

UPDATE

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Week of February 27, 2012

REALLY, DR. DEASY? WHEN?

On February 15, the Superintendent sent a letter to principals directing them to "... immediately review all working folders ..." for certificated and classified employees within 60 days. The Superintendent directed them to complete a series of additional tasks related to his directive, including submission of a Principal Responsibilities Confirmation Form. After carefully reviewing the Superintendent's letter and hearing concerns raised by principals and others, **Dr. Judith Perez**, AALA President, sent the following letter to **Dr. Deasy** regarding his directives.

I am writing regarding your letter to principals dated February 15, 2012, RE: Principal Responsibilities. AALA members have raised many questions and concerns regarding your correspondence and the accompanying confirmation form.

Procedures for Site Documents and Working Folders: The District has never established clear procedures or guidelines for what goes into site files or working folders. Furthermore, District procedures regarding reporting of suspected child abuse cases have changed over the years. Administrators have been told, for example, never to place such documents in an individual's site personnel file. During some years, they were told never to keep copies of suspected child abuse forms at the site because of confidentiality. However, during other years, administrators were told to keep them, but file them separately in a locked drawer. Some years they were told to send copies to a District operations coordinator; other years they were told to send them to the District's General Counsel's Office; other years they were told to send them to the District's Child Abuse Office (which was eliminated years ago).

Access and Time Frame: There is no indication in your directive as to the number of years the review of former employees' files should extend. Should principals go back three years, five years, ten years? As you are aware, most of our schools are over fifty years old. In addition, due to lack of space, inactive files may be kept at the school in attics, basements or storerooms. Some may have been taken home or damaged during construction, severe weather or by rodents. An incoming principal may have no idea where old files are kept and, in fact, may have never seen them. The reduction of clerical norms and the resulting turnover of classified staff coupled with storage space issues have exacerbated this problem over time.

Liability Issues: Given the fact that a principal cannot be held liable for actions of a predecessor, it would be helpful to assure the current principal of the school who finds files from a former administrator(s) that he/she will enjoy immunity from liability.

The Confirmation Form: The form does not specify exactly what principals are confirming. They are understandably concerned about signing a vague form. Does the form refer to completion of the review of files? Does it confirm that appropriate documents have already been provided to the District, or does it refer to the handling of documents which will be created in the future?

Really? (continued)

Itinerant Personnel: As you know, many schools have itinerant and other personnel who are supervised by staff other than the principal. There may be no files at the schools for such individuals. What responsibility, if any, does the principal have in locating such material? How will the District access this information? Which nonschool-based administrators have to confirm that they have reviewed the files of these employees who work at the schools but are supervised centrally?

Workload Issues: Many AALA members have cited issues of workload and the short timeline to complete required tasks. They are committed to student safety as well as student achievement. However, given all of their myriad responsibilities and the lack of support personnel, they don't know when they can find the time to review all working folders without neglecting their other responsibilities.

We look forward to your response and clarification of the above concerns.

ADULT EDUCATION—SUPPLEMENTAL OR ESSENTIAL?

AALA thanks **Dr. Vince Carbino**, Adult School Principal, for submitting this article.

We have heard repeatedly throughout the implementation of No Child Left Behind that educational decisions should be driven by research and data. However, the proposed reduction or elimination of Adult Education in the Los Angeles Unified School District is not supported by research. Recent history has shown that millions of citizens with less than a high school diploma have participated in continuing educational opportunities. Researchers note that nationally between the years of 1992 and 1996 over 15.5 million adults with less than a 12th grade education were enrolled in adult education. During the last school year, the LAUSD Division of Adult and Career Education (DACE) served more than 350,000 students: 118,700 in ESL; 99,148 in Career and Technical Education; 80,371 adults who were working towards their high school diploma; and 88,200 high school students who needed to take classes to meet their graduation requirements. More than 10% of the high school students who would have been counted as dropouts were enrolled in Adult and Career Education courses on norm day 2011. This reduced the District's 2010-2011 dropout rate by 10%. This support was provided while LAUSD was identified by *Education Week* as having the second worst graduation rate in the United States (40.6%). What would the graduation rates of LAUSD be without these additional opportunities for our students? Districts that have cut adult education programs have experienced increased dropout rates.

