

AUTONOMOUS SCHOOLS

This Agreement replaces the LSSEI Agreement of 2011, and supersedes all other agreements pertaining to Expanded School-Based Management Model (ESBMM), Pilot, and Local Initiative School (LIS) school models.

- I. **DEFINITION OF AUTONOMOUS SCHOOLS:** Autonomous Schools are LAUSD Schools that waive certain elements of District policy. Some Autonomous Schools may elect to waive certain elements of the UTLA/LAUSD Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), but in the absence of such waivers, all Autonomous Schools maintain the full CBA. Schools with current ESBMM, Pilot and LIS plans will have the ability to convert their School Plans to Autonomous School Plans, ensuring that they are able to retain the waivers that they wish to keep. Any LAUSD school may opt to become an Autonomous School. The UTLA-represented staff at Autonomous Schools may vote to exit Autonomous School Status and become traditional LAUSD schools if they no longer wish to have Autonomous School status.

- II. **PROCEDURE FOR TRANSITION FROM ESBMM/LIS/PILOT MODEL TO AUTONOMOUS SCHOOL MODEL**
 - A. **TRANSITION PROCEDURE:** All existing ESBMM/LIS/Pilot schools shall become Autonomous Schools. The District and UTLA shall work collaboratively with each existing school to update their school plans accordingly during the 2020/2021 academic year. School staff will vote to approve the Autonomous School Plans as updated. The vote shall be conducted via secret ballot and require a 60% approval of all UTLA members working 50% or more of their contractual hours at the site. All updated Autonomous School Plans shall be in effect for 3 to 5 academic years (on a rolling schedule based on time since previous review). Schools wishing to return to traditional school status (exiting Autonomous School Status) shall go through the procedure outlined in Section IV for exiting Autonomous School status. Schools with existing Election to Work Agreements (EWAs) will continue to have an EWA during the transitional school year of 2020/2021. The revision and renewal process and timeline will remain the same. Schools with EWAs will adhere to the guidelines outlined in Section VII Election to Work Agreement.

 - B. **UPDATING SCHOOL PLANS:**
 1. **REGULARLY SCHEDULED PLAN UPDATE:** Each school plan shall be updated in three-year intervals.* The Autonomous and Community Schools Oversight Committee (ACSOC - see Section IV) shall work with each Autonomous School to guide them through the update process. At this time, the school is encouraged to review their school plan and amend/revise if necessary. Any revisions must be approved by the school staff and checked for compliance by the ACSOC. The plan approval vote shall be conducted via secret ballot and require the approval of 60% of all UTLA members working 50% or more of their contractual hours at the site.

**All schools transitioning from ESBMM/LIS/Pilot to Autonomous School Plans shall maintain their initial Plan Update for 3 to 5 academic years (on a rolling schedule based on time since previous review).*

2. **UPDATING THE PLAN BETWEEN ACSOC REVIEW PERIODS:** If a school wishes to amend/revise their school plan, or add/remove additional autonomies, the school shall work with the ACSOC to revise the plan. The school may choose to amend/revise their plan at any time, as long as the impact of these revisions would not be felt beyond the school itself (e.g., a school must abide by the January 15 deadline to amend the bell schedule so that busing schedules will not be impacted). As with any plan revision, the staff must vote to approve the revised plan. The plan approval vote shall be conducted via secret ballot and require the approval of 60% of all UTLA members working 50% or more of their contractual hours at the site.

III. PROCEDURE FOR TRADITIONAL LAUSD SCHOOLS BECOMING AUTONOMOUS SCHOOLS

A. APPLICATION FOR AUTONOMOUS SCHOOL STATUS

1. **REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL:** Each year, up to 10 traditional schools shall be granted Autonomous School status. The ACSOC shall lead the plan-writing process for schools who are interested in adopting an alternative school model. All non-autonomous schools interested in becoming autonomous must attend two mandatory workshops offered by the ACSOC at various dates and locations throughout the district. The dates and locations of the workshops will be published on the ACSOC website, the United Teacher newspaper, and the AALA newsletter. Participants in these workshops will explore the menu of autonomies offered (see Attachment A) and learn about the plan-writing process. Administrators, teachers, school staff, students, parents, and community members are welcome to attend the workshops, and UTLA members who attend can receive salary point credit hours for their participation. The ACSOC shall review all plans submitted, provide feedback to schools that submit plans, and determine whether autonomous school status will be granted.
2. **VOTING PROCEDURE**
 - a. Because Autonomous Schools select autonomies from a list (see Attachment A: Autonomy Options), a petition process must precede the vote. The petition will list each autonomy (with a brief description) that the plan-writing team has chosen. The staff shall review and circulate the petition during Faculty Meeting time. The petition must be signed by at least 50% +1 of the UTLA-represented staff working 50% or more of their contractual time at the school site. This petition process will ensure that the majority of the faculty approves of the autonomies that the plan-writing team selects before the team writes the plan.
 - b. UTLA members at the school site shall vote to approve the Autonomous School Plan written by the plan-writing team. Before voting, the staff shall have time to read the final school plan, and have time during a faculty meeting to discuss the school plan. The vote shall be conducted via secret ballot and requires 60% of members working 50% or more of their contractual hours at the site to approve transitioning to "Autonomous School" status. Voting shall be supervised by the UTLA Chapter Chair and the Principal (or designees thereof).

