



an insider look at city hall

CITYWATCH EXTRA

Special Report

April 17, 2000

Volume 4 Issue 15

CityWatch Today-LA Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa wants to raise your trash fees 25 bucks a month. He wants your trip home from the office to run smoother and he wants to takeover the schools your children attend. And, he wants to discuss it all with you tomorrow evening at 5:30.

That's the date and time for this year's State of the City address. So, if \$25 more a month to tout your trash away, or improving LA's schools ... or not ... is important to you, hold off on the Dodger pre-game show, check out of Dr. Phil a few minutes early and check out what the Mayor has to say.

This CityWatch Special Report is a reminder, and a set up, for Tuesday's annual report on shape our city is in ... and the prospects, as he sees them ... for the future.

--Editor

Mayor's State of the City Address

Tuesday, April 18

5:30 p.m.

City Channel 35

Check TV logs for commercial channels

Parent-Teacher Coalition Press Conference

Monday, April 17

2 p.m.

3655 S Grand Ave

Los Angeles

State of the City Preview

Dueling Plans for LAUSD Overhaul Will Pit the Mayor Against Coalition

Villaraigosa: "Going to be an absolute war"

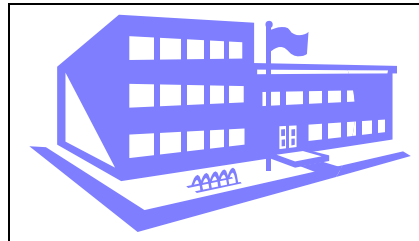
By Ken Draper

Mayor Villaraigosa will offer up his State of the City address tomorrow night and he will use it to fill in some of the blanks on his plan to takeover the LA Unified school system. In the meantime, a so-called Parent-Teacher Coalition, anchored by the teacher's union (UTLA), will make public its own overhaul plan this afternoon setting in motion a battle of visions and political control.

"It's going to be an absolute war here," the Mayor told the LA Times last week. "They're going to go nuts when (we) do it."



The Mayor's proposal includes strategy for the State legislature clearing the legal hurdles and plans to sell LAUSD's huge headquarters building and reducing the staff from 3,100 to 100, funding for teachers and an increase in Charter Schools.



Villaraigosa's commitment to reform the system was a major part of his campaign and tops his administration's agenda. He told the Education Trust Conference, earlier this month, that "Reforming our public schools is not only the central challenge facing cities like Los Angeles

... it's the civil rights issue of our time."

UTLA's Parent-Teacher coalition will break out what they are calling a "seismic shift" in LA Schools at a press conference at the Mercado La Paloma Building this afternoon. The Coalition's plan sets out five planks: 1) School-based councils giving parents and teachers more control; 2) Smaller classes with experienced teachers; 3) a curriculum that prepares all students for meaningful careers; 4) increased funding for all schools with "additional resources" for schools most in need; and, 5) support for the welfare and safety of students.



Organizations like One LA, ACORN, POWER AND Community Coalition are included in the opposition group. Though not a part of the Coalition, most of the elected school board has also come out against an LA takeover of LAUSD.

Education is not the only issue on the Mayor's front burner. His recent proposal for an increase in trash fees to pay for 1,000-plus LA police officers, his promise to improve the city's traffic and his upcoming 2006-07

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budget are expected to be covered in his State of the City address.

Whether he will respond to the sizable criticism of his participation in the recent immigration rallies and the union contract challenges he faces this year is not certain. Both the LAPD and LAFD unions have contracts coming due in June. A number of smaller unions ... in particular the Engineers and Architects ... are already out of contracts and are agitating. Four EAA officials were arrested in City Council recently when they interrupted a Villaraigosa presentation.

The Mayor may take a moment out of the more intense subject matter to plug his Day of Service, and other lesser matters. Neighborhood Councils will be watching to see if their name pops up anywhere during the part about needing neighborhoods to move LA forward. ■

A CALL TO ACTION FOR EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE IN LA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Teachers, principals and other school personnel are linking arms with parents, students and community organizations to transform the Los Angeles Unified School District. We firmly believe that a free public education is a civil right, and that all children are capable of the highest levels of academic achievement.

A quality education, however, will remain out of reach for most LAUSD students without an unwavering commitment by all stakeholders to *equity and excellence*. The District must work closely with the County of Los Angeles, The City of Los Angeles, and the 26 other cities it serves to instill a lifelong love of learning in our students and close the achievement gap.

Our vision of educational reform means:

Democratic governance and school-based decision making that involves parents and community stakeholders.

Experienced, skilled and dedicated teachers with smaller class sizes for all students.

A rigorous, diverse and engaging curriculum that prepares students for meaningful careers.

Adequate funding for all schools;

Equity in resources for those with the greatest needs.

Support for the health, welfare and safety of students, families and communities.

We hope our vision will renew the community's faith that reform is possible.

With the broad collaboration of all stakeholders, we are optimistic that LAUSD can become a remarkable new educational institution for the 21st Century.

PRESS CONFERENCE

MONDAY, APRIL 17 at 2:00 PM

3655 S. Grand Avenue, Los Angeles

(Meercado La Paloma Building / South of Jefferson and East of USC Campus)

Get your Advance Copy of the 3- page Call to Action!

Hear Speakers from the Coalition Partners!

ONE L.A. THE COMMUNITY COALITION
INNER CITY STRUGGLE

ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS FOR REFORM NOW (ACORN)

PEOPLE ORGANIZED FOR WESTSIDE RENEWAL (POWER)

THE CENTRAL AMERICAN RESOURCE CENTER (CARECEN)

UNITED TEACHERS OF LOS ANGELES (UTLA)

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