



Building the Power to Reclaim Our Schools

Reclaim Our Schools Los Angeles, United Teachers Los Angeles, and the Collaboration Behind the 2019 Teachers Strike

JULY 2019



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The six-day strike by United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) in January 2019 took the “RedForEd” teacher protest movement to a new level.

Early RedForEd walk-outs took place in 2018 in predominantly Republican states—Arizona, West Virginia, Oklahoma—signaling a new willingness by educators to fight back against ongoing financial and political attacks on their public schools.

The Los Angeles strike was the first to take place in a deeply “blue” state. It mobilized tens of thousands of Angelenos—parents, students, and community members as well as teachers—over a period of six rainy days, to express their unambiguous commitment to public education in their city.

The LA strike resulted in a stunning array of substantive victories well beyond the scope of a typical labor agreement. The daily experience of LA teachers and students will change for the better because of the strike. But the ramifications of the strike go much further: it has helped to shift the narrative on public education in the state of California and nationally.

Parents, students, and teachers who were involved in the strike talk about it in almost mythic terms. But the story of the strike is about a multi-year, multi-faceted campaign led by a bold labor/community alliance called Reclaim Our Schools Los Angeles (ROSLA).

This case study examines how the teachers union and their partners in ROSLA built and carried out a two-year campaign that lifted a vision of “the schools all our students deserve” into the public consciousness; how parent, student, and teacher leaders were trained and supported as they took their fight to some of LA’s most powerful political players—and won.

The story is still unfolding. The leadership of ROSLA is adamant that the strike was one moment in, not the end of, the struggle to defend public education. Yet, the strike, and the campaign leading up to it, offer critical lessons. Whether your perspective is that of a labor unionist, a classroom teacher, a parent, a student, a community member, or a philanthropist interested in strengthening the foundations of our public life, the work of Reclaim Our Schools Los Angeles offers insight, vision, and hope at a time when they are much needed. This case study delves into some of the details of the campaign.



Los Angeles Unified School System – Broke on Purpose

The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) is the second-largest public school system in the country, with over 900 schools, 467,000 students, and more than 33,000 teachers.

Like other school systems nationally, LAUSD has been sabotaged for over three decades by severe restrictions on its ability to raise local property taxes (the leading source of funding for most school systems). This, and the overall financialization of the economy, have allowed wealthy individuals and corporations to amass the nation's riches while public budgets, low-income, and working people are squeezed.

Public education in Los Angeles also faces the challenge of a growing charter school sector that draws both students and funding away from the public schools. Today, LAUSD spends nearly \$600 million annually to prop up a competing, parallel sector of schools.

These conditions result in a school system that is “broke on purpose.”

In the face of this manufactured austerity, the LAUSD school board and Superintendent have been content to continue looking for ways to cut the district budget rather than demanding the investment necessary to provide the kind of public education that LA students deserve.

The ROSLA campaign set out to change that.



Reclaim Our Schools LA

United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) is the second-largest teachers union local in the country, boasting more than 33,000 members including teachers, school librarians, nurses, social workers, counselors, psychologists, and others.

New leadership took over the union in 2014, bringing with it a commitment to take on the fundamental issues of institutional racism, public investment, and the impact of privatization on the district's ability to serve its students.

Internally, UTLA embarked on a complete reorganization of the union and its approach to the work. The union increased face-to-face communications with members, expanded school-based structures, and created a Research and Analytics Department to track member contacts. For the first time, the union was asking its members what they believed was important in their schools, for their students, and in their communities, and giving them the opportunity to engage not just in the union, but in a larger vision of education justice.

Externally, the union forged a coalition with three organizations—the Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE), the Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE), and Students Deserve to create Reclaim Our Schools Los Angeles. This labor/community collaboration spent more than a year creating a plan for a multi-faceted campaign to defend public education. The coalition's public statement, *A Vision to Support Every Student*, was released in December 2016 and launched a bold campaign that won the support of dozens of grassroots, civil rights, and immigrant advocacy organizations, as well as other labor groups and academic organizations across the city.

The foundations of the campaign—outlined in this case study—included a carefully developed analysis of the problems facing LAUSD; a strategy to address them; sophisticated leadership development to lift rank-and-file teachers, parents, and students into leadership roles; communications and research support; and bold and escalating action to force LAUSD to go in a new direction.

The coalition saw the union's collective bargaining process as an opportunity to fight for the broader community-based demands developed by ROSLA—a strategy called “Bargaining for the Common Good” (BCG). It was this strategy that fundamentally transformed UTLA's contract negotiations into a citywide public referendum on educational justice.

The strike changed everything according to education advocates in California. UTLA and ROSLA held firm on their Common Good platform, even when the District conceded on the union's traditional contract demands (e.g. pay increases), but not the Common Good demands. Nearly 85 percent of the agreements won so far in the campaign were won during the strike. They include:

- more nurses, counselors, and librarians in schools;
- smaller class sizes;
- nearly \$12 million in funding for the development of Community Schools;
- reductions in standardized testing;
- an end to random searches of students in some schools;
- a six percent pay raise for teachers;

- concrete vehicles for public schools to organize against charter co-locations;
- commitments for more green space on campuses;
- district support for immigrant students, and additional educational supports for ethnic studies;
- improvements in early education and adult education;
- supports from the LAUSD school board for stronger regulations on charter schools;
- improvements in special education and guaranteed work space for all itinerant educators and health and human service professionals;
- commitments from the Mayor and the LAUSD school board to join the fight for greater investment in the district's public schools, and to support a November 2020 ballot measure challenging Proposition 13, and
- a commitment from the Governor to explore improving special education and health and human service funding mechanisms that have short-changed LAUSD historically.

These agreements address issues well beyond the narrow confines of bargaining prescribed by the state's collective bargaining law. The union bargained for the Common Good, and won.

What has Changed

"Everyone in the city was touched by this," said Betty Hung with the UCLA Labor Center. "In 20 years, I haven't seen this openness, this unity."

The reverberations from the ROSLA campaign and the UTLA strike continue to be felt in Los Angeles and Sacramento. A week after the strike ended, the LAUSD School Board voted in favor of a resolution urging the Governor of California to place a moratorium on new charter schools and study the impact of charters on public school districts. A week later, the Governor appointed a task force to study the issue. That task force has now issued its report, calling for increased oversight of charters. There has been progress towards the implementation of Community Schools and additional efforts aimed at increasing available revenues for LAUSD. Momentum is building towards the November 2020 vote on the Schools and Communities First initiative, which would close the corporate loophole in Proposition 13.

While Students Deserve was monitoring the implementation of a pilot program to eliminate random searches in some schools—one of the agreements made during the strike—the school board voted in June 2019 to eliminate *all* random searches by the end of the next school year.

These and additional policy strides confirm the power of the ROSLA campaign.

Keys to Victory

How did this campaign—with its careful attention to voice, strategy, analysis, and action—successfully bring ROSLA's demands to the nation's second-largest city, and win the support of a strong majority of citizens?

Several key lessons emerged over the course of this long battle in Los Angeles—a battle that suggests a possible roadmap for other school districts, labor unions, and community organizations facing similar attacks on public education. Detailed more fully in the case study, lessons included:



- *The Power of Labor and Community/ Parent Organizing.*
- *The Power of a Transformed Union.*
- *The Importance of Taking the Time to Build a Shared Analysis and Strategy.*
- *Student Voices Matter.*
- *A Commitment to Being Bold and Going on Offense.*
- *The Validity of a “Bargaining for the Common Good” Approach to Contract Talks.*
- *The Importance of Understanding the Science of Organizing.*

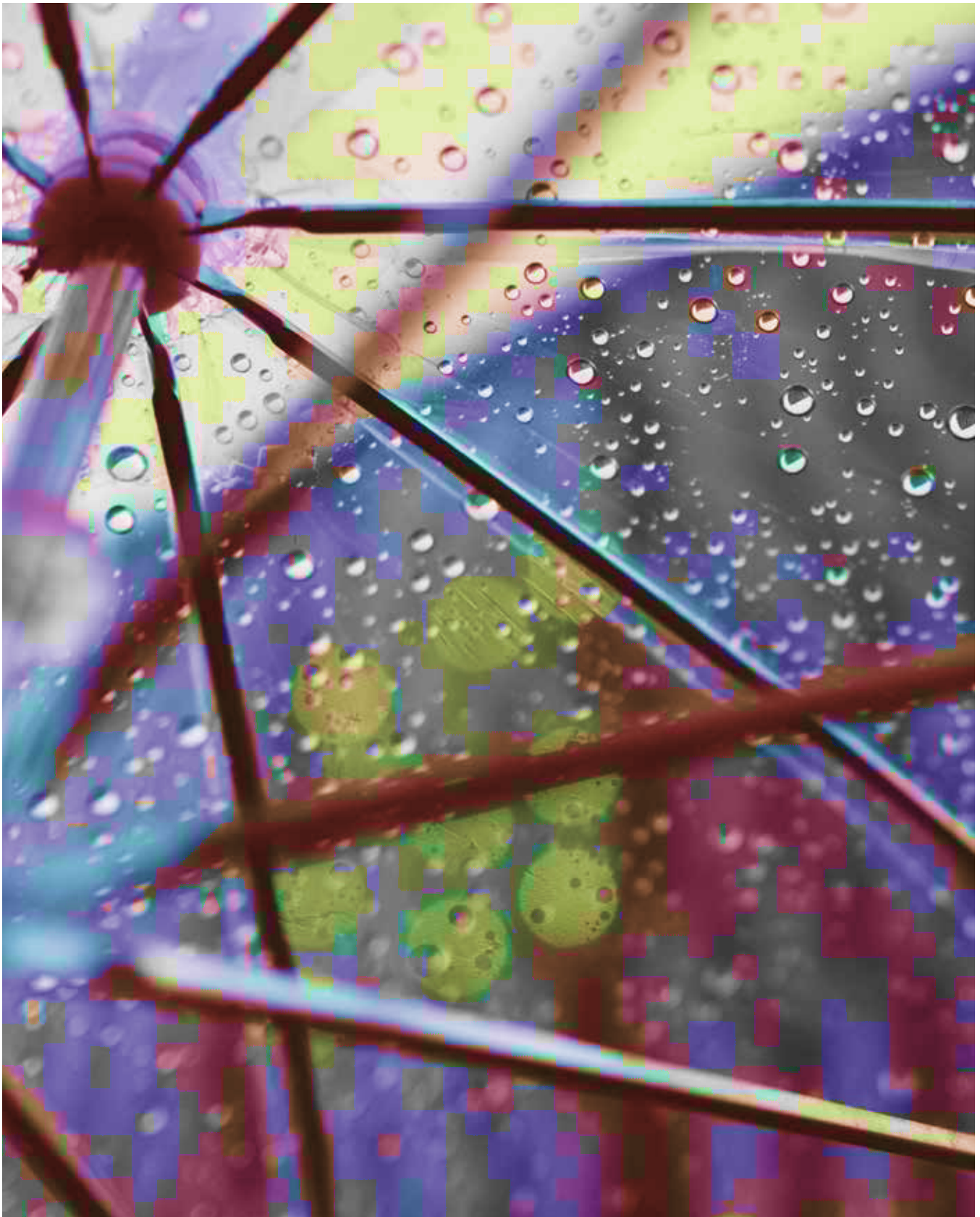


Public education and public sector unions have served as two of our country’s most important, though imperfect, levers for racial and economic justice. This is precisely why right-wing billionaires and politicians have targeted public education for privatization and teacher unions for elimination. Their efforts, with hundreds of millions of dollars at their disposal, have made public education one of the key arenas in which the future direction of the country is being fought.

This case study presents an example of how a carefully conceived, methodically developed, and thoughtful collaboration between labor and community can win

substantive change at the school, district, and state levels, with national reverberations, and establish a cadre of leaders ready to take on the next fight. It is a story worth learning from.





INTRODUCTION

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Sooner or later, they all talk about the rain.

Rain, coming down in sheets, pounding the ground and dripping from the umbrellas and the ponchos of 60,000 teachers, parents, students and community members marching in solidarity to strengthen public schools in Los Angeles. The rain in January was relentless. So were the marchers, their numbers increasing as the week went on.

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The six-day teachers strike in January 2019 by United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) has taken on mythic proportions to those who participated in it.

It is tempting to think about the strike in those lofty terms. It mobilized tens of thousands of Angelenos to stand up for public education and resulted in concrete victories that went well beyond the scope of typical labor agreements.

The real story of the strike is one of hard work: a multi-year, multi-faceted campaign led by a bold labor/community alliance called Reclaim Our Schools Los Angeles (ROSLA). Together, the teachers' union and their partners in ROSLA systematically built trust where it had withered, agreed on a shared

The outpouring of support for the strike signaled an unambiguous commitment to public schools in Los Angeles—a city where there is real fear that the very existence of public education is under threat.

analysis and strategy for public education in Los Angeles, and developed a platform of demands grounded in the lived experiences of parents, teachers, and students. Over a period of three years they lifted those demands into the consciousness of their city through systematic organizing, sophisticated communications and a series of bold and escalating actions.

The strike was neither the beginning nor the end of the struggle. But the victories that resulted from the strike and the campaign that preceded it will make a real difference for teachers and students in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). They include:

- more nurses, counselors and librarians in schools;
- smaller class sizes;
- funding for the development of Community Schools;

- reductions in standardized testing;
- an end to random searches of students in some schools;
- a 6 percent pay raise for teachers;
- concrete vehicles for public schools to organize against charter co-locations;
- commitments for more green space on campuses;
- support for immigrant students and additional educational supports for ethnic studies;
- improvements in early education and adult education;
- support from the LAUSD school board for stronger regulations on charter schools;
- improvements in special education and guaranteed work space for all itinerant educators and health and human service professionals;
- commitments from the Mayor and the LAUSD school board to join the fight for greater investment in the district's public schools, and to support a November 2020 ballot measure challenging Proposition 13;
- a commitment from the Governor to explore improving special education, and health and human service funding mechanisms that have short-changed LAUSD historically, and more.

These are concrete results. Less quantifiable are the impacts the strike had on individuals, and on the public perception of education in the city itself.



“We are leaders now. Nobody can take away that power from me. I feel so proud.”

— Maria Osorio, LAUSD parent



Hundreds of parents, teachers, and community members in Los Angeles became leaders and organizers through the campaign. Maria Osorio, a parent leader from Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE) said, tearfully: “We are leaders now. Nobody can take away that power from me. I feel so proud.”

The outpouring of support for the strike from every corner of the district signaled an unambiguous commitment to public schools in LA—a city where there is real fear that the very existence of public education is under threat.

