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MAYORAL CONTROL AND THE REORGANIZATION OF A LARGE URBAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Large unified school districts [USDs], particularly those in California's urban areas, face a multitude of challenges. Some originate outside the district, and are usually beyond its control.¹ Examples are size and rapid growth, the number of students entitled to admission, demographic diversity and severely limited funding. Other challenges come from inside the district and are amenable to solution by the community and its school system, although to different degrees.

One internal challenge is the district organization which affects the effectiveness of the major players – superintendent, school board, principals, teachers, counselors – and their interaction with one another and with parents. These interactions ultimately determine the education experience of the district's students. In more formal economic terminology, they determine a school's and district's production function and, thereby, the extent to which education can flourish. The complexity of large USDs requires talented leaders, especially superintendent, board members, and principals; for all of these there exists a serious demand-supply imbalance.

This chapter explores how large urban USDs might meet some of their organizational challenges. After a general exploration of possible strategies, its focus will turn to the Los Angeles USD. Many initiatives have been undertaken in recent years, particularly during the tenure of outgoing LAUSD superintendent Roy Romer, former three-term governor of the State of Colorado. Other possible reforms have recently been explored. Two ambitious reforms have been introduced in the California State Legislature, one early in the earlier 1970's and a second in 2005-06.

These case studies should be of broad interest to the public education community and should stimulate it to evaluate them seriously in relation to their school district. Some conclusions will be summarized at the end of the chapter.

Initiatives

Organizational efforts to meet the challenges faced by public education in large urban areas have been guided mainly by two philosophies. One emphasizes equality and fairness in access to education and in the allocation of financial resources. It also has influenced, although to a declining extent, the policies of many large urban USDs in the United States and California. These USDs have opened their doors to all youngsters and sought to provide them with roughly equal education, made possible by approximately equal financial support per student. Relatively little weight is given to students' endowment, their learning ability, aspirations, attitudes, and family background.²

The second philosophy gives recognition to the defining fact that students differ significantly in learning ability, aspiration, attitudes and family background. For this reason, a school district would seek to allocate resources in a manner which gives its students an equal opportunity to be well educated. Towards this end, different amounts of funding would be allocated to the education of different groups of students in K-12 schools.

By subscribing to the first philosophy, as many large school districts tended to do in the past, USDs have fallen into the trap of offering “one-size-fits-all” education. Using the same cookie-cutter, districts have offered essentially the same education, rather than giving teachers flexibility to adjust their teaching to students’ special characteristics.

Now, increasingly recognizing these pitfalls, large urban USDs have been looking for organization reforms which allow increased education flexibility. Among such reforms are charter schools and freedom for teachers to shape the curriculum and to select class materials. Other reforms allow neighboring schools and campuses to form clusters which have significant freedom with regard to their curriculum, class materials, and family volunteer participation. More far-reaching reforms could empower mayors to appoint school board members, or allow the popular election of the boards’ chair.

Finally, there are two ambitious, virtually revolutionary organizational reforms. One is disaggregation and uses a bottom-up approach. It disassembles a large USD into a number of local districts. The local districts can then contract with a central district for support services which benefit from scale economies.³ A second ambitious revolutionary reform is mayoral control which uses a top-down approach and transfers control of the USD to a mayor. This approach is the reform sought by Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa after his election.

Disaggregation

By their very nature, these two alternatives are built upon almost diametrically opposed philosophies. Dismantling large USDs stops schools in an area from treating all students alike and, therefore, from allocating financial support equally to all area schools. No longer would schools be forced to use the same cookie-cutter across all campuses. On the contrary, local districts would have significant freedom to make their own decision about curriculum, class materials, and about how to spend their financial resources.

State funds would have to be distributed by a formula to local districts under the disaggregation approach. Local districts could seek additional private funds and, if permissible under state law, impose their own property tax rate (something impossible in California under Proposition 13 of 1978). Thus, this type of initiative, has the potential of enhancing the flexibility of efforts to educate its students.

