

October 25, 2021

UPDATE

CANCER, a Word Not a Sentence What Cancer Taught Me About Being an Administrator: a Reflection by Maria Chua



[October is Breast Cancer Awareness month.](#)

It is also the first time that I will recognize this month as a breast cancer survivor. It was a February afternoon during the height of the COVID-19 surge in Los Angeles. I was in a Zoom work meeting when I got the call. Though my doctor's words were very clear, I had to ask her to repeat them a few times to ensure I absolutely understood what she was saying. I had breast cancer. I felt incredibly vulnerable and isolated.

I told my husband, parents and children. Then I shared with loved ones, friends and colleagues. Each conversation made it more real and I began to accept that I was diagnosed with cancer. It also gave space and resolve that I could take charge of how I wanted to share this information, what kind of support I would like, and how to be kinder to myself and others.

I learned many lessons from cancer that apply to being an administrator. The three that resonated most with me are clear communication, support and collaboration, and kindness.

Clear communication: When working with my oncology team, there was a situation where a prescription was written incorrectly, resulting in complicated side effects. I reached out to my oncologist to discuss the symptoms and read what the prescription stated. She said the prescription had not been written correctly on the label. Although I was ready to assign blame, we identified where the breakdown of communication might have started and formed an agreement on our future communications would be structured over the course of my treatment. Many people defer to the medical experts and are reluctant to ask necessary questions. That poor communication can have disastrous consequences. In my work life, when given a work task that may be ambiguous in nature, I ask for clarity (sometimes several times) to



In this issue:

- 1** CANCER, A WORD NOT A SENTENCE
What Cancer Taught Me About Being an Administrator
- 3** OPEN ENROLLMENT
Think About Saving For retirement Too!
- 4** NO ONE IS SUPERHUMAN
Caregivers Need Support Too!
- 5** HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATES
- 6** AALA BENEFITS CORNER
Group Long Term Care Insurance
BECOME AN AALA ANGEL
ANNOUNCEMENTS
- 7** IN MEMORIAM
POSITIONS AVAILABLE (LINKS)
- 8** INTEREST GROUPS
News You Can Use

CANCER REFLECTION >> PAGE 2

CANCER REFLECTION FROM PAGE 1

ensure that I understand the expectations. As a leader, I check for understanding with my team as a group as well as individually when developing and implementing projects.

Support and Collaboration:

Going through cancer treatment during the pandemic can be especially lonely. Several support organizations have been incredible in giving me a much needed sense of community. [Mommies with Cancer](#) was founded by two LAUSD employees. This fall marked the start of my 23rd year in LAUSD. I have worked collaboratively with many schools, programs, divisions, and departments. Creating and sustaining relationships across different disciplines has helped me in unexpected ways during my cancer treatment. Colleagues from all parts of the district were supportive and shared their own stories and advice. Those relationships also serve me well as an administrator. When I have worked collaboratively with the clear purpose of serving students, I have gotten my best results. To our new administrators, I wholeheartedly encourage you to not stay in your lane. Seek out opportunities where you can integrate your unique expertise in a collaborative fashion with other division and office departments. This helps the process of understanding where connections are in serving others and not being isolated and working in a silo (which can happen even within the same department).

Kindness: Overwhelmingly, kindness matters -- being kind to others and to oneself. Loved ones and colleagues reaching out meant the world to me. Being kind to myself meant posting an out-of-office message and not checking email during my treatments or medical leave. Self-care meant keeping medical appointments. We helping professionals mustn't compromise our self-care while working and caring for others. We discuss self-care a lot in my division which is Student Health and Human Services (SHHS). I try to model that by checking in with others and allowing myself space to reflect on what is most important. Reflection provides a deeper understanding of each other and our respective needs. It helps us respond in a positive and constructive way vs. reacting out of fear and negative presumption.

Kindness means encouraging others to maintain their regular health check-ups and regimen. In the spirit of Breast Cancer Awareness month, I encourage each of us to reach out to the women in our lives to get diagnostic tests such as mammograms and to schedule our annual regular wellness visits. Please visit www.cancer.org for more info. If this reflection is personal for you, we're here for you. Come find community with Mommy's with Cancer and www.livingbeauty.org



AALA Administrators we salute the work you do day in and day out to ensure the children of Los Angeles have a safe environment to learn and thrive in!

We applaud your dedication to your community and the daily sacrifices you make, arriving at your work location at the break of dawn and leaving after the sun goes down. AALA will continue to fight on your behalf for fair compensation and improved working conditions!



THANK YOU

Open Enrollment - Think About Saving For Retirement, Too!