For over two decades, the nation's students and teachers have endured a coordinated assault on public education. Budgets have been slashed. Teachers, students and schools have been relentlessly tested and

shamed. Children—particularly children of color—have been criminalized through policies that promote compliance over creativity. Further, cities like LA have been sold the false promise of “choice” instead of the guarantee of quality and equity.

Though the assault on public education began much earlier, the 2016 election of Donald Trump and his appointment of billionaire Betsy DeVos as Secretary of Education crystalized the threat for many. Teachers, parents and students, particularly those in Black, Brown, and low-income school districts, have begun to rise up.

In February 2018, teachers across the country began leading what came to be known as “RedforEd” demonstrations. Massive walkouts in traditionally Republican states like West Virginia, Arizona, Oklahoma, and North Carolina mobilized hundreds of thousands of educators and their supporters through the spring of that year. The January 2019 teachers strike in Los Angeles was an unambiguous public declaration that the “red state rebellion” is happening in deeply blue states as well, challenging Democrats, as well as Republicans.

The story is still unfolding. But the long-term campaign at the core of this story offers critical lessons. Whether you come from the perspective of a labor unionist, a classroom teacher, a parent, a student, a community member, or as a philanthropist interested in strengthening the foundations of our public life, the work of Reclaim Our Schools Los Angeles provides insight, vision, and hope at a time when all are much needed.

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THE SETTING: A SCHOOL SYSTEM UNDER ATTACK

Ringed by mountains and the Pacific Ocean’s sandy beaches, Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) is the second-largest public school system in the country, with over 900 schools, 467,000 students, and more than 33,000 teachers.

Like other school systems around the country, LAUSD has been hamstrung over the past three decades by budget cuts and a growing charter school industry.

California’s march to austerity began with the passage of Proposition 13 in 1978, which rolled back property taxes, limited future increases, and tightly restricted school districts on how they could raise money for themselves locally.¹ Because they were funded primarily through local property taxes, the impact of Prop. 13 on the state’s public schools was profound. As resources dried up, middle class and more affluent families fled to private schools, fueling a rapid demographic shift in the student populations. LAUSD students are now nearly all non-white (94 percent), and mostly economically disadvantaged (86 percent). As California schools became less white, the political will to fund them diminished.

The anti-tax movement did not stop in California, or with property taxes. Additional policies at the state and federal levels have systematically reduced taxes for corporations and wealthy individuals, denying hundreds of billions of dollars to public budgets. And the growing role of Wall Street and the financial sector in the U.S. economy has exacerbated austerity in the public sector and inequality between the wealthiest Americans and everyone else.

Today, the Los Angeles metro area has one of the highest poverty rates of all major U.S. cities.² It is also home to 173,000 millionaires and over 7,500 multi-millionaires with assets over \$10 million each.³ Some of the wealthiest people in America are nestled in the hills surrounding the city. And many of them are politically active opponents of higher taxes (for themselves, at least) and additional spending on public schools.

Privatization

In the face of dwindling resources and the subsequent abandonment of public schools by middle income white families, many of the most prominent LA millionaires—like philanthropist Eli Broad—have joined the privatization bandwagon as the silver bullet for “failing” public schools.

California’s charter school law was passed in 1992 with the support of many education advocates who believed charters could spark both innovation and improvement in the state’s public schools. But the dominant agenda behind charters was an ideological campaign to replace publicly operated schools with a privatized marketplace.

The California charter industry moved strategically, preying on widespread (and valid) worries about the decline in public schools. They touted independently owned charters as the answer. School districts with the least resources—districts with large majorities of Black and Brown students—were especially targeted. With the support of Broad and others, the charter sector has grown exponentially across the state. LAUSD now has 227 charter schools—more than any other district in the country—serving about 20 percent of the district’s students.⁴ Most of the schools, far from being locally controlled laboratories of innovation, are run by corporate management companies.

Charter school proponents promised the moon and stars. They argued that market competition would improve academic outcomes across the board. But in reality, school quality has not improved and the “reform” has served more as a vehicle for these deep-pocketed interests to appear altruistic (many are major donors to various charter management companies, and some call charters “the civil rights issue of our time”) without having to address their own complicity in the restructuring of the American economy in their favor.⁵

In fact, the proliferation of privatized charter schools in Los Angeles has made matters worse for the vast majority of students who continue to attend district schools. Not only do charters draw funds away from LAUSD, they also serve lower percentages of students with special needs⁶ and other highly vulnerable student groups, leaving the district with a disproportionate concentration of these difficult-to-serve students and fewer resources with which to serve them. A 2016 analysis conducted by MGT, a major national business consulting firm, found that LAUSD now diverts nearly \$600 million annually to charter schools.⁷

This is big business. And the industry—with its well-heeled funders—is a significant political player at both the state and local levels.

In 2017, three seats were open on the seven-member LAUSD school board, including that of board president Steve Zimmer, a former teacher and popular progressive. The race became a referendum on privatization when the charter lobby put their own candidates forward and invested heavily in them. By the time voters went to the polls, over \$14.5 million had been spent on the campaigns, far outstripping spending on prior school board races.⁸ Two of the industry’s candidates won and Zimmer was defeated,

establishing a pro-charter majority on the LAUSD school board. These new board members knew where their bread was buttered: A year later, they selected millionaire investment banker Austin Beutner as the district’s superintendent. Beutner has no experience as a teacher or school administrator.

Parents, students, and teachers in Los Angeles—most of them African American and Latino—had real reason to fear for the very survival of their public schools. The school board continued to operate from a scarcity mentality, asking, “where can we make cuts?” instead of, “what do we need to invest in our kids?” The number of charters continued to grow, and the resources available to the district’s children continued to wither away.

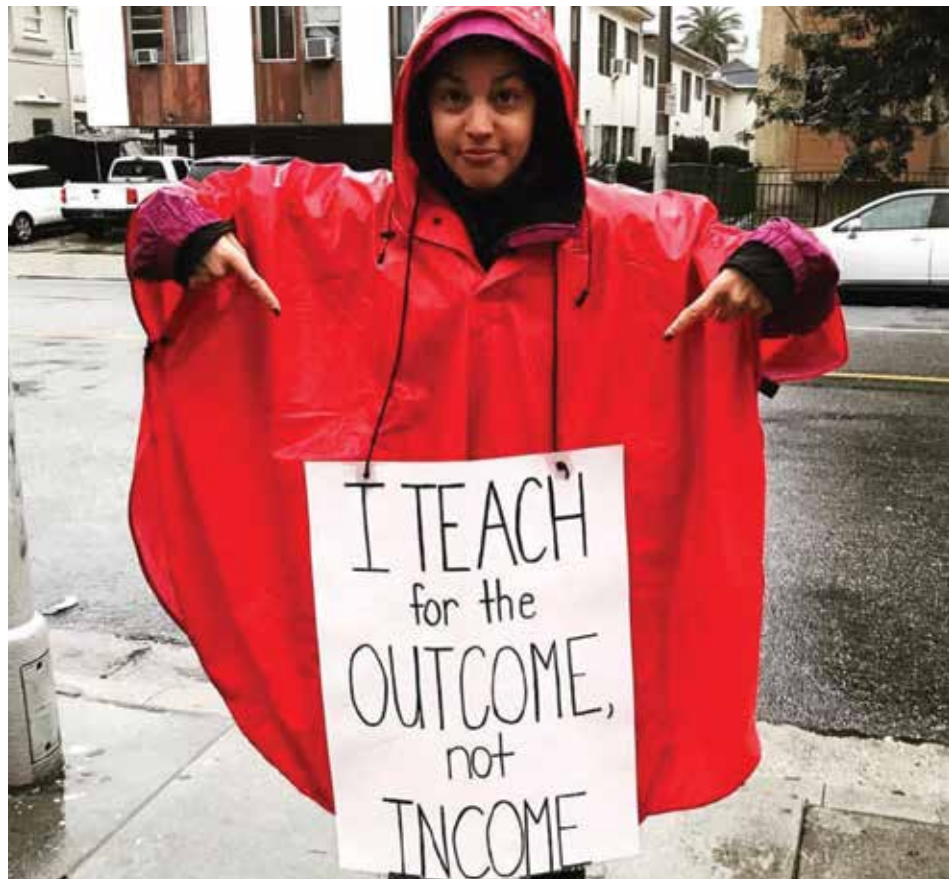
THE PLAYERS

A Union Committed to Transformation

The Robert F. Kennedy Community Schools sit on the massive block of land on Wilshire Blvd that was once home to the Ambassador Hotel. The rich and famous rubbed elbows at the hotel and the adjacent Coconut Grove nightclub. The Ambassador began its long decline when Robert F. Kennedy was assassinated just outside one of the hotel’s kitchens in 1968. In the ensuing years the hotel was demolished and the land turned over to LAUSD.

Less than a block away from the school complex, across Wilshire Blvd., are the offices of United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA), the second-largest teacher union local in the country. Dually affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association, UTLA boasts 33,000 members including teachers, school librarians, nurses, social workers, counselors, psychologists, and others.

While serving its members—bargaining for wages and benefits, addressing grievances and engaging in district politics—UTLA has not always been a reliable partner to the city’s progressive community groups, civil rights groups, or advocacy organizations. Some community groups have struggled with the union over specific issues such as seniority and curriculum reform. Other progressive organizations never heard from the union, unless the union needed them.



That began to change in 2014.

Alex Caputo-Pearl taught for 22 years in Compton and South Los Angeles, mostly at Crenshaw High School. Caputo-Pearl was also a community organizer. He helped build the Coalition for Educational Justice (CEJ), a youth-led group, and the Crenshaw Cougar Coalition, a school-based parent organization, and had worked with the Labor Community Strategy Center and LA's Bus Riders Union. Caputo-Pearl's activism got him administratively transferred from Crenshaw in 2006, but protests from parents, students, and colleagues at the school forced a reversal of the district's action and Caputo-Pearl returned to the classroom.

In 2014, he ran for the union's presidency, with a tight slate of like-minded educators running for other officer spots on the team: Cecily Myart-Cruz, Betty Forrester, Juan Ramirez, Colleen Schwab, Arlene Inouye and Daniel Barnhart. Their campaign promised an unapologetic and radical restructuring of the union, moving from a one-way and weak "service" model to a dynamic organizing model that engages members, genuinely connects with community, and uses collective power as its foundation. They were prepared to take on the fundamental issues of institutional racism, public investment, and the impact of privatization on the district's ability to fully serve its students.

Facing the conditions in LA, Caputo-Pearl's slate knew they would need to build the capacity to strike. With fears of encroaching privatization and the increasing stranglehold of austerity in their schools, the city's educators reacted positively to the campaign: Caputo-Pearl and his reform slate won the election with a commanding mandate and quickly got to work.

UTLA wanted its members to expand their perceptions of their own role in making change happen.

The transformation of UTLA took place on two fronts. Externally, the leadership team began to systematically reach out to community, civic, and issue-based organizations across the city, seeking to build deeper, mutually respectful relationships. Because they recognized that the vast majority of Angelenos were not part of organized groups, they hired an experienced community organizer named Esperanza Martinez to work with rank-and-file educators to begin to build a school-based infrastructure through which teachers could organize parents and students around broader public education and community challenges. Increasing the opportunities for educators to be engaged in change was a key strategy: the union wanted its members to expand their perceptions of their own role in making change happen.

Internally, with the assistance of national union affiliates the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), the National Education Association (NEA), and their respective state affiliates, California Federation of Teachers (CFT) and California Teachers Association (CTA), the leadership team led a restructuring effort. They brought on staff like Jeff Good from CTA and Brian McNamara from healthcare unions, both with the know-how to build member organizations across multiple worksites and with experience carrying out major strikes. A Research and Analytics director, Grace Regullano, was hired to document the causes of austerity and build a sophisticated database that could better track member organizing and activism.

These decisions were essential. However, UTLA needed the long-term budget to maintain and expand its work. A partnership agreement between UTLA and its state and national affiliates supported this wave of hiring and restructuring but required UTLA to bear the full costs of their organization within three years. UTLA would need a major budget fix to maintain the new departments and hires, and build on them.



When the new leadership team came into office in 2014, union members had been working without a contract for over three years. After the election, UTLA doubled down on bargaining, using the process to test their capacity to engage members as well as to demonstrate that their organizing model could pay off in direct benefits to teachers. A rally during bargaining in 2015 mobilized 15,000 members—the largest turnout seen in the district in a long time—and confirmed that UTLA was reaching their members. They won a new contract in a matter of months—one that included a 10 percent pay hike for teachers.

On the strength of that victory, UTLA decided in the summer of 2015 that the moment was right to propose a dues increase to address its long-term budget concerns. UTLA had one of the lowest dues rates of any teacher union

in California and was far below the dues rates in New York and Chicago. Without an increase, UTLA would simply not be able to remain financially viable, much less gear up for the massive fights against privatization and for educational justice. The UTLA leadership activated its new infrastructure again. Organized into eight regional areas, with assigned staff in each region and rank-and-file chapter chairs in every building, the union, led by its chapter chairs, conducted and documented over 30,000 one-on-one conversations with teachers to learn about their interests and explain the need for the additional funds.

This effort was, ironically, helped along by the generally anti-union *Los Angeles Times*. While for some, the specter of privatization seemed like an amorphous shadow over the district, it suddenly took direct and dangerous shape. That September, the *Times* leaked a memo from the Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation outlining a plan to move half of LAUSD students into charter schools within eight years.⁹ The memo had been circulated among wealthy investors in an effort to raise close to \$500 million to advance the effort.

UTLA members realized that the downward slide they'd been experiencing in their school system was intentional. Their union was asking for the capacity to fight back. A 30 percent dues increase was approved overwhelmingly by the membership in 2016, allowing UTLA to add both research and communications capacity, hire a second community organizer, Ilse Escobar, for the school-based parent organizing work, and increase school site and legal support for members.

UTLA's internal transformation has been systematic, scientific, and granular. Not only has it increased face-to-face communications with its members, but it built a sophisticated communications department under the leadership of Director Anna Bakalis that utilizes social media to organize and get feedback from members. Face-to-face contact is tracked relentlessly through a new database that monitors every

conversation, practically in live time. When requests for action are sent out, the responses are tracked and analyzed to determine where systems are working best, and where they're not. They reach out to learn what teachers are interested in, how they communicate, who belongs to wider networks they're willing to engage, and whether they're likely to take action when called upon.

This shift in focus towards organizing and engagement with broader social justice organizations has also been happening at the national level. The American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association have expanded their organizing work and looked for ways to deepen relationships with community groups. Both national unions saw the work in Los Angeles as worthy of investment and have continued to support the community coalition-building over the years. The national AFT's Western Region Community Engagement Coordinator, Sharon Delugach, began focusing her work in Los Angeles, helping to reach out and organize community-based groups into what would become Reclaim Our Schools LA.