However, disassembling large USDs can also have negative effects. It can shift loyalty and a feeling of belonging from the large incorporated community to the local districts. More importantly, it could produce clusters of slow learners, which might come from relatively poor

families. State funding of their schools could decline and result in de facto educational segregation.

Mayoral Control

Mayoral control is advocated on the premise that a mayor who has the experience of governing a large city can do the same in a large urban USD. He is also expected to be effective in using his bully pulpit to put a spotlight on the city's public schools and possibly obtain increased public and private financing. Furthermore, with his mayoral experience he might succeed in streamlining the district's bureaucracy, increase transparency and accountability. Moreover, the mayor's management experience could improve efficiency with which his district support functions are performed. The money saved could be used to improve the schools' academic programs.

But there are also risks. These include the possibility that an effective mayor might not also be an effective large urban USD leader. The two positions, in many respects, require different experiences, talents, and values. Moreover, the burden on the mayor would be enormous because leading a large city or USD, each by itself is an enormously demanding task.⁴

Among other risks is that a serious conflict of interest can arise when legitimate city concerns are in conflict with those of the school district. For example, consider a mayor who is seeking federal funding for expanding public transportation in his city and also finds it necessary to gain increased public school funding. Can both be obtained at the same time? Finally, the danger of focusing on organizational reform ignores the fact that, even if successful, it is mainly only a facilitator of the means and environment to educating students. Implementation is also needed.

This issue might be addressed in the selection of the superintendent. Even if this is the case, it would be valuable to spell out some of the initiatives the superintendent is expected to consider.

The Los Angeles Unified School District

The Los Angeles area differs in many defining respects from any other in the nation, particularly by its population size and diversity, growth and changing demographics. The LAUSD is the second largest school district in the United States with 727,000 students of which 13 percent are Hispanic, 11 percent Black and 9% White. It has 35,000 teachers, who teach in 1,131 schools.⁵

Periodically, questions have been raised about the efficacy of having such a large district which includes the city of Los Angeles and 26 adjacent cities. Moreover, there has been concern about the effectiveness of its board (with its chair elected by board members), the responsibilities of the school superintendent and superintendent's interaction with the board, the allocation of funds across campuses, the curriculum, and in particular student dropout rates and academic performance.

In 1969, State Senator John L. Harmer and his colleagues expressed serious concern that “LAUSD suffered from an inability to provide quality education...” which cannot be solved by the mere addition of funds channeled through the existing large already highly centralized bureaucratic system.⁶ An even greater alarm was sounded in 2006 by Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. He saw the district as failing and lambasted the district’s bloated bureaucracy as responsible for LAUSD’s high dropout rates and middle and high schools’ lagging achievements.⁷

The assertions of Mayor Villaraigosa have been challenged by, among others, outgoing Superintendent Roy Romer and State Superintendent for Public Instruction Jack O’Connell. Regarding the assertion of LAUSD’s poor performance, they argue that data indicate that LAUSD’s test scores have improved notably recently. For example, its STAR test scores published in August 2006 showed gains in almost every grade and subject area, particularly in early grades where the District concentrated its reform effort.⁸ LAUSD’s improvements over last year in English and Mathematics were about twice as large as those in the state as a whole. Thus, the percentage of second graders who scored proficient or better in English rose 6 points over the previous year and nearly doubled during the years that Romer was Superintendent.⁹ Furthermore, the number of state-named (e.g., schools formally designated by the state to be of good quality) California Schools in the LAUSD almost tripled between 2004 and 2006.

Also of relevance is the District’s \$19.3 billion construction program. While it presently has 800 campuses, LAUSD is 160 campuses into a building boom planned over the next 12 years. Jack O’Connell, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, declared that such a school construction effort is “unprecedented in the history of the United States.” O’Connell’s overall review led him to conclude that “the Los Angeles Unified School District is on a roll.”¹⁰

Disaggregating LAUSD Into Local School Districts:

The First Attempt At Disaggregation

Disassembling LAUSD has been attempted at least twice. But the two attempts, about 25 years apart, failed to be enacted. The first effort started in 1969 with the appointment of a Joint Committee – the “Committee on Reorganization of Large Urban School Districts.” This committee represented a bipartisan reform effort with Republican Senator John L. Harmer (who later served as Lieutenant Governor) as chair and Democratic Assemblyman Bill Green as vice chair.