Many people ask "Why care?" Pundits opposed to adult education often question why students who did not initially succeed in receiving a high school diploma should be given a second chance. Yet the concept of rehabilitation or "second chance" is fundamental to our social mores: retraining, redevelopment, refinancing, etc. Why would we choose to deny an opportunity to individuals willing to educate themselves? Sociologists have noted that adult education transforms communities with educated adults who are workers, citizens and parents. They contribute to a higher tax base which funds social services and promotes safer, supportive communities and schools.

During a budgetary crisis, researchers have found that program performance instead of program access should influence the budget cutting decisions. Los Angeles has the highest rate of undereducated adults of any major metropolitan area in the U.S., affecting 53% of working-age adults residing in the city (Literacy Project, 2003). How can the Board of Education vote to drastically cut or eliminate DACE which has shown to reduce the dropout rate, improve intergenerational family literacy and provide the infrastructure for increased community safety and economic security?

HEALTH BENEFITS FAQ

Topic: Navigating Prescription Drugs

What are the basic definitions for terms related to prescription drugs?

Formulary: The most common term used is formulary. A formulary is the medical plan’s list of drugs that are covered by the plan. The formulary includes both generic and brand-name, or preferred drugs. Nonformulary drugs are those not listed on the formulary. The formulary list is usually revised during the plan year, with drugs added and removed.

Generic: A generic drug is FDA approved and has the identical active ingredient(s), dosage and strength as its brand-name counterpart. Generic drugs are significantly less expensive because their manufacture does not involve research and development costs.

Brand Name: A brand-name drug is a drug protected by patent. During the effective term of the patent, generic counterparts are not permitted. The difference between a generic and a brand name is usually in shape, coloring, name and inactive ingredients.

Preferred Brand: Certain brand-name drugs listed on a drug plan’s formulary are called preferred and fall under a specific copayment amount.

Non-Preferred Brand: A nonpreferred brand is a nonformulary drug. These drugs have the highest copayments.

Specialty Drug: Specialty drugs are medications that require special handling, administration or monitoring. These drugs are used to treat complex, chronic and often costly conditions. Copayments may vary.

My prescription coverage shows copayment tiers. What’s a tier and what does each tier stand for?

A tier is another way of grouping drugs and copayments, based on drug features. For example, UnitedHealthCare®Group Medicare Advantage HMO (formerly Secure Horizons) uses four copay tiers.

- Tier 1 — \$5 copay for preferred generic drugs
- Tier 2 — \$20 copay for nonpreferred generic drugs
- Tier 3 — \$40 copay for preferred brand-name drugs
- Tier 4 — \$40 copay for specialty drugs

How do I find my medical or prescription plan’s formulary?

Plan members may access their plan’s formulary online or request a copy of their plan’s formulary by contacting their plan. The web addresses for the plan’s formulary are:

Kaiser HMO/Senior Advantage	www.kp.org/formulary	
Health Net HMO/Seniority Plus	www.healthnet.com/lausd	Click on My Benefits/Drug List
Anthem Blue Cross HMO/EPO	www.caremark.com/lausd	Click on Check Availability & Cost
UnitedHealthCare®Group Medicare Advantage HMO (formerly Secure Horizons)	www.uhretiree.com	Look up individual drugs and cost. Click on Look Up Prescription Drugs

Note: Medicare Advantage plans have a Part D formulary that differs from the formulary for active employees and pre-Medicare retirees. Medicare retirees receive a copy of their plan’s Part D formulary by mail each year.