From the beginning, UTLA's new leadership saw the next round of collective bargaining as an opportunity to further test its internal systems and external relationships by mounting a major campaign for change.



Reclaim Our Schools Los Angeles (ROSLA)

As the new Research and Analytics Department at UTLA began to unravel the policies and practices that contributed to austerity and inequity in LAUSD, UTLA leaders knew that they needed to win the hearts, minds and participation of tens of thousands of educators, parents, and community members in order to build the power to win a campaign to stop—or reverse—the district’s downward slide.

Unions have the built-in vehicle of a collective bargaining agreement that guarantees a platform for negotiations with policymakers. Community and youth-led groups have no such vehicle.

But historic efforts to build labor/community alliances have been challenging.

In Los Angeles, as in many other districts, organized parents and organized student groups have often had difficult relationships with local teachers unions—a divide that has only served to weaken the fight against corporate reform. Revisions to the state’s K-12 curriculum in 2004 began amicably, but eventually some community organizations perceived UTLA as undermining their work. UTLA’s opposition to the expansion of charter schools flew in the

face of local organizations that were supporting charters, believing that problems in their neighborhood public schools were intractable. And nationally, as well as in LA, teachers unions have walked a fine line between their members’ concerns about classroom management and safety, and growing student anger over harsh discipline policies practiced disproportionately against Black and Brown students.

Disparities in power and resources also make power-sharing relationships between labor and grassroots groups challenging, as unions enjoy the benefits of a large membership base and accompanying financial resources from member dues, while community groups are inevitably under-funded and struggle to build their membership rolls. Finally, in California, labor’s right to collective bargaining guarantees a platform for negotiations with policymakers that community groups lack.

Recognizing the potential of a genuine power-sharing coalition and the prospect of using the contract negotiations to move community as well as union demands forward, grassroots groups in Los Angeles were intrigued when UTLA leaders and Delugach invited a dozen or more of them to come together in 2014 to discuss a joint campaign.

The Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools (AROS)

The effort to build a genuine labor/community alliance in Los Angeles coincided with a national initiative, spearheaded by the AFT and NEA, in collaboration with grassroots organizing networks. A series of town hall-style meetings across the country over several months in 2013 and 2014 generated enthusiasm for a coordinated national fight against corporate education reform. Over two years, these gatherings and conversations resulted in a set of principles¹⁰ that was endorsed by over 100 local and state organizations and launched the national Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools (AROS). AROS brought together ten national partners including the teachers unions, the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), and some of the largest grassroots community and youth-led networks in the country. The teachers unions each committed financial and in-kind resources to AROS and their community partners and increased their internal staff capacity to help their local and state affiliates explore possible community alliances. By

2015, AROS was encouraging local labor/community “tables” to come together for an aggressive, vision-oriented counterattack against the dismantling of public education and the institutional racism driving it.

The AROS partners believed that the effort should lead with a positive vision of what “winning” would look like. Together, the groups merged feedback from their town halls along with existing research about the most effective components of educational success. From there, they developed a vision called “Sustainable Community Schools”—simply put, public schools that enjoy the sustained funding and partnerships for time-tested ingredients like experienced teachers, parent engagement, rich and expansive academic opportunities (including music, arts, ethnic studies, skills and crafts) along with emotional and social supports, often in the form of wrap-around services for entire families that help students succeed.¹¹ AROS adopted Sustainable Community Schools as its vision of “the schools all students deserve.” The call to action came at a perfect time for Los Angeles.

Coming to a Vision

Hoping to form a local AROS table, Delugach and UTLA leaders convened several meetings with a range of LA’s progressive community and issue-based groups. Representatives from AROS, the NEA, and the AFT helped facilitate these early conversations where a core set of principles were floated as a way to gauge consensus. There was wide agreement on most issues discussed in these conversations: that the current level of funding for the school system was woefully inadequate, growing inequality and financialization of the economy were at the root of austerity, and that a collaborative effort should lead with a positive vision of Community Schools, based on ideas from both AROS and local LA community school efforts. There were difficult debates over the union’s past relationships with community groups, and what the role of privatization was in the exponential growth of charter schools within the district.

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“The leadership of UTLA came to the community showing a different level of respect. They wanted to know what parents wanted to fight for, and what the community wanted and needed. Then we had a conversation around what we could fight for together. Importantly, community issues of race and class have been centered in this work from the very beginning.”

— Amy Schur, ACCE

After months of talking, four organizations formed Reclaim Our Schools LA (ROSLA). The anchor groups included UTLA, The Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE), the Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE), and Students Deserve—a youth-led group that had its roots in the Coalition for Educational Justice (CEJ). Together, they agreed to build a movement for broad-based education reform that would engage teachers, students, parents, and community members and build power to force real change in LAUSD. To strengthen the capacity of these partners, UTLA made the decision to give annual programmatic funding to the other three anchor groups, and the NEA, CTA, AFT, and CFT followed suit. *(To read more about the four anchor organizations, see Appendix A).*

A steering committee was created, including Amy Schur from ACCE, Rudy Gonzalves from LAANE, Rosa Jimenez, a rank-and-file teacher and facilitator with Students Deserve, Caputo-Pearl and Martinez from UTLA, and Sharon Delugach from AFT; the latter was named the Director of ROSLA. They

agreed on a campaign that would demand Community Schools, fight for new revenues to create those schools, expose and call out those with the power and the money to secure that new investment, and to challenge the expansion of charter schools as a threat to equity and education for all. They were unified in seeing the union’s collective bargaining agreement as a vehicle to advance the long-term fight.

Launching ROSLA

For over a year, the steering committee of ROSLA met and worked quietly to plan and develop its campaign. In December 2016, ROSLA went public with its platform, called *A Vision to Support Every Student*.¹² The document calls for every publicly funded school in Los Angeles “to deliver on the promise of a comprehensive, free, innovative, and sustainable public education for every student.” It addresses the vision, the barriers to meeting that vision, and ROSLA’s bold agenda for change. The platform was developed by researchers at LAANE who, along with UTLA’s research staff, carefully documented the veracity or research justification for each component of the platform.

At a press conference announcing the coalition’s formation and plans, ROSLA leaders put the LAUSD school board, the Superintendent, and the state’s wealthy reformers on notice that ROSLA would be insisting on a new path—one that invests in *all* schools and students, as opposed to only some.

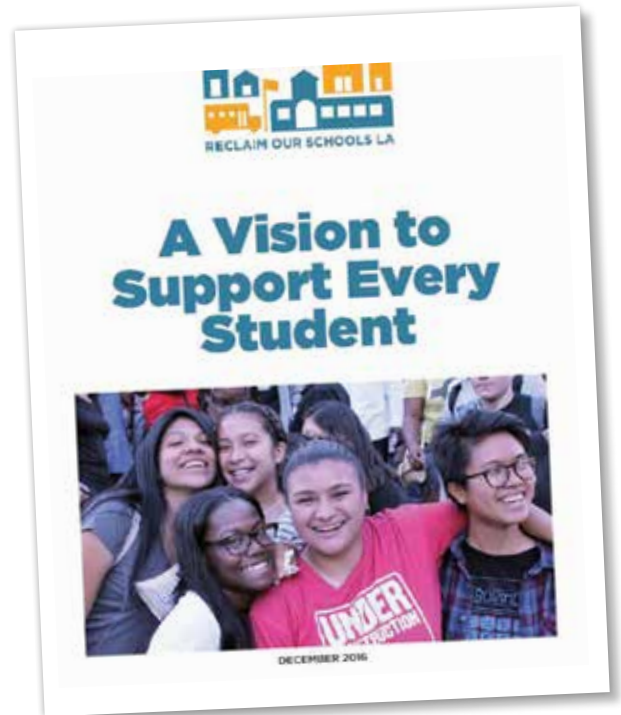
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THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE SCHOOLS LA STUDENTS DESERVE

The formation of ROSLA created the labor/community vehicle to complement a transformed and systematically-organized union for a long-term, strategic fight. The cornerstone of the campaign was the agreement by each anchor group on several key practices: the development of a shared analysis, strategy, and platform; a commitment to leadership development and grassroots voice; a systematic and scientific approach to organizing; and bold, escalating action. The ROSLA steering committee spent months developing their understanding of each other’s organizational cultures, building trust, and enforcing discipline as they moved forward.

The campaign was not going to be sustained without that trust. The union needed to rebuild relationships. UTLA’s past practices had “pretty profoundly alienated” organizations that it should have been allied with, according to many LA progressives. This time, UTLA reached out differently.

“He [Caputo-Pearl] came to us. He asked how we might be able to work together,” said Roxana Tynan, the Executive Director of LAANE. “He hired people we knew and had worked with. It was a completely different approach than previous leadership. And we responded.”



The cornerstone of the campaign was the agreement to several key practices: the development of a shared analysis, strategy, and platform; a commitment to leadership development and grassroots voice; a systematic and scientific approach to organizing; and bold, escalating action.

“It was a shift in approach and values,” says Betty Hung, Staff Director at the UCLA Labor Center. She noted that UTLA joined with the Labor Center on a couple of their campaigns, attending strategy sessions and public events.

At ROSLA, leaders and staff of the anchor groups spent time getting to know each other, and identifying cultural and operational differences in their organizing styles.

The work was slow and deliberate. Key to the process, says Rudy Gonzalves, Director of the education campaign at LAANE, was putting things on the table and recognizing differences. “We knew the different organizations had different organizing cultures. We talked about that openly and honestly. We framed the discussions around each organization’s strengths, and how to best utilize those strengths.”

Students Deserve had reason to be skeptical. Youth-led organizations are often marginalized in adult-led coalitions such as ROSLA. In addition, youth leaders in Students Deserve knew early on that their number one issue—ending the district’s policy of random searches—might not sit well with educators and parents.

Delugach and a team of teacher-mentor leaders with Students Deserve made sure that the students’ voices were heard. They were often given the first opportunity to speak at meetings, so that their ideas would be sure to get on the table. They also created student-majority small group time in the middle of meetings to process the discussion. Students were offered the space and time to talk about their concerns with a range of union and community audiences. They impressed educators with their knowledge of the use of random searches in LA and other districts, and their personal stories laid bare the humiliating experience of being pulled out of class and “wanded” by a school administrator. In venue after venue, the young people demonstrated their commitment to participation, and their passion for the issues.

Christabel Ukomadu, a leader with Students Deserve, talked about how important those opportunities for students to take the microphone were: “We were clear. Random searches and privatization were the wrong direction for education. Public Community Schools were the right direction. When we talked about this and rooms of teachers and parents were inspired, we didn’t just feel good. It felt like we were part of a social movement we were reading about in class. And we were.”

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“The build-up to the strike and the Strike itself put on display what community-labor coalitions are about—deep respect, deep collective strategizing, intentional investment of time and energy, and incredible synergy in action.”

— **Lily Eskelsen-Garcia,**
President, National Education Association (NEA)

These relationships, forged over time, ended up being fundamental building blocks for the campaign.

Building a Shared Analysis and Strategy

The ROSLA partners also recognized that advancing a new path for public education in Los Angeles required a strategic approach. The coalition took time to develop a shared analysis of the problems and the path to a solution.

The fundamental problem was Proposition 13. Passed by the voters of California in 1978, Proposition 13 limits the tax amount that can be levied on properties, which school districts rely on for revenue. Once recognized as the best schools in the nation, by 2018 California’s public schools were ranked 44th nationally in per-student spending (with the average at \$9,417 per pupil per year).¹³

Yet at the same time, California’s is the 5th largest economy in the world.¹⁴ The district’s financial crisis was real, but not inevitable, ROSLA knew. Policy decisions had led to austerity. Not only tax policy, but also the district’s complicity with privatization, which was siphoning resources away from LAUSD public schools.

ROSLA’s proactive vision for Community Schools would require new investment in a district that sees itself as on the verge of bankruptcy.

With consensus on a basic analysis of the problem, ROSLA began to think through a strategy to address it. ROSLA came up with a set of strategic agreements:

- Community Schools (based on the AROS vision as well as previous LA experience with them) needed to become the calling card of the campaign. The general public needed to understand what Community Schools were conceptually, and the district leadership needed to be forced to take sides: were they for—or against—this research-supported school design?
- The Coalition needed to make the case that austerity was a construct—that new investment in LAUSD was possible. The ROSLA partners settled on an easily understood articulation of their investment demands: LAUSD should lift per-pupil spending to \$20,000 per student by the year 2020. This “20-by-20” goal became a rallying cry and key message for the campaign.
- ROSLA knew they needed to be able to point to sources of funding to support Community Schools immediately. One target would be the district’s \$1.86 billion reserve fund, a whopping 26 percent of the district’s budget, far exceeding the amount generally recommended for reserves. While this was one-time money, it was unconscionable that such a sizeable reserve was being kept from students. Spending it appropriately could create a dynamic pathway for quality schools that new revenues in the future could sustain.
- To further explain the district’s austerity, ROSLA decided to go after the millionaires and billionaires who were not contributing their fair share to the city’s tax base and fighting efforts to increase their taxes, while also contributing handsomely to the city’s charter industry. Key to this strategy would be calling on California millionaires and billionaires to support a November



2020 state-wide ballot measure, Schools and Communities First, which would close the corporate loophole in Prop. 13, and bring over \$11 billion to California schools and services. (Working under the leadership of California Calls and a state-wide network that has been organizing around the issue for a decade, UTLA and ROSLA anchor groups have been key to gathering the signatures and getting this measure on the ballot.) ROSLA decided to personalize their targets. It wasn't going to be a fight against generic "billionaires." Eli Broad was raising money to enable privatization. Investment bankers like William Siart were spending millions of their own money to support the charter agenda while allowing public district schools to starve, financially.

Finally, in what would become one of the most ground-breaking aspects of the campaign and strike, UTLA and ROSLA agreed to use the union's collective bargaining process to advance community demands. The coalition's approach would be to utilize Bargaining for the Common Good (BCG), a strategy that expands the scope of collective bargaining to negotiate for things that have wider community benefits, to put their issues on the bargaining table, influence the debate, and win real, long-term, and interim improvements for students, educators and school staff.

Bargaining for the Common Good

Bargaining for the Common Good emerged over the past decade as labor has faced unprecedented attacks from a well-financed, conservative anti-union movement. As the largest remaining organized public sector workforce, teacher unions have felt the brunt of the assault in the political, policy, and legal arenas.

A BCG approach asserts that labor contracts should not just be used solely to benefit organized workers, but to exercise power on broader community issues. (*For more about Bargaining for the Common Good, see Appendix B.*)

This requires boldness. Most states, California included, statutorily limit the range of issues that can be addressed through collective bargaining. A BCG approach rejects those limits and adamantly puts forward a wide range of "common good" demands.

