



**Contact:**

Susan Swigart, *Senior Director, Media Relations*  
(916) 669-3242

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**SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION RESPONDS TO  
LOS ANGELES MAYOR'S TAKEOVER PLAN**

(**West Sacramento, CA**) – California School Boards Association Executive Director Scott P. Plotkin issued the following statement in response to Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa's strategy to take over the Los Angeles Unified School District:

“Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa's proposal to reform the Los Angeles Unified School District by forming a council of mayors, which by design gives him 80 percent of the power, goes against the principle of representative government by a locally elected governing board.

While the mayor promotes his strategy as an effort to preserve the voters' voice in an elected board, it remains a mayoral takeover, plain and simple. The plan would strip the school board of its constitutional authority to oversee the district's \$7 billion annual budget, set policies for the local schools, and hire and fire the superintendent.

Even if the mayor's proposal moves forward, it is guaranteed to be tied up in the court system as the constitutional issues are resolved. Instead of spending the next two to four years attacking the school district and playing politics, we call upon the mayor to work with the LAUSD board and staff to improve teaching and learning.

CSBA supports mayoral collaboration with school boards, and in fact encourages governance teams across the state to foster and maintain positive working relationships with their city and county officials. Our schools need civic and government leaders, like Mayor Villaraigosa, to focus on municipal issues such as crime, health care and affordable housing so that our schoolchildren can thrive in their environments.

Schools in California are held accountable by the statewide accountability system. In fact, California's school accountability system is one of the strictest in the nation. Is there room for improvement in LAUSD? As with anything, there is always room for improvement, but it is a fact that the district has achieved academic progress under the leadership and guidance of its locally elected school board and superintendent. It has put in place a long-term strategic plan for continuous improvement to educate all students, including raising test scores, targeting intervention and resources to the most challenged schools, and employing fully credentialed or “highly qualified” teachers.

There is still much work to be done, but the mayor's plan would surely derail this progress.”

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