NEW RESTRICTIONS ON EARNINGS LIMIT FOR CALSTRS RETIREES

As of July 1, 2012, CalSTRS retirees will be facing changes to the postretirement earnings limit. Currently, certificated retirees who return to work for any public school district in California may earn a maximum of \$31,020 per school year and still receive their monthly retirement check; however, there are some exemptions that currently allow unlimited earnings for retirees. One of the most familiar is if a retiree does not take public school employment for a 12-month period after retirement, he/she is not held to the earnings limit. Unfortunately, this and all other exemptions sunset on June 30, 2012, and all retirees will be held to the earnings limit.

This applies to all retirees, even those currently working under the exemption who can have unlimited earnings. These retirees have the option of reducing their workload to earn no more than \$31,020 next school year (or more if the limit is raised) at the public school, terminating their retirement and returning to active status or not working for a public school. If one returns to active status, he/she no longer receives a retirement check, but has no restrictions on how much can be earned. Doing so would enable him/her to earn additional service credit and a potentially higher benefit when retiring the next time.

HEALTH BENEFITS FOR ADULT SCHOOL RETIREES

AALA has received many questions from adult school employees regarding their eligibility for District-sponsored retiree health benefits. If you need to verify your eligibility status, you may submit a written request to Benefits Administration via e-mail, benefits@lausd.net, fax, 213.241.4247, or regular mail, P.O. Box 513307, Los Angeles, CA 90051-1307. Please include your name, employee number and approximate date of retirement. Responses to these requests take approximately three weeks to process, so please be patient. There is also a Benefits Administration Call Center, 213.241.4262, which can provide general information, or you are invited to visit the website, <http://benefits.lausd.net>.

ARTS EDUCATION—WHERE STUDENTS THRIVE

*AALA thanks **Robin Lithgow**, Administrative Coordinator, Arts Education Branch, for writing this article.*

Students thrive in arts-rich schools. Since time immemorial, the arts have been lauded for their role in preparing the mind for learning, for listening, for observing, for reasoning, for reflecting, for valuing. Today, an ever-growing body of research confirms the cognitive, social and emotional benefits of a substantive and sustained arts education. In view of this it seems shortsighted for LAUSD to cut all funding for its Elementary Arts Program—its 120-year-old elementary music program and its 12-year-old dance/theatre/visual arts rotation.

ARTS (continued)

During the decade from 1999 to 2009, the LAUSD Arts Education Branch built an Elementary Arts Program that was a national model. Starting with 54 schools and adding as many as 50 each year, equitably across the District, we supplemented the existing music program with the arts rotation. The program included capacity building funds that provided for professional development for classroom teachers and administrators, textbooks, materials, equipment and residencies from a vetted Arts Community Partnership Network (ACPN) of over 80 offerings. By 2009 the program was in every elementary school in LAUSD: one day per week guaranteed for music, and 2-3 days per week of the arts rotation, depending on enrollment. The program was on a trajectory that would have eventually increased the number of elementary arts teachers to 600, to be more in line with many other urban districts throughout the country and the world.

Since 2008, the number of centrally funded elementary arts teachers has dropped from 355 to 233, reducing by 33% student access throughout the District; and all funds distributed to K-12 school sites for their arts programs have been cut. The Budget for the Arts Education Branch has been cut from \$47.5 million (including \$11 million in state Arts and Music Bloc Grants now in flexible Tier III and no longer available for the arts) to \$18 million. Any further cut would make it impossible to field a quality program Districtwide.

We urge the District to consider retaining at minimum the amount of the state's annual Tier III "Arts and Music Bloc Grant" (approximately \$9 million) to fund a limited number of "Arts Education Research Sites" where we could begin to gather locally based data on the impact of a quality arts education program on student achievement and school culture.

Sometimes the solution to a complex problem is in plain sight. The arts are a solution – for achievement, for attendance, for graduation rates, for school culture, for student health, for teacher retention and growth and for virtually every urgent need we face in education. Let us not completely abandon all the hard work we have done to bring the arts back into the core of our students' education. Below are testimonials from two elementary school principals.

