



Statement from the Equity Alliance for LA's Kids on LAUSD Teachers Strike

The Equity Alliance for LA's Kids led by the Community Coalition, InnerCity Struggle, and Advancement Project California, has been fighting for increased investments for the highest-need students and schools within the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). We have been fighting the district's status quo budgetary policies that often leave predominately low-income Black and Latino students to bear the brunt of historical disinvestments and short-sighted political in-fighting.

Despite LAUSD's very fractured and complicated terrain, we were hopeful when the Board of Education voted unanimously in favor of an April 2018 resolution to shift \$263M per year towards the highest need schools in the district.

In 2019, we intend to keep our attention focused on the effective implementation of that ground-breaking resolution. The Equity Alliance is committed to fighting against any effort that undermines the letter and spirit of that resolution which would once again defer and delay justice for our highest-need students.

InnerCity Struggle Kimberly Robles, from Garfield High School: *"It's unacceptable that students like me are being overlooked and expected to learn without being given enough support. We cannot compromise on equity if we are serious about ending the cycle of poverty in our communities and putting more youth like me on the path to college."*

At the same time, we recognize the essential role teachers have in ensuring that all students receive a quality education. We value and respect our teachers, and we support their right to organize and collectively bargain. We support all demands that seek to improve public education for our highest need students and families and all efforts leading toward a more just and equitable school system.

More specifically, the Equity Alliance, agrees with several of United Teachers Los Angeles' (UTLA) demands including the need to significantly reduce class sizes, increase support staffing, move toward a more comprehensive "Community Schools" model, and ensure that students of color are not criminalized through unwarranted searches and seizures on campuses. We also

see an opportunity to negotiate these demands to be implemented equitably with high and highest need students being first in line for the additional support.

In the end, we see the responsibility for resolving this conflict falling equally on both sides of the negotiating table. We urge both sides to stay in the room until a reasonable compromise is agreed upon and to avert a strike over the next few days. Similarly, we hold both sides accountable for any negative impacts a potential strike **could** have on high-need students and demand follow up supports to make up for lost instructional time.

Community Coalition parent leader, Ana Carrion: *“In the case of a strike, it will be important for us to monitor the impact of the loss of instruction time on our children. We need the district to make up the lost time by providing our children in highest need schools with remediation and support interventions so they don’t suffer in their classes. The district and teachers’ union need to put our children first in all their negotiations.”*

Therefore, in the case of a strike, the Equity Alliance will have direct support and services to impacted students in some of the highest need neighborhoods in the district. Affected parents and students will have free tutoring, breakfast/lunch/snacks, and support for college and financial aid applications at both the headquarters of InnerCity Struggle as well as the Community Coalition.

Finally, the Equity Alliance stands ready to work with all partners to identify new revenue streams to help resolve the district’s ongoing structural deficit. The current budget constraints faced by LAUSD and large school districts throughout the state were created by a decades-long denial of our collective responsibility to pay for and invest in our children’s education. Therefore, the time is now. It is our responsibility to step up and invest in a future, a city, and state that our kids deserve. In the long haul, we feel that the Schools and Community First initiative, which California voters will find on the 2020 statewide ballot, is our best bet to resolve the district’s ongoing structural deficit. Until then, we are also willing to partner on other local efforts to raise supplemental revenues. Onward!

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About the Equity Alliance for LA’s Kids:

Advancement Project California, Community Coalition and Inner City Struggle saw an opportunity to codify LCFF at the local level. We knew we needed the data to illuminate the areas of highest need. There have always been winners and losers, with our low-income students of color getting the short end of the stick. The Equity Alliance for LA’s Kids is looking to fix that problem. www.laequityalliance.org/

About Advancement Project California:

Advancement Project is a next generation, multiracial civil rights organization. In California, the organization champions the struggle for greater equity and opportunity for all, fostering

upward mobility in communities most impacted by economic and racial injustice. Advancement Project California builds alliances and trust, uses data-driven policy solutions, creates innovative tools, and works alongside communities to ignite social transformation. For more information, visit www.advancementprojectca.org. On Twitter @AP_California.

About Community Coalition:

For nearly 30 years, Community Coalition has provided a hub to elevate South LA's voice and empower residents to take control over the future of their neighborhood. Community Coalition works with residents to build a prosperous and healthy South LA with safe neighborhoods, quality schools, a strong social safety net. The coalition continues to work on positive economic development that reduces crime, poverty and substance abuse in South LA through resident organizing, direct advocacy and community support services. Visit www.cocosouthla.org to learn more.

About InnerCity Struggle:

InnerCity Struggle has worked with youth and community residents since 1994 to promote safe, healthy and non-violent communities in the Eastside. We organize youth and families in Boyle Heights, unincorporated East Los Angeles, El Sereno and Lincoln Heights to work together for social and educational justice. InnerCity Struggle provides positive after-school programs for students to become involved in supporting our schools to succeed. We have empowered students to reach their family's dream of college. The work of InnerCity Struggle demonstrates that youth and parents working together are a powerful force for improving their communities and making real change. Visit innercitystruggle.org to learn more.