



The Budget Crisis Facing the LAUSD is a Red Herring

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(A response to the Los Angeles Daily News article: LAUSD's \$400 million crisis)

There are some things that people refuse to speak, even if they are true. We live in a culture that is so ingrained with "cultural sensitivities" that some issues may not, cannot, be discussed for fear of crossing the lines of comfortable discourse. So it is with the LAUSD.

When the howling and yelping by the District and teachers' unions is decoded, the following translation will show:

1) The District will never tell the REAL truth of the budget paralysis: 25% of the students are illegal aliens, non-English speakers. These students are the basis of the "50,000,000" lunches and breakfasts served by the District. They are using precious resources that could be used by American students who are ALREADY AT RISK of failure and dropping out of school.

2) The article by the Daily News proves that the "arts" are being taught on the back of basic education courses (history). Why? Is this the "kumbaya" melody that everyone so jokingly hums in the District? The kids have been so impacted by dumbed-down academics that elective courses have supplanted core academics. This, at a time when only 25% of our students can pass a basic Calif. High School Exit Exam! Where is the oversight here, and how has this scam been allowed to keep ripping off the taxpayers?

3) Cafeteria workers? Who said that the District's recent \$200,000,000 contract, including benefits, health care, retirement FOR PART-TIME CAFETERIA WORKERS was to be implemented on the backs of the education of our children? To anyone other than the deaf and dumb, the District is acting as a welfare system (and a lousy one at that), without concern for the swollen, deficit-riddled budget that instead should be designed to put our students in competitive status for critical thinking and technological know-how. Visit any campus breakfast program, and you'll be challenged to find how the tripe that is served can translate to wholesome, vitamin-rich, low salt, low calorie nutrition. If you wanted to stop teenage obesity and sluggish brain capacity, the cafeteria would be a great place to declare a moratorium.

How's this for a way to save teacher jobs and vital academic resources: MAKE YOUR OWN DAMN LUNCH. TRY BEING RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR OWN CHILD! I know of no responsible parent that would trust the fare offered by those super nutrition experts at LAUSD. If your contention is that the families have no money for lunch, then

we need to find another country that will agree to feed those illegals mentioned.

4) LAUSD has wasted over \$400,000,000 on the Belmont learning center. Another \$300,000,000 has been scandalously twiddled away on another school. We just couldn't do without that albatross of a pet Latino project located over a methane gas field. Note: those responsible are still on the job, not missing a paycheck, and will certainly collect fat pensions. We can't have any vigilantes seeking to have these criminals fired now, can we? That might be interpreted as "culturally insensitive."

5) Board member Marguerite Lamotte was instrumental in putting the kabash on former Mayor Richard Riordan's offer to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars, maybe more, for a Marshall Plan in raising academic achievement at drop-out plagued Dorsey High. Statewide, Dorsey is ranked as one of the lowest achieving schools. Why would anyone refuse help, in light of the horrific financial reality we face with the present budget deficit? Answer: more criminal negligence on the part of the Board, with not a little racism mixed in. Not a peep from the rest of the Board, nor from the Mayor. All's well in La La land, and the hell with the children who are criminally promoted without survival skills, onward to our already bulging State Prisons.

6) The Daily News article omits much of the budget nightmare, and just like everyone else in this city, seeks to placate a seething cauldron of social dysfunction. A serious and immediate audit will find untold millions of dollars wasted on "campus security." It is a known fact that the District is pandering to Black and Hispanic gangs, and will do anything humanly possible to retain them, despite the cost and loss of untold thousands of hours of wasted class time due to discipline issues. Students that want to study **MUST LEAVE THE DISTRICT SO THEY ARE NOT HARRASSED OR DISADVANTAGED BY BULLIES OR GANGBANGERS.** In the poorest of inner city schools, the responsible students are made to feel **GUILTY** for their diligence and desire to excel, putting them often times at risk.

The facts on the ground (in the hood) are, that the gangs are running the show! Bloods vs. Crips, Crips vs. Los Nortenos, MS13 vs Crips, 18th St. Gang vs. MS13, ad nauseum. Counselors must check a list of "gangs on campus" before they transfer a hoodlum out of a school to another (this is what they call an "opportunity transfer"). Serious offenders and predators are allowed to ravage and rampage at will. No consequences, no intervention with any accountability, just "chill" and let bygones be bygones. Meanwhile, the taxpayers must bear an increasing **NON-ACADEMIC** burden of students, many of them in this country illegally, that have hamstrung our system, laughing at us all the while. These troublemakers feel no heat--indeed, they are socially promoted, they "walk the stage" for their diplomas, and we are all supposed to feel good about a non-education that costs us more than \$12,000 per year, per student.

7) From the above we can conclude: we are probably wasting about 80% of the taxpayers' money on nonsense that passes for socially sensitized, feel-good stuff that resembles education.

We are failing our students, putting our city under siege with an army of students without skills, raising their level of frustration and expectation to the breaking point, and setting ourselves up for racial disharmony and backbiting. We have abandoned our once great schools to the misfits and academically disadvantaged. Just ask the UTLA membership where their children attend school: 60% of them send their children to private schools.

What is needed in LAUSD is not just some belt tightening: We need a revolution for the sake of our students, and the very survival of our city.

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"If we had 10 more teachers like Rabbi Shifren, we could turn America around tomorrow." Rev. Jesse Lee Petersen