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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

May 23, 2006

#05/06-240

LAUSD BOARD OF EDUCATION APPROVES INCENTIVES TO RECRUIT MATH, SCIENCE AND SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

Landmark Initiative Helps Close Student Achievement Gap

(LOS ANGELES) -- The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Board of Education today approved a n incentive program to recruit and retain highly qualified math, science and special education teachers for some of the District's neediest students. Qualified teachers could receive incentives and reimbursements of up to \$15,000 to teach at low-performing schools as part of a landmark agreement with United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA), which represents approximately 48,000 teachers and health and human services employees in LAUSD.

"Having a high-quality teacher at the head of every classroom is the surest key to improving student achievement and narrowing the achievement gap," said Board President Marlene Canter. "This agreement will help draw the best teachers to the most challenging settings -- where their skills and experience are most needed."

A combination of state and district funds will be used to fund the Teacher Recruitment and Student Support initiative that places qualified teachers in traditionally hard-to-staff schools. The District will pay incentives to ensure that fully credentialed math, science and special education teachers are placed -- and stay -- at Academic Performance Index (API) decile 1, 2 and 3 schools identified as low-performing or "program improvement" schools under the federal *No Child Left Behind Act*.

"We're putting qualified teachers in the classrooms where they're most needed," said LAUSD Superintendent of Schools Roy Romer. "This is an investment in the future of our children and this city."

(more)

Like most urban school districts across the country, LAUSD faces critical challenges in recruiting math, science and special education teachers. A combination of state and federal mandates mean that LAUSD faces even more difficulties in recruiting and keeping teachers in these fields.

“UTLA and the District don’t always agree, but we have agreed to work together to do what’s right for our kids --- and this program is right for our kids,” said UTLA President A.J. Duffy.

The incentive program begins July 1, 2006 and runs through the 2008-09 school year. Four types of incentives will be offered to qualified teachers.

1. A one-time \$5,000 recruitment incentive paid to newly-assigned (including new hires and transfers) fully credentialed math, science and special education teachers at low-performing schools
2. A one-time \$5,000 retention incentive paid to fully credentialed math, science and special education teachers who remain at these schools for three years through the 2008-09 school year
3. Up to \$5,000 reimbursement for educational expenses paid to these teachers to earn master’s degrees and to encourage credentialed teachers in non-shortage fields to become credentialed in math, science and special education
4. One-time achievement grants, based on \$20 per student, will be awarded to schools that meet their federal improvement goals for two consecutive years. Expenditure of these grants will be determined by the school’s leadership council that includes teachers, parents and students

In addition to these incentives, a \$1,000 recruitment incentive and an annual stipend of \$1,000 will be paid to fully credentialed special education teachers with English Learner certification serving at any District school.

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