



GEORGE GASCÓN
LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

HALL OF JUSTICE
211 WEST TEMPLE STREET LOS ANGELES, CA 90012 (213) 974-3500

ADOPTED

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

March 19, 2024

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

59 MARCH 19, 2024

JEFF LEVINSON
INTERIM EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Dear Supervisors:

**AUTHORIZE THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
TO EXECUTE AGREEMENTS WITH LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO PROVIDE FUNDING FOR
FIELD TRIP TRANSPORTATION FOR SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN THE PROJECT LEGAL
ENRICHMENT AND DECISION-MAKING PROGRAM
(ALL DISTRICTS) (3-VOTES)**

SUBJECT

This Board letter requests authority for the County of Los Angeles District Attorney's Office (LADA) to execute agreements with local school districts to provide transportation funding for schools participating in the LADA's Project Legal Enrichment and Decision-Making Program (Project LEAD). Project LEAD is a law-related education program for fifth grade students, which includes field trips to the Museum of Tolerance (MOT), local courthouses, and/or other approved locations.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD:

1. Delegate authority to the District Attorney (DA), or designee, to execute agreements substantially similar to Attachment A with school districts in Los Angeles County for 2023-2024 fiscal year and in the future, to allow district schools to participate in Project LEAD and for the LADA to reimburse school districts for transportation costs for students to travel to field trips as part of Project LEAD, provided funding is available. The net County cost of this program for field trip transportation is included in the LADA's budget for the 2023-2024 fiscal year and will not exceed \$50,000. Funding for future years will be included in the LADA's budget.

2. Delegate authority to the DA, or designee, to execute amendments to the agreements, following approval as to form by County Counsel, to extend, increase or decrease funding, update or change provisions, and terminate for convenience.

3. Delegate authority to the DA, or his designee to increase or decrease the program budget and determine the reimbursement amount per field trip in any given fiscal year to assist schools in the cost of transportation service, provided that sufficient funding is included in the LADA's budget.
4. Delegate authority to the DA, or designee, to make changes to the agreement template provided that any changes are approved by County Counsel as to form.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

Project LEAD is a law-related education program developed in 1993 by the LADA and Teach Democracy! (TD!), formerly known as the Constitutional Rights Foundation. Project LEAD is a volunteer-based program that places prosecutors, investigators, and other criminal justice professionals from the LADA and other partner agencies in public school classrooms for one hour a week for approximately twenty (20) weeks to teach fifth grade students about the criminal justice system. The Project LEAD Program includes field trips for the students to the MOT and where possible, a local courthouse and/or another destination approved by the LADA.

If requested by the school districts, LADA may provide funding in the form of reimbursement for transportation for students to participate in field trips as part of Project LEAD. These field trips are optional and will be coordinated by LADA, through its Public Affairs Division. Transportation shall be provided through the school district's contracted charter bus company.

LADA anticipates the cost per field trip to be \$500 and plans for two field trips per school, for the 2023-2024 fiscal year. The amount per field trip may vary in future years due to various factors, such as the number of schools participating in the program, the overall Board approved amount budgeted for the program, inflation, overall cost of services, and programmatic changes.

LADA is committed to developing crime prevention programs to diminish crime risk for youth in Los Angeles County. Project LEAD takes a preventive measure and cultivates a mindset of respect for society and the law in students; and in doing so, helps diminish future crime risk by promoting responsibility and positive behavior among youth in the community.

The optional field trips to the MOT, the local courthouse and/or other approved locations reinforce Project LEAD lessons and enhance student learning experience. School districts have a limited transportation budget, thus reimbursing the districts or district schools will make these field trips possible.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

Approval of the recommended action is consistent with the County Strategic Plan Goal No. 1, Make Investments that Transform Lives: Aggressively address society's most complicated social, health, and public safety challenges and be a highly responsive organization capable of responding to complex societal challenges – one person at a time, and Goal No. 3, Realize Tomorrow's Government Today: Be an innovative, flexible, effective, and transparent partner focused on public service and advancing the common good.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

If requested by the participating school, LADA will reimburse the school for the cost of transportation for students to participate in field trips to the MOT, a local courthouse and/or another destination approved by LADA as part of Project LEAD. Funding of \$50,000 for transportation costs is included in the FY2023-24 LADA General Fund Final Adopted Budget. Any increases for future years will be included in the department budget approved by the Board.

