



Los Angeles Area
Chamber of Commerce

TUESDAY | August 29, 2006

THE BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE:

How to Build a Better LAUSD? By Consensus



Coming up at the Chamber

[View all upcoming events on our web calendar.](#)

WED | Sept. 6
Medal of Valor Luncheon
[more info](#)

THU | Sept. 7
Member Orientation
[more info](#)

THU | Sept. 7
New Member Reception
[more info](#)

FRI | Sept. 8
Health Care Committee Meeting
[more info](#)

MON | Sept. 11
Education & Workforce Development Committee Meeting
[more info](#)

TUE | Sept. 12
Mobility 21 Coalition Meeting
[more info](#)

TUE | Sept. 12
Referral Network
Grow Your Business
[more info](#)

WED | Sept. 13
Accenture Pancakes & Politics
Featuring L.A. City Controller Laura Chick
[more info](#)

The Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce is the voice of business in L.A. County. Founded in 1888, the Chamber promotes a prosperous economy and quality of life in the Los Angeles region. For more information, visit www.lachamber.org

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Two weeks ago, I discussed the [Chamber's position on AB 1381](#), the state legislation that would give Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa a role in governing the Los Angeles Unified School District. Yesterday the [Senate passed AB 1381](#) and a vote is scheduled in the Assembly today.

AB 1381 represents a great opportunity for the citizens of L.A. to reengage in a vigorous discussion on how to reform our schools to make sure our children receive the education and support desired.

The Chamber calls on Mayor Villaraigosa, the school board, and all key stakeholders to commit to specific roles and obligations that create a collective community commitment to excellence. We believe the public will support increased funding for schools in general and for teacher salaries in particular, but only if such a compact is established and significant progress is evident.

[The Boston Compact](#), a coalition of key institutional and civic parties, has played a critical role since its inception in fostering the reform of the Boston Public Schools. Launched first in 1982 (Boston Compact 1), its renewal in 1989 (Boston Compact 2) and 1993 (Boston Compact 3) provided the framework for a common educational reform agenda of all key parties. The results turned Boston from a troubled, low-performing district to a recognized leader among urban school districts and a focus of investment by city and state government, businesses and foundations.

Here are some goals that a possible L.A. compact could outline:

Students should seek and commit themselves to a strong education and attend school in this pursuit.

Parents need to be involved in their children's education at every level both at home and in the classroom.

Teachers and teacher unions must work with the superintendent in a creative, flexible and collaborative fashion, and support a constructive reinvention of the management rights for effective placement and assignment of teachers and principals in return for improved compensation and general working conditions.

The **school board** needs to work with Mayor Villaraigosa to select a strong superintendent and set high goals to hold him/her accountable, approve the budget, set policies, and work with the mayor to develop a new community compact that commits all stakeholders to excellence in education.

Mayor Villaraigosa must engage the community and build support for education and educational reform, initiate the joint use of city facilities and other resources with the district, engender other elected leaders to become involved in K-12 education and leverage state and federal resources to better support LAUSD.

The **higher education community** should collaborate with K-12 schools to prepare, recruit and place the best teachers and administrative leaders in our schools.

And the **business community** needs to articulate workplace needs and career opportunities and to connect schools and students to internships, job shadowing and summer jobs that support academic and career education.

Areas outside of the city of L.A. should have the option of remaining attached to the LAUSD school system and its governance model; forming a separate district; or attaching to another district.

As I noted last week, the problems in our K-12 education system will not be solved overnight, but dramatic action must begin immediately.

And that's *The Business Perspective*.

Gary L. Toebben
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The Business Perspective is a weekly opinion piece by Gary Toebben, President & CEO of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, produced with the input of Senior Policy Advisor Rusty Hammer.

by
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L.A. Business THIS WEEK

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