During Open Enrollment, District employees are reminded that they can also augment their retirement by enrolling in a deferred compensation plan or making changes to it. The U.S. Senate recently passed its 16th resolution to designate October as National Retirement Security Month. For District employees already enrolled in a District deferred retirement plan, they can change the amount contributed to their traditional plans—457(b) and 403(b)—or consider the after-tax Roth 457(b) plan.



Why is it important to focus on saving for retirement?

- People in the United States are living longer, and the cost of retirement is increasing significantly.
- With longer life spans and continuing inflation, pension benefits will lose their purchasing power over time.
- With a tax-deferred account, you reduce your annual income taxes for each year that you contribute into your account, while at the same time, benefiting from the compounding effect not available in regular savings accounts.

What are the main features of the traditional 457(b) and 403(b) plans for retirement savings?

- Both plans are pre-tax, meaning that you pay taxes on your income after deducting the amount contributed to your tax-deferred plan. When you retire and begin withdrawals, you must pay taxes on the total amount withdrawn added to your annual income.
- Both plans offer a hardship or “unforeseeable emergency” withdrawal option.
- Age of withdrawal varies with each plan—from the 457(b) plan when you separate from service or take a required minimum distribution beginning at age 71 1/2; with a 403(b) plan you may withdraw without penalty after age 59 ½ regardless of whether you’ve separated from service.
- Penalties or restrictions may apply for early withdrawal (prior to age 59 1/2). Contact your tax advisor for more information.

How does the Roth 457(b) plan differ from the traditional plans discussed above?

- You make contributions on an after-tax basis and your contributions and earnings grow tax-free.
- When you retire, your withdrawals are tax-free, provided you have held the account for five years, have reached age 59 ½, and have separated from service.

What’s the allowable amount that I can reduce my salary to save for retirement?

For 2021, employees under age 49 may contribute up to \$19,500 to a 457(b) and/or a 401(b) plan, and \$6,000 for the 457(b) Roth. If you are 50 or older, there are catch-up amounts you can contribute.

Where can I learn more about the plans?

- General information about the plans is available at: <https://achieve.lausd.net/Page/11880>
- For information about the District’s 457(b) plan, go to [Voya](#), the plan administrator, or call Voya at 844.525.2873.
- To learn more about the 403(b) plan, go to [TSA Consulting Group](#), the plan administrator, or call TSA at 888.796.3786.

No One is Superhuman: Caregivers Need Support Too

A cancer diagnosis is rarely borne alone. Family members and friends quickly become the support system for their loved one. What does being a caregiver mean? It means helping with day-to-day activities, or providing emotional or spiritual support. Needless to say this role can bear a heavy toll if the caregiver goes it alone.

The [National Cancer Institute](#) (NCI) publishes several pamphlets on coping with cancer, including one titled, "[When Someone You Love is Being Treated for Cancer](#)." This pamphlet focuses on the changing role from parent, spouse, child to caring for a family member with cancer. It includes tips for coping with feelings as well as recognizing what one's strengths and weaknesses are. Caregivers need to recognize their limitations and take the help offered or ask for help when they become overwhelmed.

The NCI identifies physical support for caregivers as a critical element to address feelings of being overwhelmed. Whether it is running errands, cooking a meal, picking up kids, or sitting with the cancer patient, caregivers need to say YES to help or ASK for help. While caregivers want to shoulder all of their loved ones needs and continue with their own responsibilities, it is impossible to do so and not suffer physically or emotionally. No one is superhuman.

ME time for caregivers is as important as the support they provide their loved one with a cancer diagnosis. Whether it is maintaining a social life, finding some quiet time, or pampering oneself, it is important to say, "I love myself enough to take care of myself." Caregivers need to be physically



and emotionally well to support their loved one. This includes eating well, exercising, finding a support group. There is no shame on focusing on oneself.

Another key topic the NCI touches on is communicating with your loved one's healthcare team. This includes understanding the diagnosis, prognosis and care plan as well as asking questions during doctor's visits. Key questions to ask the health team include the following: *What medical records, or copies, would you like us to bring? What can my loved one do beforehand to prepare for treatment? How long will the treatment take? Can my loved one go to and from treatment alone? Should someone else go with him? Can I or another family member be with my loved one during the treatment? What can I do to help her feel more comfortable during the treatment? What are the side effects of the treatment? After treatment, what do we need to watch for? When should we call you? How does filing insurance claims work? Who can help us if we have questions or problems?*

Finally, open channels of communication are important. If your loved one feels comfortable sharing, talk to the entire family about the prognosis. It is especially important for children to be included in these conversations and be given healthy coping strategies. Honest conversations go a lot farther than ill-informed speculation.

