



California Center *for* Parent Empowerment

August 27th, 2014

Hon. Richard Vladovic
LAUSD Board President
333 South Beaudry Avenue
24th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90017

Dear Dr. Vladovic:

Thank you for having accommodated me to appear in Public Comments at yesterday's Board meeting. However, due to the lengthy delay of the commencement of the Public Session, and an obligation I needed to attend to which conflicted with me staying in the Board room any longer, I needed to leave and I am choosing to send this letter to you instead. It is my request that you schedule this as an Agenda item for full discussion before the Board in a very timely manner.

I am asking for a full discussion of the recent shocking revelation that LAUSD has exempted itself from California's Parent Trigger law provisions under the Parent Empowerment Act, written by me, and enacted into law in 2010. As you may be aware, I only discovered the news a few weeks ago when it happened to be mentioned to me in a meeting I had with members of your legal counsel. I am appreciative to them that they revealed the information to me.

Of course, I dispute the legal interpretation and I am in the process of seeking a state opinion on the matter. Nothing that I have seen lends support to the legal opinion of LAUSD. Furthermore, no other CORE district has similarly "exempted" itself from the Parent Trigger law despite the fact that they would be impacted by the waiver and enactment of AB484.

Today, I am specifically requesting answers to these questions:

1. Were you, as Board members, aware of this "exemption"?

2. What public and/or closed session discussion, if any, occurred on this item? If you were not aware, then when did you learn of this?

3. I've obtained correspondence dated almost a year ago—Nov 26, 2013, between Ben Austin of Parent Revolution and Dr. Donna Muncie, from LAUSD, where on page 2 it is acknowledged that this information *will be kept out of the public*. This is a shocking revelation. Was the Board aware of this “agreement” to withhold this information from the public, including legislators who wrote and supported the law? Why? And who agreed to this? Given this, what concerns, if any, do you have about the most recent actions taking place at the West Athens School where claims were made that the Parent Trigger law had been “averted” due to negotiations. If, indeed, LAUSD believed that it was exempt, there would have been no leverage to enable the parents from using the law. Sadly, was this public display an “Argo-ized” production and who sanctioned it?

Undoubtedly, there are a number of critical issues at stake here, but I will address two specifically:

- 1) The legality of the interpretation of exemption, which, of course I dispute. I am in the process of seeking a state opinion on the matter and wish to know if the Board upholds this claim of exemption and the validity of your legal counsel opinion. To date, no other entity shares this legal interpretation; and

- 2) Secondly—and perhaps even more importantly—how could a District simply erase away a law and make a pact to keep this information away from the public? What does this type of secrecy mean for a democracy and a belief that the public is entitled to know the operations and actions of its own government and representatives? You know me as having written education reform laws, but I also compiled a strong body of laws I wrote pertaining to openness and sunshine in government—whether protecting and enhancing Brown Act provisions, sunshine on prisons and the media, the public's right to know on police disciplinary actions, etc. What is the position of the Board on the decision to try to keep this hush and out of the public knowledge?

In closing, I appreciate an open and immediate response to my request to agendaize this issue in an upcoming and timely Board meeting so that I may receive answers to these questions.

Sincerely,



Sen. Gloria Romero (Ret.)

Cc: LAUSD Superintendent John Deasy

LAUSD School Board Members

Jefferson Crain