The number of field trips per school year depends on the number of participating schools and classrooms assigned a facilitator. On average, Project LEAD annually works with fifty (50) schools, often offering the curriculum in multiple classes per school. Two optional field trips are provided per class.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

LADA has historically procured a transportation vendor and provided transportation for the field trips as part of Project LEAD for the schools that participated in the program. To help minimize liability for the County, beginning with this school year, the schools will be responsible for procuring their own transportation and LADA will assist schools in the transportation cost of the field trips.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

This program does not propose attorney staff augmentation. Therefore, LADA is not subject to the Board Motion of December 15, 1998, requiring clearance with the Alternate Public Defender, Probation, Public Defender, and Sheriff's Departments.

CONCLUSION

Project Legal Enrichment and Decision-Making Program (Project LEAD) is a law-related education program that places prosecutors, investigators, and other criminal justice professionals in public school classrooms to teach fifth grade students about the criminal justice system and the importance of decision-making and consequences that stem from certain actions.

Following Board approval, it is requested that the Executive Officer of the Board return two (2) copies of the adopted Board letter to the Grants and Contracts Section at 211 West Temple Street, Suite 200, Los Angeles, California 90012-3205. Any questions may be directed to Armine Kesablian at (213) 257-2979, or at akesablian@da.lacounty.gov.

The Honorable Board of Supervisors

3/19/2024

Page 4

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gascon", written in a cursive style.

GEORGE GASCON

District Attorney

sg

Enclosures

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Auditor-Controller

**PROJECT LEAD
OPERATIONAL AGREEMENT
between
LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY’S OFFICE
and
<NAME OF SCHOOL DISTRICT>**

I. PREAMBLE

WHEREAS, pursuant to California Government Code § 26500.5 the District Attorney may sponsor, supervise, or participate in any project or program to improve the administration of justice;

WHEREAS, the Los Angeles County District Attorney’s Office (LADA) is committed to developing crime prevention programs to diminish crime risk for youth in Los Angeles County.

WHEREAS, Project Legal Enrichment and Decision-Making Program (Project LEAD) is a law-related education program that places prosecutors, investigators, and other criminal justice professionals in public school classrooms to teach fifth grade students about the criminal justice system and the importance of decision-making and consequences that stem from certain actions;

WHEREAS, Project LEAD takes a preventive measure and cultivates a mindset of respect for society and the law in students; and in doing so, helps diminish future crime risk by promoting responsibility and positive behavior among youth in the community.

WHEREAS, LADA desires to enter into this Operational Agreement with the District and the District desires to enter into this agreement with the LADA, and;

WHEREAS, on February 27, 2024, the Los Angeles County (County) Board of Supervisors delegated authority to the District Attorney or designee to negotiate, execute, amend, modify, terminate, extend and/or enter into agreements with school districts participating in Project LEAD;

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants herein set forth and the mutual benefits to be derived therefrom, the parties agree as follows:

II. PURPOSE

This Operational Agreement (Agreement) between the LADA and the <Name of School District> (District) outlines the conditions under which LADA will coordinate Project LEAD at the District participating schools (Participating Schools).

III. OPERATIVE PROVISIONS

1. Background

Project LEAD is a law-related education program developed in 1993 by the LADA and Teach Democracy! (TD!), formerly known as the Constitutional Rights Foundation. Project LEAD places prosecutors, investigators and other criminal justice professionals from LADA and other partner agencies in public school classrooms for one hour a week for approximately 20 weeks to teach fifth grade students about the criminal justice system. The program generally runs from late September to the beginning of June. Interactive lesson plans focus on the importance of decision-making and consequences that stem from certain actions.

To reinforce the Project LEAD lessons and enhance student learning experience, Project LEAD includes optional field trips to the Museum of Tolerance (MOT), local courthouses, and/or other approved locations. MOT offers age-appropriate, interactive and effective bullying prevention programs, as well as programs focused on contemporary issues related to diversity and tolerance. The courthouse visit provides students the opportunity to observe court proceedings, talk to a judge, meet other court professionals and perform a mock trial.

Researchers have found that Project LEAD produces positive results. A 2005 evaluation showed that students complete the program with a better appreciation for the law and authority, the importance of education and the benefits of making the right life choices.

