

Date: August 15, 2023

To: Los Angeles Unified School Board

CC: Superintendent Carvalho

Subject: Opposition to Divisive Language & Call for Unity

On behalf of the students, families and communities we serve across Los Angeles Unified, we are writing to express our grave concern about the assumptions and language of the “Creating a Charter Schools Co-location Policy to Mitigate Impacts Caused By Proposition 39” resolution.

We understand the district's need to develop and implement a co-location policy that addresses the needs of all students, but we don't have confidence that this resolution can achieve that goal because of its divisive assumptions and language.

The premise of the resolution centers on the belief that there is a difference between charter and district students. Yet, both are served by public schools. We reject the belief that students should be treated differently based on the type of public school they attend.

As a community, we have stood together in opposition to the hate and vilification of marginalized communities regardless of who espouses them.

This resolution stands to vilify and blame charter school students, their families - and the educators who work in those schools - for the lack of access to better opportunities in their underserved communities. As a result, this pits students, families and educators who hail from the same communities against each other based on the schools in which they have chosen to enroll or work in.

We challenge the adults who lead our public school system to find solutions that provide equitable access without dividing communities or assuming one group of students is more deserving than another. Solutions must focus on what is best for creating quality educational opportunities for all students and families, and not create artificial barriers that reduce access to public facilities for some public school students over others.

We ask the Board to reject the framing of the proposed resolution. We have learned from fighting against national waves of hate directed at our students and families: real threats from the Supreme Court's recent decisions, book bans aimed at erasing our history, and a continued battle with classist, racist, and homophobic forces. We must come together to protect and serve all public school students.

These structural barriers and hateful rhetoric should encourage this Board to find ways to uplift all public school students instead of adding to the cruel and false attacks falling upon largely first generation, working class families looking to education to bring social and economic opportunity to their children. The pandemic did not discriminate its impacts on our students, families and communities. We cannot further those impacts by scapegoating one member of our community for another.

