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LACOE Denies SEA Charter

SEA Prep Academy submitted a County Charter Petition to the Los Angeles County Office of Education. If approved, SEA Prep would have opened a charter high school for "at promise" (at risk) students within the Montebello Unified School District. Organizing Chairperson Elizabeth Kocharian gathered input from teachers of alternative programs, students, and community members to demonstrate to the LACOE Board that effective alternative high school settings were in place in the District. In cooperation with District efforts, President Doug Patzkowski spoke to the LACOE Board in opposition to the petition. The LACOE Board voted to deny the petition. SEA can now petition the State for the Charter.



Organizing Chairperson Elizabeth Kocharian (BGH) and President Doug Patzkowski attend the LACOE Board meeting April 17.

Law Gives Teachers the Final Word on Students' Grades

The California Education Code protects teachers' rights to grade students. When grades are given for any course of instruction taught in a school district, the grade given to each pupil shall be the grade determined by the teacher of the course and the determination of the pupil's grade by the teacher, in the absence of clerical or mechanical mistake, fraud, bad faith, or incompetence, shall be final.

§ 49066: if a parent, student, or administrator challenges a grade the teacher has the right to defend the grade. An Association representative should always be present at such a challenge.

Teachers are Responsible for

Failure Notices

Classroom teachers are directly responsible for notifying parents of possible failing grades. Whenever it becomes evident to a teacher that a student is in danger of failing a course (D or F grade), the teacher must arrange a conference with the student's parent/guardian or send the parent/guardian a written report (failure notice). In all cases the notification must come prior to the assignment of the grade.

The teacher's responsibility for failure notices is stated in California Education Code 49067 and Montebello Unified School District Administrative Regulation 5121 (a).

FCMAT Bond Audit Team Investigates

The Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) Bond Audit Team conducted an Entrance Meeting with District Tuesday, April 10.

The Team's probe may include:

- Evaluate policies, procedures and internal controls for purchasing, contractual commitments, and vendor payments.
- Review sample selections of vendor payments and supporting documentation and verifying compliance with established policy, procedures and applicable laws.

FCMAT audited Alum Rock Union Elementary School District last year and published numerous findings concerning the Del Terra Group. Montebello has also contracted with the Del Terra Group for construction management services. The FCMAT report is available at <http://fcmat.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2017/06/Alum-Rock-UESD-final-report.pdf>.