

School principals have the authority to restrict campus access to visitors in order to keep students safe. But what happens when a procedure intended as a shield is instead used as a sword against those students' parents? This study examines the situations, behaviors, and common policy violations which can trigger the issuance by site administrators to parents of so-called "disruptive person letters." It also presents findings and recommendations on recalibrating District policies and procedures to focus less on effectively banning parents from their children's schools and more on resolving conflict between parents and school staff.

## **Issuance of 'Disruptive Person Letters' to LAUSD Parents:**

Modifying the System to  
Maintain School Safety and  
Improve Parent Relations





## **Parent Organization Network Leading School Change**

### **Mission**

The Parent Organization Network (PON) strengthens the abilities of culturally diverse and underserved parents to be trainers and leaders, supports their local initiatives and advocacy efforts, and connects them to a broader network of committed individuals and organizations, so together they can effect long-term systemic changes, resulting in high-quality education for all students.

### **Vision**

PON is a network of parent leaders and organizations committed to improving schools and school districts. Organizations and parent leaders work together to improve educational equity and student academic outcomes by advocating for equitable laws and regulations, policies and practices, monitoring their implementation and impact over time.

We envision a public-school system transformed by highly engaged parents working closely with school officials to provide a high-quality educational experience tailored to student needs and community priorities. Where public schools value parents as equal partners and instrumental collaborators in making decisions and effecting positive changes.

## **Dedication and Acknowledgements**

We would like to dedicate this report to the policymakers, school administrators and their staff for all they do on a daily basis to keep schools running smoothly. Thanks in advance for reflecting on current system policies and practices and considering adopting new rules to improve school safety while strengthening relations with parents.

The PON dedicates this report to the countless parents and students who sometimes get caught up in unjust situations when the systems in our society don't function as intended. We are grateful to Paul Robak and Maria Daisy Ortiz, long-time parent leaders in the LAUSD whose own experiences with the so-called "disruptive person letter" (DPL) and their ensuing vocal advocacy before local- and state- level education policymakers to end the improper issuance of such letters, directly led to the involvement of PON in their campaign and to the drafting of this report. Your resilience is admirable.

Special thanks go to Araceli Simeón for leading the research, analysis, and drafting of the report, and to Karla Corina Young for contributing more than 100 hours as a volunteer intern for the project over this past summer. PON also expresses appreciation to our partners and supporters in this process, including:

Victor Leung  
*ACLU of Southern California*

Kathy Kantner  
*LAUSD parent leader*

Joyce G. Watts  
*African American Parent/Community  
Coalition for Educational Equity*

Jose Cabrales  
*PON intern*



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Introduction .....	7
II.	Methodology .....	8
III.	Context: What is a DPL? Why is this an issue? .....	9
	A. What is a DPL? .....	9
	B. By what authority may principals issue DPLs? .....	9
	C. Parent concerns .....	9
	D. District response .....	10
IV.	Data Review from Letters .....	11
	A. Magnitude and frequency of DPL issuance in LAUSD and Local Districts .....	11
	B. Who issues DPLs?.....	12
	C. DPL issuance by school type and governance models .....	13
	D. Who receives DPLs?.....	16
	E. Why, when, and where are DPLs issued? .....	17
	i. Behaviors considered disruptive that triggered DPLs.....	17
	1. Verbal behaviors.....	17
	2. Violating school policies or procedures .....	18
	3. Parents approaching students .....	19
	4. Physical altercations .....	19
	5. Threats.....	20
	6. Patterns and observations.....	21
	7. Type of offenses in letters from principals issuing 5 or more DPLs .....	22
	ii. Places and times where disruptive behavior occurs .....	23
	iii. Frequency of offenses over time .....	24
	iv. DPL consequences: Warning and restrictions .....	25
V.	Data analysis review from interviews.....	26
	A. Frequency of offenses over time .....	26
	B. Alleged and perceived reasons for receiving a letter .....	27
	C. Parent actions after receiving the letter .....	28
	D. DPL impact on parents: Feelings of helplessness and desperation .....	29
	E. DPL impact on students: Some children face retaliation .....	29
	F. Parents' reflections .....	30
VI.	Findings.....	30
VII.	Recommendations.....	33
VIII.	Conclusion .....	37
IX.	Endnotes.....	38
X.	Appendix: Interview script and questions .....	39



## ISSUANCE OF 'DISRUPTIVE PERSON LETTERS' TO LAUSD PARENTS

### SUMMARY

School principals have the authority to restrict campus access to visitors in order to keep students safe. But what happens when a procedure intended as shield is instead used as a sword against those students' parents? This study analyzed data from 476 "disruptive person letters" issued in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) as well as interviews of six parents who received these letters. The data provides insight on the type of schools and principals that use this recourse to stop unwanted parent behavior, and outlines the type of behavior and rules that tend to get parents in trouble. This study examines the situations, behaviors, and common policy violations which can trigger the issuance, by site administrators to parents, of so-called "disruptive person letters." It also presents findings and recommendations on recalibrating school policies and procedures to focus less on effectively banning parents from their children's schools and more on resolving conflict between parents and school staff, by preventing the escalation of non-disruptive situations that often start with common parent frustrations. This approach brings the added benefit of reducing the likelihood that students may become targets of violence or aggression by adults.

### I. INTRODUCTION

Schools are meant to be calm, safe places where students can learn. However, schools are also unique institutions in our society where children and adults of many different backgrounds gather. Cultures, values, goals, personalities and "people skills" of parents at times clash with those of school staff, more so than in most other places because parents leave their most prized possessions — their children — in the care of adults they trust to be extensions of themselves. This trust extends not only to classroom teachers but to staff, volunteers and administrators as well. Principals have the enormous responsibility to uphold laws, juggle multiple priorities, foster environments where people can work collaboratively and effectively, and resolve conflicts among everyone, with the primary goal of maximizing student academic achievement.

For this reason, district policy and state law grants school principals the authority to restrict campus access to visitors in order to keep students safe. The isolated but nevertheless increased number of school shootings across the nation over the past 20 years have led to school districts either adopting more stringent policies or enforcing existing policies regarding campus visitors. A parent or guardian is now required to show proper identification when picking up a student, arriving for classroom observation, and on various other occasions when parents have legitimate business on campus. The purpose behind these policies is to control who is permitted to enter a school campus, in order to keep students safe in a learning environment free of disruption.

At the same time, state and federal laws guarantee the right of parents to be involved in school as advocates for their children and as partners in decision-making. For example, the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) statute in California requires school districts to track and report efforts a "... school district makes to seek parent input in making decisions for the school district and each individual school site, and including how the school district will promote parental participation in programs for unduplicated pupils and individuals with exceptional needs ..." (Article 4.5 added by Stats. 2013, Ch. 47, Sec. 103). The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) signed into law in December 2015 reaffirms parents'

rights to be actively involved in their children’s education and further expands this responsibility from the No Child Left Behind language of “parent involvement” to “parent and family *engagement*” in order to emphasize a shift from mere compliance to more meaningful involvement of parents and family members in developing school policies, identifying and eliminating barriers to greater participation, and adopting strategies to support successful school and family interactions (ESSA, Title I, Section 1116, and 20 USC Section 6318). Why this shift? Because study after study confirms that when parents are involved and engaged at home and in school, this increases student attendance, student achievement, and leads to school plans and budgets that are more reflective of student needs.

However, in the course of carrying out parental duties (*e.g.*, enrolling their child in a school, inquiring about instructional programs and student progress, dropping off or picking up their child at school, trying to address bullying problems) and exercising parental rights (*e.g.*, observing classrooms, expressing dissent in school councils and committees, questioning school policies or decisions), now and then a parent’s words, tone of voice, or behavior may be interpreted or labeled by school staff as “disruptive.” This determination then triggers school-safety provisions designed to keep criminals and violent persons, not concerned and engaged parents, away from school premises.

The Parent Organization Network has seen a rise in the number of reports from parents with students in school districts receiving these letters. Moreover, during the past 18 months, we have become aware that several LAUSD parent leaders with whom we work are themselves letter recipients. Without a process in place to challenge the allegations contained in a letter or to appeal a principal’s decision, these parents have been improperly restricted from visiting their child’s school campus, for an indefinite period of time and, in some cases, over multiple school years. This restriction unfairly hinders their ability to participate fully in their children’s education. Given PON’s mission to support parents’ advocacy efforts in effecting systemic change and improving the quality of education for students, we felt it important to look into the issue by reviewing available data on the subject to develop this study.

It should be noted that our report does *not* advocate for student safety to take a back seat to parents’ rights. Nor does it defend or excuse egregious, clearly inappropriate behavior by adults in schools. Rather, it focuses on reviewing existing data to understand what constitutes truly disruptive behavior, and how and when DPLs are issued, in order to determine whether district policies and procedures need to be revised so that engaged parents are not so readily labeled as “disruptive” and, practically speaking, banned from their children’s school. Next we will present the data, findings and recommendations to improve the DPL issuance process in the LAUSD.

## **II. METHODOLOGY**

Our findings and recommendations are based on reviewing actual DPLs and interviewing parent recipients. In October 2015, we submitted a Public Records Act request to the Office of General Counsel for DPLs generated during the past five school years. In late May of this year, we received redacted copies of 476 letters. These DPLs come from 192 schools and span school years 2002-03 through 2015-16, with the dataset being most robust for the past four school years. Each letter was carefully read and information contained in it was entered into a database so that the letter could be analyzed by school year, local district, school grade-level configuration, school type, principal, recipient(s), type and frequency of offense, and number of warnings and letters given to recipients.

Given that DPLs only record the author’s account of a person’s behavior or situation, rather than an objective description, we also interviewed parents to capture their side of the story. We interviewed six parents. All are active at their child’s school, on central-level advisory committees, and/or in the community. Each parent was asked 21 questions regarding their experience with the LAUSD DPL process. For the interview questions, see Appendix A.

