



Los Angeles Unified School District

333 S. Beaudry Avenue, 24th Floor
Los Angeles, California 90017
Phone: (213) 241-7000

Andrés E. Chait
Acting Superintendent

Board of Education

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April 30, 2026

The Honorable Marqueece Harris-Dawson
Rules and Elections Committee, Members
Los Angeles City Hall
200 N. Spring Street, Room 340
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: SUPPORT FOR LOWERING THE AGE TO 16 FOR LAUSD AND MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Dear Chair Harris-Dawson and Committee Members:

As the Rules and Elections Committee considers the City Charter Reform Commission's recommendations, I write on behalf of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) to express our District's and Board of Education's strong support for the proposed charter amendment that would allow 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in LAUSD and municipal elections. Expanding opportunities for youth civic participation remains a shared priority, and this proposal represents a meaningful step toward strengthening engagement among young people across the City of Los Angeles.

LAUSD Student Board Member

LAUSD has long recognized the value of elevating student voices in decision-making. In 2015, the District established the Student Board Member position, following a student-led petition that called for greater youth representation in governance. Each year, a student elected by their peers serves on the Board of Education and works closely with Board Members, the Superintendent, and District leadership to represent the perspectives of students across Los Angeles. The Student Board Member attends Board meetings, engages directly with students and stakeholders, and helps inform discussions on policies that affect young people throughout the District. This role demonstrates that students are capable of meaningfully contributing to civic processes and public decision-making. In many ways, the success of the Student Board Member position reflects what expanded civic participation could look like more broadly, empowering young people to engage thoughtfully with the policies that shape their schools and communities.

Support for Lowering the Voting Age to 16 in Municipal and LAUSD Elections

Lowering the voting age for local elections would provide students with a meaningful opportunity to participate in the democratic process while they are still actively engaged in their education and civic learning. LAUSD serves more than half a million students across the District, and our schools

already prioritize civic education through coursework, student government, and community engagement programs. Allowing 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in local elections aligns with these efforts by giving students the opportunity to apply what they learn in the classroom to real world civic participation.

Additionally, decisions made at a local level, including those affecting public education such as public safety, youth services, and transportation, all have a direct impact on students' daily lives. Providing young people with a voice in these elections helps ensure that the perspectives of those most affected by these policies are represented in the democratic process.

By adopting the proposed language under Section 408: Eligibility to Vote, the Commission would take an important step toward strengthening civic participation, fostering lifelong democratic engagement, and empowering the next generation of Angelenos.

Thank you for your leadership and thoughtful consideration of reforms that promote greater civic inclusion and participation across the City of Los Angeles. LAUSD looks forward to continuing to partner with the City to support policies that uplift and engage our students and communities.

If you or your staff have any questions or would like to discuss further, please contact Martha Alvarez, Chief of Legislative Affairs and Governmental Relations, at martha.alvarez1@lausd.net.

Sincerely,


Andrés E. Chait
Acting Superintendent