



Strike Guide for Mainstream Media

FRAMING OUR MESSAGE

- Beutner is trying to buy us off with a raise and make contract negotiations about one single issue, but we are fighting for the survival of public education in LA.
- Our contract demands will reinvest in our students and create a better future for them.

Lower Class Size: LAUSD students have among the highest class sizes in the state. Lower class sizes are the most effective improvement we can make to students' daily learning environment.

Less Testing and More Teaching: Too many mandated and unnecessary tests drain instructional time and crowd out the time to teach the kind of rich, complex lessons that make the subject matter come alive. LAUSD must allow educator discretion in testing.

Invest in Community Schools: LAUSD must invest in successful strategies that uplift neighborhood schools. The Community Schools model, with increased parent engagement, broadened curriculum, and wrap-around services, is proven to improve student outcomes.

Fair Wages Now: LA's high cost of living is causing a teacher shortage. LAUSD must offer teachers a fair wage increase.

Charter School Oversight: Unchecked expansion of the charter industry drains nearly \$600 million from neighborhood schools every year. LAUSD must protect neighborhood schools by regulating charter industry growth and charter school co-locations onto neighborhood schools.

Improve School Safety: LAUSD is denying our students the supports they need to succeed. LAUSD must provide them with more access to nurses, counselors, school psychologists, librarians, and more. Many schools don't have a full-time school nurse or librarian, and counselors and psychologists have unreasonably high caseloads.

Support Students and Families: LAUSD ignores real-life conditions that impact students. LAUSD must cultivate a learning environment for all students by establishing immigrant supports, ending racially biased "random" searches, and increasing green space and early education opportunities on campuses.

- The district can afford our demands—it has a record-breaking reserve of \$1.86 billion. The state requires that 1 percent of the district's budget be put into a reserve; the district has 26 percent of its money in reserve.
- The district serves over 90 percent students of color and over 85 percent low-income students. There is no far-off "rainy day" to save for—the rainy day is now, the conditions in schools are shameful, and our kids deserve the investment.
- The district's claims of a fiscal crisis are a smoke screen to justify their agenda to disinvest in public education in favor of the greater expansion of unregulated corporate charters that don't serve all students.
- District leaders also need to step up and fight tooth and nail for more state funding. There's no excuse for California—the richest state in the nation and the birthplace of Google and Silicon Valley—to rank 43rd in the country in per-pupil funding.

RESPONSES TO TOUGH QUESTIONS

The district says it can't afford your proposals because teacher healthcare and pension costs are bankrupting the district.

- You can't cut your way to a thriving school district. As we head into a nationwide teacher shortage, we're going to need to be able to recruit and retain educators in some of the most difficult places to teach, and that means a fair salary, reliable healthcare, and a chance at a decent retirement.
- It's also important to note that many of our contract demands wouldn't cost the district money or would even save money. Examples include cutting back on the overtesting of students, addressing charter co-location, and giving parents and educators more say in how money is spent at school sites.

You claim to be doing this for the students, but isn't the strike hurting them the most?

- The real threat is the years of disinvestment in our public schools. It's heart-breaking to go into my school every day and watch my students go without the tools once considered essential to a healthy, nurturing educational environment, like nurses and psychologists, a full-time librarian, and arts and music classes.

INTERVIEW BEST PRACTICES

- **Get familiar with talking points and key messages ahead of time.** Choose the contract demands that resonate most strongly with you and put the messages in your own words, with details from your personal experience.
- **Keep answers short and concise.** Don't get too nuanced, especially if it is a TV or radio interview—they will cut what you say down, and you want to make sure they get the right parts.
- **Keep your tone positive and friendly.** Reporters may ask some aggressive or confrontational questions, but don't get drawn into a debate. Remain calm, don't repeat their negative statements, and keep repeating your talking points.
- **You don't have to answer the question they asked.** Consider the question a "topic" and use that topic to talk about what you want to talk about. Always pivot back to the message. Some good pivot phrases: "What this all means is.... What's absolutely critical to remember is.... What people should be more concerned about is...."
- **It's okay not to answer every question.** Never guess or speculate and don't answer hypothetical questions.
- **When you speak to reporters, imagine you are talking directly to parents and the community.** What do you want them to know about our fight?
- **For taped interviews, if you stumble on an answer,** or if you believe you can respond shorter or with a better response, ask if you can answer the question again.