### III. CONTEXT: What is a DPL? Why is this an issue?

#### A. What Is a DPL?

A “disruptive person letter” is a document received by a parent, guardian, other adult, or even a minor, from a school principal, for behavior which has been deemed “disruptive.” This document restricts access to the school campus for an unspecified time period, and requires that in order to enter the premises at any time for any reason, the recipient must first obtain permission from the principal or the principal’s “designee.”

#### B. By What Authority May Principals Issue DPLs?

Various school district policies and state laws have been enacted to give school administrators the authority to keep students safe and in an environment conducive to learning. For example, the California Penal Code (at Sections 626.6 and 626.8) grants school administrators at preschools, K-12 schools, community colleges and universities the legal authority to remove visitors from campus if they “interfere with the peaceful conduct of the activities of the campus or facility.”

Similarly, the California Education Code (at Sections 44810 and 44811) classifies “**willfully interfer[ing] with the discipline, good order, lawful conduct, or administration of any class or activity of the school with the intent to disrupt, obstruct, or to inflict damage to property or bodily injury upon any person**” as misdemeanors that are punishable by monetary fines and incarceration. The LAUSD visitor policy upholds these principles by establishing that “all campus visitors must have the consent and approval of the principal/designee” (LAUSD Board Rules 1265 and 2002, and BUL-6492.0).

In addition, administrators have the authority to contact school police or the local law-enforcement agency if they need assistance with a particular person or situation. When an incident occurs, school administrators may issue DPLs in order to prevent individuals from causing additional disruption or threats in the future. **It is important to note that at this time, to the best of our knowledge there is no state law, LAUSD Board Rule or District policy which mandates or suggests a process for drafting or issuing “disruptive person letters.”**

#### C. Parent Concerns

For nearly two years now, parent leaders have expressed concerns to senior LAUSD administrators about the use of DPLs with parents who are not actually disruptive. Various administrators have offered differing answers, but to date these parent leaders have not been given a clear, meaningful response.

Most recently parents raised their concerns about this issue at a meeting of the LAUSD Early Childhood Education and Parent Engagement (ECEPE) Committee on April 19, 2016. The following is an excerpt from the recommendations they presented to this Committee:

***“Create a fair policy around the issuance of Disruptive Person Letters across LAUSD schools that provides parents with due process and a chance to be heard regarding the content of such letters.***

*a. Background:*

- i. 486 Disruptive Person Letters have been issued since 2012 to parents and other community members.*
- ii. There is no district policy/bulletin that dictates a specific process that Principals must adhere to in order to issue a Disruptive Person Letter to a parent. Parents do not have the opportunity to be heard before or after the letters are issued.*
- iii. Due process means providing an opportunity for parents to tell their version of events, include clear timelines and expectations, and rescind Disruptive Persons Letter if agreed upon conditions are met.*
- iv. Several parents in Central Committees have been issued a Disruptive Person Letter, and don’t understand why the District employs Restorative Justice with students and not with parents. Restorative Justice may provide a helpful structure for due process.”*

These recommendations may be accessed at <https://boe.lausd.net/sites/default/files/06-02-16ECEParentRecommendations.pdf>.

#### **D. District Response**

District officials responded to parent concerns at the subsequent ECEPE Committee meeting on June 2, 2016, by reviewing the policies mentioned above which allow principals to remove visitors from school campuses. Responding to a Board Member’s question about what process exists for parents to contest DPLs, Katrina Campbell, Assistant General Counsel, stated that the District does not have a legal obligation to provide an appeals process. Ms. Campbell explained that these letters are intended as a last resort to stop disruptive behavior. Ideally, she added, DPLs would be issued only after school administrators have warned parents about repeated or ongoing inappropriate behavior, unless the behavior is so egregious that the person must be removed from campus immediately for the safety of students and staff. Ms. Campbell’s comments were shared as she and Christopher Ortiz, at that time the Director of School Operations, reviewed for the Committee the process used to issue a DPL. This passage is taken from their PowerPoint presentation:

*“If a site administrator determines that the behavior of a third party is disruptive to the orderly conduct of the school operations, then the principal can do the following:*

- 1. Attempt to calm the individual down so that the disruptive behavior does not continue.*
- 2. If the disruptive behavior continues, the site administrator shall direct the individual to leave the premises. If criminal threats have been made, the site administrator can request law-enforcement assistance.*
- 3. After the third party has left the campus, the site administrator can issue a disruptive visitor letter.*
- 4. The site administrator will generate an ISTAR report, attach a copy of the letter to the report, and notify the Local District Administrator of Operations or the Operations Coordinator of the incident.*
- 5. At the discretion of the site administrator, an appropriate length of time can be determined after which the letter will sunset and the third party can be granted regular access to the school site.”*

This presentation may be accessed at <https://boe.lausd.net/sites/default/files/06-02-16ECEParentsasPartnersWithinLAUSDUpdate.pdf>

#### IV. DATA REVIEW FROM LETTERS

##### A. Magnitude and Frequency of DPL Issuance in LAUSD and Local Districts

The dataset reviewed had a total of 476 letters dating from 2002 through 2016. (See Table 1.) The data was more robust for the past four school years. However, it is assumed that the number of letters issued is greater than what was received, given that until recently these letters have not been systematically tracked by the District. For example, of the six interviewees who received DPLs within the past three school years, the dataset only included a few letters for two of them.

At the June 2, 2016 ECEPE Committee meeting, District officials explained that principals are now required to log the DPLs they issue into the LAUSD ISTAR database. Although the District has records of 304 DPLs for 2015-16 (see Table 2), PON received only 67 of these letters, or 22 percent of the total, even though our Public Records Act request was submitted on October 22, 2015, but not fulfilled until May 27, 2016.

In Table 3, it can be seen that the number of DPLs has increased from year to year for the four most recent school years.

**Trend:**

**There is a trend of DPL issuance increasing in recent years.** The number of cases relative to the total K-12 student enrollment of 643,493 (2015-2016 LAUSD Fingertip Facts) is small; however it is growing. Also, it has great impact on those receiving the letters, and it may impact parent engagement more broadly as the behavior modeled by principals tends to set the tone for how staff treat parents.

**There is a wide discrepancy in DPL issuance by local district, with about 38 percent of all DPLs coming from Local District West.** (See Tables 2 and 3.) However, the South and Northwest were close behind. (See Graph 1.)

Table 1: DPLs by School Year

No Date	1
2002-03	1
2008-09	1
2009-10	4
2010-11	2
2011-12	18
2012-13	62
2013-14	134
2014-15	186
2015-16	67
	476

Table 2: Table from ECEPE Meeting

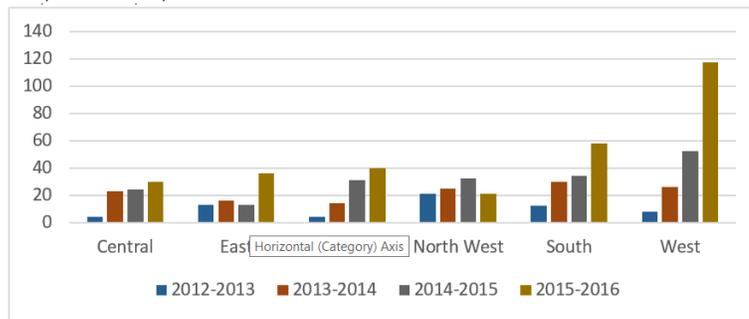
ISTAR Report- Disruptive Parent/ Community Member	
LAUSD Office of School Operations	
7/1/2015-6/1/2016	
Local District	
Total	
C	30
E	36
NE	40
NW	21
S	58
W	117
ZA	2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>304</b>

Table 3: DPLs by School Year, by Local District

School Year	C	E	NE	NW	S	W	ZA	Total
No Date						1		1
2002-03					1			1
2008-09	1							1

2009-10	3					1		4
2010-11					2			2
2011-12	2	3	3	4	1	5		18
2012-13	4	13	4	21	12	8		62
2013-14	23	16	14	25	30	26		134
2014-15	24	13	31	32	34	52		186
2015-16 (From dataset)	5	12	6	17	13	14		67
2015-16 (From ECEPE)	30	36	40	21	58	117	2	304
<b>Dataset Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>107</b>		<b>476</b>
<b>Total from ECEPE Meeting</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>713</b>

Graph 1: DPLs per Local District over Four Years



## B. Who Issues DPLs?

The 476 letters reviewed were issued by 206 principals from 192 schools. In a few schools there was a change of principal during the school year thereby increasing the number of apparent administrators in the dataset.

**While females constituted 60.5 percent of all LAUSD principals in 2015-16, they represented 68 percent of those issuing DPLs.**

Table 4: Comparing Principal Gender in DPL Data and LAUSD

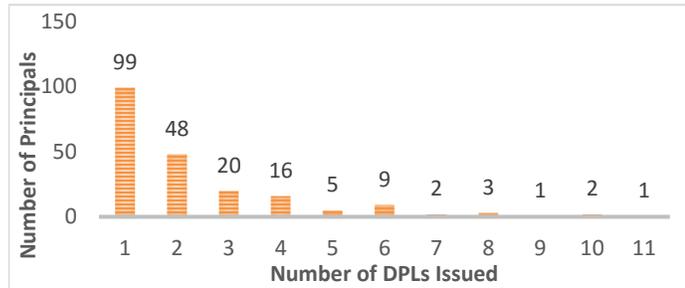
Principals Issuing DPLs: 206	Principals in LAUSD K-12 Schools in 2015-16*: 795
Gender: Female: 140 (68%) Male: 65 (31.5%) NA: 1 (.5%)	Gender: Female: 481 (60.5%) Male: 306 (38.5%) NA: 8 (1%)

\*Source: LAUSD's Office of Data and Accountability  
School Information Branch, Alphabetical List of 2015-2016 K-12

The distribution of DPLs issued by principals was also analyzed to determine if most were coming from a few administrators overusing this option. We found that about 99 (48 percent) of the principals in this sample issued only one DPL in a period of five years, 48 (23 percent) issued two DPLs, and the remaining 59 (29 percent) issued between 3 and 11 DPLs. (See Graph 2.)

