Mr. Zimmer, accuse Westside Charter parents of being racist? My son is a minority, special needs child who attends a charter school.

Meeting Format (1 question)

· Why are the questions for this event moderated? Are parents not being allowed to speak?

Operations/Facilities (4 questions)

· Cleaning School – Other than hiring, what about truly training those hired to clean properly?

· Noise and air pollution is now OK @ the Emerson location?

· Ms. Hildreth & Ms. King: Since local residents can ask for and get the programs they want – what happens when they are given their requested program and then they choose to send their child elsewhere?

· Ms. Hildreth – if you want neighborhood schools to have the specialized programs, then why are they all MAGNET programs?

Partnerships: Business and Community (6 questions)

· The LAX Coastal Chamber of Commerce has played a meaningful role in the community for over 60 years. Our leadership truly believes that in order to be strong business leaders, we also have to be strong community leaders, which is why the Chamber hosts events like the Teacher Eddy Awards honoring outstanding teachers and the School Expo as well as hosting a monthly education committee with all of our local principal and key administrators. Education has always been a pillar of this organization and something we feel is worthy of utilizing our resources and influence to support. In fact this year we’ve decide to ramp up by forming an Education Taskforce. This group will survey our businesses, area residents and educators to find out how the Chamber can help affect change in our education climate-- at a time, we feel, it is needed more than ever. In your opinion, what can the business community do to support our public schools and local educators, so that our children receive a great public education in a safe and supportive neighborhood environment? *Name/Email available.

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- How can the community be proactive in assisting you in your mission to create an exceptional educational environment for students, staff, parents and all other stakeholders?

- What obstacle(s) are you experiencing that could delay or sabotage your goals for improving the educational system impacting Westside schools? How can the community support you in these challenges?

- The Emerson Community Garden has been working with STEAM/WRIGHT to build a school and community garden. Our goal is to improve integration with the two groups. Our efforts have been hindered by LAUSD process. We have been 4 years in getting signed joint use agreement which will enable us to make needed improvements for full accessibility. How can we get this final step completed?

- From – Emerson Ave CG. How do we get through the bureaucratic red tape to get a final signature on our joint use agreement?

- Emerson Avenue Community Garden has been waiting a long time for approval of our joint-use agreement. How can we speed this up and get a final signature?

Performance Outcomes and Analysis (3 questions)

- Absent standardized testing, how do you propose measuring school performance, teacher performance, and student performance? What schedule and milestones will be used?

- How will the 2% time devoted to testing recommended by President Obama in the LA Sunday Times be allocated? *Name available.

- What's going to replace API to ensure parents have a clear understanding of school performance?

School Quality/Performance (5 questions)

- There is always talk about how not enough local kids go to the local public schools. However, no reach out is done by the local school to parents? Why not?

- How do you intend to "fix" the feeder pattern in both Westchester and Playa Vista to help families WANT to choose the local option instead of seek higher-performing options?

- What is LAUSD doing to provide safe, Quality education for LOCAL residents?

- What's being done to strengthen all the elementary schools in the Westchester/Playa area?? Parents today are only focused on OPEN, WISH, PDR, Playa Vista ES or any school rated 9/10 in Great Schools. Parents do not feel confident in the other local schools like Cowan, Westport, Loyola Village, ETC. They are greatly concerned.

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- Do magnet schools compete with neighborhood schools? How can you promote one without hurting the other?

Student/Teacher Success (4 questions)

- May I please ask LAUSD School Board President Steven Zimmer if he thought the issues raised in "Heal Our Schools", the documentary film he saw Sunday the 18th [of October] at Hamilton High School, were accurate challenges to our education process? I have particular reference to testing, child preparedness and parent participation as well as teacher driven curriculum. *Name/Email available.

- How can the community assist the Service Center in helping students reach their highest potential? How may we also support our teachers’ success?

- How will you keep your graduates from falling prey to the predator student loan market?

- ADD/ADHD, tics, gastrointestinal [disorders]: Would you consider nonviolent communication skills being part of one teacher training?

Vaccinations (7 questions)

- To Steve Zimmer and panel: My daughter gets seizures but does not qualify for a medical exemption under SB277. I have many close friends with children who have been permanently disabled, by their own testimony and experience, immediately after vaccines. We know our children!!! Mississippi has the nation's top vaccine rate (and does not allow exemptions that will not be allowed by California starting Jan 1, 2016) and has highest infant mortality rate, amongst other high levels of disability. Will you consider PLEASE the number of children who will be permanently damaged by having NO CHOICE as we watch our children's bodies react negatively to vaccines? How many children will need to die or be disabled to justify going along with a law that was not voted on by the people that is based on a media-driven fear of an epidemic that never came, nor a disease that permanently damaged ANY child? Please respond! *Name/Phone/Email available.

