



For Immediate Release
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Parents and Stakeholders Claim LBUSD Violates State Law, Depriving High Needs Students Some \$40 Million in Services for the 2016-17 School Year

Long Beach, CA – The Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD) is violating state law by misallocating more than \$40 million of state education funding that is specifically designed to increase or improve services for low-income students, English language learners and foster youth, according to an administrative complaint filed today by Public Advocates, Inc. on behalf of Children's Defense Fund-California (CDF-CA), Latinos in Action and parents of low-income and English learner students.

The complaint asserts that LBUSD is not meeting the promise of equity in the new school funding law known as Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) by failing to increase and improve services for the high-need students who generate additional funds for the district called "supplemental and concentration" grants. Instead, the district has approved allocations for everyday basic instructional services that do not specially address the neediest populations, including \$17 million in Common Core instructional materials, \$2.5 million for technology infrastructure, and \$21.4 million in teacher and staff salary increases and benefits districtwide.

"This bothers me, and makes me very angry," said Guadalupe Luna, who currently has three children in the district. "If this money was meant to help high need students, why is it being used this way? This is illegal and needs to be brought to public light. It's upsetting that in a country like ours injustices like these happen and no one stops them when the law says this is the district's responsibility. Where is the help?"

Luna is one of two parents named as complainants in this claim against the district. Marina Roman Sanchez, the other parent complainant and member of Latinos in Action, has two sons in the district and is equally appalled by the district's actions or lack thereof as it relates to high needs students. For years, she has fought the district to protect the rights of her children and get them the services they are due and deserve.

"Confronting the district so that my sons can have appropriate services has been so stressful," Sanchez said. "I have had to prove that my children deserve the services they need. I am tired."

In total, the complaint asserts that the district is spending some \$40 million out of \$108 million of this special funding without justifying how these significant investments are meeting the needs of low-income, English language learners and foster youth. This significant spending grows to a total of \$124 million in three years. A complaint was also filed against the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) for approving this unlawful spending in LBUSD's 2016-17 Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP).

"We know what high needs students can and do achieve when they have the targeted academic and social-emotional supports they need from administrators, teachers and staff at their schools," said Angelica Salazar, senior policy associate for CDF-CA. "Districts will give these students more of a chance by spending equity funds on programs and services they often need, such as intensive academic enrichment, assistance with transportation to and from school, support from mental health professionals, and coaching for teachers on how to eliminate implicit racial bias that impacts academics and school climate."

The complaint urges the district to amend its 2016-17 LCAP to demonstrate that it is meeting its "proportional spending obligation" to increase and improve services for high needs students and reallocate unjustified expenditures of as much as \$40 million to support critical services and comply with the equity promise of LCFF.

"Over the past two years, the district has received multiple letters warning that it is not meeting its obligations to equitably serve high needs students. Unfortunately, the district has not meaningfully responded," Angelica Jongco, Public Advocates senior staff attorney explained. "While we support fair pay for all staff, across-the-board salary and benefits increases like these should be paid out of the district's base funding for all students—not the limited pool of funds intended to change outcomes for students with greatest need."

For a copy of the complaint against LBUSD, click [here](#).

For a copy of the complaint against LACOE, click [here](#).

For background information on LCFF, click [here](#).

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Public Advocates Inc. is a nonprofit law firm and advocacy organization that challenges the systemic causes of poverty and racial discrimination by strengthening community voices in public policy and achieving tangible legal victories advancing education, housing, transportation equity, and climate justice. www.publicadvocates.org

Children's Defense Fund-California (CDF-CA) is a state office of the Children's Defense Fund, a national child advocacy organization that has worked relentlessly for over 40 years to ensure a level playing field for all children. CDF-CA champions policies and programs that lift children out of poverty, ensure all children have access to health coverage and care and a quality education, and invest in our justice-involved youth. www.cdfca.org

Latinos in Action is a community-based organization whose mission is to fortify and enrich the lives of families, individuals, seniors and youth.