As they began to negotiate a new contract with LAUSD, United Teachers Los Angeles adopted a BCG approach, in full collaboration with their partners in Reclaim Our Schools LA. By June 2017, two teachers—Gloria Martinez and Alex Orozco—had been elected as new members of the UTLA officer team with Caputo-Pearl continuing as President, and the slate and its transformative vision still in place. The union and ROSLA began investing the time, energy, member engagement, and community engagement required to make a BCG approach real.

Creating a Platform Grounded in Lived Experiences

To help define the issues to be included in UTLA's bargaining platform, ROSLA organized a series of community forums in different parts of the city to bring together parents, teachers, and students. At each event, participants were asked what they thought were the most pressing issues at their schools and in their communities. Students, parents, and community organizers like Tayah Hubbard, Martha Sanchez, Kahllid-Al-Alim, and Albert Ramirez led the meetings. Small group sessions helped tease out issues and ideas for solutions. Five of these sessions were held during a six-month period, allowing hundreds of parents, teachers, and students to put their Common Good issues on the table.

The meetings helped reinforce growing trust between community members and the union. Rank-and-file members and officer representatives from UTLA’s bargaining team—Victoria Casas, Adrian Tamayo, Julie Van Winkle, Erika Jones, Cynthia Matthews, Javier Romo, Matthew Kogan, Tomas Flores, Elgin Scott, Daniel Barnhart, Gloria Martinez, Grace Regullano, and team co-chairs Arlene Inouye and Jeff Good—described to the community how they intended to introduce community demands into the bargaining process, and listened to the issues raised by parents and students.

The town halls provided an opportunity for ROSLA leaders to present their analysis of the political climate and causes of the District’s austerity and see if their messages resonated with participants. The meetings surfaced a set of concerns that were rooted in the lived experiences of those closest to the schools—specific concerns that ROSLA and the union knew were prevalent in the community as the union entered the bargaining process.

Meanwhile, UTLA distributed an internal member survey to gauge teachers’ interests on a variety of potential

contract demands. This field survey asked UTLA members to rank issues based on three different frames: Which issues were a top priority for *them personally*; which issues did they think were top priorities *in their school*; and which issues did they believe were the highest priority for parents and community members at their school? The framing was important: the union wanted members to think beyond their own self-interest. The results of this survey found striking similarities between the concerns of teachers, parents, and students.

The survey asked UTLA members to rank issues based on three different frames: Which issues were a top priority for *them personally*; which issues did they think were top priorities *in their school*; and which issues did they believe were the highest priority for *parents and community members* at their school? The framing was important: the union wanted members to think beyond their own self-interest.

Research Supports Platform Development

UTLA’s Research and Analytics Department coordinated with ROSLA, and state and national union affiliates to investigate the district budget and the wealthy investors behind some district initiatives. LAANE identified the strongest arguments behind each of the union’s Common Good demands. “It was an opportunity to present the issues as a vision for where schools should be and what they needed to succeed,” says Gonzalves. “Everything we did had to be factual and backed up with credible studies. We worked together with UTLA to make sure we could back up everything we said.”

Based on feedback from community forums, union member surveys, and the research that validated its analysis, ROSLA worked with UTLA to build a broad Common Good platform for bargaining. The platform included:

- **Smaller class sizes.** While LAUSD had set ceilings on class sizes, a provision within the contract allowed those ceilings to be waived under certain circumstances. This provision—Section 1.5—had allowed class sizes to balloon, in some cases to upwards of 50 students. Class size was not

only one of the biggest concerns for teachers, but was also raised by students and parents in the community forums. The union decided to demand the elimination of Section 1.5 and the initiation of a program for ongoing class size reduction, which the district itself had not taken on for decades.

- **Increased support staff.** Thousands of LA students were attending schools with no full-time nurse, too few counselors and librarians, and few, if any mental health professionals. Austerity had stripped the district of the kinds of student support staff that were needed.
- **Funding for Community Schools.** Reflecting ROSLA’s strategy of leading with a positive vision for change through the creation of Community Schools, the platform demanded dedicated funding and the establishment of Community Schools, beginning with some of the district’s highest-needs schools.
- **Expansion of ethnic studies programs** and support for multilingual programs.
- **Improvements in special education**, reductions in caseloads, and key changes in working conditions for mental health professionals.
- **A salary hike** for educators of 6.5 percent to help keep pace with the increasing cost of living in Los Angeles.
- **An end to random searches of students.** Students Deserve highlighted the district’s increasingly punitive school climate. The district spends \$67 million on school police¹⁵ the students noted, and had implemented an aggressive random search policy that disproportionately targeted Black and Brown students in the city’s lowest-income schools.
- **A reduction in standardized testing.** Teachers and students alike complained that too much valuable class time was taken up by assessments. UTLA’s research team identified over 100 standardized LAUSD assessments taken by K-6th grade students each year.
- **Support for new revenues for LAUSD schools—\$20,000 per student by 2020.** The union demanded that LAUSD be active partners in supporting new revenue proposals that would bring additional funding to the district.
- **Greater accountability for charter schools** and restrictions on charter co-locations. California law forces public schools with “under-utilized” space to allow charter schools access to public facilities. These co-locations have been a significant source of anger for public school parents, students, and teachers. UTLA wanted greater input in the co-location process in order to protect the district’s highest-need students, and greater accountability for the under-regulated charter school sector. As the strike neared, UTLA added a political demand that the LAUSD school board support a call for the State to place a cap on charter school expansion.
- Improvements in **early education** and **adult education**.
- In addition, UTLA included a demand for **more green space** on school campuses, **support for undocumented students and their families** facing the anti-immigrant rhetoric and actions of the Trump Administration, concrete action on the part of LAUSD to address the **housing crisis** and challenge gentrification, and free Metropolitan Transportation Authority (**MTA**) **bus passes for students**, a long-time demand of LA’s Bus Riders Union. These concrete demands that came out of the community forums and went to the bargaining table helped bring additional local advocates to the table with ROSLA.

As the Common Good bargaining package was developed, and as the community organizing work deepened, ROSLA grew. Additional organizations joined the coalition, including Black Lives Matter LA, Brotherhood Crusade, Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights in LA (CHIRLA), Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice (CLUE), the local chapter of California School Employees Association (CSEA), the NAACP LA chapter, Pacoima Beautiful, Strategic Actions for a Just Economy (SAJE), Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 99.

UTLA kicked off its renewed contract negotiations with LAUSD by inviting ROSLA members to outline the labor/community alliance’s demands at an official bargaining session in September of 2017. The session was held at UTLA. As the bargaining teams from both the union and the district listened, guest presenters from ROSLA groups and other allies around the city introduced each of the platform demands.

The presentations forced the district team into a difficult corner. The LAUSD bargaining team was hard-pressed to disagree with the issues being presented. But again and again, as expected, they reminded UTLA that these issues were outside the legal scope of bargaining. UTLA’s bargaining team did

not budge: these were their demands. It was clear that LAUSD would dig in its heels in opposition to negotiating around the broad Common Good demands. Just as clear was that UTLA and ROSLA would hold firm in making those demands.

Leadership Development and Grassroots Voice

The ROSLA partners knew that if parents, students, and teachers were going to participate in a big way and be in the streets potentially risking arrest, it was critical for *them* to make campaign decisions based on in-depth knowledge of the issues they were working on and the solutions they were fighting for.

A key component, therefore, of the long-term effort built by ROSLA was leadership development. ACCE played an instrumental role in conceptualizing a structure for leadership trainings and popular education opportunities that together helped train hundreds of student and parent leaders throughout the campaign.



ROSLA began a series of monthly leadership training events in 2017. Each of ROSLA's four anchor groups brought 10 to 15 of their most promising leaders. The events were held on Saturday mornings and drew between 30 and 50 participants.

Several early sessions focused on Community Schools. The National Education Association, which had embraced the AROS vision of Community Schools, took the lead in offering training opportunities and hands-on support for the development of ROSLA's Community Schools vision. The NEA's Kyle Serrette attended leadership trainings to describe the research, model and results of Community Schools. Leaders also discussed key implementation challenges and how much the district would need to invest to make Community Schools a reality.

Additional leadership sessions were held on privatization. Participants learned about the ideological roots of the charter movement and its emergence as a privatization strategy. The sessions dissected the forces behind charter schools' rapid growth in Los Angeles. In addition, parents talked about their personal experiences with co-location of charters inside public school buildings.



Another focus was the broader history of the financialization of the U.S. economy and the role of Wall Street in the austerity happening in LAUSD. LAANE and UTLA's research identified several specific local millionaires who were playing a role in perpetuating austerity.

More than 30 leadership development trainings were held over the course of two years.

In addition to their educational component, these monthly leadership development sessions served as critical campaign and action planning meetings. Participants talked about strategies and tactics ranging from lobbying and public events to direct action. They considered how to approach the LAUSD school board, how to target Eli Broad, Austin Beutner, and other education privatizers.

These leadership sessions, as before, were facilitated to ensure that members of Students Deserve would be well represented and heard. Even within this group of developing leaders, organizers knew that "ageism" might otherwise unintentionally stifle the students' participation.

For ACCE, this commitment to leadership development was a foundation of its engagement with ROSLA. It was time-consuming work, but the leadership of ROSLA knew that without the education and development of hundreds of parent, student, and teacher leaders, the campaign would not move forward. Significant amounts of time were spent talking with leaders about the research behind the union's demands, the context of its fight, and what to expect as the powerful attempted to fight back. Long discussions were held with parents, students, and teachers, talking through action ideas and campaign

strategies. For one session, an expert in popular education trainings was brought in to contribute to the effort. Because of this painstaking work, ROSLA's base was broad and deep, and ready to take action.

Activating Unorganized Parents

ROSLA became the vehicle for pulling together organized parents and leaders through ACCE, LAANE, and other ROSLA partners, while Students Deserve rallied students at high schools across the city through student-led assemblies designed to surface ideas and issues. But the groups recognized that the vast majority of parents across the district were not part of these organizations and that the best way to reach those parents was through the schools that their children attended. Finding a way to reach out to parents had posed a challenge to UTLA since the new leadership took over. They wanted to figure out how to activate parents on a much broader scale than existing grassroots groups had the capacity to do.

They also wanted to get teachers thinking about their identities in different ways—that they are not just a teacher, but a community member. Not just a teacher but a churchgoer. Not just a teacher but the mother of a student at a school down the street. Getting teachers to own their multiple identities would help them connect with parents at their own schools, the union thought.

Esperanza Martinez, an experienced community organizer with LA's Labor/Community Strategy Center and Bus Riders Union, had been hired by UTLA in 2014, to create an internal structure for organizing parents through their children's schools. In 2016, after UTLA had successfully passed the dues increase, the union hired Ilse Escobar to join Martinez. Escobar, like Martinez, had deep experience organizing on the immigrant rights struggles, as well as at the UCLA Labor Center. The commitment to dedicate staff and systematically use the union's infrastructure to organize parents was new for UTLA—and nearly unheard of at other unions across the country.



Martinez and Escobar envisioned having a teacher at each school who would serve as a Chapter-Parent Action Liaison (CPAL). Working with rank-and-file leaders like Claudia Rodriguez, Hector Perez-Roman, Yolanda Tamayo, Noah Lippe-Klein, Jennifer McAfee, Ayde Bravo, Rebecca Solomon, and Velia Casillas, they began to recruit teachers for the role and train them in basic grassroots organizing strategies. They talked about how to reach out to parents, how to listen, how to conduct “one-on-ones” (individual conversations aimed at identifying specific concerns or ideas). The goal was to develop a small

core of parents at each school building, and to engage them in the broader citywide organizing, or at the school level on specific school-based issues like co-locations.

The union's parent organizing efforts revealed a few challenges, according to Martinez. Primarily, how does a membership organization of teachers—the union—grow and sustain a constituency—parents—

without having a formal organization for them to belong to? “It can be a challenge to figure out how to formalize their role,” Martinez noted.

Martinez and Escobar worked through the union’s regional structure. While not able to recruit CPALs in every school, they worked with teachers at a number of schools to test out a basic model. On the East side of Los Angeles, the rank-and-file regional board of the union invested deeply in the parent organizing work and had several pre-existing parent activists who took up the challenge. Eastside schools had a shared concern: several schools were facing charter co-locations. Escobar worked with parents who came together around this very specific threat to their schools. Eastside Parents Against Privatization was formed as its own organization out of these fights. The group works very closely with the union and became a strong coalition in its own right in the fight against co-locations and during the strike. Parents in the area near the Harbor of LA have followed the Eastside example, creating Harbor Defenders of Public Education, also closely connected to UTLA and ROSLA. Thus, a new model emerged that combines parent initiative and parent membership organization, with close affiliation with the union and the broader labor/community alliance.

While a sustainable model is still being developed, Martinez and Escobar’s efforts have paid off. Lessons learned from the CPAL experience informed union-wide trainings for chapter leaders on engaging parents and forging lasting connections at every school in the months before the strike. These were essential.

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Communications and Analytics

UTLA and ROSLA coordinated to create a drumbeat of a unified set of messages and facts supporting the labor/community demands.

The Communications staff at UTLA, headed by Anna Bakalis, shared educational materials with union members in a weekly email. There was constant outreach through social media. Teachers who were active on social media were identified and targeted for collaboration in an effort led by UTLA rank-and-file leaders and staff member Pablo Serrano, who brings experience from South and Central American social movements. Between 2015 and 2018, the union built a massive social media network that delivered information to union members, news media, and the broader public about the bargaining process, the common good demands, and the fight against privatization. Specific messages were driven into regions of LAUSD where they were most salient.

UTLA’s Research and Analytics Department created a sophisticated database, which was used to target alerts and messages across the city. The database included community organizations and parents, as well as UTLA members. Through controlled access and data-sharing agreements, a representative from each of the ROSLA anchor groups had access to portions of the database and its immense capacities.

In the weeks before the strike, ACCE organized daily canvasses outside schools in targeted areas. Canvassers talked to parents about the possibility of a strike and gathered contact information for those who wanted to be kept informed. These parents’ names were subsequently added into the central database to receive updates and alerts. The union and ROSLA used the text-based platform Hustle during the strike to provide rapid-response information and instructions.

The communications team built a deep bench of spokespeople. Media trainings were held for parents and teachers identified as potential spokespeople. This was part of a multi-faceted and intensive effort to make sure that the campaign's key messages were saturating the district.

Meanwhile, UTLA's seven elected city-wide officers did months of intensive school site meetings and dialogues every day, with increasing numbers of schools inviting activist parents into the site meetings as the struggle with the district escalated. This member engagement was coordinated with staff and tracked so that each of the district's 900 schools received visits. Feedback from the schools was recorded as well.