- In honor of supporting an education for every child – how is the district educating and supporting families unable or unwilling to comply with good conscience to the new corporate sponsored vaccination mandate?

- How will SB277 be implemented?

- How will LAUSD implement SB277 – the mandatory vaccine law?

- How will the mandatory vaccination laws (SB 277) be implemented?

- What do you have in place for children whose parents do not want to vaccinate? What do you have planned for children who are vaccine injured or damaged?

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- How do you include all children when SB277 excludes families who don't believe government should dictate medical choice?

Westchester/Playa del Rey/Playa Vista (11 questions)

- We’d like a zip code breakdown of attendance in our local schools over the past several years, as well as the number and type of permits (and those zip codes too). Magnets as well. We know this information is collected and we’ve been given it in the past, so please don’t tell us you can’t get it. Please provide it, don’t make us track it down school by school. We can’t plan for our schools if we don’t have complete information. If we have partners in other zip codes, we want to know so we can work with those communities too.

- When will you look at our area and that of the Westside strategically and combine some smaller schools, etc.? It’s hard to get a toehold when our local families are spread thin between schools. It’s ridiculous for popular charters or pilots to be spread across several campuses or be forced into expensive and inappropriate private space. Why do you insist that moving a small program -- like that of Broadway elementary to another school nearby is somehow displacement, instead of recognizing how such a move can strengthen programs and provide better resources overall?

- Parents in Westchester/Playa clearly want choice and local control. When will the district restore the autonomy that was promised to us and then taken away? Will the district work with our community leaders, including the Chamber of Commerce and Neighborhood Council Education Committees and the Westchester/Playa Education Foundation, to restore that, either in the form of a pilot or charter district? Or do we all just have to keep moving away to independent districts?

- What is the plan for students from Phase II of Playa Vista if the proposal to expand PVE doesn’t pass? We’ve been told that Del Rey Elementary is full. So where will my child go to school?

- What is the plan for students who live in Phase II of Playa Vista? We’ve heard Playa Del Rey Elem. is full, so what happens if Playa Vista Elem is too? *Name/Phone/Email available.

- What can you tell us about the future plans for Playa Vista, Wright Middle School and WISH Charter?

- Right now, what is the target high school for Playa Vista residents?

- What are my options for High School?

- What can you tell us about the proposed new middle school to be located on Wright’s campus?

- What are the greatest current challenges in education affecting Westside schools?

- Why is my son losing his special 4th and 5th grade years at Playa Vista Elementary?

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Questions Prepared in Advance by Collaborative Committee

Yellow = Asked at the Community Meeting

1. What initiatives out of your office highlight your priorities for Westside communities and schools?

2. Looking 5-10 years from now, what is one thing you hope the District will have achieved?

3. If you were a parent of a school-aged child who is new to the Westside, what steps would you take to find the best school for your child? How would those steps differ if your child had learning disorders?

4. Like you, we are concerned about underserved populations, which include -- among others -- immigrant families, impoverished families, homeless families, violent communities, and high school drop outs. What efforts on the Westside are targeted toward these vulnerable groups and enhancing their success?

5. Please explain how Measure Q has impacted Westside school facilities and what the future plans are for our schools using the allocated funds.

6. A recurring issue in the news pertains to competition between charter schools and traditional public schools. Do you envision “competition” between these entities? Will they continue to exist as separate school-choice options? In other words, what’s the future of charter schools on the Westside? How does Proposition 39 play a role?

7. Another significant issue in the news facing the Westside is high-tech driven gentrification and industry relocation. What’s your vision for effectively preparing for this potential change in culture and influx of new families?

8. How do you envision careers changing in the future and how are you preparing our students to match these shifts? What is the role of college in the future? Trades? Technical skills education? How is LAUSD cultivating a 21st Century global workforce?

9. Thinking about the modern approach to students’ “willful defiance” that discourages disciplinary suspensions, is there a role for school suspension in the future or are the new, less punitive disciplinary measures more effective? In your response, please address the policy’s impact on school climate (i.e., peers, teachers, administrators) and the ‘pipeline to prison’ cycle.

10. Many families are concerned about where their children will attend high school, so much so that it impacts their elementary and middle school decisions. What are the high school options for Westside families and how do you envision strengthening these pillars? How may the community work to support our public high schools?