**Although about 70 percent of principals seem to be using DPLs as a last resort, about 30 percent of principals in this sample may be overusing or misusing the tool. In other words, 32 percent of all DPLs (157 letters) come from just 11 percent of all principals who generated DPLs. These 23 principals each issued at least five DPLs in this period, with several issuing 10 or more.**

Graph 2: Distribution of the Number of DPLs Issued by Principals



**C. DPL Issuance by School Type and Governance Models**

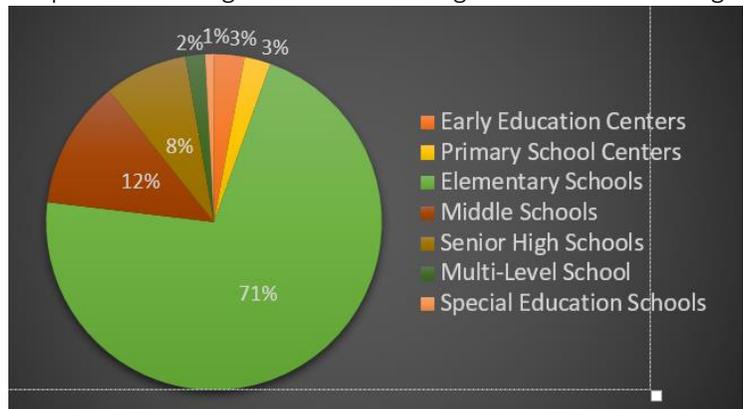
We also analyzed the types of schools issuing DPLs. The data showed that **70 percent of DPLs come from elementary schools**. Middle schools and senior high schools issue 12 percent and 8 percent of DPLs respectively. The remaining 10 percent of DPLs come from schools with other grade-level configurations. (See Table 5 and Graph 3.) Student enrollment in elementary schools for 2015-16 was 46.5 percent (per 2015-16 LAUSD Fingertip Facts).

One reason more DPLs are issued more frequently at elementary schools may be that parent engagement and presence in schools is higher at the elementary level. It is likely that more female administrators issue DPLs because more women lead elementary schools.

Table 5: Schools Issuing DPLs by Grade Level Configuration

Early Education Centers	8
Primary School Centers	4
Elementary Schools	133
Middle Schools	22
Senior High Schools	19
Multi-Level School	4
Special Education Schools	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>192</b>

Graph 3: Percentage of DPLs According to Grade Level Configuration

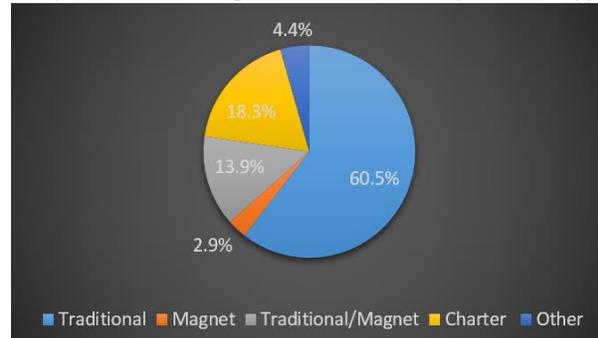


The data also was analyzed by school type: traditional, magnet, charter, or “other” to differentiate schools with pilot, community schools, and other models. In this sample, 60 percent of DPLs were issued by principals in traditional schools, 18 percent by principals in

charter schools, and about 14 percent by principals at campuses where both traditional and magnet programs operate. (See Table 6 and Graph 4.)

Table 6: Schools that Issued DPLs by Type      Graph 4: Percentage of DPLs Issued by School Type

Traditional	118
Magnet	9
Traditional/Magnet	29
Charter	24
Other	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>192</b>



Although **traditional elementary schools make up 35.5 percent of all LAUSD schools, they account for 49.5 percent of the schools that issued DPLs.** There also was a **slight over-representation of magnet schools within a regular campus:** Although these schools represent 12.2 percent of LAUSD campuses, they account for 15.1 percent of the schools that issued DPLs. It was anticipated that charter elementary schools would be over-represented in the sample since 83 percent, or 20 of the 24 letters issued by charters came from elementary schools. We were not able to make that comparison, as the LAUSD Fingertip Facts only provides the total number of charter schools, without differentiating campuses by grade-level configuration. Overall, however, **charter schools were underrepresented, given that they account for 16.6 percent of all schools but only 12.5 percent of these issued DPLs.** (See Table 7.)

Table 7: Comparison of School Types in DPL Data and in LAUSD

Traditional Schools	Number of schools in LAUSD	% of schools	Number of Schools Issuing DPLs	% of schools issuing DPLs
Primary School Centers	19	1.5%	4	2.1%
<b>Elementary Schools</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>35.5%</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>49.5%</b>
Middle Schools	83	6.5%	9	4.7%
Senior High Schools	98	7.7%	7	3.6%
Option Schools	54	4.2%	2	1.0%
Magnet Schools	42	3.3%	9	4.7%
Multi-level Schools	22	1.7%	3	1.6%
Special Education Schools	12	0.9%	2	1.0%
Centers for Advanced Transition Skills	1	0.1%	0	0
Home/Hospital	1	0.1%	0	0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>784</b>	<b>61.5%</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>68.2%</b>
<b>K-12 Magnet Centers (on regular campuses)</b>				
Elementary	46	3.6%	11	5.7%
Middle	55	4.3%	10	5.2%
Senior	55	4.3%	8	4.2%
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>12.2%</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>15.1%</b>
<b>Other Schools</b>				
Charter Schools	211	16.6%	24	12.5%

Elementary	n/a			20	
Middle	n/a			3	
Senior	n/a			1	
Other Schools and Centers	3	0.2%		n/a	
Community Adult Schools	10	0.8%		n/a	
Regional Occupational Center/Program	1	0.1%		n/a	
Alternative Education Work Centers	23	1.8%		n/a	
Early Education Centers	86	6.8%		8	4.2%
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>26.0%</b>		<b>32</b>	<b>16.7%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1274</b>	<b>100%</b>		<b>192</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Source: Schools and Centers from LAUSD's 2015-2016 Fingertip Facts

Lastly, given the higher incidence of DPLs in Local District West, data was reviewed to determine if there was a higher concentration of specific school models in that district which would explain the high rates. **It was found that local districts with more DPLs had slightly higher number of schools. (See Table 8.)** When the distribution was analyzed by school type in each local district, it was found that all had about the same number of school types issuing DPLs, except that Northwest stood out by having 16 charter schools issuing DPLs, while most other local districts had one or two charter schools issuing DPLs. (See Table 9.) However, that did not strongly correlate to overall DPL issuance, since the Northwest ranks third in the number of average DPLs issued, and local districts with fewer charters ranked higher.

Table 8: Distribution of Schools by Local District

	Central	East	Northeast	Northwest	South	West
# of DPLs	63	52	57	104	93	107
# of schools	26 (14%)	29 (15%)	25 (13%)	39 (20%)	36 (19%)	37 (19%)
Average # of DPLs by Local District	2.42	1.79	2.28	2.67	2.58	2.89
Combined Average # of DPLs for LAUSD	2.43					

Table 9: Distribution of Schools in Local District by Type

	Central	East	Northeast	Northwest	South	West
Traditional	14	18	17	17	22	18
Traditional/Magnet	2	7	3	3	7	7
Magnet	1	1	1	1	2	3
Charter	1	0	3	16	0	4
Other	4	1	0	1	2	0
ECE	1	1	1	1	0	4
Primary Center	3		0	0	1	0
Continuation	0		0	0	1	1
Special Ed Center	0	1	0	0	1	0

	26	29	25	39	36	37
--	----	----	----	----	----	----

We then reviewed the distribution of schools according to the number of DPLs issued. (See Table 10.) It was found that the East and Northeast Local Districts, in addition to having slightly fewer schools issuing DPLs, those that did mostly issued one to two letters and had no schools that issued more than four DPLs. On the other hand, although the West and Northwest Local Districts had a similar number of schools issuing one to two letters, nearly 20 percent of schools issued six or more letters. **Thus, local districts with higher DPL issuance had more schools or principals that issued 5 or more DPLs. This suggests that their higher DPL rate is coming from a small number of schools, with principals who have made DPL issuance a regular practice.**

Table 10: Distribution of Schools by Number of DPLs Issued and by Local District

	C		E		NE		NW		S		W	
1 DPL	14	18	15	22	11	17	20	27	17	27	14	23
2 DPLs	4	(69%)	7	(76%)	6	(68%)	7	(70%)	10	(75%)	9	(62%)
3 DPLs	3		5		1		3		1		4	
4 DPLs	2	5	4	9	4	8	3	6	0	4	3	7
5 DPLs	0	(19%)	0	(24%)	3	(32%)	0	(15%)	3	(11%)	0	(19%)
6 DPLs	0		0		0		3		3		3	
7 DPLs	1		0		0		0		1		1	
8 DPLs	1		0		0		0		0		1	
9 DPLs	1		0		0		0		0		1	
10 DPLs	0		0		0		2		1		0	
11 DPLs	0	3	0		0		0	6	0	5	1	7
12 DPLs	0	(12%)	0	0	0	0	1	(15%)	0	(14%)	0	(19%)

#### D. Who Receives DPLs?

The 476 letters were issued to 447 recipients. A few recipients received more than one letter. About 70% of recipients were female. A simple explanation for this is that when it comes to children’s education many cultures and families delegate this role to mothers. All recipients were given a copy of the DPL in English and only 23 (4.8 percent) received the letter in Spanish, as well. One hundred and four (23 percent) of recipients had Spanish surnames. Race or ethnicity was not identified. Ninety-four percent (94 percent) of recipients were parents but letters were also issued to others. (See Table 11.)

