

# UTLA INITIAL PROPOSALS FOR 2010-2011

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## Introduction

This initial proposal of United Teachers Los Angeles (“UTLA”) addresses three priority areas for UTLA and its members, all of which research has confirmed as essential to the improvement of teaching and learning.

### **I. Authentic School Change**

Significant and meaningful support must be given to schools with high teacher turnover to ensure that all students receive the highest quality instruction from a blend of new and veteran educators. In addition, alternatives to the competitive Public School Choice program must be developed based on innovation, inclusiveness, and stakeholder collaboration. Finally, clear and binding procedures applied to UTLA members’ participation in iDesign schools should be established, comparable to those provided by the MOUs establishing Pilot and ESBMM schools.

We also point out and emphasize that UTLA governance bodies have now approved a fair and effective Teacher Support and Evaluation policy based on targeted support for all teachers at various stages of their careers. This will guide the UTLA bargaining team in the planned discussions and negotiations with the District. We attach a copy of that policy for your information.

### **II. Restoring Instructional Days and Maintenance of Class Size**

UTLA is eager to commence negotiations to avoid class size increases, save classroom and support service positions, and reduce the impact of budget cuts on teaching and learning by utilizing new federal and state revenue.

### **III. Increased Classroom Teacher Autonomy**

For students to develop the problem solving and critical thinking skills so necessary for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, teachers must have greater academic freedom and responsibility, especially in the area of professional development, curriculum design, and assessments. UTLA therefore seeks the reduction or elimination of mandated scripted programs, pacing plans, periodic assessments, and other centrally assigned mandates, in favor of collaboratively and locally developed processes.

## UTLA’S INITIAL PROPOSALS

**1. New Revenue/Compensation:** Negotiate impacts of increased State and Federal funds to among other things:

- Reduce furlough days and restore instructional days
- Insure that there will be no class-size increases, including Special Education
- No second semester re-norming
- Explore Early Retirement Incentives for UTLA bargaining unit members

## 2. Re-open Three Articles

### A. School Reform

- i. Reverse high teacher turnover at hard to staff schools
  - Providing every site with collaborative administrators who are master teachers and innovators
  - Creating opportunities for educators to design and implement school policies, procedures and curriculum
  - Targeting professional development to best address the needs of staff in these challenging environments
  - Establishing effective educator assignment practices that balance staff experience levels.
  - Examining recruitment and hiring practices, including possible financial incentives
  - Providing educators and staff with the increased resources they need to help students succeed, including budget flexibility
  - Establishing and maintaining safe, orderly and clean schools
- ii. Develop alternatives to current Public School Choice program
- iii. Binding procedures for i-design process

### B. Increase Classroom Teacher Autonomy

- i. Amend Article XXV: Develop programs for greater academic freedom and responsibility and reduced impacts of instructional mandates. Rationale: Greater accountability sought in developing skills for evaluation must offer guarantees of academic freedoms to the curriculum assigned. Included are mandated scripted programs, pacing plans, lesson plans, and assessment measures and tools.
- ii. Reduce non-instructional duties and paperwork obligations

### C. Professional Development

- i. Greater bargaining unit member input into design and implementation of professional development programs. All discretionary PD should be collaboratively designed and implemented.
- ii. Develop improved educator support mechanisms re: classroom management skills (fully implement The School-wide Positive Behavior Support Discipline Plan)

## **Policy Statement**

*Passed by House of Representatives on November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2010*

### **Supporting Better Teaching and Learning:**

**Creating a System to Improve Teacher Evaluation, Teacher Effectiveness, and Student Learning**

A quality teacher effectiveness plan supports improved teaching so that students will learn as much as possible. Improving instruction will require changing our current Stull Evaluation process and making systemic reforms to support teachers throughout their careers. We need to transform the current system, but we also need to take care to ensure that we do not replace it with an even less effective system. We need a plan that is founded upon our best knowledge of how adults and children learn and grow.

An Improved Teacher Effectiveness System must:

1. Focus on improving teaching and learning as its primary goal.
2. Systematically encourage collaboration among teachers.
3. Involve teachers in the development, implementation, and oversight of the system, in order to ensure that the system reflects the realities of classroom learning.
4. Embed teacher evaluation in a broader reform agenda that addresses the needs of teachers throughout their careers (such as enriched teacher preparation and induction for beginning teachers, a strengthened PAR program for struggling teachers, and differentiated career paths for teacher-leaders), as well as the many factors outside of teachers' control that impact teaching and learning (e.g., school resources and poverty).
5. Provide for mutual accountability by giving teachers a meaningful role in evaluating principals and other support providers charged with helping teachers improve instruction.
6. Differentiate between Evaluation for Basic Competency and Evaluation for Better Teaching and Learning and base both on agreed upon standards of practice.
  - a. Evaluation for Basic Competency must be transparent, fair, free of personal bias and, when needed, should lead into a PAR program that either helps teachers improve or helps those unwilling or unable to meet basic competency to leave the profession.
  - b. Evaluation for Better Teaching and Learning must be built on trust, promote collaboration, and provide individualized options for professional growth such as peer evaluation, portfolio evaluation, and videotaped self-reflection.
7. Use data fairly and wisely. Standardized tests are not designed for the purpose of evaluating individual teachers, the value-added measures derived from them are unreliable, and an over-reliance on them leads to serious and harmful unintended consequences such as narrowing of the curriculum, teaching to the test, and diminished professional collaboration. Therefore, standardized test scores should play no part in high stakes decisions such as dismissal or entry into PAR. Teachers will use multiple forms of data when setting goals to improve teaching and learning.
8. Be integrated with a system-wide program of continuous professional growth for all teachers – new teachers as well as veterans, struggling teachers as well as experts.
9. Provide high-quality training for teachers, administrators, and the community in order to ensure common understanding of the evaluation goals, metrics, and processes.
10. Be developed and implemented with a realistic timeline that will allow for true collaboration, quality training, and focused attention to all the important details, subject to a joint UTLA/AALA/LAUSD oversight body.