

COLLABORATION BETWEEN LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES

IN SUPPORT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE

PASADENA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

(A Proposal Developed and Presented by ACT, Pasadena's Grassroots, Non-partisan,
Progressive Political Organization, May 14, 2007)

I. PRESUPPOSITIONS

- A. PUSD has shown significant improvements in recent years, yet faces ongoing fiscal challenges in the wake of severe state cutbacks, under-funded state and federal mandates, and declining enrollment impacted by soaring housing costs. Moreover, the communities and city governments that make up PUSD have not been taking a proactive, constructive role in promoting PUSD's successes or supporting their ongoing efforts at improvement.
- B. With a new superintendent now in place, this is an ideal time for the PUSD to regroup its management and for new partnerships to be forged on behalf of the District's students.
- C. Continued improvement in PUSD's schools is to the advantage of the entire community, not just the families of the students enrolled, as it upgrades the general quality of life.
- D. The municipalities that are part of the PUSD have a vested interest in the success of the District's schools, because of the potential effect this would have on attracting talent to the community, lowering crime and gang activity, and improving tax revenue from thriving commerce.
- E. These municipalities have certain resources, expertise, and capabilities that can be applied to helping the District deliver quality education to students in its schools. In addition, there are frequent opportunities for joint partnerships to be supported with State resources designated for specific city-schools projects.
- F. Elected officials play an important leadership role in elevating public education to the top of the community's agenda and promoting public-private partnerships with PUSD.
- G. Moreover, elected officials and staff persons in the municipalities provide a channel for citizen inquiry and input that has the potential to be a powerful conduit of information to the city and its partnership with the district.

05/14/2007

Item G

Handout by George Van Alstine

II. PROPOSALS

- A. That a more assertive leadership around public education be demonstrated by all elected officials in the PUSD area.
- B. That a new level of mutual commitment to work together become the goal of the PUSD, the Pasadena City Council, the Sierra Madre City Council, the Altadena Town Council and Pasadena City College.
- C. That this commitment be channeled through the development of a new JOINT INTEREST COMMISSION, which should be comprised of a balanced group of elected officials, such as

2 members of the PUSD Board

2 members of the Pasadena City Council

1 member of the Sierra Madre City Council

1 member of the Altadena Town Council

1 member of the Pasadena City College Board

The addition of high-level staff and other representatives of the various government organizations will be important, but left to the discretion of the joint commission.

- D. That this Commission meet according to a regular schedule, and that its meetings be subject to the Brown Act provisions for open meetings.
- E. That in undertaking the work of this body, we encourage the municipalities and PUSD to collaborate in ways that improve public education and that have worked in other localities. Elsewhere in California, for example, local governments and local school districts have collaborated on management of public and school libraries; management and maintenance of playgrounds, athletic fields, and parks; and purchasing of equipment and supplies to take advantage of economies of scale. See <http://www.ccspartnership.org/> for information on what's working in California. Examples of successful partnerships in cities outside of California are (sources: National League of Cities website and its Institute for Youth, Education, and Families *Action Kit for Municipal Leaders*):

Boston, Massachusetts: School Technology (Pop.547,000)

In 1996, Boston's mayor pledged that within five years all 130 schools would be wired with high-speed Internet access. He also promised a 1:4 computer-student ratio, a computer for every teacher, and high-speed Internet access for Boston's public libraries. The mayor committed \$50 million in capital money to develop the infrastructure and partnered with dozens of regional and national corporations and raised over \$30 million in resources. In 1998, Boston was the first major urban school district to network all its schools. Currently, the city's schools have a 1:5 computer-student ratio, 80 percent of teachers have received professional development on instructional computer usage, all 27 public libraries are networked and there are over 100 community-based technology centers throughout the city.

Denver, Colorado: Club DenverAfterschool Program (Pop.554,636)

In partnership with the Denver Public Schools, the mayor launched an effort to support after school programming for Denver's middle-school youth. The resulting program, called Club Denver, is modeled after "career academies" and now operates in all 20 of the city's middle schools. Each club focuses on a specific career pathway and is led by a teacher who receives a \$750 stipend per academic semester. Individual teachers report to their school principals and to a staff person in the city agency that is most closely associated with that club's career pathway. For example, instructors for the Aviation Club report to the Denver International Airport. The city staff supervisors provide ideas, curriculum, and other support to the instructors.