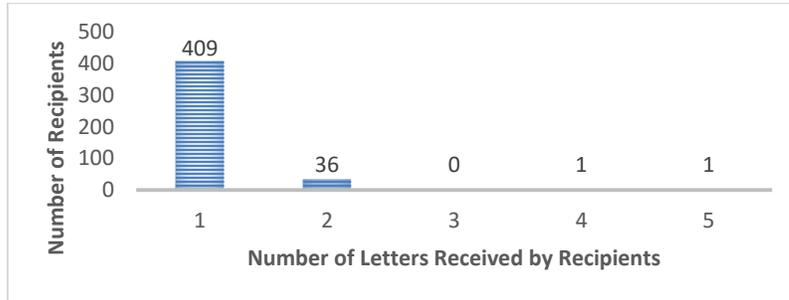
The number of letters received by parents was also analyzed to determine if a small number of parents might be generating a disproportionate number of DPLs.

Table 11: Type of Recipients

Parents	420
Parent Volunteers/ Leaders	9
Parent’s Friend	
Accompanying Parent	2
Attorney	1
Contractor	1
Relatives	6
Students (e.g., expelled)	3
Community Member	2
Not Clear	3
	447

We found that 91.5 percent of parents in this sample were issued only one letter, 8 percent were issued two letters, and only two parents (0.5 percent) were issued 4 or 5 letters. (See Graph 5.)

Graph 5: Distribution on the Number of Letters Received by Recipients



**E. Why, When, Where, DPLs are Issued**

The 476 letters issued resulted from 456 situations that occurred in schools. There are more letters than situations because more than one DPL may have been issued to different persons for the same situation.

**i. Behaviors Considered Disruptive that Triggered DPLs**

**1. Verbal Behaviors:** Most situations in the letters began with verbal exchanges. Eighty-two percent of the letters, or 389, made allegations against the recipient or described situations where the recipient showed one or more of the following verbal behaviors: being irate, raising the voice, yelling, using the wrong tone of voice, using profanity, being argumentative, being disrespectful, saying negative things about the school, staff, or parents to others, or making general threats.

In about 45 percent of these DPLs, administrators provided details as to how or why the situation started. We identified the following **themes or subcategories** in Table 12:

Table 12: Context from DPLs on How the Alleged Disruptive Verbal Behavior Happened

Reasons Behind Parents’ Verbal Behavior	Number	Percentage
Parents addressing issues related to child (e.g. learning, program, attendance, behavior)	65	16.6%
Parents addressing bullying/child-safety issues	38	9.7%
Parents providing input or expressing opinions (e.g., in meetings, asking questions or justifications, “talking negatively” about school)	35	9%
Parents disputing legal issues (e.g., restraining orders, court orders regarding child custody)	28	7%
Parents disrupting school events (e.g., sports game, holiday program or student performance)	10	2.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>44.8%</b>

Below are two sample excerpts of what a parent may receive on their DPL:

*Excerpt 1:*

*“Your conduct in our campus caused great disagreement that affected our school:*

- 1. You approached parents in the main office to express negative comments about the school.*
- 2. You threaten staff by saying you would file a complaint at the district level.*
- 3. The school has received reports from parents that you have asked them to go to district to file complaints against the school and staff. You have mentioned in several occasions that you will make sure specific staff is fired because you don’t like them.*

*You caused great discomfort and anguish among staff and volunteers in school.”*

*Excerpt 2:*

*“On Monday, April 27, 2015, you harassed [redacted staff name] in an antagonistic way over the phone because you received automated messages regarding attendance of your [redacted student’s name]. ... [Y]our conduct caused Mrs. [redacted staff name] great discomfort and anguish. ... If you have business on campus, please call my office in advance.”*

- 2. Violating School or District Policies or Procedures:** We noted 168 letters (35 percent) accusing the recipient of failing to comply with a policy or procedure, refusing to leave campus, or not following specific instructions after being asked to do so. In all there were a total of 187 different violations, with several letters alleging multiple policy violations. See Table 13 for the school policies most frequently violated.

Table 13: Alleged Frequent Policy/Procedure Violations

<b>Alleged Frequent Policy/Procedure Violations</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Visitor’s Policy (e.g., parents not signing in or out correctly or at all on the school’s visitor log)	72	38.5%
Failure to Leave Campus or Comply with Instructions	30	16%
Student Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures (e.g., parking violations, dropping off at wrong gate)	18	9%
Classroom Observation (e.g., parents stopped observing and talked to others)	14	7.5%
Checking Out Students Early (e.g., not being able to provide identification, taking child without properly checking them out)	14	7.5%
Policies Related to Photographs, Audiotaping, Video Recording and Posting on Facebook:	10	5.5%
Violating Court Orders, Previous DPLs (e.g. restraining orders, child custody agreement)	9	5%
Other Reasons (e.g., administering medicine, dogs on campus, questioning enrollment criteria, retrieving ball from classroom roof)	20	11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>100%</b>

Below is a sample excerpt of what a parent may receive on their DPL:

*“According to the written statement of [redacted staff name], Special Education Assistant and of Ms. [redacted staff name], Substitute Teacher, you interrupted the class to ask questions regarding curriculum and took pictures with your iPhone. In addition you continued to take notes for almost an hour or more; all items mentioned constitute a class disruption.”*

Although approaching students directly, engaging in physical altercations, and threatening others’ safety violate a policy or laws, these merited their own sections as the cases were more egregious.

**Pattern:**

Sixty percent of all situations involving a policy violation also reportedly began with a verbal exchange that escalated, as when staff approached the person to enforce a policy. Some parents would react by questioning the policy, disregarding the request, or refusing to comply with the request. It is important to note that the letters show only the school administration’s version of what happened, with no information on how staff handled the situation, and **whether staff contributed in any way to the situation escalating.**

- 3. Parents Approaching Students:** Eighty-five DPLs were issued for situations where parents approached children other than their own to directly to talk to them, touched their arm or shoulder to re-direct them, reprimanded or confronted them, threatened them, or physically struck them. In 13 instances or 15 percent of the cases, the DPL indicated that adults physically hurt (hit or wrestled) children.

*Pattern:* In 29 of these cases (about 34 percent), bullying was a precipitating factor, where a parent approached one or more students in an attempt to stop the bullying of his or her child.

In some instances, administrators noted that children witnessed an offense such as verbal interactions or physical altercations. In all, there were 169 instances where children were witnesses to (84) or the object of (85) inappropriate adult behavior in a school.

Table 14: Situations Involving Children

Witnessed adult(s) behaving inappropriately	84
Reprimanded or confronted verbally	59
Touched (grabbed arm, touched shoulder)	10
Physically assaulted (hit, wrestled)	13
Inappropriate relationship or touching	2
Took someone else’s child home without parent’s consent	1
	169

**4. Physical Altercations:** In 32 occasions adults engaged in physical altercations. All of these situations began with heated verbal exchanges that escalated to physical altercations between parents, or between parents and staff. Instances where parents physically confronted staff tended to be in the main office. When parents confronted other parents, it was usually during dismissal time. In eight of these instances, police were called to intervene.

Table 15: Type of Altercation:

Parent vs parent	21
Parent vs staff	10
Parent vs unclear	1
Total	32

**5. Threats:** Overall the words “threat,” “threatening manner,” and “felt threatened” were used in 121 or 25 percent of the letters. However, depending on the context of each situation these threats were treated differently.

**a. Sixty-five** letters documented general threats describing situations where parents’ demeanor, tone of voice, and/or words expressed anger. Many of these letters described the parent as speaking or looking at others in a “threatening manner.” However, most of these situations did not lead to an administrator or staff summoning police, unless situations escalated to physical altercations. Police were called more often in situations where parents would not calm down, even if staff did not feel directly threatened; the word “threat” was not mentioned in all letters.

Table 16: Types of Threats

General verbal threats (e.g. when person is angry, generally hostile toward others, or is intoxicated)	65
Verbal threats specific to individuals	40
Verbal threats specific to hurting the school, people in it	4
Credible threats to hurt individuals or the school	10
Negligent actions potentially endangering others	2
	121

**b. Forty** letters document verbal threats that were directed at specific persons, mostly at other parents, teachers, staff and, in some cases, children. Typically when the targeted individual became distressed by the threat, the letter would mention the emotional toll this person had suffered as a result of the incident. However, these actions only tended to be documented for teachers or school staff, and not for other parents or children who felt threatened. Besides writing the letter and documenting the threat, the letters did not mention any other special precaution taken to support those who reported feeling threatened.

**c.** There were **four** instances where parents threatened to harm the school and/or people in it by verbally describing specific actions they would take (e.g., burning the school down, shooting others).

**d.** There were **ten** situations where people made threats thought to be credible because of past disruptions they had caused at the school or because they displayed a weapon (a knife or gun).

**It is important to note that we were unable to assess from the letters whether a specific verbal threat made by the recipient was credible.** What tends to be documented most often are verbal threats made when existing relationships became strained; for example, between spouses, among unrelated parents, or between parents and staff. However, in more dangerous situations where a person resorted to violence, there wasn't much time for verbal threats. For example, in several cases, a person decided to approach children to reprimand or confront them about bullying. They seldom mentioned their plans to officials in advance, instead acting immediately. When persons did so on impulse, causing the situation to quickly escalate, typically this was because the person was already upset prior to entering campus or due to previous negative interactions with that same person.

## **6. Patterns and Observations:**

**a. Bullying-Related Incidents:** Forty-five letters were issued for incidents related to bullying, when parents entered the school, intending to stop their child from being bullied. Thirty-eight (84 percent) of these situations began with verbal exchanges with school staff, and another seven (or 15.5 percent) approaching students directly. However, of the 38 situations that started with a parent speaking to staff, 22 escalated rapidly from a single offense to multiple offenses during a single visit. For instance, after stopping by the main office, parents would proceed to talk to staff and/or approach students directly in an attempt to stop those children from bullying their child. Some parents expressed dissatisfaction with the way their child's being bullied was apparently not being investigated, or they tried to conduct their own investigation and persuade others to serve as witnesses for them.

