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NEWS RELEASE

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LAUSD Board Names Ramon C. Cortines Next Superintendent *Nationally Recognized Educator to Lead District*

Los Angeles—The Los Angeles Board of Education today voted unanimously to hire veteran educator Ramon C. Cortines as the next Superintendent of the Los Angeles Unified School District. Cortines, the Senior Deputy Superintendent since April, has accepted a three-year contract effective Jan. 1, 2009.

It will be his second time at the helm of the nation's second-largest school district. In 2000, he served as interim superintendent for seven months. During his distinguished career, Cortines has also run school districts in New York, San Francisco, San Jose and Pasadena. Though superintendents of big-city school districts typically earn \$300,000 or more, Cortines chose to maintain his current LAUSD salary of \$250,000.

"Mr. Cortines is a nationally recognized leader with a proven track record and a tremendous vision to reinvent LAUSD as a world class educational institution," said Board President Mónica García. "I expect him to lead our District by aligning and accelerating our efforts to reach 100% graduation."

She added, "We acted quickly to elevate a national expert in our own backyard. We need his innovative and decisive leadership to respond effectively to the current financial crisis and plan for the challenges ahead."

As Senior Deputy Superintendent, Cortines has also led the District's budget and negotiations teams in search of fiscally responsible budget cuts and savings needed to manage the 688,000 K-12 student district.

"We believe that Ray Cortines is a visionary leader and a strong reformer. We believe that he is the right person to move our educational agenda into the 21st century," Board Vice President Yolie Flores Aguilar said. Addressing him directly after the vote, she added, "You have seen first-hand what success looks like. You know what success looks like. You won't settle for mediocrity for our children. This is why we need you to lead our District. "

Board Member Marlene Canter said, "Mr. Cortines' deep experience in education reform is exactly what this District needs at this moment to move forward." She added, "This

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District—and our students—cannot afford any loss of momentum now. Mr. Cortines is uniquely qualified to lead the District and accelerate the gains we are making. He has my full confidence.”

Board Member Julie Korenstein said, “I look forward to working with our next Superintendent Ray Cortines. I’ve had the pleasure of working with him many years ago. “

Board Member Dr. Richard Vladovic, who worked for him years ago, said, “It’s going to be sleepless in Los Angeles as he works on behalf of kids,” explaining how Cortines routinely arrives at work long before sunrise.

Another board member acknowledged the challenges that come with running the nation’s second-largest school district.

“In the best times, being a LAUSD Superintendent is not easy,” Board Member Tamar Galatzan explained. “It is one of the toughest jobs right now because of the budget crisis in Sacramento and what that means for our budget.”

Board Member Marguerite Poindexter LaMotte supported the appointment, but added, “While some of my constituents and I still have concerns about Superintendent David Brewer’s leaving LAUSD with this global economic crisis and our own budget crisis, in the interest of moving the District’s agenda progressively forward for all stakeholders, especially students, I voted affirmatively for new Superintendent-elect Cortines. My vote represents my hope for the District to concertedly focus on the education of all students, especially those who are most underserved and have special needs. We must all continue to know that our students can learn and be successful.”

Civic and educational leaders also expressed their support for Cortines.

In response to the appointment of the new superintendent, Ted Mitchell, President of the State Board of Education, said “Ray Cortines is one of the wisest, strongest, and most creative leaders in American public education. His steady hand and creative mind are just what LAUSD needs at this crucial juncture. I look forward to working closely with him as the District and the State tackle unprecedented challenges.”

A partner in tackling these challenges, Jack O’Connell, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, said, “Ray Cortines is an excellent choice to lead the Los Angeles Unified School District, particularly in these challenging economic times. His experience at the federal, state and local levels of education gives him a unique perspective on how we can best leverage funding streams and assistance on behalf of the students in Los Angeles.”

The selection of Mr. Cortines pleased other Los Angeles leaders.

“We applaud the appointment of Cortines as the permanent Superintendent of the Los

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Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD),” said Gary Toebben, President and CEO of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce. “We call upon all stakeholders — including the business community, elected leaders, labor, parents, and community leaders — to support Superintendent Cortines and the Board of Education in reaching the promise of a world-class education system in Los Angeles.”

Elise Buik, President and CEO, United Way of Greater Los Angeles, said, “The District needs someone who understands reform and has a track record of implementing change, so we’re happy with the Board’s selection of Ray Cortines. We think he is the right leader for LAUSD and we’d encourage him to immediately bring in community leaders to help create a strong plan to reform LAUSD.”

Shortly after Superintendent-elect Cortines assumes his new leadership role, he is expected to make a “State of the Schools” address.

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