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May 2, 2021

Tanya Ortiz Franklin
LAUSD Board Member, District 7
Tanya.Franklin@lausd.net
via email

Subject: Concerns Regarding Charter School Opening in the Harbor Community

Dear Ms. Franklin,

The Central San Pedro Neighborhood Council (CeSPNC) has serious concerns about the opening of a Knowledge is Power for People (KIPP) Charter School at the former Alice Baxter site in San Pedro. Our concerns are based on the negative effects that charter schools have on already established school learning communities and the resources needed for the continued success of our non-charter public schools.

Educational research has found that in many cases charter schools do not perform better than similar non-charter public schools. In fact, in too many cases, charter schools adversely effect other surrounding non-charter public schools by siphoning off much needed funding, cherry picking more able students who tend to have higher test scores, and through the adoption of a curriculum that gives short shrift to Dual Language Programs, Gifted and Talented Programs (GATE), Magnet programs, English Language Learner Programs and special education programs. Further, the loss of public school monies to charters negatively impacts non-charter public schools enrollment and the retention of fully credentialed experienced teachers.

The CeSPNC strongly believes that our public schools exist to serve all students no matter their backgrounds or academic status, and that all public schools exist to bring out the full potential of every student within its doors.

The CeSPNC further supports our community's parents, teachers and community members in their effort to maintain and improve our non-charter public schools who are mandated by law to serve each and every student that they enroll.

The CeSPNC is troubled by the lack of transparency that seems to be taking place with respect to the establishment of the KIPP Charter. Our community deserves and demands to be involved in all issues surrounding the proposal to place this school in our community.

In closing, our Central Council requests that we be provided with specific and detailed information about how adding this charter school will benefit our community, and how it adds to existing academic programs that allow our students to reach their full potential. Further, we would like you to speak at one of our regularly scheduled Board meetings (third Tuesday of each month), and to provide a timely response (one or two weeks?) to our letter.

Sincerely,

Louis P. Caravella
President