In two cases the parents witnessed a student's aggression toward their own child, and in another case the child came out of the school with blood stains on their clothes. When parents saw their child hurt, they expressed ire, raised their voice, or used an aggravated tone of voice toward others. Although their reaction is understandable given the circumstances, they nevertheless received DPLs from school officials.

**b. Use of Police:** The police were called 45 times or 10% of the situations. Of these, 25 (or 55%) were due to verbal altercations with staff, mostly in the main office. These infractions include:

- i. **Nine incidents** where the parent was already upset when entering the school or became upset soon after, and police were called to calm them down.
- ii. **Six incidents** where parents became loud once on campus, causing disruptions in classrooms or at school events.
- iii. **Five incidents** where parents defied staff by using foul language, improperly filling in the visitor log and then refusing to correct it, refusing to leave the office until they were seen and the matter concerning them was resolved, or due to accusations they made about the principal.

- iv. **Four incidents where** parents needed to pick up children early but were not able to do so because they did not have proper identification or, when they did provide ID, they were alleged to be upset and “argumentative.” These scenarios escalated to the point that parents were escorted out of the office by school police, with their children upset (if they were present) and the child not understanding why they couldn’t leave with their parent.
- v. **Two incidents where** parents were called to pick up the child because he/she was sick or needed a change of clothes, but when the parent arrived at school, the staff were dealing with more urgent matters, such as a “lockdown” or paramedics present. The parent wanted to see their child, but staff could not attend to this and instead asked parents to leave. The parent would not leave, became agitated, and then school police were called.
- vi. **In one incident**, the parent simply showed up and, based on nothing more than their previous interactions with staff, school police were called.

In eight remaining cases, police were called due to physical altercations, and in nine cases, police were asked to intervene in situations involving court orders or criminal activity (e.g., parents carrying knives, stealing, making false statements on an application, and an expelled student trespassing). Other situations when police were called involve three bullying-related incidents where a teacher was touched by the parent, or when students were being intimidated or physically hurt by a parent.

Pattern: Of the 13 incidents where children were physically hurt (e.g., wrestled or hit) by adults, police were called in only two instances to intervene. One explanation for this is that many incidents related to bullying happen during dismissal time when there are too many things happening at once to be noticed by staff, or after school when there is less supervision on campus.

- c. **No Context:** There were 63 instances where the letters only said parents were “disruptive” but did not provide specific details about the allegation or an explanation as to what contributed to the situation.
- d. **DPLs after Parent Transfers Child to Another School:** In four instances principals issued a DPL even after the parent had transferred their child to a different school.
- e. **Automatic DPL Renewals:** In two instances parents received automatic DPL renewals without any new offenses being alleged. These recipients seemed to be essentially “blacklisted,” and restrictions on them extended, regardless of changes in school administration or the beginning of new school years.
- f. **DPLs for Employee-Related Issues:** Eleven cases were related to employment issues, such as a contractor cutting a tree during school hours, a part-time assistant running an after-school program, or husbands/boyfriends interrupting the

wives'/girlfriends' work at school. It is not clear why these issues were not resolved through other departments (i.e., Operations, Human Resources).

**7. Identifying Type of Offenses in Letters from Principals Issuing 5 or More DPLs**

Given that only 11 percent of principals issued about 33 percent, or fully one-third, of all DPLs, we analyzed the type of offenses cited in their letters. Table 17 shows that **high-DPL-issuing principals consistently account for at least 29 percent of all incidents in each offense category. They also account for 42 percent of all bullying cases and police calls reported.**

Table 17: Percentage of Offenses Cited by 11% of Principals Issuing 5 DPLs or More

Offense	# of Offenses in Letters from Principals Issuing 5+ DPLs	Total # of Offenses in all letters	Contribution from 11% of principals to total # of DPLs
Verbal Behaviors	127	389	33%
Policy or Procedural Violations	55	187	29%
Approaching Children	31	85	36%
Physical Altercations	10	32	31%
Threats	44	121	36%
Bullying	19	45	42%
Police	19	45	42%

The high incidence of cases in all categories show staff and parents often experiencing conflict. High levels of conflict in a school may be due to staff’s conflict resolution skills and communication style. When conflict is not resolved in the early stages, it escalates. Hence the higher number of threats, bullying cases, physical altercations, and police calls. Also the large number of parents approaching children may be explained by a high incidence of bullying. If reports of bullying occurrences are not being investigated promptly or if parents are not kept abreast of the investigations, they are more likely to approach other children and their parents directly in an attempt to resolve the situation. This can lead to verbal and physical altercations.

However, after reviewing the type of physical altercations reported, it was found that of the ten fights, five (50 percent) happened between parents, four (40 percent) happened between a parent and staff, and one (10 percent) the identities of parties involved was unclear. **This shows higher percentages of aggression between staff and parents,** since for the larger sample of 32 physical altercations, 21 (66 percent) of the fights happened between parents, and 10 (31 percent) happened between parents and staff, and one (3

percent) was unclear. This reaffirms the need to support staff in resolving conflict, in order to interact effectively and work collaboratively with parents and others.

**ii. Places and Times Where Disruptive Behavior Occurs**

Over 39 percent of letters just referred to the situation happening on a school campus in general. About 18 percent of incidents happened in the main office, and about 15 percent in multiple locations. Some of the DPLs were issued for exchanges or interactions that did not happen in person but over the Internet, on Facebook, or over the phone. (See Table 18.)

Table 18: Places where “Disruptive” Behavior Occurs

Place	Number	%
School campus in general	184	38%
Main Office (Reception, Principal's Office, Nurse's Office)	89	18%
Multiple spots	73	15%
Classroom (or with teacher)	39	8%
Drop Off / Pick Up Areas (Parking, Front of School, Gates)	31	7%
Meeting (multipurpose room, parent center, SSC, ELAC, IEP meeting)	28	6%
Event (game, performances, assembly, dance)	10	2%
Staff areas (teachers’ lounge, parking, entrance)	8	2%
Playground and Lunch Area	8	2%
Over the phone	3	1%
Internet	3	1%
	476	100%

**iii. Frequency of Offenses Over Time**

Given that LAUSD’s legal counsel mentioned at the ECEPE meeting in June that DPLs are supposed to be given as a last resort to curb inappropriate behavior, and that ideally there would be warnings (i.e. verbal or written) given to parents before issuing a letter, we analyzed the number of offenses over a

Table 19: Frequency of Offenses Over Time

	#	%
One Offense / Single Visit	231	49%
Same Offense / Multiple Visits	65	13%
Multiple Offenses / Single Visit	127	27%
Multiple Offenses / Multiple Visits	53	11%
	476	

period of time and divided into 5 categories: 1) one offense during a single visit, 2) same offense during multiple visits, 3) multiple offenses during a single visit, 4) multiple offenses during multiple visits, including those recipients with multiple letters.

The data in Table 19, indicates the following:

- **49 percent of all letters were issued to parents for a one-time offense;** many of these letters document violations of school rules and procedures.

- Twenty-seven percent of letters were issued to parents that committed multiple offenses during a single visit. These letters usually described more egregious situations that escalated from verbal to physical altercations, disrupted school performances or events, early check-out cases, or bullying cases where a parent came into the main office then tried to address the issue with others on campus, including teachers, children, or other staff.
- Thirteen percent of letters are issued to parents that violate the same offense several times. These include parents who failed to sign in, interrupted classroom instruction to ask questions during visits or observations, or those who came to the main office to request information but showed disrespect toward staff more than one time.
- Eleven percent of cases where parents have come in multiple times and behaved inappropriately, as recorded by school staff. Some of these cases included parents that received letters before, and in other cases it was their first time receiving a letter, but the DPL documented different incidents over a period of time that may have extended beyond a single school year. In other words, the school administrators had included different incidents that happened more than one year prior, which may or may not have been discussed with the parent until the letter was issued, or that may or may not be related to the new offense.

**iv. DPL Consequences: Warning and Bans**

- a. Warnings.** Most DPLs did not mention warning parents. This in part because 76 percent of DPLs were issued on the first visit, including those that allegedly committed a single or multiple offenses. Of the remaining 24 percent letters, it was unclear if a warning had been issued in 52 letters; 24 letters reported previously warning parents in writing; 34 letters mentioned giving verbal warning to parents; 8 letters mentioned having meetings with parents on previous issues. Given the 52 unclear situations, and that 38 parents in this sample have multiple DPLs (usually coming from the same school or principal) and only 24 letters referenced previous DPLs, it can be deduced that documenting warnings is not a requirement and therefore it is not systematically included in the letters.

Next, the actual consequences described in the letters were reviewed to determine how many letters were intended as written warnings and how many were bans. Per Table 20, 19 percent of the letters issued were formal warnings. The remaining 81 percent were effectively bans, restricting parent access to school campus.

Table 20: DPL Consequences: Warning and Bans

	Warning	Ban
One Offense / Single Visit	59	172
Multiple Offenses / Single Visit	20	107
Same Offense / Multiple Visits	5	60
Multiple Offenses/Multiple Visits	6	47
	90 (19%)	386 (81%)

Of the 231 letters given on the first offense, 25 percent were warnings and the remaining 75 percent were bans. For DPLs with multiple offenses during single visit letters, 16 percent of the letters were warnings. For DPLs with

multiple offenses over multiple visits, 10 percent of letters were warnings.

- b. Type of Bans:** Of 386 DPLs issued, **99 percent restricted parent access to the entire campus**, which has implications for student drop-off and pick-up, as well as the ease with which parents may attend school meetings and events. Only three letters (or about 1 percent) included restrictions that limit access only to specific locations where the problem had occurred (e.g., parent center, cafeteria).