- c. The election determines whether the school is to become an Autonomous School. All autonomies selected shall be retained indefinitely, but at a minimum should be retained for 3 years in order to permit adequate time for experience and evaluation.
- d. If the faculty and principal jointly find that the autonomous model, or major elements of it, is counter-productive and clearly not performing as expected, the model or major elements of it may be rescinded earlier. All changes must be approved by the LSLC (or equivalent) and a staff vote. All amendments to the plan must be sent to the Autonomous Schools Oversight Committee (ACSOC, defined in Section V) on appropriate forms. However, Disagreement between staff and administration shall be mediated by the ACSOC.

B. STAFF SELECTION AT AUTONOMOUS SCHOOLS (applicable to new Autonomous Schools and schools that have transitioned from ESBMM/LIS/Pilot Status): Autonomous Schools, as well as schools that have Staff Selection/Mutual Consent SBM waivers, may select certificated staff working 50% or more of their contractual time by committee. Out-of-district applicants may be interviewed if the District is accepting applications for credential type needed. If a hiring freeze in the area of need is in effect, the school must select from the District pool. Schools must indicate the composition of their Staff Selection Committees in their School Plan. The Staff Selection Committee will be determined by the LSLC (or equivalent). An example of possible composition guidelines is as follows:

SELECTION OF UTLA-REPRESENTED STAFF:

- 4 UTLA-represented staff (2 selected for that purpose, plus the Chapter Chair and the appropriate department or grade level chair for the opening being filled);
- The Principal or designated administrator;
- 1 classified employee selected by the school's classified staff;
- 2 parents selected by the LSLC; and
- 1 student (usually the Student Body President, for Secondary Schools only)

SELECTION OF AALA-REPRESENTED STAFF:

- 4 UTLA-represented staff (including UTLA Chapter Chair or designee);
- The Local District Director overseeing the school;
- 1 classified employee selected by the school's classified staff;
- 2 parents selected by the LSLC; and
- 1 student (usually the Student Body President, for Secondary Schools only)

Schools that have no composition in place in their school plan must use the above composition. Decisions of the Staff Selection Committee, to become final, are subject to the approval of the Local District Superintendent; however, if the Local District Superintendent does not approve the decision of the Staff Selection Committee, he/she must provide a written rationale to the Committee. Administrator removals or reassignments remain within the authority of the Superintendent and District.

- C. **RETENTION OF EXISTING STAFF:** Traditional LAUSD schools that vote to become Autonomous Schools shall retain existing staff and may not, under any circumstances, re-interview existing employees. Employees who do not wish to continue to work at the school may submit transfer paperwork, consistent with CBA procedure.
- IV. **EXITING AUTONOMOUS SCHOOL STATUS:** During the regularly scheduled plan update year, a school may decide to exit from Autonomous School Status completely. To begin this process, the UTLA Chapter Chair (or designee) shall contact the ACSOC. The ACSOC will meet with the school staff during faculty meeting time and explain the process for exiting. The final step in the exit process is a vote, which requires a 50% + 1 vote of members working 50% or more of their contractual hours at the site to approve exiting Autonomous School status.
- V. **OVERSIGHT OF AUTONOMOUS SCHOOLS:** The Autonomous and Community Schools Oversight Committee (ACSOC) is an 8-person team composed of four appointed members each from the District and UTLA. The costs of all appointees, District and UTLA, shall be borne by the District. The ACSOC shall work collaboratively with Local District Directors and Superintendents, UTLA leadership, Human Resources, and other departments to provide continuing support and guidance to the aforementioned schools. The ACSOC shall have the authority to approve/reject all Autonomous School Plans, interpret the autonomies and support schools.
- A. **SUPPORT:** The ACSOC shall facilitate and oversee the transition of all current and future autonomous schools, the exiting of autonomous schools, the update/revision processes of school plans, and the application for autonomous school status. The ACSOC shall provide support to all autonomous schools. The ACSOC members are responsible for communicating with respective stakeholders at school sites, and providing individual support as needed. The ACSOC shall communicate regularly with Local District directors who oversee Autonomous Schools and establish systems for progress monitoring. The ACSOC shall have the authority to update the Autonomous School Manual (previously called the Pilot School Manual).
- B. **EXISTING RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING COMMUNITY SCHOOLS:** The ACSOC is recognized as the successor to the Local Options Oversight Committee (LOOC) referenced in the Community Schools Strike Settlement Agreement of 1/22/2019, and shall exercise all responsibilities named therein.
- C. **SCHOOL LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE SUPPORT:** The ACSOC shall support all autonomous schools in forming and maintaining a LSLC (or equivalent). The ACSOC may assist all District schools in forming and maintaining their Councils. The ACSOC may recruit and train teams in different regions of the District to support schools, should demand exceed the capacity of the ACSOC members.
- D. **SBM WAIVERS:** Schools that are not autonomous may submit waivers, per LAUSD Memorandum 6680.0. The ACSOC shall keep records of all approved waivers.
- E. **SCHOOL SITE AUTONOMIES:** The ACSOC shall have the authority to mediate any dispute over the implementation of school autonomies.
- F. **MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS:** The ACSOC will maintain the Autonomous School Manual, Autonomous School Plans, and Election to Work Agreements. The ACSOC shall also keep

