

MOTION

In 1990, the City's voters created the Public Matching Funds Program in order to help reduce the power of moneyed special interests in elections by ensuring that qualified candidates for an elected City office will receive enough funding for their campaigns through public financing. To receive funding, candidates must agree to participate in the program, meet the program's qualification requirements, and adhere to spending limit guidelines. If candidates are eligible, they may receive public dollars as a match to qualifying campaign contributions from individuals. Currently, qualified contributions are matched at a 6:1 rate, whereby the City will pay candidates \$6 in public funds for every matchable dollar of qualified contribution that is received.

Since 2011, it is estimated that outside interests have spent over \$54 million on Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Board of Education races through independent expenditure groups, which are not subject to contribution limits. Individuals, on the other hand, can only donate up to \$1,300 to a LAUSD Board of Education candidate's campaign. Due to this, candidates often seek endorsements from these interest groups to help fund their campaigns, which limits the amount of time they can spend making their voices heard within their communities.

Per the City Charter, the City is responsible for administering municipal elections for the LAUSD Board of Education. Candidates for the LAUSD Board of Education are required to adhere to the City's election guidelines related to fundraising, campaign finance and spending, ethics, as well as other general election provisions. However, although candidates for the LAUSD Board of Education are required to adhere to these provisions, they are currently not allowed to participate in the City's Public Matching Funds Program. In order to help empower non-traditional candidates and decrease reliance on excessive fundraising, the City should allow candidates for the LAUSD Board of Education to participate in the Public Matching Funds Program. Including LAUSD Board of Education candidates in the Public Matching Funds Program would not only incentivize candidates to engage directly with their community, but also help increase the value of smaller individual contributions.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Council request the Ethics Commission, with the assistance of the Chief Legislative Analyst and the City Attorney, to report on the feasibility of allowing candidates for the LAUSD Board of Education to participate in the Public Matching Funds Program, including an analysis on the impacts to the Public Matching Campaign Funds Trust Fund and the steps necessary to place a ballot measure that would expand the eligibility of the Public Matching Funds Program to LAUSD Board of Education candidates for a ballot in 2024.

PRESENTED BY:



MITCH O'FARRELL  
Councilmember, 13th District

SECONDED BY:



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