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11. Westside communities are growing, yet it is hard to find adequate space. Further, school support staffs remain the same size or diminish even with larger student enrollment. What initiatives are coming from your office to address the facilities challenges on the Westside at a state and local level? Please speak not only to space but also to the condition of the facilities.

12. People say, “You vote with your feet.” How would you say that applies to the percentage of students attending private, independent, and parochial schools on the Westside? How may we bring more families to enroll – and importantly, retain -- their children as students in their local LAUSD schools, particularly for middle and high school?

13. What do you envision as the future of Common Core State Standards within LAUSD?

14. Do you think parent choice will be the predominant approach toward student enrollment in the future or will traditional attendance boundaries be the norm?

15. As a public institution funded with public monies, what sorts of checks and balances are a part of the LAUSD system?

16. How will a new LAUSD Superintendent affect the operations of schools on the Westside? What do you think is their biggest challenge and greatest opportunity?

17. If you were a Westside parent or teacher attending this meeting, what else would you want to know?

_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

LAUSD Panelists/Education Officials and Elected Representatives’ Contact Information

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<th>Ms. Michelle King</th>
<th>LAUSD Chief Deputy Superintendent</th>
<th><a href="mailto:Michelle.King@lausd.net">Michelle.King@lausd.net</a></th>
<th>Ph: 213-241-7000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>333. S. Beaudry Avenue, 24th Floor</td>
<td>24th Floor</td>
<td>Los Angeles, CA 90017</td>
<td>Fax: 213-241-8442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Cheryl Hildreth</td>
<td>LAUSD Instructional Area Superintendent Educational Service Center - West</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Cheryl.Hildreth@lausd.net">Cheryl.Hildreth@lausd.net</a></td>
<td>Ph: 310-914-2100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11380 W. Graham Place</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>Los Angeles, CA 90064</td>
<td><a href="http://achieve.lausd.net/Page/8327">http://achieve.lausd.net/Page/8327</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Steve Zimmer</td>
<td>LAUSD Board of Education President &amp; Board District 4 Representative</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Steve.Zimmer@lausd.net">Steve.Zimmer@lausd.net</a></td>
<td>Ph: 213-241-6387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles City Board of Education</td>
<td>District 4 Representative</td>
<td>333. S. Beaudry Avenue</td>
<td><a href="http://achieve.lausd.net/zimmer">http://achieve.lausd.net/zimmer</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles, CA 90017</td>
<td></td>
<td>Los Angeles, CA 90017</td>
<td>Fax: 213-241-8453</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Program Panelists: LAUSD Chief Deputy Superintendent Michelle King; LAUSD Instructional Area Superintendent Cheryl P. Hildreth; LAUSD School Board President and District 4 Representative Steven Zimmer

Representatives: Senator Benjamin Allen (Fernando Morales); Councilperson Mike Bonin (Fred Sutton); Assemblymember Autumn Burke (Odysseus Bostick); Assemblymember Patrick O’Donnell (TBD)

Moderator: Dr. Michele Cooley-Strickland (Chair, NCWP Education Committee)
Westside Public Education Community Meeting on 10-26-15 from 6:30-8pm
Westchester, Playa del Rey, Playa Vista, Del Rey, Mar Vista, Venice, and Westside Village

The Westside Community’s Questions for Education Representatives and Elected Officials

| California Senator Benjamin Allen | District 26 Office 2512 Artesia Blvd., #320 Redondo Beach, CA 90278-3279 | Benjamin.Allen@sen.ca.gov
|                                | Fernando Morales - District Representative | http://sd26.senate.ca.gov/
|                                |                                           | Fernando.Morales@sen.ca.gov
| California Assemblymember Autumn Burke | 62nd California Assembly District 1 Manchester Blvd. STE 601 Inglewood, CA 90301 | Autumn.Burke@asm.ca.gov
|                                | Odysseus Bostick – Sr. Field Representative | http://asmdc.org/members/a62/
|                                |                                           | Odysseus.Bostick@asm.ca.gov
| Los Angeles City Councilmember Mike Bonin | District 11 Field Office Westchester Municipal Building 7 166 W. Manchester Avenue Los Angeles, CA 90045 | Councilmember.Bonin@LACity.org
|                                | Fred Sutton - Field Deputy: Westchester, Playa Del Rey & Playa Vista | www.11thdistrict.com/
|                                |                                           | Fred.Sutton@lacity.org

Ph: (310) 318-6994 Fax: (310) 318-6733
Ph: (310) 412-6400
Ph: (310) 568-8772

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