**c. Length of Time Ban is in Effect**

For 97% percent of the letters, the length of time the ban is in effect was not specified. The remaining 3 percent of letters varied in the length of time given, from a single sports season to the current school year and next. (See Table 21.)

Table 21: Length of Time Ban is in Effect

Not specified	377
Remainder sport season	1
Remainder of calendar year	1
Remainder of current school year	5
Remainder of current school year and next	2
	386

Not specifying the length of the restriction can lead to future DPLs as a parent may violate the DPL simply by not being aware of when the restriction ends.

**d. Additional Instructions Included in Bans**

In addition to restricting parent access to the school campus, the letters provide some instructions on how to interact in the future. The standard language of the letters instructs parents to call to schedule an appointment before visiting campus and specifies that administrator approval is required to enter campus. Other frequent instructions included:

- Drop off/ pick up child at main office, outside the school, or make arrangements for someone else to drop off/pick up child. (40 times)
- Must be escorted/supervised by administrator when engaging staff. (26 times)

Not a single DPL provided instructions on how to appeal the letter or how a parent might work with the school administrator to regain normal access to campus.

**V. DATA ANALYSIS REVIEW FROM INTERVIEWS**

All six persons interviewed were parents of at least one child who currently attends an LAUSD school. All six received DPLs from an elementary school, with one receiving a letter from a middle school as well. The DPLs for these parents were issued by principals in Local District West (2), Local District Central (2), and Local District South (2). All six recipients are active in their child’s or children’s school(s) and have observed classrooms and volunteered; five of the six had been elected to serve on school- or district- advisory committees and/or councils. Two were male and four female. Two were a male-female couple. One of the parents in the couple only answered some but not all of the questions.

**A. Frequency of Offenses over Time**

Four of the six parents interviewed had encountered problems with the school and were not able to resolve them before the letter was issued. They received multiple letters, between two and 10, from between one and five school sites over the past decade. Please note that most of their letters were not included in the group of 476 letters received through PON’s Public Records Act request. One of the parents received five DPLs within a six-week period in May and June of 2015, as they kept trying to have the root of the problem addressed, and asking that the previous DPLs be rescinded. The remaining two parents were a couple with only one offense; one of the parents was involved in an incident that got him banned from campus. Consequently, the wife agreed to visit the school and submit a written response to the DPL given to her husband, a response she shared with several teachers. The principal then issued a separate DPL to the wife.

**B. Alleged and Perceived Reasons for Receiving a Letter:**

Although the allegations parents mentioned the most during the interviews vary, the majority of these include violations of school rules or procedures, as opposed to more egregious or violent offenses (see Table 22).

**Parents’ Perceived Reasons for Receiving the Letter**

All six interviewees reported that allegations and other statements contained in their letters were either exaggerated (incidents did not occur as claimed) or completely fabricated (incidents never occurred), and that they were not given any prior warning before receiving a letter, with no opportunity to defend themselves against the allegations or to challenge the accuracy of allegations. Five of the six interviewees mentioned a suspicion that the real reason for receiving a letter was because they had been vocal or persistent in challenging policies

being enforced (e.g., classroom visitations were limited to 20 minutes, in violation of District policy and state law), pointing out improprieties at School Site Council meetings (e.g., audio recording not permitted, business conducted without a quorum, voting not done for action items on the agenda, administrators running the meeting rather than elected chairpersons), or flagging to principal and district officials that their child’s teacher was giving contradictory grades for different tests and assessments. One of the parents felt that the staff incited situations so she would react, and then used her reactions against her in the letter.

Table 22: Type of Alleged Offenses by Interviewees

Type of Offenses	
<b>Verbal Exchanges</b>	<b>3</b>
<i>Demanding, disrespectful, disruptive</i>	2
<i>Not satisfied with timeliness of reports</i>	1
<b>Violating Procedures</b>	<b>12</b>
<i>Entered school without permission</i>	1
<i>Entered classroom without permission</i>	1
<i>Stayed in classroom too long; Too many classroom visits</i>	2
<i>Disrupted instructional environment</i>	1
<i>Went into employees only area</i>	1
<i>Seen taking photos</i>	1
<i>Tape recorded a school council meeting</i>	1
<i>Urged other parents to take action</i>	2
<i>Refused to comply with a request</i>	2
<b>Parents Approaching Students</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Physical Altercations</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Threats</b>	<b>3</b>
<i>Accused of stealing</i>	1
<i>Made others feel uncomfortable, unsafe</i>	2

**C. Parent Actions after Receiving the Letter**

All parents interviewed took action after receiving the letter, by attempting to meet with the principal, asking for the letter to be rescinded, or requesting that the letter be reviewed by the principal’s supervisor or an administrator from their local district (see Table 23). During this process parents inquired about the duration of the restrictions and the process for appealing the DPL, but they received different answers from different District personnel, ranging from no reply, to being told the letter would only remain in effect for the current school year (though the staffer in question was not willing to put this in writing), or merely supporting a principal’s decision. One parent recalled appealing to the principal’s director for intervention but instead being told, **“When it comes to things like this, the District backs the principal 100 percent.”**

Table 23: Type of Action after Receiving a Letter

Type of Action and Outcomes	Frequency
Spoke with, wrote letter to principal <i>Outcome: Principal refused to meet or refused to rescind the letter.</i>	5
Declined to meet with principal without a witness present. <i>Outcome: Nothing changed</i>	1
Contacted other School Staff for Support <i>Outcome: No staff provided supporting statements to parents.</i>	2
Contacted Local District Staff <i>Outcome: Local district staff did not respond when they were carbon copied on letters, and when contacted directly upheld principal’s actions.</i>	5
Hired an Attorney (not to appeal the but to resolve student issues parent originally sought to address) <i>Outcome: The State intervened and ruled in student’s favor to provide the services needed.</i>	1

In one case, the parent was successful in getting the Local District and LAUSD superintendents to intervene. Consequently, the principal reconsidered her original position, while she did not rescind the DPLs the parent’s child was allowed to stay at the school, since the student was enrolled on an inter-district permit that had not been renewed after the DPLs were issued. The Local District continued assisting both the administrator and parent in managing the conflict.

Another parent was eventually successful in meeting with their Administrator of Operations (AO), but as soon as the meeting began, the AO adopted an accusatory tone, implying that this parent was a problem since they had purportedly received previous DPLs from principals at other elementary sites. The parent reported feeling very intimidated by this behavior, as well as by the fact that two school officers sat through the entire meeting.

It is important to note that five of the six parents responded that even if they did not agree with the letter, they followed its instructions to call in advance and request the principal’s permission before visiting the campus.

Two parents mentioned that their requests, typically to visit their child's classroom or attend schoolwide events, were sometimes denied without explanation. A parent talked of being a member of the school's ELAC, with the principal telling them that since they were a member, they did not need to get permission to attend these meetings. Yet at the very next ELAC meeting, school police were called and escorted them off the premises. They received a phone call from the principal shortly thereafter, informing them that because their mere presence had "disrupted" the ELAC meeting, they were no longer allowed to attend a GATE parent meeting scheduled later that same day, permission for which had already been granted.

Another parent mentioned being repeatedly threatened with arrest should she not comply with the letter's restrictions. Nonetheless, five of the six parents kept their children enrolled in the same schools where the DPLs were issued. As parents considered their options they prioritized their children's wellbeing. Moving children can be very disruptive, especially if the child has established friendships, if the school is close to home and is more convenient or, in the case of one parent, because their child was attending a high-performing, gifted-magnet school, having excellent teachers with whom the parent had very good relationships. For most parents, though, it can be overwhelming to think about switching schools midyear. Also, a parent might worry that their "bad reputation" would follow them to a new school. The parent that transferred her child to another school did so because the retaliation from staff affected his wellbeing and learning.

**D. DPL Impact on Parents: Feelings of Helplessness and Desperation**

Overall parents report experiencing emotions ranging from feeling sad, angry, frustrated, powerless, desperate, and ultimately devastated, given that they had been actively involved in their child's school, could not find any way to defend themselves, and felt there was "no way out" to get the principal's decision reviewed or overturned. Some were allowed to continue participating on committees at the local and District levels but could only observe at events or school programs rather than assist in coordinating these, as they had been doing prior to receiving a DPL. Others found themselves being allowed to participate at the District level, in advisory committees, but not at their child's school. Parents experienced additional distress in having to explain to their children why they were no longer able to be on campus when they had formerly been a frequent, active presence on campus.

Nevertheless, as engaged, experienced, knowledgeable leaders, these parents are resilient and have continued to advocate for their children and for all children. As one parent said:

*"If I go through this, I cannot imagine what other parents go through when they don't know their rights."*

**E. DPL Impact on Students: Some Children Face Retaliation**

The impact on the children varied, from classmates noticing and asking why their parent no longer volunteers, to being retaliated against by school staff. Two parents acknowledged that the school did not retaliate, while two other felt their children had missed out on programs or activities because they were no longer present as frequently at the school, and they had to find resources outside the school to help their children. However, two different

parents mentioned that their children did suffer retaliation. One said her child would be punished for things she had not done, while the other told us that her child was intimidated by being questioned by police officers in the principal's office. The child was so traumatized that he had to see a psychologist, but after three years of private schooling, he is again attending a District school.

**F. Parents' Reflections**

Given that time has passed and the parents have had a chance to reflect on their situations, two of them feel that perhaps their behavior could have been different, "could have not been so insistent or made such an issue of things." However, other parents feel that, given their active engagement, and the questions, opinions, and problems they were asking the school to resolve, they probably would still have received a letter at some point or another. Four of the six parents insisted that they did not do anything wrong and that the school administrators abused their authority, instigated situations and/or misapplied the rules when issuing DPLs. They all agree no parent should be given DPLs for the behavior they engaged in. These parents feel lawsuits are the only way to get the district to resolve problems. Three of these parents are writing letters to policy makers on the issue and they urge other parents to do the same. Their recommendations to improve the policies and procedures on DPLs and to strengthen relations with parents are included in Section VII of the report.

