

Greetings, my name is Johnathan Williams and I am running for LAUSD, School Board, in District 1 because I believe that all children can learn and deserve an opportunity to live well and prosper as I have.

Like many children in the LAUSD School district, particularly in District 1, I was raised in a single parent home in the inner-city. However, a great public education was for me-and I believe still is for so many-the tool to overcome poverty and access opportunity.

The value of education was instilled by my mother, who made our academic achievement a priority for my siblings and me. As a result her support for us, my siblings and I were among the first in our family to graduate prepared for college. Our public education system enabled us to move up in our society. One example is my brother who had an interest in helping people, so he pursued a career in medicine and is now a successful family medical doctor. Every child in this District deserves the same opportunity to dream and achieve.

District 1 is very diverse, including working and middle class families. We need a public school system that responds to the community's needs. We can have one of the greatest education systems in the nation, but we have to roll up our sleeves and go to work.

After graduating from UCLA and briefly going into banking, I made a conscious choice to give children the same opportunity that I enjoyed. I began teaching in an LAUSD school located in the Watts section of the city. There I facilitated and witnessed learning that some think impossible for the inner-city children I served. And though there were classrooms where rigorous activities were taking place, they were not systemic. Our kids and teachers need systems of support for that magic of teaching and learning to happen in a way that inspires their curiosities, so that they wake up everyday excited to come to school.

So in order to establish this ideal learning environment, teachers and parents joined me in starting our very own public school, called The Accelerated School. A school where parents can leave their children -pre-school through high school-in the care of talented professionals. A school where teachers are provided the freedom and resources, to graduate students prepared for the work force and college.

Today I am proud to say that we now have children from South Los Angeles attending CSU, UC, USC, and Yale- and I believe that ALL kids deserve this opportunity.

If you want your school, to be a place of opportunity, join me by voting on March 6. I bring more than 20 years of experience in the classroom, and on the State Board of Education. I will bring that same commitment to innovation and success to the entire district.