Bold and Escalating Action

When ROSLA emerged publicly at the end of 2016, its strategy called for a series of escalating actions. There was a clear sense that the union's contract negotiations—particularly if UTLA held firm on their Common Good platform—might lead to a strike. UTLA and ROSLA viewed the strike, if it happened, not as the end of the campaign, but as a tactical opportunity within it. They knew they had to lay the groundwork for that possibility. In effect, the union was building the capacity to strike even before the beginning of the bargaining process.

The path to success was through a series of actions sequenced to put their analysis and demands in front of the public, to polarize the issues by singling out targets, to mobilize increasing numbers of organized parents, teachers, and students, and to gradually increase the level of confrontation to get to the point where tens of thousands of Angelenos would be willing and ready to support a strike if necessary.

AROS Walk-Ins: Setting the Stage—2016

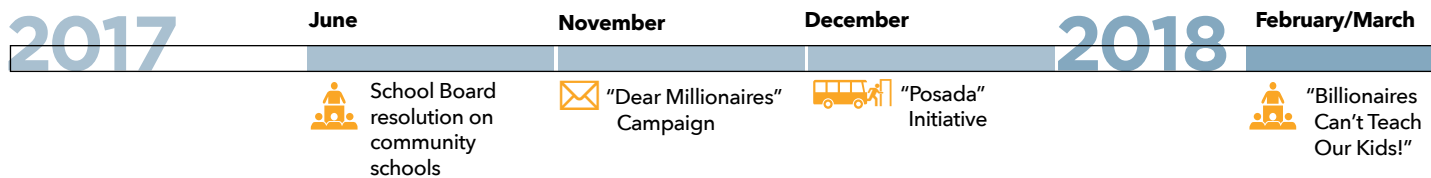
At the same time, the national Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools was looking for ways to activate large numbers of teachers—often wary of confrontational action—to get used to the idea of collective mobilizations with parents.



In early 2016, AROS announced the first of a series of coordinated “walk-ins” at individual schools across the country. The strategy, used initially in St. Paul, MN, was distinctive: AROS wanted to stage a visible, national event that would lift up a pro-public education message. But local school issues varied widely, so a set of national demands didn't make sense. Instead, AROS came up with the idea of a coordinated *tactic*, through which local teachers and parents could come together with their own, localized messages.

The tactic was positive and non-confrontational: parents, teachers,

A SERIES OF BOLD ACTIONS



and students would meet in front of their school building on a nationally coordinated date. A brief rally would be held, and local issues raised in front of an audience. When the morning school bell sounded, the teachers, parents, and students would walk into the school to begin the day. Parents would be treated to coffee and pastries while teachers and students went to their classrooms.

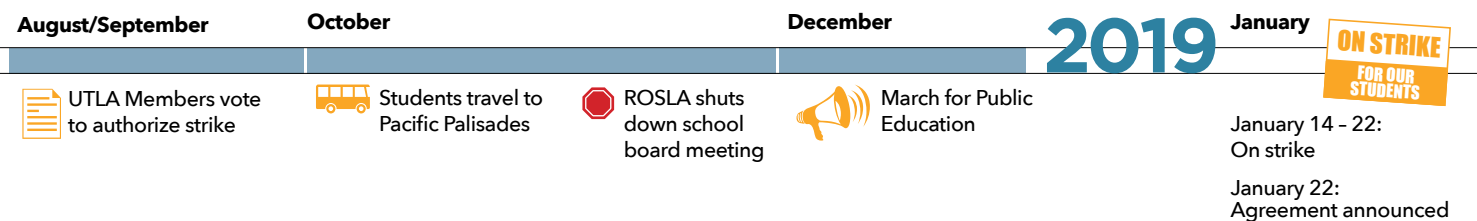
AROS, with its national community and union partners, spent weeks preparing for the first round of walk-ins. National webinars were held to describe the strategy to participants. Sign-up sheets and talking points were included in a toolkit for organizers. The NEA and AFT—both AROS partners—disseminated the materials and the call to their state and local affiliates.

The first round of AROS walk-ins in February of 2016 drew over 35,000 participants at 800 local schools in 31 cities.¹⁶ The largest walk-ins took place in Los Angeles, spearheaded by UTLA, and in Chicago, where the Chicago Teachers Union, a longtime UTLA partner, also with deep community ties, brought out thousands. The national media covered it, as well as dozens of local newspapers, TV stations and radio stations. A second round of walk-ins was held in May of 2016, and a third in October of that year, just before the presidential elections. Los Angeles teachers and parents were enthusiastic participants in each. The final round of walk-ins engaged over 2,000 schools, nationally.

The AROS walk-ins were a vital precursor for larger education mobilizations to follow. Many of the teachers who participated in or organized the Spring 2018 RedforEd rallies in West Virginia, Oklahoma, North Carolina and Arizona credited the AROS walk-ins for bringing teachers into the political space to protest.

The walk-ins provided further consolidation of a state-wide California effort. In 2015, the presidents of the LA, Oakland, and San Diego teacher unions initiated conversations that grew into the California Alliance for Community Schools (CACCS), and came to include ten of the largest teacher union locals in the state. Leaders from the locals developed a joint platform, brought similar demands into their local bargaining including Common Good proposals, shared organizing strategies, and were early organizers for the November 2020 Schools and Communities First funding measure closing the corporate loophole in Prop 13. Many of the locals participated vigorously in the AROS walk-ins.

For ROSLA, the walk-ins were perfectly timed as it began to pave its own path towards mass mobilization. With their strategy laid out and appetites whetted for action, ROSLA put forward its positive demand for Community Schools.



School Board Resolution on Community Schools – June 2017

In May of 2017, ROSLA presented a resolution to the LAUSD School Board. The detailed six-page resolution laid out the components that defined a Community School, showcased their proven track record, and set out a process, starting with the establishment of a Community Schools Implementation Team (CSIT), for identifying and targeting LAUSD schools to undergo the transformation process.¹⁷

ROSLA members met with each member of the school board to seek their support. With the support and leadership of then-LAUSD School Board president Steve Zimmer, the resolution was passed in June 2017—a significant initial victory for ROSLA, just six months after its public launch.



With the district now officially on board, ROSLA created a list of representatives to sit on the CSIT and wrote up an implementation plan. The plan called for a \$5 million investment over the first year of the program. But ROSLA was unable to secure that funding when the LAUSD budget process came up the following year. Funding was the big issue, and the district was arguing that they did not have it.

ROSLA responded to that argument with a series of actions calling out several millionaires and billionaires who were culpable on two fronts: their failure to pay their fair share of taxes (and in some cases, their public opposition to initiatives that would bring new revenues to the district), and their complicity and support for privatization in LAUSD.

“Dear Millionaires” – November 2017

With the help of research colleagues around the country, including LittleSis (an online, crowd-sourced database on the 1 percent),¹⁸ ROSLA identified a number of millionaires who invested in school privatization and were well-connected in Los Angeles. In November 2017, ROSLA sent letters to over twenty of them, including Eli Broad, several members of the Walton Family, Netflix CEO Reed Hastings,

and others, asking them to shift course and support a strategy to invest in all students. The letter asked them to sign on in support of the ROSLA campaign elements:

- \$20,000 in per pupil funding by 2020;
- scaling-up the Community Schools strategy within LAUSD schools;
- financial support for the Schools and Communities First ballot measure in November 2020, and
- support for additional new revenue strategies for the district.



A "Posada." – December 2017

The responses did not exactly overwhelm the phone lines. In fact, not a single millionaire responded to the letter. In December, ROSLA decided to confront some of these millionaires and billionaires in person. ACCE, which uses direct actions frequently as a tactic in their campaigns, developed a creative plan of attack.

In Mexico at Christmastime, it is tradition to hold a "Posada"—a ritual reenactment of Mary and Joseph's search for lodging in Bethlehem. The celebration begins with a procession, with participants carrying candles and singing carols. The procession moves from house to house in the

community while two participants, playing the roles of Mary and Joseph, appeal for a place to stay. They are turned down at door after door until finally, at an appointed house, they are let in.

ROSLA decided to carry their demands to the millionaires in the form of a Posada, traveling from place to place asking their targets to respond to their demands.

On the day of the action, over 100 parents and students led by leaders such as ACCE parents Maria Osorio, Silvia Agustin, and Maria Gomez, and Eastside Padres parents Noemi Galindo, Manuela Panjoj, and Rosario Bonilla, piled into buses and headed to the Netflix campus in Hollywood. The group pushed past the security gate and up to the front doors of the building, asking to speak with Netflix founder Reed Hastings to get his response to their letter. After a brief face-off with corporate security, the group left their letter and boarded the buses again. From there they traveled downtown and took over the lobby of the offices of Great Public Schools Now, a pro-charter organization led by investment banker William Siart. Again, the parents asked to see Siart so they could get a reply to their letter. Again, they were turned away.

"Billionaires Can't Teach Our Kids!" – February/March 2018

The strategy to shine a spotlight on the hypocrisy of the billionaire backers of charter schools refusing to pay a fair share of taxes to support traditional public schools continued. In February 2018, ROSLA visited the

offices of Excellent Education Development—a charter school think tank also founded by William Siart. The coalition demanded that he support their “20 by 20” goal.

The next month, the group took on Oaktree Capital—an investment company whose chief investment officer, Bruce Karsh, had personally donated over \$25 million to KIPP charter schools in Los Angeles, as well as supporting the California Charter School Association (CCSA) and pro-charter political candidates. ROSLA learned that Oaktree executives were speaking at a conference of Wall Street private equity managers at the Omni Hotel in downtown Los Angeles. A group of over fifty students, parents, students, and community members managed to infiltrate the room and confront the bankers with their demands.

Contract Negotiations Continue – August/September 2018

With no significant movement by the district on UTLA’s demands, including the Common Good demands, in August 2018 the union called on members to authorize a strike. During a three-day voting window in August, 81 percent of union members weighed in on the question, and 98 percent of those voted to authorize a strike if necessary.¹⁹ The vote sent a clear signal to the district that the teachers were not backing down.

At the end of September, LAUSD offered the union the 6 percent retroactive pay raise that rank-and-file members were demanding, though still connected to cuts to healthcare for future employees. The district also offered a small reduction in class sizes at several dozen elementary and middle schools.²⁰ The union rejected the offer on the grounds that it did not address the wider platform demands and did not guarantee the class size changes for more than a year. That the union turned down an offer including concession on its salary demand was the strongest indication yet to the community that UTLA was truly bargaining for the common good.

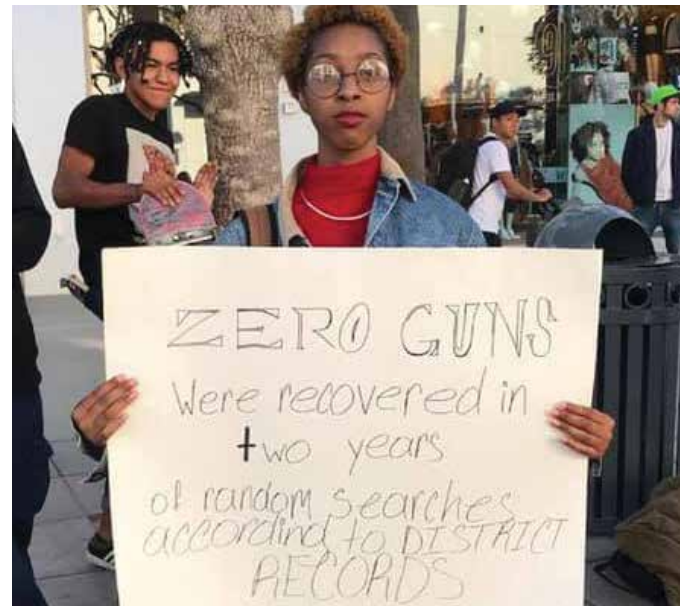
UTLA rank-and-file bargaining team member Adrian Tamayo recalls, “the district and privatizers thought that just because *their* relationships with parents are surface and transactional, ours are just the same. They were wrong. Our experience of being shoulder to shoulder in struggle every day for years with parent, student, and community leaders shaped every single thing we did as a bargaining team. Every single thing.”

ROSLA redoubled its efforts to demonstrate that the community would stand behind their teachers.

Students Travel to Pacific Palisades – October 2018

In October of 2018, ROSLA was tipped off that Superintendent Austin Beutner would be the guest of honor at a fundraising dinner sponsored by the *LA Review of Books*. The fundraiser was being held in Pacific Palisades, an affluent neighborhood of LA, at the home of a Beutner friend.

Students Deserve had been attempting to talk to Beutner for months. The students wanted to deliver their demands directly to him. But he continued to hold them off. So, when they heard that he’d be telling



the wealthy guests in attendance about his plans for LAUSD, they eagerly accepted a number of donated tickets to the event.

Four students, Marshé Doss, Saisha Smith, Zi Quazi Ishrat, and Neelima Hossain, worked for days to prepare. When the evening arrived, the four students, along with two adult supporters, politely presented their tickets and walked through the doors of a stunningly appointed home. With the blue glow of a swimming pool illuminating the glassed-in dining area, the students stood, faced the guest of honor, and said that, because he had refused to meet with them, they were there to tell him what they needed in their schools. Each student talked about their vision of Community Schools, the frustration of large classes, and the fear instilled by random searches. They also talked about the pressing need for guidance counselors and nurses.

Beutner listened briefly then disappeared into a back room. At that point, some of the guests began to challenge the students, telling them that they were being “intimidating” and disruptive. The students, having prepared for any response, continued their statements. Then, with wine glasses clinking in the background, the students went in search of their Superintendent. They found him sequestered with a couple of other guests in a downstairs room. He refused to speak to them. After a few more minutes, the students left the home.

The critical importance of this action, according to Rosa Jimenez, who works closely with Students Deserve, was less about getting a response from Beutner than about demonstrating the determination of the students to be seen and heard taking action in support of the demands being put forward in UTLA’s contract negotiations. The entire action was live-streamed on YouTube,²¹ and teachers across the city had been tipped off to watch it unfold in real time. Jimenez, who teaches at the UCLA Community School in Koreatown, noted that watching the students stand up boldly and calmly to face an unfriendly crowd sent a clear message to teachers that Students Deserve was truly on their side and prepared to engage bravely in the campaign.

The Superintendent Doubles Down: ROSLA Shuts Down a School Board Meeting – December 2018

Undeterred by the action, Superintendent Beutner continued advancing his own agenda of privatization. Shortly after the students’ action, Beutner announced plans for a major reorganization of the district. ROSLA’s collaborative research team immediately recognized that the Superintendent was proposing “portfolio” reforms that in other cities have led to school closings, more charter conversions, and less public engagement. Worse, Beutner’s announcement about the reorganization came without warning, hearings or opportunities for public input. The move reinforced the need for action.

