



TUESDAY | August 7, 2007

THE BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE:

Fixing the State School Construction Formula



Coming up at the Chamber

[View all upcoming events on our Web calendar.](#)

WED | Aug. 8
Small Business Owners Roundtable

Lets Talk Technology Part Two [more info](#)

FRI | Aug. 10
Health Care Committee Meeting [more info](#)

TUE | Aug. 14
Referral Network Grow Your Business [more info](#)

THU | Aug. 16
Education & Workforce Development Committee Meeting [more info](#)

WED | Aug. 22
Transportation & Goods Movement Committee Meeting [more info](#)

THU | Aug. 23
Luncheon with FAA Administration Marion C. Blakey [more info](#)

THU | Aug. 23
The Connection Point From Leads to Sales [more info](#)

The Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce is the voice of business in L.A. County. Founded in 1888, the Chamber promotes a prosperous economy and quality of life in the Los Angeles region. For more information, visit www.lachamber.org

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There is no doubt that Los Angeles schools are overcrowded. Last November, Angelenos joined statewide tax payers and voted to pass Proposition 1D (Statewide School Bond Resources) with the expectation that our local investment would earn a match from these state bond funds. Yet today, some of our district's new school construction efforts are at risk because the state's current funding formula does not make us eligible for the very bond money we voted for last fall.

The state's current formula to fund new school construction uses historical data to project enrollment and does not accurately represent large urban districts like L.A. For example, the state will not help pay for the construction of new schools when there is space available anywhere in the district. For L.A., that means a student living in Watts, whose neighborhood school is overcrowded, could be bused as far as Woodland Hills depending on space availability district wide.

Angelenos are committed to addressing overcrowding in our district. In recent years, L.A. tax payers have invested \$19 billion of their own money to fund new school construction – the largest public works project in U.S. history.

The L.A. Area Chamber and the Los Angeles Unified School District have [organized a coalition to advocate for AB 1014](#), a bill that would enable all of the state's school districts to use an alternative funding formula for projecting enrollment and construction eligibility. For L.A., the passage of AB 1014 would make Proposition 1D bond money available to LAUSD for the new school construction projects. We invite our members and others in the community to join in this effort.

It is critical that we act now. Even with LAUSD's historic building effort underway, our schools remain overcrowded. Thousands of students are subject to involuntary busing because there is insufficient capacity in their neighborhood schools. Every new neighborhood school will also help eliminate the multi-track calendars that have been a huge deterrent in keeping students on a path toward graduation. After the current building program is complete, LAUSD will still have 200,000 students in portable buildings and long-term forecasts predict that enrollment will continue to increase through 2020.

L.A. needs new schools now, and we will need even more schools in the future. Our region has invested generously, but voters also expect the state to do its part. We urge the Senate Appropriations Committee to pass AB 1014 so that we can continue to build new neighborhood schools and prepare our students for the workforce of the future.

And that's *The Business Perspective*.

Gary L. Toebben
President & CEO
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce

The Business Perspective is a weekly opinion piece by Gary Toebben, President & CEO of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, produced with the input of Senior Policy Advisor Rusty Hammer.

by Gary Toebben, President & CEO, Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce

L.A. Business THIS WEEK

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