The Committee was assisted by a staff of five technical experts (with the author of this chapter serving as Chief Counselor) and by Arthur D. Little Company, a consulting firm. After having held dozens of hearings for a year all over California and after numerous Committee meetings, a reorganization plan was adopted and introduced into the Legislature as SB 242. (See Appendix, page 89) After the approval of SB 242 by both the California Senate and Assembly, Senator Harmer and I had a meeting with Governor Ronald Reagan at which he did not voice any opposition to the bill. He instead gave the impression that SB 242 was consistent with his opposition to large government. However, on September 20, 1970, Governor Reagan

vetoed the bill. Apparently, the heads of teachers unions had impressed upon him their strong opposition.

The Second Attempt at Disaggregation

In February 16, 2006, a further attempt was made to introduce a LAUSD Disaggregation bill – AB 2071 – by Assemblymen Keith Richman and Senator George Runner.¹¹ It was defeated in the Assembly Committee on Appropriations by a 7 to 3 vote and therefore never came to the floor of the Assembly or Senate.

What might have been the effect if SB 242 (or for that matter SB 2071), had been enacted? Based on longstanding empirical research on local government expenditure functions, one could expect that disassembling LAUSD would have had relatively little effect on per-student cost, while the quality of education and student performance might well have improved.¹²

However, for positive results to materialize, two important conditions would have had to be met. One condition relates to the State of California funding individual districts in a manner which enables them to provide students with an educational effort responsive to their ability to learn.¹³ A second condition is significantly improved relations between LAUSD and teachers unions. Remember that unions had a major impact on Governor Reagan's veto of SB 242 and, as will be seen below, on Mayor Villaraigosa obtaining (partial) control in 2006.

Mayoral Control

On August 30, 2006, the California legislature passed AB 1381. The need for mayoral control had been first discussed by Antonio Villaraigosa during his 2005 campaign for Los Angeles Mayor. His program was to remedy serious deficiencies of the LAUSD by transferring to the mayor of Los Angeles virtually all-encompassing control of LAUSD. Villaraigosa was inspired by the experiences of New York and Boston.¹⁴ His proposal meant control over LAUSD was to be added to the plethora of existing mayoral responsibilities in the City of Los Angeles. Municipal functions include, among others, police and fire protection, street maintenance and cleaning, water and electricity delivery, garbage collection, and zoning. The City also faces fiscal difficulties.

Phase 1

Once elected, Mayor Villaraigosa developed a detailed proposal for mayoral control of the LAUSD which he unveiled in his March 18, 2006 State of the City message.¹⁵ As former speaker of the California Assembly, Villaraigosa had established himself as a strong leader and had developed good working relations with Democrats in the Legislature. He had the strong support of the present speaker Fabian Nuñez, a close friend, and Senate Majority Leader, Gloria Romero. In many respects, the efforts centering around the State of the City Message constituted Phase 1 in the campaign for comprehensive mayoral control reform.

However, fierce opposition from leaders of the two teachers unions – California Teachers Association and United Teachers of Los Angeles (a local affiliate) – surfaced. As a result of tough negotiations behind closed doors between the unions and Villaraigosa (himself a former teachers union official who served as union organizer during UTLA’s 1989 strike against LAUSD), an agreement was reached in June 2006.¹⁶ The revised proposal was written into AB 1381, which significantly cut back the scope, coverage and power of the Mayor from the level he had contemplated.¹⁷

Phase II

Specifically, the compromise mayoral control bill AB 1381 of June 26, 2006, gave the mayor direct oversight only over 3 clusters composed of three low-performing high schools and their elementary and middle feeder schools, altogether perhaps 40 schools. It created a Council of Mayors, responsible for reviewing the District budget and coordinating delivery of select services, e.g., after-school programs and safety. The Council of Mayors (which was designed to overcome constitutional provisions) would be composed of the mayor of Los Angeles and the mayors of the 26 other cities served by the LAUSD as well as state and county representatives. Since only mayors could vote – and their vote would have a weight proportional to their city’s population – the Los Angeles mayor with about 80% of the population, would effectively control the Council.