Continuing their efforts to amplify their demands, and the district’s refusal to accede to UTLA’s Common Good agenda, ROSLA members shut down a meeting of the LAUSD school board on December 11th. The board’s agenda included discussion of Superintendent Beutner’s reorganization proposal. Parents spoke out about the district’s reserve fund and asked why it wasn’t used to support the schools. Student Cheyenne McLaren told the board there were 52 students in her 10th grade chemistry lab. The group called out the Superintendent as a millionaire with no education experience. After a few minutes, school board president Monica Garcia turned off the microphones, then adjourned the meeting and left the room.²²

Taking to the Streets—December 2018

As a demonstration of their mounting confidence that the city would support the teachers should a strike be necessary, and as one more opportunity to test its feedback and mobilization structures, UTLA called a citywide march and rally on December 15th, 2018. The rally drew over 50,000 people, who marched from Grand Park to the Broad Museum, once again shining a spotlight on philanthropist Eli Broad's role in supporting privatization in Los Angeles.

Support was pouring in from around the country as well. AROS placed a full-page ad in the *Los Angeles Times*, supporting the teachers' demands. The ad was signed by over 400 local and state community and labor groups. The NEA, AFT, CTA, and CFT provided substantial financial and staff support to UTLA.



THE STRIKE January 14 - 22, 2019

On Monday, January 7th, the district presented a new proposal, which offered a small drop in class size, librarians in every secondary school, and some additional counselors. The district's salary offer of a six percent raise spread out over two years remained in the proposal, though still connected to cuts in future employees' healthcare. UTLA refused the offer.

Superintendent Beutner called on the new California Governor, Gavin Newsom, to step-up communications with both sides to try to reach a settlement, noting that new State funding would be

required to meet the union’s demands. Both Governor Newsom and Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti became more involved in the negotiations, while reaching out privately to both sides. Still, the union held firm for its Common Good demands.

On the Friday before the strike began, civil rights icons James Lawson and Delores Huerta, Melina Abdullah, founder of the LA chapter of Black Lives Matter, and well-known civil rights advocate and long-time LAUSD administrator Sylvia Rousseau, held a press conference in Los Angeles announcing their support for the strike. Lawson called the district’s attacks on teachers “a disgrace.”

Picket lines went up on Monday, January 14th, 2019 in a driving rain. Despite the rain, tens of thousands of teachers, parents, and students turned out to join picket lines at their neighborhood schools. AROS announced the creation of a “Solidarity Fund” to help raise money nationally for ROSLA’s work and strike support. ROSLA bought thousands of red ponchos and umbrellas.



UTLA’s intensive focus on structure and internal communications paid off. Contract Action Teams made up of one educator-leader for every ten educators in each school had been built over the course of the previous year to facilitate tight communications within each building. These structures pulled virtually every UTLA teacher in the city into the strike. There was over 98 percent rank-and-file participation on picket lines. Site-based logistics teams including parents organized tents, coffee, and sound systems across neighborhoods. Parents were arriving at their children’s schools with homemade food, while joining teachers on the picket lines. A team of UTLA staff led by Brian McNamara, Jollene Levid, and Cami George collected electronic reports from chapter chairs on the strength of picket lines at every school each morning during the strike. UTLA’s regional rank-and-file area chairs Bruce Newborn, Scott Mandel, Karla Griego, Stacie Webster, Erika Jones, Adrian Tamayo, Maria Miranda, and Steve Seal worked with UTLA, state, and national affiliate staff to provide real-time support where needed.

“Every night of the strike, we had conference calls with about 70 leaders from schools in my region. We went over how strong the picket lines were, what supports were needed, and how to make parent connections on the picket lines lasting relationships. On those calls, we could hear leaders transforming into incredible movement marathon runners,” recalls Stacie Webster, chair of UTLA’s Central Area.

Students Deserve organized sign-making parties and enlivened the picket lines with young people playing music and organizing dance troupes. One day, they decorated hundreds of ponchos. Labor unions from across the city representing dozens of

sectors, from UNITE-HERE to UFCW to ILWU and more, and multiple community organizations adopted school picket lines daily. Organizational allies like the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) played critical support roles. LAUSD workers from SEIU Local 99 and CSEA went on sympathy strikes. Supporters from the state-wide coalition, CACS, poured into LA, supporting picket lines and picking up lessons for a possible Oakland strike only weeks away.

On January 15th, 2019, over 60,000 people flooded the wet streets surrounding the LA offices of the CCSA. Speakers included both public and charter school teachers, as well as a parent who shared her first-hand experience with co-location. Eric Garcetti also joined the crowd that day. The action effectively tied up the downtown area and shined a spotlight on CCSA as a target in the broader campaign.

The strike attracted media from around the world. The UTLA Communications Department realized that its efforts to saturate the city with the campaign's specific messages had been so successful that it needn't worry about putting the right spokespeople in front of the cameras. "We didn't really need to point members of the press to designated spokespeople. Everyone had the same talking points. We were able to just wave to the crowd and say, 'talk to anyone you want,'" noted Anna Bakalis.



“La Escuelita de Lideres”

As the strike loomed, ROSLA leaders discussed how to engage and mobilize parents and students across the district to not only march with the teachers, but to expand the range of mobilizations and support efforts. They decided on a daily “Action School” as a way to ground the effort and take the pulse of parents and students on a daily basis.

The model was based on a “week of action” strategy that progressive organizers had developed and tested in other campaigns. The idea—spearheaded by ACCE—was to bring together a consistent set of leaders from across organizations for intensive reflection, planning, and education *on a daily basis* during a time of intensive action. The experience in other organizing drives had created strong solidarity across organizations and built individual leaders with a commitment to strategic action.

In Los Angeles, the daily leadership sessions became known as “La Escuelita de Lideres” (leadership school) and launched on the first day of the strike. Each day, some 50-75 teachers, parents, and students came together at the UTLA offices, where child care and food was available. A typical “Escuelita” day began on the picket lines in front of neighborhood schools. Around noon, the group would gather to reflect on the previous day’s activities and participate in political education sessions. The participants talked about the issues still on the table with the district on any given day of the strike. They learned about how schools in California are underfunded, and the systemic reasons behind this. In the afternoon, they planned direct actions to keep their issues in the public eye throughout the strike.

Participants were moved by the power of leaders like ACCE parents Ruby Gordillo and Martha Sanchez, Eastside Padres parents Eloisa Galindo and Jazmin Garcia, Students Deserve parents Jsane Tyler and

Kahlid Al-Alim, and parent Alicia Baltazar, a key Harbor area leader working with LAANE. Gordillo with ACCE, described how these educational and planning sessions affected her:

“During the strike we were all busy. We were learning all kinds of information on how the 1 percent had benefited. About the school to prison pipeline. It woke me to reality. It helped me understand that the larger the population of Brown and Black students got within LAUSD, the less investment was made in our schools. Why should we settle for that? These discussions were empowering. Parents, students and teachers all learning together, all fighting together, all planning together.”

Based on those planning sessions, parents and youth decided to undertake a series of actions that were separate from the teachers work stoppage, but shared the same demands.



The first action took place in the afternoon of day two of the strike, at the headquarters of Oaktree Capital. A crowd of over 100, heavily student-led, took over the lobby of the company’s building, calling on chief investment officer Bruce Karsh to accept ROSLA’s letter of demands. When the police were called on the chanting group, one of the security officers agreed to deliver the letter to Karsh, and the group left.

The following night, students, and parents rallied outside the home of LAUSD Board President Monica Garcia in the El Sereno neighborhood of Los Angeles. They were met by officers from the LAUSD Police Department. With over 100 parents and students standing in a driving rain, a small delegation of students, including Marshé Doss, Cheyenne

McLaren, and Neelima Hossain approached Garcia’s door to deliver a letter asking the board president to reduce class size, provide more supports for students, support community schools, and cap and regulate charters. After no one answered the door, the police eventually pushed the delegation back to the sidewalk where they continued the rally.

On the fourth night, the targets were William Siart and Austin Beutner, who live in Pacific Palisades. Siart’s large white-columned home offered a striking backdrop as students and parents—with the media in tow—marched, chanted and delivered their message: “Hands Off Our Schools. Stop Privatizing Our Schools.”

The group then moved to the nearby home of Superintendent Beutner for a candlelight vigil. This time, they were met by Los Angeles police in riot gear. Beutner lives in a gated community, and the protestors were unable to get past the heavy security gate. In response, they rang the intercom for Beutner’s address, and chanted “open the door, Beutner.... open the door, Beutner,” urging him to come out and accept their letter of demands.

ROSLA ensured that the story of each protest would be told by inviting the media, and by having a designated videographer and “narrator” who documented the actions and live-streamed them on the group’s Facebook page. Striking teachers were able to watch the nightly actions and witness the dedication of parents and students joining them in their fight.

The rain continued relentlessly. Yet each day tens of thousands of educators, parents, and students joined the picket lines, and at citywide marches and rallies. The rallies grew through the week. Attendance levels in schools fell to 15 percent citywide as more and more students joined the picket lines.

Maintaining Control of the Message

Two days into the strike, a group of 21 African American pastors released

a letter through the pro-charter *LA School Report*, calling on UTLA to go back to the bargaining table.

The letter was an attempt to divide the city's African American community on the ongoing teacher's strike. The pastors proclaimed that "the fortunes of African American children do not improve on a picket line."²³

ROSLA countered the following day, publishing a commentary in the *Daily News* from civil rights giants James Lawson and Delores Huerta, who wrote, "We stand with the striking teachers. The 33,000 teachers of Los Angeles are fighting for the 500,000 students they serve. And the Los Angeles community should stand with them, too."²⁴

The UTLA Communications Department ensured that the strike's messaging was cohesive. Every day began with a morning press conference, livestreamed on Facebook. The morning event was held at a different school each day and outlined the events and messages of the day. The messages were thematic: privatization one day, class size another, etc. In the evening, a second livestreamed debrief was held, to update teachers, parents, and students on any bargaining news and report on the day's events. The press events were intentionally designed to speak to parents, teachers, and students, but also to demonstrate to LAUSD that the alliance was holding firm.

A Settlement is Reached

A tentative agreement was reached in the early morning hours of Tuesday, January 22—making it a six-day strike. LAUSD had folded.

The agreement achieved by the union and district was much broader than the content of a new collective bargaining agreement alone. The contract itself included a 6 percent retroactive pay increase (with LAUSD having dropped its demand to tie the raise to cuts to future employees' healthcare) and the elimination of Section 1.5 which had allowed class size ceilings to be ignored year after year. Many leaders believe that the strike would have been an unmitigated success even if the only result had been the elimination of 1.5, which had for so long hampered any efforts to contain class size.

The contract also included guaranteed work space for all itinerant educators and health and human service professionals, improvements in early education and adult education, expansion of resources for ethnic studies, reductions in special education caseloads, guarantees of the union's ability to bargain changes in special education, earlier notification of potential charter co-locations to allow time for

Every day began with a morning press conference, livestreamed on Facebook. The event was held at a different school each day and outlined the events and messages of the day... In the evening, a second livestreamed debrief was held, to update teachers, parents and students on any bargaining news and report on the day's events.

organizing, and establishment of a formal union member co-location liaison position to fight for district school rights when schools face charter co-location.

But perhaps what was most extraordinary about what UTLA won was included in seven separate Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), addressing the union's Common Good agenda. One of those MOUs promised \$12 million—over twice what ROSLA had tried to get in the previous year's budget—to implement a Community Schools program. Another pledges action to increase green space at schools, while in the process removing unused bungalows which had been used as justification to co-locate charters on district campuses. One mobilizes concrete immigrant defense supports. There are MOUs spelling out the timeline for hiring additional nurses, counselors, and librarians, and providing details for the implementation of the first systematic and enforceable class size reduction timeline in decades. There is an MOU defining a process (in collaboration with UTLA) for identifying unnecessary tests and a plan for reducing the time spent on assessments by 50 percent. In addition, after so much district resistance to the student movement's demands on random searches, an MOU outlined a pilot program to eliminate the searches at 28 schools over two years.

85 percent of the final agreements were forged during the strike.

The Mayor and the Superintendent made public commitments to support the fight for more revenue for schools and to support the November 2020 Schools and Communities First ballot measure that would close Prop. 13's corporate loophole. The Governor committed to exploring changes to how special education and health and human services are funded, as LAUSD has historically been short-changed by funding formulas.

An additional key victory was an agreement that the LAUSD school board would pass a resolution calling on Governor Newsom to place a moratorium on new charter schools, and to create a commission to study the fiscal impact of charter schools on local districts. This was a massive step forward in a district where a majority of the school board, plus the Superintendent, have favored charter expansion. *(For a full list of agreements resulting from the strike, see Appendix C).*

“Parents had their own reasons for joining this fight.

Together, we are the ingredients for this soup...

We got a good contract. But do we deserve more?

Yes we do. Are we going to fight for more? Yes, we are. This is just the beginning of it. This fight is for our students, and the students of our future.”

—Ruby Gordillo , ACCE parent leader

The union had won concessions on some contract issues before the strike began, including the traditionally central issue of salaries. But 85 percent of the final agreements—including on the Common Good demands—were forged during the strike, as tens of thousands of teachers, parents, and students filled the rain-soaked streets of Los Angeles, refusing to back off. After over a year of asserting that they could not negotiate on issues not included in the state's “scope of bargaining” law, LAUSD did just that.

What Has Changed

On Wednesday, January 23rd, 2019, the rain stopped. Los Angeles teachers triumphantly went back to work. But the organizing for the schools LA students deserve goes on.

ROSLA and UTLA members were, and still are, clear that the fight for stronger public schools did not end with the teachers' strike. There is deep commitment to continue to build, to enforce the agreements that were won, and to continue putting grassroots leaders—teachers, parents, and students—at the front of this fight.

“Everyone in the city was touched by this,” reflected Betty Hung with the UCLA Labor Center. “In 20 years, I haven’t seen this openness, this unity.”

In Los Angeles, local policymakers continue to make advances toward meeting the ROSLA and UTLA demands. And ROSLA is maintaining pressure to ensure full implementation of all that was won.

