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News Statement

For Immediate Release

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Statement from Ramon C. Cortines, Superintendent, Los Angeles Unified School District

The superintendent's response to the latest estimate on spending for public education in California.

We are grateful to Gov. Jerry Brown for his continued support for California public education. The governor is proposing an additional \$2.1 billion for the Local Control Funding Formula, an additional \$2.4 billion in one-time discretionary spending, and increased support for career preparation pathways.

We applaud the governor's recognition that decisions on how to meet the needs of our students are best made at the local level and not in Sacramento. We support the governor's plan to give discretion to school districts in investing one-time funding.

The governor's commitments to education and career preparation are strategic investments in California's future. Today's announcement of increased financial support for schools will help improve the lives of students in the Los Angeles area. We will prioritize these new resources to make our students college and career-ready.

At L.A. Unified, we educate more than 200,000 students with special needs, with limited English skills, or who are homeless or part of the foster care system. Almost 80 percent of our students are eligible for free and reduced-price lunches. We have a moral responsibility to provide these impacted students with the tools they need to succeed in life. The governor's increased investment in schools will greatly benefit these students.

The governor's increased education budget comes at a time when there are many positive trends occurring at L.A. Unified. In just weeks, we begin our third school year under the governor's Local Control Accountability and Funding model. As a result, we now have over 4,500 foster youth with comprehensive academic plans to put them on track to graduate. With feedback

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from our school communities, the District has launched a program for restorative justice that will make our campuses safer.

This builds on our ongoing effort to support our students. Since 2008, we have reduced by 80% the number of days lost due to suspension of students, and have improved graduation rates for the past several years. The additional funds will enable us to continue our targeted support for these students.

We also will continue our focus on addressing chronic absenteeism and reducing dropouts and increasing A-G support, which includes an ongoing assessment in English and math studies.

The governor has demonstrated his strong commitment to public education during this period of economic recovery in California. He has affirmed – yet again – that education is the foundation of a brighter future for all.

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