

**Los Angeles Unified School District
Board of Education**



**Steven Zimmer
Board Member, District 4**

Chair Paul Krikorian and Members of the Budget & Finance Committee
Los Angeles City Council
200 N. Spring Street, Room 435
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Chairman Krikorian and Members of the Committee:

I write you today in strong continued support for the collaboration between LAUSD and the City of Los Angeles through the FamilySource Centers. More specifically, I write to advocate for funding the full 16 Family Source Centers under the present model that is so well serving families in need throughout our city. While I recognize that it is never easy to push for funding beyond the CDBG allocation, this is one of those rare instances where the partnership defines the working relationship between LAUSD, the City of Los Angeles, and community providers. Discontinuing this level of support will set us back literally a decade in our ability to serve our neighborhoods in the most need. I urge you and the committee to recommend full funding of the partnership at \$1.3 million to the 16 FamilySource Centers under this model to ensure all 16 FamilySource Centers are equipped with an LAUSD Pupil Services and Attendance (PSA) Counselor.

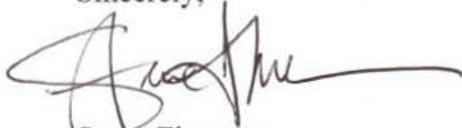
When I was a teacher and counselor advocating with families in Northeast LA, myself and others urged the consolidation of city services into a single resource center design to better engage families under one roof. After years of trying to provide services piecemeal, we knew that organizing services through a lead agency (in our case El Centro Del Pueblo) would help families. The FamilySource Center model has served our communities well. Nevertheless, as we tried to align services between the Family Source Centers and LAUSD we ran into many obstacles trying to work through each system separately. As soon as I was elected, it was one of my priorities to ensure we could break down the silos and through a partnership with Youth Policy Institute (YPI), we embedded our first Pupil Services and Attendance (PSA) counselor and Psychiatric Social Worker (PSW) in the YPI Hollywood FamilySource Center in 2011. That successful partnership has now expanded to every Family and YouthSource Center.

Since 2014, through this partnership with the City of Los Angeles, 13 LAUSD PSA Counselors, one lead counselor and one coordinator have collaborated to serve over 8,055 students throughout the district and city. PSA Counselors have also provided over 212 student and parent workshops on various topics such as the importance of school attendance, high school graduation requirements, and how to navigate school resources. This unprecedented partnership has additionally allowed our Los Angeles School Police Department to implement an Arrest Diversion program where students who commit minor law violations are referred to a PSA Counselor at one of the FamilySource Centers to receive counseling support rather than sent to juvenile court and probation. Thank to this partnership, close to 700 youth have been diverted from the juvenile justice system. And we have changed the way we work and improved how well we serve. More importantly, we are changing lives.

As you may know, my field office is intentionally co-located at the YPI Hollywood FamilySource Center. Quite literally every day, I see LAUSD staff working with FamilySource staff. Referrals that used to take weeks or months now take minutes. Families that once needed to take two or three buses between school and center, they now walk between offices. Gone is the fiction that there is a separation between school and community. Blaming and finger pointing has been replaced by friendship and collaboration. Family stability has increased, interventions are more successful and graduation rates are on the rise.

I am aware and cognizant of the many priorities and strains on city finances. Nevertheless, I am asking for you to invest in success and change. The only way this work can continue is for the Committee to recommend continued funding at current levels at all 16 sites across the city. LAUSD stands ready and prepared to continue and expand this partnership. I personally stand ready to assist in any way that I can. No less than our ability to transform education outcomes hangs in the balance. I hope that I can count on your support. Please contact me at 213.241.6387 if I can provide further insight to your decision.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Zimmer', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Steve Zimmer
Board President