**VI. FINDINGS**

The local and state policies that give school administrators the authority to issue DPLs were enacted to keep students safe in a disruption-free learning environment. However, the current system has the following flaws that prevent it from being more effective:

- A. The definition of "disruptive" behavior has expanded beyond egregious acts of "willfully interfering with activities" or "intentionally disrupting, obstructing, or inflicting damage"** to include a wide range of routine and minor policy or procedural violations and verbal behaviors are now interpreted as disrespectful, and/or threatening and ultimately labeled and sanctioned as disruptive. However, most of the situations described in the DPLs happened by accident due to lack of knowledge of the rules, carelessness, miscommunication due to differing communication and conflict resolution styles, or lack of understanding of how their actions disrupt the learning environment. In the end, the expanded definition generates a higher number of DPLs, some of which are legitimate and many that are not.
  
- B. DPLs expose an inherent, unresolved conflict of goals that is likely to continue recurring in schools and growing in coming years.** Administrators prioritize maintaining order over building relationships, addressing individual parent requests or concerns, and resolving conflict. Consequently, staff have difficulty dealing with parents who express criticism or dissatisfaction with a perceived lack of customer service, or who are vocal in advocating for

their children or for changes to school policies. Many DPLs seem to be issued for the sole reason of keeping a parent away from the school if a principal feels that their authority is being challenged (i.e., when the right words and tone are not said to the right person at the right time) or when parents are viewed as distractions, annoyances or “troublemakers.” DPLs seem to be the solution of choice for some principals, since 32 percent of them issued five or more DPLs over the past four years, whether in response to actual disruptive offenses or not.

The challenge is that parents’ prioritize their child’s well-being (physical and emotional safety, learning) and securing opportunities or resources that will help their child or children in their community develop fully and thrive in life. This points to an inherent and unresolved conflict in goals that will continue to occur in schools and is likely to grow, if existing policies, or perhaps the entire practice of parent engagement is not changed, given that current state and federal laws require greater parent and family engagement, and that the data shows a positive trend of DPL use over the four past years.

- C. The system is not designed to recognize and differentiate the reasons why a parent is angry or having difficulty managing his or her emotions.** It is therefore unable to: determine if anger is a natural and appropriate response to a situation; identify the root cause problem the parents seek to address; differentiate cases that pose more of a threat than others; and adopt different responses to resolve cases more appropriately. For example, parents trying to resolve bullying situations are more sensitive than others, but the system simply processes their behavior as “Angry. Not complying with policies”. With bullying cases, issuing a DPL may increase the likelihood that the parent will be even more frustrated, thereby escalating the situation and making the campus and specific students less, not more, safe.
- D. The practice of DPL issuance and letter templates used by principals are often not used as described by district officials at the June 2, 2016 ECEPE meeting.** Forty-nine percent of DPLs were issued without warning over non-egregious first time offenses, without specific citations of the inappropriate behavior, without an explanation on what the restriction means and for how long it would be in effect. Without these details, DPLs essentially ban parents from schools for minor offenses indefinitely and infringe upon their right to participate in their children’s educations.
- E. The current system gives too much discretion to site administrators, without a process to investigate the legitimacy of, or to appeal, DPLs.** Given that principals have the sole discretion of reporting what happened in a given situation, the letters fail to capture the parents’ side of the story. or anyone else’s view of what actually happened, and administrators seem to have no reason to assess or acknowledge whether their staff’s or their own verbal and emotional response (tone of voice, choice of words) to the potential conflict was appropriate, professional, and/or if their choices at the time contributed to either diffusing or escalating a situation. Ultimately, having a system in place whereby administrators are the only ones allowed to provide their version of events leaves parents

without recourse to appeal a DPL, and allows a small number of principals (11 percent) to generate a great number (32 percent) of DPLs. The absence of a verification and accountability mechanism provides the opportunity for abuse of a principal's discretion or power, which we believe may result in discrimination, retaliation, harassment and oppression, and which calls into question the legitimacy of the system itself.

- F. The system only monitors and documents the ways in which inappropriate adult behavior from visitors harms children, but children are also affected when parents receive DPLs.** According to the interviewees, children are also affected when they see their parents are no longer welcomed at their school, when they hear comments or gossip from other adults or children about their parents, or when they are retaliated against or held responsible for their parent's behavior. The latter is truly a reproachable practice that disrupts a student's learning both at school and at home. It is also unknown if any supports are given to children that were physically attacked by an adult after an incident documented in a DPL happens or if the initial problems the parents were trying to address on behalf of their children (i.e. related to learning, bullying) before receiving the DPL are ever resolved.
- G. The system works best at maintaining an orderly environment and keeping students safe during the school day if there is only one entrance and all visitors comply in entering the campus through the main office.** But the system is weakened when visitors find other ways to enter the school. For example, many physical altercations and some of the bullying happen during dismissal time and after school when the campus is more open and there is less supervision.
- H. The system assumes aggressors will verbalize their intentions and threaten others before engaging in harmful or unsafe actions.** It punishes those whom express their anger verbally toward staff. In fact, those adults that did resort to violence said fewer words, if any. This typically happened because the person was already upset when coming to campus or due to previous negative interactions with the other person.
- I. It is unclear to what extent, if any, race, culture, and socioeconomic status play a role in conflict situations between parents and administrators, as this information was not available.** Other studies on conflict between administrators and students, or on student discipline, show that school administrators use "willful defiance" as the primary reason for suspending students. Like "willful defiance," the definition of "disruptive" is similarly subjective. Studies have found that the broad interpretation of "willful defiance" impacts students of color disproportionately because implicit racial and other biases play a factor when issuing disciplinary actions.
- J. It is unclear whether DPLs are an effective means of ensuring the safety of students and staff, and whether administrators are receiving adequate training in safety protocols.** In reviewing the DPLs, it became clear that there were multiple situations where children and

staff were threatened or assaulted, yet police were not called. Instead, police were too often summoned over verbal exchanges between parents and staff in the main office.

## VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

To recalibrate the system so that it is centered on protecting children and staff and strengthening relationships with parents to better identify and address students' needs, here are the following recommendations:

### A. District Level Policy & Procedure Modifications:

#### 1. Clarifying the Process of DPL Issuance

- i. **Provide instruction to differentiate responses to parent behavior;** identify the root cause problem the parents seek to address; differentiate cases that pose more of a threat than others; and adopt different responses to resolve cases more appropriately. For example:
  - For parents violating school policies and rules encourage dialogue and explaining the rules and their impact on the learning environment.
  - If a parent volunteers, require that they have training and that the training addresses that they cannot touch children (not even their arm, or shoulder).
  - If a parent requests to observe a classroom and it is their first time observing at this school, require staff to review the rules and responsibilities to exercise that right. Providing additional information on what to look for in classrooms and what to expect when learning is happening would be also beneficial to enhance their experience.
  - To resolve problems due to lack of identification, adopt an alternative "password practice" where parents answer two or three questions or set a password on the child's emergency card to verify their identity as parents or legal guardians.
  - If parent are observed using photography, video or audiotaping, explain why there are rules against these activities and how this could hurt children.
  - When a parent points out inconsistencies and violations with policies, remind school administrators to not take it personally.
- ii. **Talk calmly to parents who enter the office and appear distressed or angered.** Try to find out the reason behind their emotional state. Listening to them is likely to calm them down. Providing guidance, resources, making calls or sending messages to address the situation will help them resolve problems and can help diffuse conflicts between parents and staff before they get out of hand.
- iii. **When a parent does not calm down, issue an emergency DPL to restrict access for an specific period of time, 48 to 72 hours,** to allow parents and staff to calm down before attempting to resolve the issue in a meeting. The emergency DPL can serve as a warning. However, restricting parental access to their child's school for an extended period of time (potentially months or years), when all they did is become upset and lose their temper on a single occasion, should not be acceptable.

- iv. **Clarify that actions which are not willful or not intentionally disruptive, such as verbal behaviors and minor policy violations, do not qualify as grounds for restricting parents' access to school for an extended period of time.** Explain to principals that restricting parental access hinders parent engagement and that minor offenses can nearly always be resolved more effectively using other strategies.
- v. **When parents come onto campus to intentionally disrupt instruction in classrooms or school events, if they display weapons, or engage in physical violence with others, then call the police and issue a DPL.** These situations are why such laws exist.

**2. Update the letter template used by principals to ensure DPLs includes the following:**

- i. The date of the letter;
- ii. Cite the specific behavior(s) or offenses for DPL;
- iii. Provide context of the situation (if previously warned with a letter, date of incident, describe how and why it happened);
- iv. Specify the type of campus restriction: entire campus, only sections of it;
- v. Specify the length of the restriction;
- vi. Clarify how a parent can continue to be active in their child's education by explaining how the DPL impacts their involvement for student drop off/pick up, classroom observations, field trips, attendance in parent-teacher conferences, school meetings, or events.
- vii. Outline the process to appeal and/or restore access. Include information for a contact person at the local district who will be responsible for reviewing the appeal.
- viii. In addition to attaching a copy of the laws and policies giving principals the authority to restrict school campus access, require attaching a copy of the previous written warning provided to parents.

**3. Offer assistance in mediating conflict between staff and parents.** If the staff and parent have met at least once within the current school year to address the issue but cannot agree on the solution, then provide parents with the information to contact the local district for a review of the issue at a higher level.

**4. Review the district policy and procedure to investigate and resolve bullying cases.**

- i. Review the timeline for investigating reports, including how parents are kept informed throughout the investigation process.
- ii. If possible, designate specialized staff at the district and site level who will be responsible for resolving these cases, and provide them with additional training (conflict resolution, de-escalation techniques) to work with parents and students during times of stress.