records of all displacements of employees at Autonomous Schools due to non-issuance of the EWA (see Section ~~VI~~ VII)

VI. GOVERNANCE OF AND ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR AUTONOMOUS SCHOOLS

- A. The governing council of Autonomous Schools shall be the LSLC (or equivalent) as defined in Article XXVII, with the following modifications (to replace Article XXVII, Sections 2.4-2.5):
1. **FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:** The LSLC (or equivalent) shall consider all points of view and shall solicit the advice and counsel of parent organizations, other employee groups and all other interested parties. The LSLC (or equivalent) shall have the following functions and responsibilities:
 - a. Participation in shared decision-making training collaboratively developed by ACSOC
 - b. Determination, by majority vote, of the following matters:
 - i. All site-based professional development for UTLA-represented employees;
 - ii. Annual development, approval and evaluation of a School Climate, Student Discipline and Positive Behavior Support Plan;
 - iii. Schedule of school activities and events, and special schedules (e.g., final exam schedules and schedules designated to accommodate additional preparation time for elementary teachers). For purposes of this paragraph, "schedule" shall include, but not be limited to, a determination by the LSLC (or equivalent) of what activities shall take place. The Council shall not have the authority over scheduling of school activities and events mandated by the Board of Education;
 - iv. Guidelines for use of school equipment, including the copy machine;
 - v. Expenditure of all school-based discretionary funds, including but not limited to LCFF funds distributed by the District;
 - vi. School-based implementation of initiatives or programs mandated by the local, state, or federal government, including but not limited to Breakfast in the Classroom and periodic assessments;
 - vii. Course electives and program options (e.g., Visual and Performing Arts, Ethnic Studies and double-periods for specific subjects).
 - c. In making determinations in the matters listed above, the LSLC (or equivalent) operates within the same set of powers and constraints as previously applied to the Principal. However, future additional District restrictions upon local discretion shall be consistent with applicable laws, regulations and CBAs. The focus of LSLC activity shall be upon establishment of local policy and planning rather than the day-to-day administration or execution of policy and plans. The LSLC shall not be obligated to act in the designated areas, and may delegate its authority to existing school committees if it believes they are functioning satisfactorily.

d. DECISIONS: The attainment of consensus whenever possible shall be the primary goal. Both parties recognize that decisions made by consensus are the most effective in promoting cooperation and commitment to the policies which are established by the LSLC. Only if consensus cannot be reached shall decisions on the matters set forth above be made by majority vote. In order to be resolved by vote at the meeting in the event of consensus fails, the meeting agenda (see Article XXVII, Section 2.6) must have identified the proposed action with sufficient particularity that the Council members could have, prior to the meeting, meaningfully consulted with all interested parties with respect to the specific action under consideration, as provided in Article XXVII, Section 2.4. The vote required shall be a majority of those committee members present at the meeting. With respect to procedures governing voting matters, Robert's Rules of Order shall be applicable to issues not addressed herein. The site administrator shall ensure that written minutes for all LSLC (or equivalent) meetings shall be made available to all staff and school community.

- B. All Autonomous Schools shall be protected from reconstitution, new charter co-location and renewed charter co-location, unless prohibited by law.
- C. Each Autonomous School shall receive a centrally-funded, full-time Autonomous School Coordinator, who shall be recognized as part of the certificated bargaining unit represented by United Teachers Los Angeles.
- D. All Autonomous Schools have the right to work with ACSOC and their Local District Instructional Director to develop a process for an advisory Principal Evaluation.