The following are some major provisions of the original bill AB 1381.

- The Los Angeles Mayor, through the Council of Mayors, would play a major role in the selection and ultimate appointment of the LAUSD superintendent.
- The superintendent would be granted enhanced powers to lead and manage the District by being given authority over personnel, business operations, budgeting and the facilities program.
- The School Board’s essential powers would be retained, but with a strengthened focus on improving outcomes.
- Teachers would be given greater flexibility in the selection of state-approved instructional materials.

In a sense, the efforts of preparing AB 1381 for submission to the Legislature on June 26, 2006 constituted Phase 2 in the drafting of (what turned out to be) a greatly watered down mayoral control bill. It was met with support, among others, by the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, virtually all Democrats in the Legislature and the two teachers unions. Governor Schwarzenegger promised to sign the bill if it reached his desk.

There were strong attacks by powerful and influential individuals and groups on the compromise plan. They included Professor William Ouchi of UCLA, a chief of staff to former

Mayor Richard Riordan¹⁸ and philanthropist Eli Broad, on whom Villaraigosa had relied to make good on his promise to be an effective fundraiser.¹⁹ Both complained that the bill would seriously muddle lines of responsibility, because it failed to give sufficient authority and accountability to the mayor.

Criticism also came from some of the smaller cities in the LAUSD that objected to the voting procedure of the Council of Mayors. A concern coming from many interested parties was that the bill would cloud accountability and make management more fractured and thereby less efficient. Mayoral control is supposed to centralize authority but the new proposal seemed to diffuse it. A variety of complaints also came from legislators whose vote was needed to pass the bill. Thus, intense horse trading took place so that ultimately the bill was allowed to pass by a single vote in the Assembly with 17 members abstaining.²⁰ In order to gain sufficient votes for the bill's passage, a number of modifications had to be accepted in the final version of AB 1381.

Final Version: Phase 3

The effort at further compromise was complicated when, a few days before the end of the term of the Legislature, the constitutionality of the Mayor's authority to operate and administer the schools of a school district was questioned. Specifically, a 1946 amendment to Article IX, Section 6, of the state Constitution states: "No school or college or any other part of the public school system shall be, directly or indirectly, transferred from the public school system or placed under the jurisdiction of any authority other than one included within the public school system."²¹

Fearing that courts might accept the view that some part of the bill was unconstitutional and invalidate all of it, the sponsors added to the bill a Severability Clause. Under it, if part of the bill is found to be unconstitutional, the rest would nevertheless become law. Strong objection to this clause by former Mayor Riordan, former Governor Pete Wilson, and two legislators led to the removal of the clause.²² The school board has asked the court to invalidate AB 1381, while Los Angeles teachers voted by a majority of 56% to 44% to repudiate the schools law signed by the governor...(with the possible implication) that the union leadership...join an anticipated lawsuit challenging the new law."

The final version of AB 1381, on which the Legislature voted in the last days of August 2006, contains among others, the following provisions:²³

- An affirmative vote by the Council of Mayors requires that mayors representing 90% of the LAUSD population express their support. Thus, the mayor of Los Angeles cannot control the council without some additional support from other cities.
- Through the Council of Mayors, the Los Angeles Mayor may ratify the selection of the LAUSD superintendent, including contract terms. But the final decision remains with the LAUSD Board who also has final approval authority over the District budget.

- The Mayor through a Community Partnership is given oversight and authority over a demonstration project in three clusters of LAUSD schools, each composed of a high school and its feeder middle and elementary schools.
- The elected School Board has much of its power reduced and shifted to the Superintendent.
- No city can be required to expend city resources on services to the School District. Nor would LAUSD be required to assume any liability incurred by a member of the Council of Mayors when acting on behalf of the District.
- The Superintendent will have authority over the appointment, dismissal and reassignment of school principals subject to ratification by the Board of Education. He also will have authority over the fiscal operations of the District, including control over negotiations, but not including collectively-bargained contracts.