- iii. In an effort to deter future violence, develop procedures to inform staff of active bullying cases and identify the alleged bullies and children being bullied and their parents. Make sure a suspected bully knows they will be watched at all times.
- iv. Avoid issuing a DPL to these parents. If a DPL must be issued, then assume the responsibility of giving the children involved (both the bully and the target) greater protection, and discuss with their respective parents the plans for getting the children safely to and from school.

**B. Training for School Staff:**

- 1. **Provide training to any staff member that interacts with parents** on customer service, conflict resolution, and de-escalation techniques, and identifying credible threats, and know how to document the details needed to issue a written warning since a great number of verbal altercations between parents and staff happen at the main office when they violate a school policy or procedure. Staff should be able to demonstrate the ability to apply what was learned in the training.
- 2. **Prioritize training for principals who have issued five or more DPLs and their main office staff.** These situations merit immediate technical assistance given the high incidence of conflict between staff and parents. See also recommendations on page 36-37 to strengthen relationships with parents.
- 3. **Evaluate principals and staff on how they work with parents in the school and in the community as well, on whether they increased parent participation.**

**C. Training for Parents at School Sites:**

- 1. **Providing parents with a booklet of rights to review on their own is not enough. Principals need to review the rules most frequently violated with parents at “Back to School Night” events.** Tips:
  - Frame the discussion around building a positive relationship with parents to support children, as opposed to adopting an authoritarian tone and instructing people to “follow the rules.”
  - Acknowledge that there are many rules schools and parents are supposed to follow in order to keep students safe. Many parents are unaware that scolding, disciplining, or touching a child who is not their own violates District policies and state law.
  - Parents would also benefit from a training about bullying: What constitutes bullying behaviors and what does not, and how a child’s developmental stage influences their behavior.
  - Describe or role-play expectations as well as consequences, if a person violates a rule one or more times.
  - Offer ways parents can provide input to improve existing rules or procedures. Assure them that having fair, equitable rules and procedures in place is as

important as parents knowing and adhering to these agreed-upon rules in order to help their school do its most important job: Providing the most optimal environment possible where children can learn and thrive.

**2. Offer formal orientations to new parents** with opportunities for parents and staff to dialogue about rights and responsibilities, school rules and procedures and why these are necessary, and how to navigate the school and district to seek resources and resolve problems at school.

**3. Before a parent is granted permission to volunteer or observe a classroom, schools need to provide training on what to do and what not to do.**

**D. Strengthen Relations with Parents**

**1. Establish an Office of the Parent Advocate by creating a specific unit to help resolve conflict between administrators and parents.** This unit could specialize in training staff on conflict resolution and processing parent grievances. Ideally this branch would work together with Restorative Justice staff, so the same philosophies and practices are promoted throughout the system to improve school climate and help strengthen relations with students and parents.

**2. Engage Parents in Identifying the Problems and Finding Solutions**

**i. Review Current Procedures and Update School Safety Plans at the School Site:**

By law, School Site Councils (SSCs) or School Safety Committees update their school safety plans on an annual basis (California Education Code, Sections 32282 and 32288). These bodies should review incidents that have caused disruptions or threatened safety at their schools to determine if they need to rethink some of the following procedures: Campus entry points; drop-off and pick-up procedures; campus supervision during dismissal and after school; process to resolve bullying cases; and to assess their office staff's approach when helping parents resolve issues, even when the parent is distressed or irate.

Recommended questions to discuss core issues related to these problems:

- During regular operating hours, how can parents enter the campus?
- Are there specific rules at or near dismissal time that parents keep violating? What can we do to improve the student pick-up process or improve adherence to the rule?
- How do staff view parents – as partners and allies, or as distractions and problems? What is the principal's own philosophy for working with parents?
- How could students and staff get help if they find themselves in dangerous situations during school hours, after school hours or when there is little or no supervision? How do other school campuses that are open and with

less supervision (e.g., community colleges, universities) deal with this situation?

- ii. **Assess School Climate:** Improved relations with parents will result in higher trust levels that are likely to increase compliance with rules and thereby reduce disruptions. Higher trust levels will also improve school climate, which would make students and staff on campus safer.

Require district administrators to review with site administrators the reasons why DPLs were issued and the school's results of the annual LAUSD School Experience Survey (SES), which is administered to students, parents, and school staff during the spring semester to identify improvement areas that may be causing the conflict. To add additional questions, consider reviewing the California Parent Survey, the California Healthy Kids Survey for students, and the California School Climate Survey for staff Schools. (Source: California Department of Education: [www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/at/csps.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/at/csps.asp))

**As an overarching philosophy, “Listen to parents; don’t restrict their access to campus when they are informed and empowered, because they are your most crucial partners in educating children.”**

## VIII. CONCLUSION

Laws and District policies give school principals a “shield,” a system of procedures to protect children’s safety and their learning environment. Let’s modify the policies and procedures so that the system actually does what it’s intended to do, while strengthening relationships with parents. Maintaining the safety of students while building stronger relationships with their parents are not mutually exclusive concepts. Both are achievable if schools truly reframe the role of parents as true partners. After all, no school administrator can do it alone, for the education and the safety of children in schools is a shared responsibility with parents, staff, and other stakeholders inside and outside a school.

## IX. END NOTES

1. Cal. Educ. Code § Article 4.5 Local Control and Accountability Plans added by Stats. 2013, Ch. 47, Sec. 103
2. Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Title I, Section 1116
3. 20 U.S.C. § 6318
4. Cal. Educ. Code § 44800-44824
5. LAUSD Board Rules 1265 and 2002, and BUL-6492.0
6. Parent Recommendations to LAUSD, 4/19/2016, Early Childhood Education and Parent Engagement Committee, Los Angeles Unified School District  
<https://boe.lausd.net/sites/default/files/06-02-16ECEParentRecommendations.pdf>
7. Parents as Partners Within LAUSD Update, 6/2/2016, Early Childhood Education and Parent Engagement Committee, Los Angeles Unified School District,  
<https://boe.lausd.net/sites/default/files/06-02n16ECEParentsasPartnersWithinLAUSDUpdate.pdf>
8. LAUSD Office of Data and Accountability, School Information Branch, Alphabetical List of 2015-2016 K-12, [www.lausd.net/lausd/offices/bulletins/school-listings/ICB5697D.pdf](http://www.lausd.net/lausd/offices/bulletins/school-listings/ICB5697D.pdf)
9. LAUSD 2015-2016 Fingertip Facts (English version was not found on the website but is available in Spanish),  
[http://achieve.lausd.net/cms/lib08/CA01000043/Centricity/Domain/32/FingertipFacts1516REV\\_spn.pdf](http://achieve.lausd.net/cms/lib08/CA01000043/Centricity/Domain/32/FingertipFacts1516REV_spn.pdf)
10. California Parent Survey, the California Healthy Kids Survey (for students,) and the California School Climate Survey (for school staff), California Department of Education, [www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/at/csps.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/at/csps.asp)

## X. APPENDIX: INTERVIEW SCRIPT & QUESTIONS

Thank you Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_ for accepting to be interviewed regarding the “Disruptive Person Letter” (DPL) you received from your child’s school. The Parent Organization Network (PON), ACLU, and parent leaders from LAUSD decided to analyze this issue because an increasing number of parents have reported receiving these letters. We requested data from LAUSD and have analyzed over 400 DPL letters the district has issued over the past 3-4 years. However, the letters only document the district’s account of what happened and we thought it was important to interview letter recipients to document the other side of the story.

We appreciate in advance your time for this interview and also want to assure you that your name will be kept confidential in this process.

1. How many children do you have?
2. Do they all attend LAUSD schools? What grades are they in?
3. Did you ever visit or observe your child’s classroom?
4. Did you ever turn in an application to be a volunteer at the school or sign up to chaperone events or fieldtrips?
5. Were you ever a member of a school committee (i.e. School Site Council, English Learner Advisory Committee, Local School Leadership, PTA)?
6. Had you encountered problems at your child’s school(s) before? If so, had you been able to address the issues and resolve them?
7. How many DPLs have you received all together? Did you receive DPLs from more than one school? What level of school gave you the DPLs (i.e. early ed center, elementary, middle or high school)?
8. When did you begin having problems at the school?
9. When did the school issue the letter?
10. Why did the school issue the letter?
11. Are there any statements that are true on the letter?
12. Are there any statements that are false, exaggerated, or misleading on the letter?
13. Are the reasons stated in the letter the REAL reasons you were given the DPL or were there other problems, reasons, or motives for issuing the letter that were not stated?
14. Did you receive a warning about your behavior BEFORE you were given the DPL? If answer is yes, was it a meeting or a letter?
15. What did you do AFTER receiving the letter? Did you meet (or try to meet) with the principal to discuss it or did you contact anyone else outside the school in LAUSD to complain about the DPL or get it overturned? If so, who did you talk to, and what was the result?

16. Did the principal or any other district official give you any information on who you could contact with questions about the DPL or if you disagreed with anything in it? Did they tell you how long the DPL would be in effect, or what you would need to do differently in order to get it cancelled?
17. A DPL usually includes a statement that if the parent wants to come on campus for any reason, they must contact the principal in advance for permission to do so. Did you follow this procedure every time, and if so, did the principal ever deny your request? If they did, why? If you did not follow this procedure and came on campus anyway, what happened?
18. Did your child remain at the same school after this?
19. How were you (as a person and a parent) affected by this process?
20. Was your child affected in this process? If so, how?
21. Looking back on the situation now, do you believe you were at fault for incidents that occurred which led to you being given a DPL?
22. Do you believe that parents who said or did the same things you did, in the same situation you were in, should be given a DPL?
23. Would you have done anything different to resolve the situation?
24. What could school administrators or staff do differently to resolve situations with parents?

Thank you so much for your time and for sharing your experience with us. The organizations and parents mentioned earlier will be presenting findings and recommendations to LAUSD this fall.

Should you have questions or need to contact us about this study, please reach out to Araceli Simeon, PON Project Director, at 626-991-1610.

We truly appreciate your contribution to this study.