



**LOS ALTOS  
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

brighter minds make  
a world of difference

**BUSINESS SERVICES**

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September 22, 2010

Santa Clara County Civil Grand Jury  
Superior Court Building  
191 North First Street  
San Jose, CA 95113

Re: Los Altos School District

Enclosed is documentation you requested in your June 24 letter regarding **Looking at Policies Our Schools Use to Find and Place Employees.**

If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (650) 947-1164.

Sincerely,

Randall A. Kenyon  
Assistant Superintendent, Business Services

**FILED**

SEP 28 2010

DAVID H. YAMASAKI  
Chief Executive Officer/Clerk,  
Superior Court of CA County of Santa Clara  
BY D. ALDYCKI

## Looking at Policies Our Schools Use to Find and Place Employees

### Finding 1

Per the District's current CBAs, internal applicants are given priority over external applicants who may be better qualified for the job.

#### **LASD Response**

*The district disagrees with the finding. While internal applicants have the opportunity to apply for jobs ahead of external applicants, only well-qualified internal applicants actually benefit from this opportunity.*

### Recommendation 1

Each Board should revisit this subject in future CBA negotiations to ensure that competency is the determinant factor in the job candidate selection process.

#### **LASD Response**

*The district recognizes that competency is a determinant factor in the job candidate selection process, but it is not the only important factor. Other factors we consider include past work performance, the ability to work well with others, demonstration of a strong work ethic, and the ability to acquire new skills.*

### Finding 2

The PAUSD utilizes a process that requires teacher job applicants to teach demonstration lessons which are subsequently scored by a qualified review team. The scores are utilized as significant factors in hiring decisions.

#### **LASD Response**

*While we are not familiar with the PAUSD hiring process, we believe we have a process in place that results in attracting and hiring the very best qualified candidates.*

### Recommendation 2

All Districts should consider adopting interview practices like PAUSD which provide opportunities for applicants to demonstrate their teaching skills.

#### **LASD Response**

*The process in our district includes requiring applicants to demonstrate their teaching skills by delivering a demonstration lesson, thus we have already implemented this recommendation.*

### Finding 3

Twenty-two of the 32 Districts have policies covering the hiring of employee and Board member relatives.

#### **LASD Response**

*While we do not have knowledge of the hiring policies of other districts in our county, we have a policy in place in our district that covers the hiring of employee and board member relatives.*

### Recommendation 3

All Boards should formulate and implement policies covering the hiring of relatives, including the disclosure of any familial relationships to the Board, to avoid the appearance of bias or favoritism in the recruitment and job assignment processes.

#### **LASD Response**

*The district will review its current policies in light of this recommendation and implement any necessary changes prior to December 31, 2010.*

### Finding 4

Twenty-two of the 32 Districts do not permit employees to be placed in direct reporting relationships to their relatives. The following 10 Districts stated they do not have a written policy regarding the direct supervisory relationship of related employees. [See Report for list.]

#### **LASD Response**

*While we do not have knowledge of the policies and practices of other districts in our county, our district is not one of the 10 districts on the list.*

### Recommendation 4

The Boards of the Districts listed in Finding 4 should formulate and implement a policy prohibiting direct employee supervision of spouses and other relatives.

**LASD Response**

As stated above, Los Altos School District already has implemented this recommendation.

**Finding 5**

The following 18 Districts allow the Superintendent to override the policy of not permitting relatives to be placed in direct reporting relationships to current employees, on a case-by-case basis: [See Report for list.]

**LASD Response**

While we do not have knowledge of the policies and practices of other districts in our county, we recognize that our district is one of the 18 districts on the list and contend that we should not be on the list. We believe the Grand Jury has misinterpreted our policy.

**Recommendation 5**

Boards should adopt a policy of reviewing all Superintendent decisions that override the policy that pertains to the placement of related employees in direct reporting positions.

**LASD Response**

The district already has implemented this recommendation. The Grand Jury has misinterpreted our policy regarding Employment of Relatives. Our policy states the relatives can be in the same department, but may not be in a supervisor to employee relationship. [Policy is attached.]

**Finding 6**

Fourteen of the 32 Districts are aware of and/or document the number and names of related employees. The following Districts do not document this information. [See Report for list.]

**LASD Response**

While we do not have knowledge of the policies and practices of other districts in our county, our district is not one of the 14 districts on the list.

**Recommendation 6**

The Boards of the Districts listed in Finding 6 should implement a policy of identifying familial relationships and tracking such data.

**LASD Response**

As stated above, Los Altos School District already has implemented this recommendation.

**Finding 7**

Only Los Gatos-Saratoga Joint Union and the Palo Alto Unified Districts responded that they ask about familial relationships on their job applications.

**LASD Response**

While we do not have knowledge of the policies and practices of other districts in our county, we acknowledge that our district does not ask about familial relationships on our job applications.

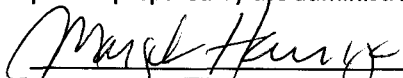
**Recommendation 7**

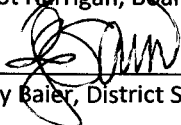
All Boards should implement measures to identify familial relationships during the hiring process.

**LASD Response**

The district agrees with this recommendation and, to the extent permitted by law, intends to implement the recommendation prior to December 31, 2010.

Responses prepared by the administration and governing board of Los Altos School District.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Margot Harrigan, Board President

  
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Jeffrey Baier, District Superintendent

09.21.10  
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(Date)