2. Term

The term of this Agreement shall commence on the Effective Date through June 30, 2034, unless earlier terminated pursuant to Section III-11. This Agreement may be extended upon mutual consent of the parties.

3. Effective Date

The Effective Date of this agreement shall commence upon the date of execution by the LADA.

4. Funding

Participating School may request funding from the LADA for the optional field trips to assist with transportation costs. At LADA's discretion, LADA may reimburse the Participating School up to \$500 per trip for transportation to and from field trips to the MOT, a courthouse, and/or other approved locations. The

reimbursement amount is subject to change depending on the number of schools participating in the program, the funding availability, and LADA discretion. LADA does not guarantee funding. There is no financial commitment or cost to the Participating School associated with facilitators' time in the Participating School's classroom.

5. Services

5.1. LADA Responsibilities

- 5.1.1. LADA, through its Public Affairs Division, will manage the Project LEAD curriculum and operations. The LADA may update the curriculum at any time. The curriculum used in the classrooms is maintained on the Project LEAD website. It is accessible each school year to facilitators participating in Project LEAD. Anyone seeking to access the Project LEAD curriculum must first obtain written approval from the LADA Public Affairs Division. Attachment I sets forth the curriculum as provided in an Overview of Lessons. Project LEAD is a volunteer-based program. The District affirms that it has reviewed and approves the Project LEAD curriculum.
- 5.1.2. LADA, through its Public Affairs Division, will review annual school registrations and determine eligibility in program participation for each school year. Approval of any Participating School is at the LADA's discretion.
- 5.1.3. Based on the availability of volunteers, LADA, through its Public Affairs Division, will assign facilitators to participating classes for each school year. In any given year, volunteer participation may vary. As such, LADA may not always be able to field a sufficient number of facilitators to accommodate all schools or classes for that school year.
- 5.1.4. If requested by the District, LADA may provide funding in the form of reimbursement for transportation to field trips to the MOT and, where possible, a local courthouse or another destination approved by LADA. These field trips are optional and will be coordinated by LADA, through its Public Affairs Division. Transportation shall be provided through the District's contracted charter bus company.
- 5.1.5. LADA is not responsible for the safety or well-being for the students, teachers, staff, or volunteers.

5.2. District Responsibilities

- 5.2.1. Each District school must register by the deadline set by the Project LEAD Program managers in order to participate in the Project LEAD Program each school year. Registration may be submitted online at this website:
<https://projectlead.lacounty.gov/school-registration>.

Attachment A

- 5.2.2. The District is responsible and maintains responsibility for conducting comprehensive background checks of the Participating School teachers, substitute teachers, support staff and volunteers working with the District as it relates to the Project LEAD program.
- 5.2.3. The District is solely responsible for the safety and well-being of students, teachers, staff, or volunteers who participate in the Project LEAD program.
- 5.2.4. The Participating School will maintain an appropriate teacher-to-student and/or staff-member-to-student ratio in its classrooms and on field trips conducted with LADA. The District and the Participating School is further responsible to ensure that students who participate in the field trips are safely returned to school.
- 5.2.5. The District and Participating School will provide proper supervision of students participating in Project LEAD, both in the Participating School's classrooms during Project LEAD sessions and on field trips that have been authorized between the District and LADA. Teachers must remain in the classroom at all times during all Project LEAD lessons. It is the teacher's responsibility to maintain order in the classroom so that facilitators may focus on teaching and leading the Project LEAD lessons. The District and Participating Schools are responsible for student behavior while participating in the Project LEAD program.
- 5.2.6. The District will be responsible for securing transportation for the field trips. The District shall request funding from LADA at the time of scheduling the field trip.
- 5.2.7. The Participating School will work cooperatively with LADA to coordinate transportation for field trips in which it participates with LADA. The Participating School will designate a teacher and/or staff member to serve as the Field Trip Coordinator. The Field Trip Coordinator will work with and communicate with LADA, through the Public Affairs Division, regarding field trips.
- 5.2.8. For Project LEAD field trips, Participating School shall ensure the below:
 - a. Should a student become ill or be required to leave the field trip before the field trip concludes the Participating School is responsible for ensuring that such student is returned to an approved parent and/or caregiver.
 - b. The Participating School shall adhere to districtwide policy regarding all aspects of field trips.
 - c. The Participating School shall ensure updated health and emergency information for all participating students.
 - d. The Participating School shall be prepared to address emergency situations on field trips.