AB 1381, as passed by the legislature on August 30, 2006, in fact provides for little mayoral control over LAUSD. Rather than being “true blue mayor control,” it is at most “mayor control lite,” or as the *Los Angeles Times* called it: “power sharing.”²⁴

The final drive for the ultimate enactment of a greatly modified AB 1381 can be looked upon as Phase 3 of an effort lasting more than a year. AB 1381 does not install Mayoral Control over LAUSD. It is partial disaggregation of LAUSD into two parts. One part is Mayoral Control over 3 school clusters with about 40 schools. The Second part is limited control over LAUSD shared with 26 other mayors. Whether this power sharing arrangements can improve clarity, transparency and accountability and - most importantly - improve students’ performance and completion rates remains to be seen. However, improved education in the three school clusters under the Mayor’s control has a good chance to materialize. In part such a positive outcome is likely because of Mayor Villaraigosa’s enthusiasm and drive, and perhaps because his personal youthful experience of having been expelled from one school and having dropped out of another.²⁵

Conclusions

As we enter the 21st century, reformers of public education are facing especially great challenges. Los Angeles is no exception. Minor initiatives, of which there are many, are feasible. But they often are held to be insufficient. Consequently, Los Angeles has turned to two truly ambitious reforms. One proposal – SB 242 of 1971 – sought to disassemble the LAUSD into local districts of 45,000 to 60,000 students, while having a central district for the purpose of supplying local districts with support services. The bipartisan SB 242 was approved by the California Legislature, but – under fierce pressure from teachers’ unions – it was vetoed by Governor Reagan.

Thirty-five years later, a second ambitious proposal was advanced by newly-elected Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. While SB 242 had relied upon a bottom-up approach, the 2006

reform as initially perceived, relied on a top-down approach of mayoral control over the entire LAUSD. However, it was watered down considerably, primarily because of fierce opposition by teachers unions. The enacted AB 1381 gives the Los Angeles Mayor limited control shared with 26 other mayors of much of the LAUSD, but more total control over three clusters of about 40 schools, i.e., less than 5% of LAUSD schools.

The two initiatives have in common that they are attempts at major reform. As was to be expected, the reformers faced serious challenges. Some of the problems have been summarized in this chapter in the hope that this information will be helpful when in the future yet more reforms are contemplated.

Ultimately, however, focusing almost entirely on organizational reform is unlikely to be the best strategy to improve students' performance and reduce the dropout rate. The organization of large urban school districts is merely a facilitator of education whose quality depends heavily on motivation and commitment by the superintendent, principals, teachers, and counselors.

The claim that public schools have the power greatly to reduce dropout rates is at best questionable. Schools in affluent areas have low dropout rates. Their students are given substantial attention by their parents who seek to stimulate and assist them toward gaining a good education and know how to do it. Such students have role models that they can look up to. They are likely to have a strong desire to excel in school in order to gain admission to a good college. In poor areas the opposite is often true and the school organization can do relatively little to change these circumstances.

For either disaggregation or mayoral control reform to be successful in improving public school education in such a large USD as that of Los Angeles, will greatly depend on the funding and especially on how funds are distributed.²⁶

Reforms tend to cause uncertainty and insecurity which is especially the case of comprehensive reforms in public education proceeded by fierce opposition. The result can be that some of the best principals and teachers seek employment elsewhere and that hiring quality replacements becomes especially difficult.

Relations between a large urban school district and teachers unions tend to be adversarial. They can block or impede the enactment of organizational reforms as in the cases of the two major efforts at LAUSD.²⁷ Reformers must be aware of this fact as well as the possibility of unforeseen side effects.

A telling example is a well-meant proposal by James Coleman of the University of Chicago, who in 1966 persuaded lawmakers to pass laws in support of busing students from poor areas to superior schools. Once implemented the policy had far reaching side effects, for which even a new term was coined i.e., "White Flight". The negative effects of busing are still felt throughout the country. Thus, attention should be paid to the possibility of both disaggregation and mayoral control reforms leading to "Bright Flight". It could occur if reform were to lead

directly or indirectly to taking funds from schools in well-to-do areas and giving them to schools in poor areas.