Fort Lauderdale, Florida: The Education Advisory Board (Pop.152,397)

The City of Fort Lauderdale established the Education Advisory Board (EAB), comprised of 20 community residents appointed by the City Commission to serve as a conduit for the interests and concerns of parents and educators. The City Commissioners work with the EAB to address broad issues related to youth and schools, and to take action on targeted issues. The City has funded selected EAB initiatives, including an Education Summit and the publication of a Guide to Fort Lauderdale Schools. The EAB also serves as an advocate for the public schools and has been actively involved in issues related to educational equity and quality in terms of facilities, programs and resources.

St. Petersburg, Florida: Mayor's Mentors and More

St. Petersburg's Mayor's Mentors and More initiative provides mentoring and tutoring opportunities and collaborates with corporations to improve schools in the community. Dedicating about \$1 million towards 300 college scholarships, the initiative provides college students in need of financial support with full coverage of all school expenses. Recipients of the scholarship also receive mentoring from city workers, guiding them in their academic aspirations and strengthening the connection between youth and the community. In addition to mentoring, the initiative offers students tutoring opportunities in community recreation centers and libraries. The initiative's Caring Officers Present Storytime (COPS) program involves city police officers reading to children at city libraries, helping to develop relationships between them and the

youth. Through the A+ Housing Program, eligible school employees of St. Petersburg may receive grants for buying homes in the city. Corporate partners involved in the program offer various levels of support, ranging from donations of cash or equipment and technical support to volunteer hours for mentoring or school projects. This program was featured in the 2005 City Showcase at NLC's Congress of Cities in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Portland, Oregon: School Funding (Pop.437,319)

In Portland, Oregon, the mayor took a lead role in establishing the Coalition for Community Funding Now to respond to a statewide school funding crisis in 1996. The Coalition's members include business and community leaders, education advocates, parents, teachers, and concerned citizens who believe that every child in the state should have access to a high-quality public education. During the past two state legislative sessions, the Coalition won approval of an additional \$1 billion in school funding beyond what the Governor had initially proposed. Portland's mayor and city commissioners have also contributed more than \$40 million in city funds to the local school district budget as part of a community-wide effort to raise student achievement.

Portland, Oregon: Schools Real Estate Trust

The Schools Real Estate Trust was established to acquire the rights to Portland Public Schools (PPS) properties and prepare them for redevelopment. PPS owns several properties that are either no longer needed or that are larger than needed to meet its educational mission, draining school finances. By delegating the responsibility to develop properties without granting title, the Portland Board of Education maintains control of the property and secures any future facility needs. A board of community leaders with expertise in development governs the Trust and advises on redevelopment and reuse issues. The City of Portland was instrumental in leading the effort to establish the Trust and saw the project through its completion. Innovation Partnership, a non-profit organization that was formed to identify and bring innovative solutions to persistent community problems, housed the effort to establish the Trust, and two senior city officials sit on its Board of Directors.

- F. That funding for the various programs developed by the Commission be actively sought as part of the Commission's mandate, through the Pasadena Educational Foundation and other sources.

- G. That the municipalities and the school district pursue every opportunity to obtain limited State funding when it is made available. The State of California often provides funding for specific joint city and school projects such as meeting rooms, gymnasiums, community centers, sports facilities, and libraries; it is imperative for the local municipalities and PUSD to have a formal process, such as the JOINT INTEREST COMMISSION, to identify worthy projects and jointly apply for these funds as a way to leverage and maximize local dollars.

- H. That in addition to the JOINT INTEREST COMMISSION, a policy be developed and implemented to include PUSD-appointed individuals on city commissions, task forces and committees that potentially impact PUSD students and public education. These include planning for land use, development, housing, and health and human services, among others.

III. PROCEDURE

- A. The ACT Steering Committee has voted that this document will be used in its consideration of candidates seeking endorsement or support in elections for the PUSD Board, the PCC Board, the Pasadena City Council, the Sierra Madre City Council, and the Altadena Town Council.
- B. It is also the intention of the ACT Steering Committee to hold elected officials accountable for promises made during election campaigns regarding support of efforts to reform and upgrade education in PUSD schools