- A week after the strike ended, on January 29th, the LAUSD School Board voted 5-1 in favor of a resolution urging the Governor of California to place a moratorium on new charters and to study the impact of charters on public school districts.²⁵ Over a thousand charter school parents and teachers protested outside, having falsely been told that passage of the resolution might result in their schools being closed. Yet, the school board, with its pro-charter majority, passed the resolution as agreed to in their MOU with the union. A single board member opposed.
- A week after the strike, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors appropriated \$10 million for mental health professionals in schools and asked county staff to find additional funding for more nurses in schools.
- The weekend following the strike, the California Teachers Association endorsed the November 2020 Schools and Communities First ballot measure. The measure continues to build momentum across the state.
- On the second day of the LAUSD strike, January 15, UTLA members at Accelerated Charter School went on strike in the second charter school strike in United States history (UTLA represents about 1,000 charter educators).²⁶ ROSLA has a history of supporting Accelerated teachers and was on the picket lines with scores of parents and students. The educators won the strike after eight days, gaining due process rights and key working conditions improvements. The solidarity of UTLA-unionized and non-union charter teachers across the city with the LAUSD and Accelerated strikes was a tremendous breakthrough.
- In February, the LAUSD Board voted to put a local “parcel tax” on the ballot, which was shortly thereafter endorsed by the Los Angeles City Council. The measure proposed to raise \$450 - \$500 million annually for LAUSD schools by increasing property taxes. It was designed to ensure that 70 percent of the revenue would come from commercial and industrial landholders rather than individual homeowners. Unfortunately, because of a well-funded, scorched-earth campaign by big business and the Chamber of Commerce, the measure was defeated in June 2019. The opposition’s negative campaign suppressed voter turn-out which resulted in conservative voters having disproportionate influence. Though the measure was defeated, the effort produced some advances: The Superintendent and Mayor became much more immersed in the fight for more school funding, and important infrastructure and systematic voter contacts were built in the campaign that will help the November 2020 Schools and Communities First measure.

- Also in February, the LA School Board voted for more supports for homeless students and plans to contribute additional funding to build affordable housing for LAUSD workers. These echoed key strike demands and long-time demands of the LA housing justice movement.
- By mid-April, LAUSD Superintendent Austin Beutner had backed off his controversial “portfolio” plan to restructure the district, proposing a less disruptive re-configuration instead.²⁷
- In May, a special election to fill the District 5 school board seat was widely seen as a referendum on charter schools, school funding, and the union’s strike action. After a bitter campaign, UTLA’s candidate, Jackie Goldberg, a former teacher, city council member, and state legislator, won overwhelmingly with 72 percent of the vote.²⁸ Goldberg’s election restores balance to the school board on the issue of charter schools and dramatically increases the board’s voice on the issue of school funding.
- ROSLA is working with the district to implement their Community Schools victory. A steering committee was been appointed to take over the role of the Implementation Committee created by the resolution in 2017. The new steering committee includes eight representatives appointed by UTLA (only one is a UTLA teacher, the others are students, parents, and community leaders), and eight from LAUSD. Delugach is one of two co-chairs. The steering committee began meeting in late April and expects to select the first cohort of 20 schools over the summer of 2019.
- In June, the Mayor announced free bus passes for students on city DASH buses, a first-step victory echoing strike demands and a long-time demand of LA’s Bus Riders Union.²⁹
- A huge additional victory was scored on random searches. Students Deserve has been actively monitoring the implementation of their victory from the strike. The district had agreed to a pilot program allowing 28 schools to eliminate random searches in conjunction with creating additional conflict resolution structures within the schools. In April, the first 14 schools were selected to begin this process. Fourteen additional schools were to be added to the pilot next year. But on June 18, the movement’s relentlessness and strategic savvy paid off: the school board voted to eliminate random searches in *all* schools by July 1, 2020.³⁰

In the state capitol of Sacramento, “the strike changed everything,” according to several state education advocates.

- Less than two weeks after the strike ended, Governor Gavin Newsom appointed a task force to study the fiscal and other impacts of charter schools in the state. The task force issued its report in June, with majority recommendations calling for much tighter practices in the authorization of charters, the ability of school districts to consider fiscal impact when considering charter applications, and the opening of a conversation about charter limits.³¹
- In March, the CA state legislature passed a bill (SB 126) clarifying that charter schools must comply with state open meeting, conflict-of-interest, and disclosure laws, as local district school boards must. This includes holding public board meetings, opening records to the public upon request, and ensuring that board members don’t have a financial interest in contracts on which they vote. The Governor signed the bill on March 5th. Several additional bills that would strengthen charter oversight and limit their expansion continue to move through the legislature.

Just three weeks after Los Angeles teachers went back to work, educators in Oakland walked off the job over their district’s failure to negotiate an adequate contract. The Oakland teachers were out for seven days and won a salary increase, as well as agreements to reduce class sizes and provide more

student supports including counselors, psychologists, and speech pathologists.³² Oakland teachers highlighted the need for passage of the Schools and Communities First ballot measure. UTLA officers and staff went to Oakland to assist the strike and were joined by CACS local leaders and CTA leaders across the state and learned a lot more. The RedforEd movement continues to percolate across the country.

Keys to Victory

A poll conducted during the LA strike showed that 77 percent of residents in Los Angeles supported the teachers.³³

Such a level of support for a disruptive, citywide mobilization is unprecedented. How did this campaign—with its careful attention to voice, strategy, analysis and action—successfully bring community and labor demands to the nation’s second-largest city and win the support of a strong majority of citizens?

“We organized hard and methodically. We built strong rank-and-file and grassroots leaders. We were audacious in our actions. We didn’t give up,” said ROSLA director Sharon Delugach.

Several key lessons have emerged over the course of this long battle in Los Angeles—a battle that suggests a possible roadmap for other school districts, labor unions, and community organizations facing similar attacks on public education:

- ***The Power of Labor and Community United.*** For nearly fifty years, a myth has been promoted that portrays the interests of organized teachers as different from those of parents and students. While there are challenges and differences, in the face of a corporate-led, ideological movement to privatize public education over the past quarter-century, parent and teacher interests have converged more than diverged. Efforts to bring teachers and communities together to reclaim our public schools are more important than ever.
- ***The Power of a Transformed Union.*** The new leadership team at UTLA was clear that they wanted to not only change the union’s external face, but also the union’s internal operations. The leadership’s vision of engaged and mobilized members, a deep commitment to social justice and broad educational change (not just a focus on wages and benefits) required the union to restructure from the inside out. Member engagement doesn’t happen by itself. UTLA built the structures to reach and activate their members and help them adopt a vision for a better school system. The union identified natural leaders at schools and supported and tested its chapter leaders and structures through the essential face-to-face organizing work involved in member commitment drives for escalating actions—all tracked, analyzed, and built further through a comprehensive, real-time database and constantly-updated lists for leaders. UTLA saw genuine and respectful engagement of parents, community, and youth as a critical role. While there are

“In the organizing leading up to the strike, and during the strike, UTLA leaders at all levels wholly engaged the Step Up - Step Back philosophy that we want to replicate in other teacher unions. They were intimately involved in co-strategizing with parents and students, but they also deeply trusted parents and students to lead with their own initiative in the collective work. It was truly a community strike.”

— Randi Weingarten, President, American Federation of Teachers

questions about whether labor unions can, or even should, attempt to organize parents, the work of the union’s community organizers made a huge contribution to both community trust of the union, and to mobilization during the strike. UTLA continues to build a model that will be sustainable.

The union’s efforts to reach out to other progressive organizations and movements in the city, including Black Lives Matter, the immigrant rights movement, and others was key. UTLA turned out for allies’ press conferences, held panels on a range of issues for their members, sent staff or leaders to events, and more. Their willingness to put more than money on the table in support



of these campaigns helped create real solidarity when the teachers took to the picket lines. This was a multi-year effort and could not have happened if they had waited until the final run-up leading to the strike.

- ***Taking the Time to Build a Shared Analysis and Strategy.***

ROSLA leadership spent months building a shared analysis of the state of public education in Los Angeles and agreeing on a strategy. That process began with an agreement that the development of parent, teacher, and student leaders

would be a key component of the campaign, and that these leaders must have the final voice in determining campaign direction. They built consensus around the path forward, and the messages that they would promote throughout the campaign. Before ROSLA went public, it had been building this shared vision of the work for over a year.

- ***A Commitment to Being Bold and Going on Offense:*** For too long, teachers, parents and students have been reactive—putting out fires and fighting small fights. In Los Angeles, a years-long strategic plan went big and bold. The ROSLA partners called for an end to rearranging deck chairs: LAUSD students needed support, the district needed significant new investment, and the school board needed to join that fight at all levels, they insisted. The campaign’s demands were big and unapologetic. The coalition took on LA’s wealthiest residents, while calling out the racism of random searches and disinvestment. ROSLA demanded less testing, more green space, and Community Schools.
- ***Using the Collective Bargaining Agreement as a Tactic:*** UTLA’s contract talks became a strategy to focus the conversation on their broader demands. By utilizing a BCG model, the union refused to confine their demands to the accepted “scope of bargaining” called for by the district (and state law!). Many of the most transformational victories won through the collective bargaining campaign were outside the defined scope of bargaining.
- ***Understanding the Science of Organizing.*** UTLA and ROSLA understood that organizing is not only an art, but a science. Numbers mattered. They created rapid feedback loops to test messages and how they resonated with their own members and with the general public. Thousands of

one-on-one meetings, parent meetings, and popular education sessions were held—and tracked. Members were polled. Structures were created that empowered rank-and-file members to lead in one-on-one organizing, lead in strategy, learn, and lead more. Tasks were set to test new leaders and give them experience. Social media was used to draw people in, elicit feedback on demands, and drive out the messages. Actions were livestreamed so that members of the public, along with teachers, parents, and students could watch them unfold in real time.

“I still have the shoes I wore during the strike and they’re still muddy and I haven’t cleaned them. Because that’s just something you want to remember.”

**—Marshé Doss,
Students Deserve**

- ***Student Voices Matter.*** Students played a critical role during the strike. During the day, it was students who livened up picket lines with dances and music. At night, it was students, sloshing through the rain up to the front doors of the Superintendent and the School Board President, insisting that they agree to the union’s demands. Night after night, as Angelenos tuned in to the news or watched Facebook Live as the actions took place, it was the faces and the voices of young people, calling for change, that riveted the city.

Those voices were nurtured over the years preceding the strike. The students fundamentally changed the narrative about school safety through their demands for an end to random searches and their insistence that more counselors, nurses, and librarians would do more to make their schools safe than the oppressive random searches. They convinced wary parents and educators—and eventually the LAUSD school board, that they were right.

...

The work of ROSLA continues. Even the victories won during the strike are only as real as the next several years’ worth of implementation. Parents, students and educators understand that there will be challenges, and there will be efforts to roll back their advances. There will be new fights as well. But the campaign so far has built a cohort of now-experienced and sophisticated leaders who understand the rigors of systematic organizing.

Public education and public sector unions have served as two of our country’s most important, if imperfect, levers for racial and economic justice. It is precisely why right-wing billionaires and politicians have targeted public education for privatization and teacher unions for elimination. Their efforts, and the hundreds of millions of dollars at their disposal, have made public education one of the key arenas in which the future direction of the country is being fought.

This case study presents an example of how a carefully conceived, methodically developed, and thoughtful collaboration between labor and community can win substantive reform at the district, school, and state levels, with national reverberations, and establish a cadre of leaders ready to take on the next fight. It is a story worth learning from.

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APPENDIX A

RECLAIM OUR SCHOOLS LOS ANGELES (ROSLA)

Anchor Partners

Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE)



www.acceaction.org

ACCE is a multi-racial, community-based organization, working with low-income and working-class people across the state of California. The ACCE membership base is predominantly African American and Latinx, and very low-income. Collectively, members fight for economic, racial, and social justice at the local, city, regional, and statewide levels. ACCE works through broad base-building and education, deep leadership development and political education, and issue or electoral campaigns that make demands directly of the power players who are making decisions that affect their lives.

ACCE chapters have won victories ranging from local city and school district investment in neighborhood streets and schools, to city increases in minimum wage, or rent stabilization programs, and from county commitments to cover all residents with affordable health care, to statewide wins that protect homeowners from predatory lenders or tax the ultra-rich to pay for public programs that benefit all Californians. Their power comes from everyday people organizing toward a common goal.

ACCE members who are parents at schools in some of the lowest-income communities have been organizing and fighting for increased funding and an expansion of the Community Schools model to more schools, as well as campaigning against the privatization of public education.

Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE)



www.laane.org

Founded in 1993, the Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE) is a nationally recognized advocacy organization dedicated to building a new economy for all. Combining dynamic research, innovative public policy, and strategic organizing of broad alliances, LAANE promotes a new economic approach based on good jobs, thriving communities, and a healthy environment.

For the past 25 years, LAANE has been at the forefront of Los Angeles' progressive movement, transforming conditions in key industries and improving the lives of hundreds of thousands of working families in southern California.

LAANE's groundbreaking policy wins and new approach to economic development have been a model for similar efforts across the country. LAANE is a co-founder of the Partnership for Working Families (PWF), a rapidly growing national alliance fighting for good jobs and healthy communities in nearly 20 major metropolitan areas.



Students Deserve

#STUDENTSDESERVE

Students Deserve is building a social movement against the institutional oppressions of race and class in LA's schools and in the broader society.

www.schoolslastudentsdeserve.com/

Students Deserve is a volunteer-based, grassroots organization made up of parents, students, and teachers dedicated to transforming the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD).

Students Deserve is contributing to building the movement against criminalizing youth in schools and making sure LA schools and communities provide what young people need. The students' work aligns with and contributes to the Movement for Black Lives, the fight against neoliberal privatization of public education, and the development of the next generation of parent and student leaders of color.

Along with its successful campaign to end random searches in LAUSD schools, and its fight for Community Schools, Students Deserve has initiated other student-led events around the city. These reflect Students Deserve's commitment to being a horizontally structured organization. Students and parents are encouraged to lead the organization and are supported to create student-only spaces.

Through its alliance with Reclaim Our Schools LA (ROSLA), Students Deserve was able to hire one full-time and one part-time organizer. This enormously increased its student and parent organizing capacity and has transformed the organization. With 15 school chapters, Students Deserve general assemblies often have as many as 75 students, parents, and teachers and its coordinating team has grown to about 25 members.

United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA)



United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) was created in 1970 from more than a dozen different organizations representing teachers and support service personnel throughout the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), the nation's second largest school district. UTLA is affiliated with the California Teachers Association (CTA), the National Education Association (NEA), the California Federation of Teachers (CFT), and the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO (AFT).

In forming and fighting for its first contract, UTLA went on a successful strike in 1970 that helped fuel a national movement for public sector workers' rights.

In 1989, UTLA organized another successful strike, which resulted in pay increases, improvements to educator working conditions, and more. Over the following decade, UTLA helped defeat disastrous school voucher plans and other schemes to break up the LAUSD.

The UTLA leadership elected in 2014 brought in an explicit organizing framework, transforming both its external relationships with grassroots and progressive organizations around the city, and its internal structure to mobilize and activate its members. In January 2019, UTLA members went on strike to win unprecedented agreements addressing school staffing, random student searches, class size, pay, green space, and dozens of other "Common Good" demands.

