

Bulletin

L.A. School Board Decided in Secret, by 4-3 Margin, in April, to Hire Profiteer Austin Beutner; Disgraced Member Rodríguez Cast the Pivotal Vote

Largest Club in L.A. County Calls Action by Board Majority “Corrupt and Contemptuous of Kids, Taxpayers, and Democratic Values”

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In maneuvers eerily similar to the Trump Administration, a majority of the Board of Education of the public schools of Los Angeles, the second largest public education system in the country, **voted in secret nearly 2 weeks ago to hire a corporate profiteer, Austin Beutner**, with no experience in public schools or education governance.

Who had the **decisive voice in that vote? Ref Rodriguez**, the disgraced school board member, now awaiting trial on 3 felony counts and two dozen other criminal charges, who hails from District 5, representing Eastside and Northeast L.A., including Silver Lake and Los Feliz, and cities southeast of Downtown L.A.

“Shame on the majority of this school board,” said EAPD President Hans Johnson, a resident of District 5. **“That concept does not appear entirely lost on them, since they went to great lengths to conceal their actions from constituents and the public.”**

CORRUPTION STINKS



SO TELL OUR SCHOOL BOARD

Now the parents, students, and community stakeholders of L.A. learn that the board majority chose to conduct public business in secret. Perhaps this wrong decision was rooted in concern that shunning openness, selecting a candidate with zero experience in public education, and allowing an indicted board member under a cloud for criminal campaign violations and a March arrest for public drunkenness during work hours to cast the pivotal vote might smell so bad to public that the resulting outcry might have blown their cover, resisted the obstruction, and ultimately derailed approval of their artful inside deal.

“This maneuver by the board majority is corrupt and contemptuous of kids, taxpayers, and democratic values.

“Those values are under siege from the White House, from Trump appointees like Education Secretary Betsy DeVos, and, it is abundantly clear, from several promoters of for-profit charter schools, including Ref Rodriguez and his enablers on this school board. Kids, parents, grandparents, classroom teachers, school workers, retirees, former school board members like the five who addressed the board on Tuesday, community stakeholders, and grassroots Democrats: We ALL deserve so much better. And we will not rest until we achieve it, with our voices and with our votes.”

**Los Angeles Unified School District
Board of Education**



**Scott M. Schmerelson
Board Member, District 3**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**STATEMENT FROM BOARD MEMBER SCOTT SCHMERELSON
REGARDING THE SELECTION OF LAUSD SUPERINTENDENT**

On April 20, by the slimmest majority possible, four members of the LAUSD Board of Education (Garcia, Melvoin, Vladovic, Rodriguez) voted to authorize negotiations for an employment contract with Mr. Austin Beutner as the General Superintendent of the District. I did not vote for Mr. Beutner.

Today, a three-year contract for Mr. Beutner was considered for action. In good conscience, as an elected trustee for this District and a retired educator who served the children of LAUSD for over three decades, I again voted "no" on the selection of Mr. Beutner.

I do not believe that Austin Beutner, who has absolutely no experience in the field of public education, is qualified to manage the largest school district in the nation with an elected Board. He has never taught in a public school, never managed a public school, has no instructional background, and has never worked for a school district of any size. The Board majority refused to exercise due diligence regarding Mr. Beutner's lengthy and tangled business affairs including the disputed delivery of services and breach of a \$3 million contract between LAUSD and Vision to Learn, an organization that he founded and continues to lead.

I apologize to the dedicated parents and constituents who have been advocating for a voice in the superintendent selection process. I am especially addressing those who have been expressing their frustration with the lack of transparency during the last ten days, when every member of the Board knew that a decision had already been made while pretending to be maintaining an open mind toward all the candidates who were deemed finalists. These ten days have been extremely painful for me personally.

It's easy to talk about putting kids first. But, I believe that the Board majority has forced a process and made a decision that clearly overlooks the well-being of our kids in favor of a political agenda that I will continue to resist as the duly elected Board Member representing BD 3.

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East Area Progressive Democrats (EAPD) is the largest Democratic club in Los Angeles County, with more than 850 members. Covering the neighborhoods of Eastside and Northeast L.A. and adjoining communities of Glendale, Pasadena, and unincorporated East L.A., EAPD is dedicated to healthcare for all, affordable housing, human rights, environmental protection, public education, strong civic participation, and public integrity.

Over the past 2 years, EAPD has registered more than 2,500 Angelenos to vote. Our work led to passage of the statewide ban on throwaway plastic bags in 2014 and to stopping 2 measures on the 2016 ballot to undermine and undo the first-in-the-nation law that reduces costly blight in our communities and leads the shift to reusable products and green jobs for Californians. Members of EAPD helped detect and call

out abuses of campaign finance laws by District 5 school board member Ref Rodriguez in 2015, and we continue to call for his removal from the board of our public school district.



There's a U in Public Accountability! And US in Community Strength. Join EAPD to win change.

EAPD organizes in our communities including voter registration, advocates to win on policy through coalition, earns media coverage to inform and activate voters, and elects Democrats including women, Latinas/os, LGBT people, and veterans to serve in the party structure to build a vibrant and responsive Democratic Party. Please join the club [HERE](#).

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