186th Street Elementary School is soaring academically, artistically, and peacefully as a result of the Arts. When our school had the full implementation of the Stage 5 Arts Program with arts teachers everyday, we moved into the 800 club with our academic performance index (API). With a poverty index of 86%, our school has an 852 API. The arts have motivated our children to dream, to thrive, to flourish! As I study schools across the nation to mirror their best practices, there is one thing they all have in common...the Arts!!! When our children talk about their fond memories of being at our school, they always refer to something related to the arts. Eliminating all the arts in our schools, is not a wise decision. An artless District would be like a world without the birds, the bees, the flowers and the trees. Yes, the Arts put the heart in smart, and they also put a zing in our wings to soar. We can save our schools with one art lesson at a time. The arts are essential in education. They bring life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness!!!

Marcia Reed, Principal, 186th Street Elementary School

ARTS (continued)

At Leo Politi Elementary, an inner city school in the Pico-Union neighborhood, there is no doubt that a robust arts program has helped students make sustained academic gains. Through the Elementary Arts Program, experts in the fields of music, drama, dance and visual arts deliver high-caliber, standards-based arts instruction to participating classes. Through the years, the arts teachers' presence here has informed the instructional delivery of classroom teachers across the campus who now employ arts-based strategies to improve student engagement and horizontally expand lessons. Higher student engagement equals higher student achievement.

The arts are the cornerstone of Los Angeles' success, and the professional artists who make their homes here will tell you their journey began at the elementary level. The students filling our seats at instrumental and vocal music classes in our schools someday will fill the seats of the L.A. Philharmonic and the Ahmanson. And those, like me, who participate in arts instruction while in elementary school but pursue a different career, still have much to gain from a rich arts background. These students learn at an early age they can take on an additional responsibility as long as they manage their time well. This gives them a head start on the organization of time, which becomes so important at the secondary level. Their arts instruction informs their ability to think critically as they learn the language of music. Of course, a rich arts background adds to the whole individual, one who can relate to others about the arts, its history and its relevance. Again, this is a journey that must begin in elementary school.

An after-school science illustration visual arts program has bridged students' love of illustration to new learning in science. Since 2009, a cadre of upper-elementary students has learned science illustration from an expert in the field. Native plants, birds, insects and arachnids all have been studied—not just the physical form but the world they inhabit. Students' passion for art now has ignited a passion for science. The school's teachers seize on this interest as they teach science during the instructional day, and the percentage of Grade 5 students scoring within the Proficient/Advanced range on the CST has made a two-year leap from 9% to 53%.

Brad Rumble, Principal, Leo Politi Elementary School

SAVE THE DATE

The 42nd Annual Scholarship Dinner Dance sponsored by the American Educators of Italian Origin United, AEIOU, will take place on Saturday, March 24, 2012, at Casa Italiana, 1051 N. Broadway, LA 90012. For more information, contact **Al Fasani** at 714.827.1591.

IN THE UPDATE NEXT WEEK . . .

The new LAUSD homework policy that will be presented to the Board in March.

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER AWARD NOMINATION FORMS

It is time to submit your Community Volunteer Award nomination form if you have not already done so. The deadline for submission is **Wednesday, March 7, 2012**, and the form can be accessed on the AALA website. Just go to the website at <http://www.aala.us/aala-initiatives/community-recognition/> click on Community Volunteer Nomination Form, complete the one-page form and submit it for consideration. If you prefer, the form may be downloaded, completed and mailed (1910 W. Sunset Blvd., Suite 850, Los Angeles 90026) or faxed (213.484.0201) to AALA. A selection committee will review all nomination forms received, and the selected recipients will be honored at the Scholarship and Community Awards Banquet on **Wednesday, May 23, 2012**, at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel. Should you have any questions regarding the community awards, please contact **Gema Pivaral** in the AALA office at 213.484.2226.

