

For Immediate Release

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Media Contact:

Darcy Pollan
Peace Over Violence
(213) 955-9090
darcy@peaceoverviolence.org



Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education Passes a Resolution to Promote Healthy Relationships and Prevent Teen Dating Violence

June 14, 2011 - The Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education passed a teen dating and sexual violence prevention resolution that would make the District a leader in responding to and prevention adolescent relationship abuse. The resolution provides for district coordination of teen dating violence intervention and prevention strategies at all LAUSD schools.

Patricia Giggans, Executive Director at Peace Over Violence, remarked: "We commend the Board of Education for recognizing the importance of building healthy relationship skills with our teens and children. With this resolution, LAUSD yet again becomes a champion for ending violence in our relationships, families and communities."

Steve Zimmer, Board member for District 4, sponsored the resolution. Mr. Zimmer is a 16-year veteran teacher and community activist. He has been working on issues of teen dating and sexual violence for years at John Marshall High School, and now in his capacity as a board member.

The resolution contains provisions for District coordination of teen dating and sexual violence response and education, professional development topics for school employees, prevention education for students, parent engagement and education strategies, notice of the policy to students and parents/caregivers, and data collection and reporting requirements. The resolution is based on the model teen dating violence prevention policy developed through *Start Strong: Building Healthy Teen Relationships*, an initiative funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation with Blue Shield of California Foundation to target 11- to-14-year-olds and rally entire communities to promote healthy relationships as the way to prevent teen dating violence and abuse. Peace Over Violence is one of eleven *Start Strong* sites and helped to develop the model policy with other experts and stakeholders.

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Peace Over Violence is a social service agency dedicated to building healthy relationships, families, and communities free from sexual, domestic and interpersonal violence.

metro headquarters

1015 wilshire blvd, suite #200
los angeles, california 90017

213 . 955 . 9090 office
213 . 955 . 9093 fax
866 . 947 . 8684 video
866 . 947 . 9907 video

peaceoverviolence.org
info@peaceoverviolence.org



“The passage of this resolution is tribute to the paradigm shift that is occurring in Los Angeles, California and the nation. Promoting healthy relationships and responding to teen dating violence is not an option—it is a necessity for creating safe schools and positive school climates.” Emily Austin, Director of Policy, Peace Over Violence, said.

The resolution is the result of a dedicated partnership between LAUSD, Peace Over Violence, violence prevention organizations, local school teachers, counselors, and administrators, and youth leaders. In the following months, LAUSD will develop an implementation strategy in partnership with administrators, community organizations, law enforcement, and other key stakeholders.

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