UTLA policy at all levels is set by members either directly or through elected representatives. Every year each school site elects a Chapter Chair. UTLA has seven citywide officers on full-time leave from the classroom, who handle day-to-day UTLA business. The 40-member UTLA Board of Directors is elected from the eight UTLA areas and sets strategy and business functions for the organization. The 300-member UTLA House of Representatives, also elected from the eight UTLA areas, meets eight times a year to debate broader policy.



APPENDIX B

BARGAINING FOR THE COMMON GOOD

Bargaining for the Common Good (BCG) is a strategy that utilizes labor negotiations as an opportunity to organize with community partners around a set of demands that benefit not just the bargaining unit, but the wider community.

BCG has gained traction over the past dozen years with the rising role of Wall Street in creating wealth inequality and the success of other right-wing groups in taking over state and local offices. In addition, the need for BCG has grown in response to a series of anti-union court cases aimed at chipping away long-held rights of workers.

These assaults on working people have been part of the overall financialization of our economy that has resulted in many public sector programs, like education, being “broke on purpose.” Wealthy individuals and corporations continue to amass the nation’s riches while public budgets, low-income, and working people are squeezed. Teachers unions, among the largest public sector unions and the most powerful organized labor groups in the country, have demonstrated that by going on the offensive with community partners, they can build a broader movement against austerity. Labor/community campaigns have started to win important victories.

Community organizing groups have also been attacked and blocked from winning substantive policy change. With traditional policy advocacy and lobbying growing increasingly ineffective, community organizers realized they needed new strategies and partners. By focusing on Wall Street billionaires and the corporations that are responsible for financialization, both publicly and behind the scenes, community organizers have flipped the script and gone on the offensive. Bargaining for the Common Good has been a key strategy in that work.

For both labor and community groups BCG raises the prospect that collective bargaining agreements can be used not just to benefit organized workers, but to exercise power on broader community issues.

Key Principles

Bargaining for the Common Good (BCG) is organized around seven key principles:

1. Expanding the scope of bargaining beyond wages and benefits, to issues that resonate with partners and allies, and that impact communities.
2. Identifying, exposing, and challenging the financial and corporate actors who profit from and increasingly drive policies and actions.
3. Engaging community allies as partners in issue development and the bargaining campaign.
4. Centering racial justice in contract demands by addressing the role that employers play in creating and exacerbating structural racism in our communities.
5. Using bargaining to strengthen internal organizing and member engagement.
6. Leveraging the financial power of workers' pension funds and endowments in order to win Common Good demands.
7. Building long-term community-labor power.

Bargaining for the Common Good has been refined and promoted by the Kalmonovitz Initiative at Georgetown University, the Center for Innovation in Worker Organizations at Rutgers University, and the Action Center on Race and the Economy Institute (ACRE) which together make up the Bargaining for the Common Good Network. Through training, connecting experiences and challenges, and hands-on support, the Network has helped several BCG efforts win significant change.

In 2012, (prior to the official launching of BCG) the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) aligned their contract fight with the interests of community allies to call for smaller class sizes, improved school facilities, and more. The 2012 CTU strike brought tens of thousands of parents into the streets to support their teachers and signaled a new relationship between teachers, parents, and community.

The next year, teachers in St. Paul followed suit, working with community partners to draw up a list of 29 bargaining demands, including that the district stop doing business with banks that foreclose on their student's families. In 2014, labor and community groups from around the country held the first Bargaining for Common Good convening at Georgetown University.

In 2015, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 721 in Los Angeles utilized a BCG framework in their contract negotiations with the city. Local 721 represents 95,000 public sector workers, including the city's street services and water treatment workers, librarians, sanitation workers, and others. SEIU's campaign called out the austerity budget in Los Angeles, where more money was being spent on Wall Street fees than on street repair, and focused on massive infrastructure needs. Targets included the Wall Street firms whose fees were overwhelming the city budget and forcing cuts to important city services.

United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) watched these fights over the years, and sent staff and leadership to trainings hosted by the Bargaining for the Common Good Network. As the union planned for a new round of contract talks in 2017, it recognized that the strategy fit perfectly with its broad vision of building power for workers and their communities. Together, as part of Reclaim Our Schools LA (ROSLA), UTLA broadened its platform and put a series of Common Good demands on the table with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) in 2017.

When UTLA went out on strike in January 2019, it had already made significant progress on some of its contract-related demands. The refusal of the union to settle for that progress, and a willingness to strike over demands that were outside the legal scope of bargaining in California, contributed to the massive public support for UTLA teachers. With the strike, UTLA and ROSLA scored significant victories on nearly all of their Common Good platform demands.

To read more about Bargaining for the Common Good, check out these resources:

- Bargaining for the Common Good Comes of Age. (2019, March 11). *Working Class Perspectives* (blog). The Kalmonovitz Initiative at Georgetown University. Retrieved from <https://workingclasstudies.wordpress.com/2019/03/11/bargaining-for-the-common-good-comes-of-age/>
- What it Takes to Unite Teachers Unions and Communities of Color. (2014, October 13). *The Nation*. Retrieved from <https://www.thenation.com/article/what-it-takes-unite-teachers-unions-and-communities-color/>
- Before the Chalk Dust Settles: Building on the 2018 Teachers' Mobilization. (2018, April 24) *The American Prospect*. Retrieved from <https://prospect.org/article/chalk-dust-settles-building-on-2018-teachers%E2%80%99-mobilization>



APPENDIX C

UTLA STRIKE 2019: WHAT WAS WON

(partial list)

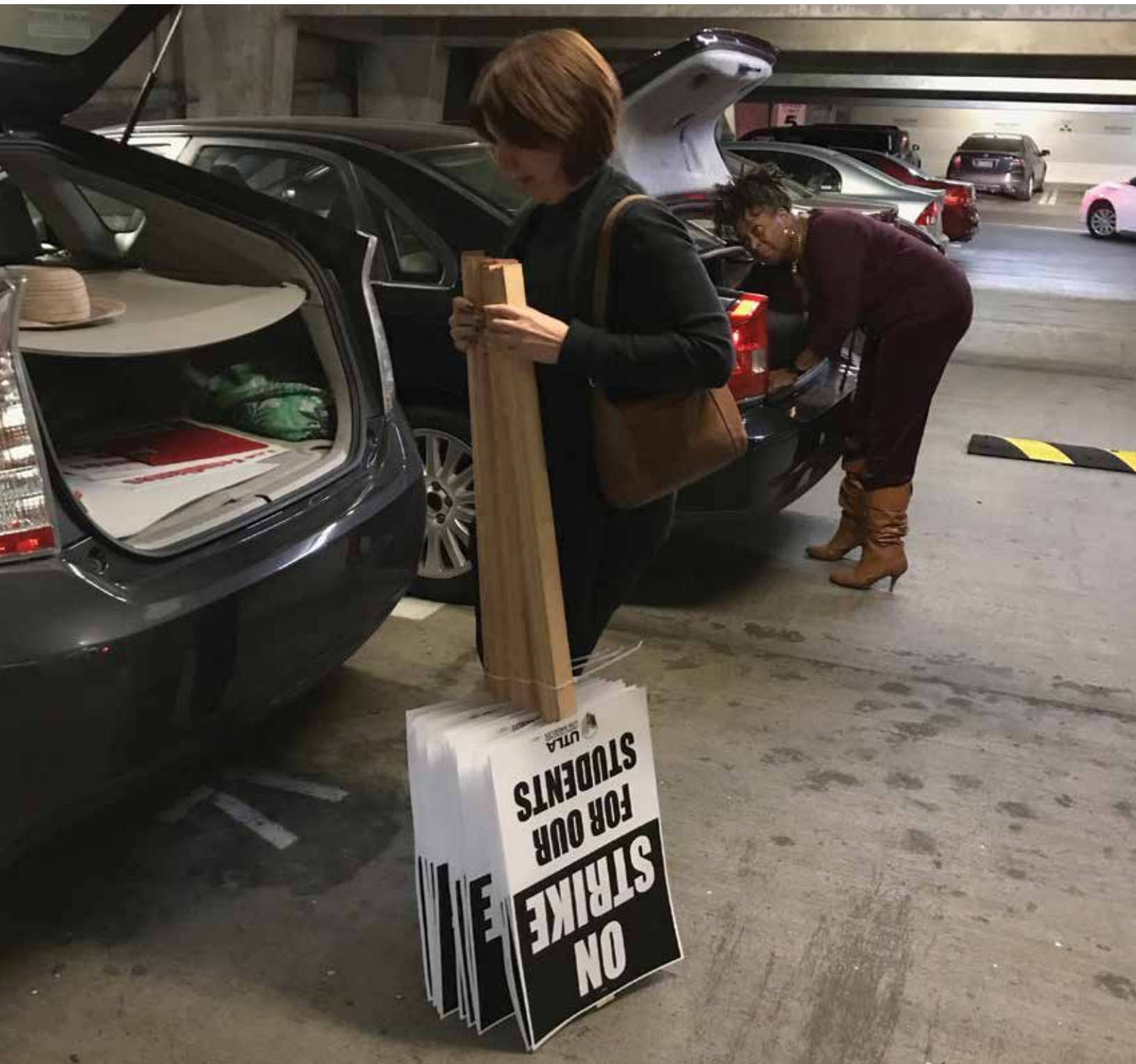
WHAT WAS WON	
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS	<p>Establishes a Community Schools Steering Committee to determine a process to select 30 schools in high-needs areas to apply to begin the Community Schools transformation process. 20 schools will be selected for the 2019-2020 school year, and an additional 10 schools will join the list for the 2020-2021 school year. Designates funds totaling \$12 million towards the transformation process for these 30 schools. Protects these schools from reconstitution, new charter co-locations, or renewed charter co-locations.</p>
STUDENT SUPPORT STAFF	<p>A nurse in every school, every day by the start of the 2020-2021 school year.</p> <p>A teacher librarian in every secondary school, every day, by the start of the 2020-2021 school year.</p> <p>A guaranteed counselor-to-student ratio of 500:1 at every secondary school.</p> <p>Psychologists and psychological social workers will be key staff positions in new Community Schools.</p> <p>Guaranteed work space for all itinerant educators and health and human service professionals.</p>
CLASS SIZES	<p>Eliminates Section 1.5 of the union contract, which allowed an override of class size caps. Sets an immediate cap of 39 in English Language Arts (ELA) and math high school classes. Class size reductions every year starting in 2019-2020 and continuing.</p>
RANDOM SEARCHES	<p>Creates a pilot program to exempt schools from random searches and to provide additional non-police supports to schools. 14 schools have been selected to pilot this program in the 2019-2020 school year. An additional 14 schools will be selected for the 2020-2021 school year.</p> <p>(UPDATE: In June 2019, the LAUSD School Board voted to end random searches at all schools.)</p>
REDUCING TESTING	<p>Establishes a district/union committee, which will meet 5 times during the 2019-2020 school year to compile a list of all district assessments, their purpose, efficacy, length of time to administer, and costs. The committee will make recommendations to reduce the amount of district assessments by 50%.</p>
CHARTER SCHOOLS	<p>The LAUSD School Board agreed to vote on a resolution calling on the Governor to enact a moratorium on new charter schools and create a task force to study the impact of charter schools on public school districts.</p>

<p>CO-LOCATIONS</p>	<p>Requires early notification of schools threatened by co-location and provides more ability to protect space at co-located schools by creating a union co-location coordinator and requiring their input into the development of shared-use agreements.</p>
<p>PAY</p>	<p>6% salary increase with no health care or other contingencies.</p>
<p>INVESTMENT IN SCHOOLS</p>	<p>Commitment by the LAUSD School Board to support, along with the Mayor’s office and others, the November 2020 Schools and Communities First statewide ballot measure which would bring \$11 billion in new funds for public schools and services by closing the corporate loophole in Proposition 13. Commitment by the LAUSD school board and Mayor to support other local revenue-raising strategies as part of the “20 by 20” campaign.</p> <p>Commitment from the Governor to explore improving special education and health and human service funding mechanisms that have short-changed LAUSD historically.</p>
<p>SPECIAL EDUCATION</p>	<p>Creates district norms on special education caseloads; creates release time for teachers for testing; assurance that the district will provide real data on current caseloads; gives UTLA the right to bargain changes in instructional delivery programs.</p>
<p>GREEN SPACE</p>	<p>The district will create a Green Space Task Force that includes representatives from LAUSD, UTLA and the City of Los Angeles. The task force will develop a plan to increase green space at schools (prioritizing schools with the least available green space currently) by removing asphalt and unused portable bungalows, which have often been used as justifications to co-locate charters on district campuses.</p>
<p>IMMIGRANT STUDENT SUPPORT</p>	<p>The district will designate at least one attorney, and necessary support staff, to address immigrant-related concerns, and provide support to district personnel, students, and families by identifying and coordinating legal support from local organizations already doing this work. The district will create and publicize a district-wide hotline to support students and families facing immigration-related concerns.</p>
<p>ETHNIC STUDIES</p>	<p>Additional resources, support, and curriculum in order to successfully implement ethnic studies and culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy. Formation of a committee to explore expansion of ethnic studies resources throughout the district at all grade levels.</p>
<p>WORKING CONDITIONS</p>	<p>Important victories for educators in early education, adult education, and those who serve as substitute teachers.</p>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Many important documents and resource materials were developed throughout the ROSLA campaign. The following is an abbreviated list of documents that characterizes the work of the coalition and exemplifies how it positioned itself for success.

- ***A Vision to Support Every Student*** — ROSLA platform statement. December 2016. Available at <http://laanedev.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Reclaim-Our-Schools-LA-A-Vision-to-Support-Every-Student-December-2016.pdf>
- ***LAUSD Community Schools Resolution*** — passed by the LAUSD School Board in June 2017. Available at <http://laschoolboard.org/sites/default/files/06-13-17RegBdRes098CommunitySchoolsFinal6-14-17.pdf>
- ***Give Kids a Chance: Stop Starving Our Public Schools*** — ROSLA LA / We Are Public Schools / UTLA. January 2019. Available at <https://laane.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Give-Kids-a-Chance-Stop-Starving-Our-Public-Schols.pdf>
- ***UTLA Tentative Agreement in Full — Including Memoranda of Understanding*** — UTLA. January 22, 2019. Available at https://www.utla.net/sites/default/files/UTLA-LAUSD%202019-2022%20Tentative%20AgreementFINALV4012219_0.pdf
- ***OUR CONTRACT AGREEMENT: What we won & how it builds our future*** — United Teachers Los Angeles. January, 2019. Available at <https://www.utla.net/sites/default/files/What%20We%20Won%20Side-by-Side%20032919.pdf>
- ***LAUSD Resolution calling for State to study impact of charter schools on traditional districts, and requesting a moratorium until results are evaluated*** — January 29, 2019. Available at <http://boardresolutions.lausd.net/fmi/iwp/cgi?-db=Resolutions&-loadframes>





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