ACSA REGION XVI AWARD WINNERS

Congratulations to the following administrators who received awards from ACSA Region XVI for their outstanding career accomplishments:

- **Dr. Angel Barrett**, ES Principal (Marcus Foster Memorial Award)
- **Brandon Cohen**, HS Assistant Principal (Valuing Diversity Award)
- **Nancy Franklin**, Special Education Administrator
- **Barbara Friedrich**, ES Principal
- **Yvonne Garrison Edwards**, HS Principal
- **Francis Gipson**, Local District Administrator
- **Claudio Gómez**, ES Assistant Principal
- **Bernadine González**, AS Principal
- **Victorio R. Gutiérrez**, Options Principal
- **Mariam Hironimus**, Business Services Administrator
- **David Holmes**, HS Assistant Principal
- **Marjorie Josaphat**, Human Resources Administrator
- **Rowena Lagrosa**, Local District Superintendent
- **Noel Morales**, AS Assistant Principal
- **Steven Muñoz**, MS Assistant Principal
- **Evelyn Payne**, ECE Principal
- **John Ralles**, HS Assistant Principal
- **Dr. Deborah Wiltz**, MS Principal

In addition, **Scott Folsom**, former 10th District PTA President, received the Fred Kiesel Award; **Connie Llanos**, former *Daily News* writer, received the Thelma Barnes Award; and **Sandy Banks**, *LA Times* Columnist, was the recipient of the Outstanding Media Coverage of Public Education Award. The **Wasserman Foundation** received the Partners in Educational Excellence Award. All will be recognized by ACSA Region XVI, on May 3 at Casa Italiana Restaurant. For more information visit the website, <http://regions.acsa.org/16>.

IN MEMORIAM

ELENA BROWN-ANTHONY—Principal of Los Angeles High School and former Assistant Principal at Los Angeles and Dorsey high schools. Elena had been on an illness leave since August 2011 and passed away on February 17, 2012. The wake and rosary will be held on February 24, 2012, 7:00 p.m., at Rose Hills Memorial Park and Mortuary, Hillside Chapel (Gate 17). The funeral will be held on Saturday, February 25, 2012, 11:00 a.m., at St. Bernadette Catholic Church, located at 3825 Don Felipe Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90008.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Minimum Qualifications: Candidates are responsible for making sure all the District requirements have been met. Please do not contact AALA for information regarding positions; use the contact phone number provided in the announcement. To view the following positions, go to http://certificated.lausd.k12.ca.us/admin_vacancies. Select School-Based or Non-School-Based positions and click on any position to view the specific flyer.

CERTIFICATED POSITIONS

Coordinator, English Language Development (ELD) Compliance

Local Educational Service Center (5 positions), MST 41G, Temporary Adviser, B Basis. For information and application procedures call 213.241.6886. **Filing deadline is Monday, March 12, 2012.**

Coordinator, English Language Development (ELD) Instruction

Local Educational Service Center (5 positions), MST 41G, Temporary Adviser, B Basis. For information and application procedures call 213.241.6886. **Filing deadline is Monday, March 12, 2012.**

Specialist, Instructional Technology

Local Educational Service Center (5 positions), MST 38G, Temporary Adviser, B Basis. For information and application procedures call 213.241.6886. **Filing deadline is Monday, March 12, 2012.**

PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED POSITIONS

POSITION	LOCATION	CONTACT	DEADLINE
<i>INSPECTOR GENERAL, Classified Senior Management Position</i>	Administrative Offices Beaudry Building	213.241.5549 Katie.wong@lausd.net Anna.forsberg@lausd.net	Until filled
<i>COORDINATOR, EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS, MST 40G, E Basis</i>	Office of Data and Accountability Beaudry Building	Grace Pang Bovy 213.241.2450	5:00 p.m. Monday February 27, 2012
<i>LOCAL AREA ADMINISTRATOR OF OPERATIONS (5 positions), MST 49G, E Basis</i>	Local Educational Service Center	Administrative Assignments 213.241.6886	5:00 p.m. Wednesday February 29, 2012