Cancer Information & Support:

National Cancer Institute

Provides current information on cancer prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment, genetics, and supportive care. Visit <http://www.cancer.gov>

Cancer Information Service

Answers questions about cancer, clinical trials, and cancer-related services and helps users find information on the NCI website. Provides NCI printed materials.

Toll-free 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237)

Visit <http://www.cancer.gov/aboutnci/cis>

Chat online. Click on "LiveHelp" from the home page.

Additional resources can be found in the [pamphlet](#).

Associated Administrators of Los Angeles

CERTIFICATED HIRING FREEZE

To address the District's staffing shortages this school year, **Interim Superintendent Reilly** sent a communication to all school leaders on 10/18/21 stating the following:

- Effective immediately and until further notice, the District will freeze the hiring of all non-classroom staff that will create additional classroom vacancies at school sites.
- Existing classroom vacancies will continue to be filled.
- Principal vacancies will continue to be filled.
- Questions may be addressed to Chief Human Resources Officer Ileana M. Dávalos at idalalos@lausd.net or Deputy Chief Human Resources Officer Frank J. Serrato, Ed.D. at fserrato@lausd.net.



EDUCATOR DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

Per the LAUSD/UTLA Tentative Agreement for 2021-2022 Reopener dated September 21, 2021, permanent UTLA represented employees who have not received a below standard evaluation in the last five years will not be evaluated in the 2021-22 school year. All non-permanent staff will continue to be evaluated. If you have newly assigned non-permanent staff, ensure they are rostered and notified as soon as possible.

For the Initial Planning Sheet Activities (planning sheet and conference), work with your newly assigned non-permanent staff to establish a reasonable timeline, perhaps no later than two weeks from notification.

The EDS team is here to support you. Please contact a team member at mypgs@lausd.net or join Friday Office Hours from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm.

Zoom link: <https://lausd.zoom.us/j/86023099747>

SUBSTITUTE SUPPORT

Human Resources has created a substitute unit support team whose members will serve as points of contact to support schools with substitute needs. The table below designates the contact member by Local District:

Local Districts	Team Member	Email
Central & East	Pat Castro	plc0188@lausd.net
Northeast & Northwest	Jorge Amador	jorge.amador@lausd.net
South	Veronica Aragon	varagon@lausd.net
West	Renee Fuentes Campa	rcampa@lausd.net

Did you know? Substitutes are being assigned to unfilled vacancies and non-school absences as a first priority for now. All other requests may not be filled because of the shortage of qualified substitutes.

AALA Benefits Corner

BEAT THE UPCOMING RATE INCREASE FOR AALA MEMBERS THAT WANT TO ENROLL IN THE GROUP LONG TERM CARE INSURANCE PLAN



NOTE: This announcement DOES NOT pertain to or affect individuals who are already enrolled in the Group Long Term Care Insurance Plan.

As of **February 1, 2022**, the rates for the Group Long Term Insurance Plan will increase considerably for anyone wishing to become a **NEW** enrollee.

Current AALA Members, Spouses, Family Members, and Retirees are also eligible to enroll at these group rates; however, they must complete a Health Application and are subject to Medical Underwriting.

Unplanned long-term care costs can push you into serious financial distress. Get coverage **NOW** before a health issue prevents you from qualifying.

Call **1-800-764-6585** or send an email to info@siltc.com and mention AALA with your name and home address in order to receive a no obligation kit. You can also visit the following website www.siltc.com/aala for more information and to print out an enrollment application.

If you printed an enrollment application from the website, please be sure to mail it to the address shown below, or use the postage-paid envelope included in the packet. **DO NOT** send the Benefit Election Form and the Health Questionnaire directly to the UNUM office in Portland, Maine; this will delay your application.

Specialists in Long Term Care Insurance Services, Inc.
P.O. Box 6630, Auburn, CA 95604

Become an AALA Angel

AALA established FRIENDS OF AALA, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation in January 2011, to continue our outstanding student scholarship program for deserving LAUSD students. In Spring 2021 AALA awarded 40 scholarships to graduating seniors representing high schools and community adult schools. The 2020-2021 school year marked AALA's 40th year providing scholarships to students.



Friends of AALA also recognizes the tremendous support given by community volunteers at local school sites and presents five awards each year.

The Board of Friends of AALA meets its annual fundraising goal by seeking donations from AALA's active and alumni members, private foundations, service clubs, organizations, and businesses. The generosity of these donors is much appreciated.

For as little as \$5 or \$10 a pay period, you can support these deserving seniors by clicking [HERE](#). All donations to FRIENDS OF AALA are tax deductible.



Benefits Open Enrollment window 10/25-11/21. Look for a packet in your mail. If you have not received it go to <https://achieve.lausd.net/benefits> and download Open Enrollment Letters, 2022 Benefits Information, and Summary of Benefits Coverage.

