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News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Board Cuts School Police to Improve Black Student Achievement

LOS ANGELES (February 16, 2021) – The Board of Education today reorganized the Los Angeles School Police Department and cut \$25 million from that budget to fund a Black Student Achievement Plan.

“Student safety is everyone’s responsibility and starts with creating a school environment that is centered in students’ social-emotional wellbeing,” Board President Kelly Gonez said. “The Board’s investment in the Black Student Achievement Plan ensures we are actively working to promote equity across the District.”

“I am proud of the Board decision to make critical investments in the academic needs of Black students,” Board Member Dr. George J. McKenna III said. “School safety remains my top priority and I look forward to ongoing dialogue with my colleagues and the Superintendent on how we continue to protect and support our students.”

“Change is essential. Investments and behaviors must be different if we want outcomes to be different,” Board Member Mónica García said. “Black students, parents, teachers and allies have demanded that we interrupt the school to prison pipeline. We all have more work to do.”

“By approving the Black Student Achievement Plan, the Board has made a commitment to provide multiple resources needed for academic success,” Board Member Scott M. Schmerelson said. “We are committed to prioritizing the group of students who have often been shortchanged by public education.”

“Right now, as we celebrate Black History Month, we must also acknowledge that we are not at the *end* of a national struggle for racial justice, but instead right in the middle of this history,” Board Member Nick Melvoin said. “And as schools have long been at the epicenter of that history, I believe that today we are taking an important step in the right direction to provide Black students with vital investments in their success—with millions of dollars going toward academic support, social-emotional resources, and a new approach to school climate and safety. This student and community driven action was long overdue, and we will continue working toward our District’s goal of providing every child with the opportunity to succeed and meeting the unique needs of our local school communities.”

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“The Black Student Achievement Plan, which was developed in close collaboration with students and community organizers, demonstrates this Board’s commitment to Black students,” Board Member Jackie Goldberg said. “Needed services and supports are made possible by trimming the school police budget. I have heard the concerns of Black students who have felt targeted by school police. I believe there are creative ways to keep our schools safe that don’t rely on having an officer stationed on campus.”

“I’m proud to be part of today’s historic decision and want to give a huge thank you to our students, educators and community partners for their passion, commitment and leadership throughout this entire process to #FundBlackFutures,” Board Member Tanya Ortiz Franklin said. “We came to agreement today in large part because of the advocacy and persistence of Students Deserve, the Brothers, Sons, Selves Coalition, Black Lives Matter – Los Angeles and other community partners who showed us how to center Black student voices and experiences in decisions about their future.”

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