



El Sol
Science and Arts Academy of Santa Ana
An Excellent Public School

Dear El Sol Parents,

We are writing to share with you information regarding a situation that has developed over the last couple of weeks between El Sol Academy and our sponsoring charter agency, Santa Ana Unified School District (SAUSD).

In March of this year, SAUSD - without any prior conversations or notification - sent El Sol Academy, as well as all other charter schools in the district, an invoice claiming we owe them nearly \$8 million for special education services they have provided to our students since we opened in 2001. Collectively, SAUSD is seeking nearly \$40 million in funds from all five charter schools. I assure you that this news was as shocking to us as it is to you reading about it now.

Not once in the 18 years we have been operating has SAUSD ever claimed we owe them anything above the amount we already pay to them as our Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA). Furthermore, this issue has never been raised during the three charter renewals we have been awarded over this time period. Even now, SAUSD has provided no documentation to back up their claims for more funds.

Needless to say, this is an incredibly disappointing development in our long and largely successful partnership with SAUSD. According to legal counsel, SAUSD's attempt to raid our funds is in violation of our charter, state education code, and other parts of state law. We have attempted to meet with the district to resolve this issue in a reasonable and collaborative manner. However, the only condition under which they are willing to meet is if we admit that they are entitled to some or all of these funds.

Therefore, we are taking the unfortunate but necessary step of filing a complaint against the district in California Superior Court. As another step toward protecting ourselves from further attempts to raid our funds, we are asking the court to immediately allow us to leave the SAUSD SELPA and join the highly-regarded El Dorado SELPA.

El Sol Academy, the other charter schools, and our legal counsel are confident that the facts and the law are on our side and that we would prevail in a legal proceeding. However, our overwhelming preference would be for the SAUSD Board of Directors to vote to abandon this misguided effort by their staff.

In the coming weeks, you will likely see details of this situation in the news. Be assured that we are working diligently to resolve this matter and that there is no need to be concerned at this time. We remain fully committed to your child's success and offering the highest quality education programs that earned El Sol Academy the honor of being named one of America's Best Urban School and a California Distinguished School.

We will continue to keep you updated with transparency and truth as this process moves forward. In the meantime, should you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to either of us directly.

Sincerely,

Monique Daviss
Executive Director