



11501 Atlantic Avenue, Lynwood, CA 90262

August 1, 2017

The Honorable Alex Johnson
President and Board of Directors
Los Angeles County Office of Education
9300 Imperial Highway
Downey, California 90242

Re: LTA Opposition to the Soliel Academy Charter School Petition

Dear Mr. President and Board Members:

The Lynwood Teachers Association (LTA), representing 720 highly qualified TK-12 and adult classroom educators, counselors, school psychologists urges the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) to uphold the Lynwood Unified School District's decision to deny the Soliel Academy Charter Petition based on the following key grounds:

1. No Plan for a Diverse Student Population or Support Staff

A diverse student population and workforce populate the Lynwood USD. The petition does not provide evidence of any commitment to achieving ethnic and racial diversity of its student population or its staff. There is no stated action plan designed to attract, hire, and retain a diverse workforce nor a description of the method to attract and enroll African-American, Asian/Pacific Islander, and other non-Hispanic students who reside in Lynwood.

2. Charter School Budget

When a public school district loses students to charter schools, it does not diminish the cost carried by the district to pay for utilities, maintenance, transportation, food service, and staff salaries and benefits. The Soliel Academy will create a parallel school system that duplicates services and costs that syphons vital resources from the Lynwood Unified School District.

3. No Record of Student Achievement

The petition does not provide evidence that the Soliel Academy Board members have advanced degrees in education, whether in educational administration, curriculum and instruction, assessment and evaluation, special education, or educational leadership. There is no evidence of any member with a highly qualified public educator designation, nor is there a record of accomplishment of excellent instruction and student achievement pursuant to expected student learning results in elementary education. However, they do have lawyers, a controller, a portfolio manager, and a leader of a private equity firm.

4. Qualifications of Charter Employees and Professional Development

The petition does not provide a description detailing credentialing nor procedures for determining well-qualified classroom educators who are prepared and ready to enter the classroom to teach Lynwood students with competence and confidence. Additionally, there is no evidence of a path for professional development or teacher training designed to improve classroom management, which is fundamental in the delivery of quality instruction for better student outcomes.

5. No Right to Bargain

The petition does not provide evidence of the explicit right to bargain for fair compensation, health and welfare benefits, working conditions in accordance with the Educational Employees Relations Act (EERA) enacted as Senate Bill 160 (Rodda) Chapter 961 (1975) as well as other enactments established by the California Education Code, to attract, support, and retain highly qualified classroom practitioners.

In the best interest of Lynwood students and for the reasons stated above, the Lynwood Teachers Association urges the Los Angeles County Office of Education to deny the Soliel Academy Charter School petition.

Respectfully submitted,

The Lynwood Teachers Association

Debbie Diaz, MA, President

LTA Executive Board

Lydia A. Hollie, JD/MAED, Vice President
Rose Witucki, BA, Secretary
Arthur Williams, MA, Treasurer

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