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Community Impact Statement Hermon Neighborhood Council

The Hermon Neighborhood Council wishes to express our support for an issue not yet addressed by a City Council File. We ask the City Council to move to order a thorough review and explanation of the Los Angeles Unified School District's lack of services for special needs students during the COVID-19 pandemic – in particular students on the autism spectrum, including an explanation of lack of small in-person classrooms for students with special needs and a pathway forward that proactively addresses this concern. Parents of special needs children have a tremendous financial burden now that all LAUSD classes have shifted online. This financial burden stems from the fact that these students need a group of in-person teachers physically to walk them through their classwork. Special needs children generally do not flourish on their own without in-person instruction.

As a result, parents are required to fill this void and assist in teaching in ways other parents may not be required to. Often these are parents without adequate training or skill to effectively step in as their child's special needs teacher. This places great financial burden on a family as one parent must then quit their job in order to fill this role, a burden that disproportionately affects women. This is untenable and unsustainable. How can we ask the parents of special needs students to fill in the teaching gap when their livelihoods and the livelihoods of their children depend on their income? The burden is incalculably greater still for single parents in essential jobs.

Every family in the LAUSD has the right to provide for their family, and we in no way advocate for opening schools in an unsafe manner, but families deserve a comprehensive approach to

safely open in-person teaching for special needs students as soon as it is safe to do so. If we take this one size fits all approach for children with different backgrounds and abilities we set them up to fail. Special needs students could regress without in-person learning and services, and regressions for these children can and will have life-long effects. We ask that the City Council ask LAUSD to form a plan for safe in-person learning for special needs children and to consider opening these very specific classrooms as soon as it might be safe to do so, rather than waiting for the entirety of LAUSD to be able to open.

In service,

Hermon Neighborhood Council

THE HERMON NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL VOTED TO APPROVE THIS CIS ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 13, 2020 AT OUR AUGUST SPECIAL BOARD MEETING. THE VOTE WAS:

7 IN FAVOR; 0 AGAINST; 2 ABSENT