



Los Angeles School Police
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NEWS RELEASE

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CAMPAIGN TO FUND ADDITIONAL UTLA POSITIONS AT THE EXPENSE OF SCHOOL SAFETY

LOS ANGELES – United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA), the union representing thousands of teachers and other school employees, is co-sponsoring, along with several community organizations, a rally on February 24, 2018, to organize students against School Police, end random metal detector searches, and fund more counselors.

The leadership of the Los Angeles School Police Management Association (LASPMA) met with UTLA leadership on several occasions upon learning of this rally. UTLA President Alex Caputo-Pearl repeatedly stated that UTLA does not have an organizational policy supporting the abolition of School Police and referred to an article reporting on the rally as “. . . an unfortunate and misleading headline.” This contradicts what could be found on UTLA’s own website where, verbatim, the first paragraph of that article was used as a lead-in to the flyer advertising the Making Black Lives Matter in Schools rally on February 24th.

Another co-sponsor of the February 24th rally is Schools L.A. Students Deserve. According to Caputo-Pearl, that organization is a different entity from UTLA - even though UTLA’s membership passed a resolution in 2013 calling for UTLA to build a Schools LA Students Deserve campaign. In yet another “coincidence”, Schools L.A. Students Deserve identifies as one of their goals to “Re-direct money from school police and law enforcement towards counselors & Peace Builders.”

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“PROFESSIONALISM THROUGH LEADERSHIP AND DIRECTION”

It is troubling that UTLA is exploiting various community organizations to advocate on their behalf for the removal of Los Angeles School Police officers. These organizations have many valid concerns and objectives that merit support. However, the abolishment of School Police and pilfering their funding in order to fund more UTLA positions is misguided, dangerous, and self-serving. In many ways, this tactic of UTLA is also self-defeating. LASPMA has been an avid supporter of restorative justice, police reform, and adequate funding for more school counselors. It is an LAUSD policy which directs administrators and UTLA members to conduct random metal detector searches, not the police. Furthermore, LASPD is among the leaders in the industry with its progressive approach to law enforcement and its responsiveness to community input.

This divisiveness is unnecessary and distracts from all our goals to provide safe, nurturing schools where ALL students have equal access to a quality education. We share the passion that every student deserves the support needed to help them safely reach the point where they graduate from high school and are prepared to succeed in their higher educational goals and careers.

UTLA has the ability to lead the effort in encouraging all of our community advocates to collaborate with our School Police on evolving issues. Our children need to be safe in order to be educated. Recent events locally and beyond have demonstrated the value of having a professional, sensitive and progressive school police department, such as the Los Angeles School Police Department, abundantly clear.

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Prepared by P.J. Webb, President of the Los Angeles School Police Management Association (LASPMA). LASPMA represents the sworn and non-sworn supervisors of the Los Angeles School Police Department which includes Lieutenants, Sergeants and Supervising School Safety Officers.