VII. ELECTION TO WORK AGREEMENT (EWA): This section pertains only to schools that have chosen Autonomy 11 from Attachment A: Autonomy Options.

- A. RENEWING THE EWA FOR THE FOLLOWING ACADEMIC YEAR: The finalized EWA for the following year must be approved by LSLC (or equivalent) and available for all staff to read by April 1. All UTLA-represented staff working 50% or more of their contractual time at an Autonomous school wishing to remain at their site for the next school year must sign the EWA by April 15.
- B. Each UTLA-represented employee who chooses not to sign the EWA must initiate a teacher-initiated transfer by April 15th.
- C. PROCESS FOR EWA INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT
 - 1. All faculty members and out of classroom personnel are expected to meet the responsibilities as indicated in the EWA.
 - 2. If the principal is concerned that a faculty member is not fulfilling the roles and responsibilities outlined in the EWA, the principal will notify the employee of his/her concerns in writing by the end of the first semester. The scope of these concerns shall be limited to what is written in the EWA, and cannot reference any matter pertaining to the employee's Formal Evaluation. If the principal still feels that the employee continues

to not meet the responsibilities as indicated in the EWA no later than February 1, the principal will offer the following support and guidance:

- a. The principal will notify the employee with a written notification stating that the receipt of the EWA for the following school year is under review and the need to participate in an improvement plan. At this point, the issuance of the EWA will be contingent upon the employee making significant measurable progress in terms of fulfilling the responsibilities as indicated in the EWA. The latest date to issue a written notification will be February 28th. } 4
- b. A meeting will be held within 10 school days of the written notification. The employee and principal will meet to develop mutually agreed upon improvement plan. The employee may bring a UTLA representative or designee to the meeting. The improvement plan will include:
 - i. Measurable goals
 - ii. A schedule and system for support by peers and principals
 - iii. A system for documentation between teacher and support members
- c. If an agreement cannot be reached between the principal and the employee, the LSLC (or equivalent) will develop the improvement plan.
- d. Before April 15th, a post-meeting will be held with the principal, employee, and UTLA representative (or designee). If the employee has met the mutually agreed upon goals supported by documentation and evidence the employee will receive an EWA by April 15th. However, if the employee fails to meet the goals, the principal may decide to deny issuance of the EWA to the employee; however, this decision must be confirmed by a majority vote of the LSLC (or equivalent). If the LSLC (or equivalent) votes to issue the employee an EWA, the employee shall remain at the school for the following academic year. If the LSLC (or equivalent) votes to deny issuance of the EWA, the employee shall be displaced from the school.
- e. If at any time, in this process, there is a dispute that requires mediation, the ACSOC shall work with the school to resolve the issue.

D. ELIMINATION OF EWA: Over time, the UTLA-represented staff at a site with an EWA may wish to maintain Autonomous School status, but no longer use an EWA. In order to discontinue use of the EWA for future school years, the school must conduct a secret-ballot, majority vote of all UTLA-represented staff working 50% or more of their contractual hours at the site, overseen by the UTLA Chapter Chair and Principal, no later than December 1. The Principal and LSLC (or equivalent) may give an advisory recommendation on this matter to the UTLA-represented staff, but cannot prevent the staff from voting to discontinue the use of the EWA.

ATTACHMENT A: AUTONOMY OPTIONS

Autonomous Schools shall have the authority and option to determine local policy with respect to any or all of the matters listed below, without the need for waivers of policy or contract from the District or UTLA:

1. School-determined methods to improve pedagogy and student achievement, such as articulation between grade levels and departments, intervention strategies and intervention/special support programs (such as parent contracts, homework clinics, directed focus of services to assist struggling students and after-school reading rooms or math coaching on a rotating basis)

CBA LANGUAGE WAIVED: none

2. Locally determined curriculum (subject to State and Federal minimum curriculum standards); local instructional standards, objectives, and special emphases (supplementing District standards) with the understanding ~~the~~ the District will fund the chosen curriculum during adoption years

CBA LANGUAGE WAIVED: none

3. Local interim benchmark assessments, tests and pacing plans, aligned with and equivalent to District requirements (e.g., GATE, Algebra Placement), and complying with any State and Federal requirements

CBA LANGUAGE WAIVED: none

4. Local instructional schedules and strategies, including modified daily instructional days/minutes, the school's schedule of activities and events, and special schedules such as those designed to accommodate additional prep time for elementary teachers (all of the above being subject to State-mandated annual number of school days and minimum annual minutes of instruction and calendar requirements, and contractual pay in the case of additional required hours of regular daily instruction. The rationale behind this autonomy is that middle schools have common planning time, which allows for increased teacher collaboration and shortens the number of required minutes. All schools - not just middle schools - should be allowed to have this option). Schools may also use this autonomy to change the calendar for the instructional year, with approval from the Local District.