In spite of these challenges, there exists today enthusiasm for school reform, matched by confidence that it will succeed. A case in point is Los Angeles where this feeling was given expression at the signing ceremonies of AB 1381 on September 18, 2006. Governor Schwarzenegger, having promised to sign the bill months before he had seen it, declared at the signing ceremony, "We will move graduations numbers up. We will move test scores up." A beaming Mayor Villaraigosa added, "I'm asking for people to hold me personally responsible for leading improvement in the schools."²⁸ They surely will.

APPENDIX: The First Reorganization Plan *

Under the first reorganization plan described in the text, the Los Angeles City Unified School District was to be reorganized into about 12 virtually autonomous local school districts. Each local district would have had its own locally elected board of nine members. Members were to be nominated by petitions and elected by registered voters of the local district. Districts were to be composed of about 45,000 to 60,000 pupils in kindergarten through 12th grade. On the average, each district would have contained four high schools and their feeder junior high and elementary schools.

Each local board was to be able to determine curriculum, instructional arrangements, staffing, and resource allocation within lump-sum budget allocations based on needs and cost levels. In addition, local district boards were to be delegated control over school maintenance, school plant operations, and housing of supplies allocated to the local districts.

The activities of the local district were to be assisted by elected advisory councils for each school to advise principal, staff, and the local board. At the same time, school principals would be delegated increased responsibilities and latitude. Thus, acting with the advice and counsel of the school advisory council, and under the general supervision of the local district superintendent, the principal would exercise expanded prerogatives for determining the allocation of resources within the school, the nature of curriculum and instruction, and the hiring, placement, salary levels (within defined limits), utilization, and release of school staff.

The central district board was to have those functions which benefit from substantial scale economies. Its function would have been to support the activities of the local district. Its policy powers and administrative functions were to be those not specifically delegated to the local districts. Thus, the central district board would have been responsible for allocating state funds and local tax monies to the local district, for teacher recruitment and master contract provisions, for purchasing of routine supplies and their distribution to storage warehouses in local districts, and for other specified central functions.

In addition, the central district was to be responsible for research and development. It would develop evaluation instruments and a performance accountability system in order to measure comparatively the achievements of the 12 local districts. By circulating comparative results, competition among schools and local districts was to be fostered.

The central district board was to be composed of representatives of the 12 local district boards. As delegates to the local district boards, the central district board members were to establish a formula to distribute funds among the local districts, taking into account relative needs and cost levels. The right to award “tenure” was to be vested in the central district board.

A seven-member Commission on Large School District Reorganization, chaired by the Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools, was to establish the boundaries for the local districts, approximately 12 in number, with a view of making these local districts of about equal size.

* Note: The description is taken (with tenses changed and other editorial modifications) from *Final Report to the Legislature by the Joint Committee on Reorganization of Large Urban Unified School Districts* (Pasadena, Welsh Graphics, 1971) pp. 11-12.

Endnotes:

¹ This chapter was written before the Los Angeles Unified School District began a legal challenge to the 2006 state law giving the mayor of Los Angeles partial control of District affairs and before the District's board appointed a new school superintendent without mayoral input.

² A review of recent research on factors affecting students' learning can be found in Diana Jean Schemo, "It Takes More Than School to Close the Achievement Gap." *New York Times on Education*, August 9, 2006. For example, it has been found that family background has a large impact on whether students are academically and socially prepared.

³ Support functions include procurement and distribution of supplies, bill paying, accounting, data processing, auditing, legal services, constructing of new facilities, and maintenance.

⁴ The probability of having a person who is qualified to hold both positions requires multiplying one possibly low probability by another possibly low one. The result of this multiplication shows how difficult it would be to find a great mayor-USD head. However, the problem is less severe to the degree that the mayor has input into selection of a talented school superintendent who is then delegated substantial authority.

⁵ Los Angeles School Board, "Fingertip Facts 2005-6" January 2005.