Kaiser Permanente reminds members to get a mammogram: <https://kp.showpad.com/share/BzCWxYdRtJ9hMEyFLksXQ>

Stress Management Webinars: These no cost weekly webinars, sponsored by Kaiser Permanente, are for KP members and non-members. <https://kp.showpad.com/share/ZipwIK9dhs0XhxK6qmUDX>

In Memoriam

GUADALUPE M. FLECHA - Juan A. Flecha's beloved mother died on Saturday, October 16, 2021 at age 96.

A one-time Friends of AALA memorial scholarship is being established in her honor. She never had formal schooling, learned English, or was an active school parent because of work responsibilities. However, she made it clear "chancla" therapy would be applied if the school ever called with a complaint. Three cheers for understanding and valuing the power of a formal education without ever experiencing one and for her effective parental participation from afar!

In lieu of flowers, please consider making a contribution to Friends of AALA. A one-time memorial scholarship will be named in her honor if the \$2000 goal is met. If the scholarship gift is less than the minimum \$2000, the gift will be listed in all publicity in her honor. Note donations are tax deductible to the extent the law allows.

Here are convenient methods to make donations:

Venmo - @Juan-Flecha

Call AALA Headquarters at (213) 484 - 2226 to use a credit card

Send a check and/or condolences to:

AALA c/o Juan A. Flecha - 1910 W. Sunset Blvd., Suite 850, Los Angeles, CA 90026. Please make checks payable to Friends of AALA and annotate the memo line to read Guadalupe M. Flecha.

NATHA LUSK - Field coordinator - Child Development Division. Passed away 9/26/2021. No Services.

ROBERT P. VENEGAS - Former principal at Ford Boulevard; Marianna; Albion elementary schools, and former president of the Council of Mexican American Administrators. Mr. Venegas helped shape the future of many teachers and administrators with his advice and life lessons. Mr. Venegas retired in 2006 and passed away October 2, 2021. Services will be held November 6, 2021. For further information see attached [flyer](#). If you have any questions, please contact Ileana Dávalos, at idavalos@lausd.net.



Note to Applicants: Please be advised that you are responsible for making sure all the District requirements have been met. Do not contact AALA for information regarding positions; for detailed requirements for positions and employment updates use the contact phone number provided in the announcement or visit the District website at <http://www.lausdjobs.org> (classified) or <http://achieve.lausd.net/Page/1566> (certificated). Employees who change basis during the school year may not earn a full year of service credit and annualized employees who change their basis during the year may sustain an annualized settlement.

CERTIFICATED *positions are open to certificated and classified employees who meet the position requirements.*

Click [HERE](#) for school based positions

Click [HERE](#) for non-school based positions

CLASSIFIED *positions are open to certificated and classified employees who meet the position requirements.*

Click [HERE](#) for current job opportunities.

Interest Groups - News You Can Use

Alliance for Asian Pacific Administrators

AAPA Members, you are invited to our annual leadership development (In Person) meeting. Sharpen your skills by revisiting our district's school leadership framework that will set you on the trajectory to success! Whether you are a current or aspiring administrator, this will be a fantastic opportunity! Please see [attached flyer](#) for more information including the registration link.

Association for California School Administrators Region 16

DigCitCom 2021, Saturday October. 23, 2021

Register here: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_QjUuzJ3yTwio6YEJ0EMJUG and the bit.ly shortcut is bit.ly/RSVP-DigCitCon2021

Will your retirement be the retirement of your dreams or nightmares? For Your Future... AALA, ACSA Region 16 and HR are sponsoring a special presentation on STRS retirement.

Jeremy Leibowitz, CFP®, RICP®, NEA Retirement Specialist Phone- (818) 274-2460

<https://lawealthmanagement.com/>

Monday, October 25, 2021, 3:00 p.m.

Zoom Link: <https://lausd.zoom.us/j/87999320482?pwd=aFcyYWsyZlF5Zzk0alp6ZDNTTFJZQT09>

Passcode: acsa

Council of Black Administrators (COBA) Updates

COBA Opening Meeting - 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm
Wednesday, October 27, 2021

General Membership Meetings 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm:

Wednesday, November 17, 2021

Wednesday, January 26, 2022

Wednesday, March 23, 2022

Holiday Social - 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm Monday,
December 13, 2021

Council of Mexican American Administrators (CMAA) Updates

If you have any questions about becoming a member or any of the events, please reach out to Adriana Cortez at axc7702@lausd.net or feel free to visit our website [here](#).

Upcoming Events:

December 10, 2021 6:00 p.m. Winter Social Location
TBD

Have Good News to share? Email us at AALAOFFICE@aala.us and we will include it in the next Update. Photos optional but encouraged!

