LOS ANGELES – At its April 12, 2016 regular board meeting, the Los Angeles Unified School District’s Board of Education unanimously approved a resolution brought by Board Member Mónica Ratliff and co-sponsored by Board Members Dr. Ref Rodriguez and Dr. Richard Vladovic, that calls for the superintendent to immediately allocate the necessary resources for the District to process new magnet school applications in a timely manner and to assist interested schools with the application process.

Magnet programs are court-ordered voluntary integration opportunities available to L.A. Unified students in grades K-12. Currently, there are 210 magnet programs serving over 67,000 students. The academic innovation and success of magnet programs have made them attractive to students and parents seeking an alternative educational program. As a result, many popular magnet schools have long waiting lists of students hoping to be admitted and many schools are interested in opening magnet programs.

“Recently, one of the schools in my district, Haddon STEAM Academy in Pacoima, expressed strong interest in opening a magnet program. The principal, teachers, and parents were very excited about the possibility,” said Board Member Ratliff. “I was disheartened to learn, however, that due to a backlog of applications, District staff felt they did not have the resources to provide assistance to Haddon with their application. I authored this resolution to encourage the Superintendent to allocate the necessary resources to ensure that schools interested in opening a magnet program receive the appropriate consideration. We should be supporting our school communities when they want to open a magnet program.”

“I am proud to lend my support to this resolution,” said Board Member Dr. Vladovic. “We know from experience and by data that our magnet programs are a big success, and any steps we can take to reduce the magnet program waiting lists and make better use of space available at already approved magnet sites will be all-around beneficial for our students, our communities, and our district.”
“This resolution affirms a commitment to maintain and develop a portfolio of innovative District programs that attract and serve all students and allow our families to choose successful academic programs in which our most vulnerable students thrive,” Dr. Rodriguez said. “Magnet programs, for example, have already proven effective in narrowing the opportunity gap our students face. Investment now is critical in supporting the success of our students both inside and outside of the classroom.”

Finally, Board Vice President Dr. George McKenna stated, “I am pleased to support the growth and expansion of magnet program offerings to give families additional choices for specialized education options for students.”

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