⁶ *Final Report to the Legislature by The Joint Committee On Reorganization of Large Urban School Districts* (Pasadena: Welsh Graphics, 1971), p. 2.

⁷ Jim Newton, "Mayor set to Battle Labor Allies," *Los Angeles Times*, August 21, 2006, pp. B1-B2.

⁸ M. Landsberg and E. H. Yasaki, Schools Getting Higher Marks on Tests, *Los Angeles Times*, August 11, 2006, p. B6.

⁹ Hemmy So, "LA Unified Achieve Quality in Quantity", *Los Angeles Times*, April 26, 2006, p. B6.

¹⁰ Howard Blume, "LA Unified Shows Off New Campuses", *Los Angeles Times*, September 6, 2006, p. B6.

¹¹ *Reorganization of Large School District AB 2071* (February 16, 2006).

¹² Werner Z. Hirsch, "Expenditures Implications of Metropolitan Growth and Consolidation", *Review of Economics and Statistics*, August 1949, pp. 232-241.

¹³ One of the sponsors of the disassemblment bills told the author that he had decided not to deal with State funding.

¹⁴ Boston was awarded in 2006 the Broad Prize as a model for improving big-city school systems. New York, however, had quite a few problems, e.g., wholesale exit of experienced principals, complaints about the Chancellor introducing a corporate culture and about parents feeling disenfranchised. In two other cities, Mayoral Control appears to have failed. Thus, in Detroit, Mayoral Control was short-lived and in Baltimore, where in its existence from 1987 to 1999, the score of many students remained so low that 16 schools in the district ended on probation. (*Reorganization of Large School District AB 2071*, February 16, 2006).

¹⁵ Duke Helfin and Steve Hyman, "Villaraigosa Plans to Ask Legislature For Control," *Los Angeles Times*, April 19, 2006, pp. B1, B19.

¹⁶ Sandy Bandas, "Mayor Takes Case To Teachers," *Los Angeles Times*, August 21, 2006, p B3.

¹⁷ AB 1381, Gloria Romero Education Reform Act of 2006 amended in Senate June 26, 2006, 21 pp.

¹⁸ William Ouchi, "Wrong Bill, Right Idea," *Los Angeles Times*, August 18, 2006, p. B13.

¹⁹ Duke Helfand and Joel Rubin, "Broad Attacks Mayors Plan for Schools," *Los Angeles Times*, July 15, 2006, p. B3.

²⁰ Nancy Vogel, "School Bill Wins Wary Democrats," *Los Angeles Times*, August 30, 2006, p. A18.

²¹ Maura Dolan, "Heated Court Fight Seen on Schools," *Los Angeles Times*, September 25, 2006, p. B1.

²² Howard Blume, "Riordan Seeks Change in LAUSD Legislation," *Los Angeles Times*, August 23, 2006, p. B5.

²³ AB 1381, op cit. Howard Blume and Joel Rubin, "Teachers Buck Union Repudiates Takeover," *Los Angeles Times*, September 6, 2006, p. 13.

²⁴ Mitchell Landsberg "Mayor School Plan is Likely to End in Court", *Los Angeles Times*, August 22, 2006, B4.

²⁵ Ajay Singh, "What Fuels the Passionate Political Perpetual-Motion That Is Antonio Villaraigosa?" *UCLA Magazine*, January 2006, p. 26.

²⁶ The importance of the issue and a reason for it not being dealt with is well demonstrated by the Assemblyman Horton who, for his vote, elicited from Mayor Villaraigosa a promise that the schools that being overseen by him would not get larger funding than the other districts. Also when I raised the funding issue with one of the three reform sponsors, I was told that he did not want to get involved in the funding issue.

²⁷ Mayor Villaraigosa referred to his work as union organizer during UTLA's 1989 strike against LAUSD, during an address to the 2006 United Teachers-Los Angeles' annual leadership conference. See Sandy Bandas, "Mayor Takes Case to Teachers," *Los Angeles Times*, August 21, 2006, p. B3.

²⁸ Duke Helfand and Howard Blume, "Governor Signs School Control Law into Law," *Los Angeles Times*, September 19, 2006, p. B1.