CBA LANGUAGE WAIVED: The school's method for implementation of this waiver may contradict the CBA procedure outlined in Article IX: HOURS, DUTIES AND WORK YEAR. In this case, the language written in the Autonomous School Plan supersedes CBA language.

5. School's internal organization plan, such as division into academies, small learning communities, houses, etc. within the assigned student population

CBA LANGUAGE WAIVED: The school's method for implementation of this waiver may contradict language in Article VIII: SMALL LEARNING COMMUNITIES. In this case, the language written in the Autonomous School Plan supersedes CBA language.

6. Local professional development plans aligned with the school's Single Plan for Student Achievement, except as training relating to legal/compliance mandates

CBA LANGUAGE WAIVED: Schools selecting this waiver shall task the LSLC (or equivalent) with determining all banked professional development time, not one-half, as outlined in Article IX-B, 2.0(h).

7. A requirement for Staff Selection with respect to the filling of certificated positions (UTLA-represented and administrative, working 50% or more of their contractual hours at the site), meaning no District-mandated priority placements, but school must still comply with return rights or other placement rights to the school that are created by legal mandates or by the District-UTLA agreement

CBA LANGUAGE WAIVED: none

8. Local process/methods for determining assignment of teachers to grade levels, departments, subjects and classes (e.g., looping, team-teaching, ungraded instruction, multi-age classrooms, etc.), with the expectation that the school establish an appeals process and include it in their plan

CBA LANGUAGE WAIVED: The school's method for implementation of this waiver may contradict the CBA staffing procedure outlined in Article IX-A: ASSIGNMENTS, Section 2.0(c) and 2.0(d). In this case, the language written in the Autonomous School Plan supersedes CBA language.

9. Local process/methods for selecting teachers as grade level or department chairs, coordinators, deans, instructional coaches, etc.

CBA LANGUAGE WAIVED: The school's method for implementation of this waiver may contradict the CBA procedure outlined in Article IX-A: ASSIGNMENTS, Sections 3.0 - 7.0. In this case, the language written in the Autonomous School Plan supersedes CBA language.

10. School's positive behavior support/socio-emotional services plan, aligned with District-wide standards and rules governing student conduct, suspensions, expulsions, and transfers

CBA LANGUAGE WAIVED: none

11. Election to Work Agreement (EWA): Schools choosing to use an EWA shall provide an EWA to each UTLA-represented certificated employee at the inception of his/her employment at the school and no later than April 15 annually thereafter. All employees are required to sign such document as a condition of working or continuing to work at the school. This document shall include the following information:

- A. The length of the instructional day, school day and workday

- B. The length of the instructional year, work year and school calendars
- C. The amount of time an employee is required to render service beyond the instructional/school/work year or day set forth in the CBA
- D. Any additional required duty time, such as during summer, school breaks, etc.

The EWA shall be created by the LSLC (or equivalent) and shall be given to all UTLA-represented certificated staff no later than ~~February 15~~ ^{April 15} of the previous school year. By a 50% + 1 vote, affected staff may vote to override the EWA, sending it back to the LSLC (or equivalent) for re-working. If the EWA for an upcoming school year has not been approved by March 15 the previous year's EWA shall remain in place.

CBA LANGUAGE WAIVED: The school's method for implementation of this waiver may contradict the CBA procedure outlined in the following articles:

- IX: HOURS, DUTIES AND WORK YEAR
- XI: TRANSFERS

In this case, the language written in the EWA supersedes CBA language.

12. Additional waivers: A school, pursuant to the procedures outlined below, may request local authority waivers in addition to those described above, such additional waivers would, however, require separate consideration and approval from both the District and UTLA before becoming effective. Furthermore, once approval is granted and incorporated into the school's plan, no annual waiver is needed.

In order to become an Autonomous School, members of the school community must attend 2 mandatory workshops outlined in Section V(A). After attending these workshops, the plan-writing team must choose the above-listed waivers that they will include in their plan. Before writing the plan, the majority (50% + 1) of UTLA-represented staff must sign a petition agreeing to the plan-writing team's selection of waivers. Before the plan writing team begins the process of writing the plan, they must ensure that the majority of the staff is in agreement with the waivers they have selected.

* Please note, some roman numeral references need to be updated.