Attachment A

- e. The Participating School shall contact its principal and school nurse as needed for health questions or emergencies while on field trips.
 - f. On the day of the field trip, changes to rosters and/or transportation lists should be submitted to the Participating School's principal and provided to the driver(s) and the Participating School's field trip coordinator.
 - g. Parent permission forms and rosters shall be carried by the Participating School's Field Trip Coordinator on the trip.
- 5.2.9 The District shall ensure Participating Schools comply with this Agreement.

6. Background Check – LADA Personnel

LADA certifies that all Project LEAD facilitators have undergone a comprehensive criminal background check. By nature of the facilitators' employment with LADA, such background checks will be in full compliance with Education Code Section 45125.1.

7. Invoices

The Participating School must submit an invoice for the transportation expense to the LADA within 30 days after the field trip. All invoices must be submitted to:

Armine Kesablyan, Field Deputy
Office of the District Attorney
Bureau of Communications | Public Affairs Division
211 West Temple Street, Suite 200
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Telephone: (213) 257-2979
akesablyan@da.lacounty.gov

All invoices must include the following information:

Date of service
Name of vendor providing transportation service
A copy of bill from vendor

8. Ownership of Materials

All pre-existing LADA materials, including the Project LEAD curriculum, lesson plans and other non-public materials provided by LADA, shall remain LADA's intellectual property. None of LADA's pre-existing intellectual property may be used by the District or Participating Schools without LADA's written consent.

9. Insurance

The Parties represent that they maintain sufficient insurance coverage through self-insurance and/or third-party coverage to meet their respective indemnity

Attachment A

obligations as set forth under this Agreement. District shall ensure that the transportation vendor has all required insurance and licenses.

10. Termination of the Project LEAD Program

LADA may terminate the District or Participating School from participating in the Project LEAD program should the District or the Participating School not comply with the terms of this Agreement.

11. Termination of Agreement

This Agreement may be terminated by LADA or the District for any reason by giving the other party at least fifteen (15) days written notification.

12. Indemnification

The County agrees to defend, indemnify and hold the District harmless, including, but not limited to, its governing board, officers, attorneys, employees, agents, from and against any and all claims, costs, allegations, losses, damages, liabilities, expenses, demands, judgments, court costs, attorneys' fees, and any settlement paid, which may arise out of, or relate to, any performance or nonperformance by the County under this Agreement, except to the extent such are caused by the sole fault or negligence of the District.

The District agrees to defend, indemnify and hold the County harmless, including, but not limited to, its governing board, officers, attorneys, employees, and agents, from and against any and all claims, costs, allegations, losses, damages, liabilities, expenses, demands, judgments, court costs, attorneys' fees, and any settlement paid, which may arise out of, or relate to, any performance or nonperformance by the District, Participating School, staff, employees, volunteers or agents under this Agreement, except to the extent such are caused by the sole fault or negligence of the LADA.

13. Governing Law

This Agreement shall be construed in accordance with, and all disputes hereunder shall be governed by the laws of the State of California. The Parties agree and consent to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of the State of California for all purposes regarding this Agreement and further agree and consent that venue of any action brought hereunder shall be exclusively in the County of Los Angeles.

14. Compliance with Applicable Laws

The Parties shall comply with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws, rules, regulations, ordinances, directives, guidelines, policies, and procedures.

IV. AUTHORIZATION

The District authorizes its Participating School principals to register in order to participate in the Project LEAD program each school year.

We, the undersigned, as authorized representatives of the Los Angeles County District Attorney’s Office and the <Name of School District> do hereby approve this Agreement.

_____	_____
George Gascón, District Attorney	Date
Los Angeles County District Attorney’s Office	

_____	_____
School Representative, Title	Date
Name of School District	



OVERVIEW OF LESSONS

Introductory Lesson

This lesson provides an opportunity for students to get to know Project LEAD facilitators and learn new terminology. First, facilitators will introduce themselves and briefly review what students will learn through Project LEAD. Then, facilitators will share an item that gives them a sense of pride. Next, students will participate in a "Going to Law School" activity in which some legal terms are introduced with the Project LEAD Law Book and an Animal Courtroom handout. Students also will create their own nameplates so that facilitators can learn their names. Finally, facilitators will provide some basic classroom rules for future Project LEAD visits.

Lesson 1: Order in the Court

This lesson provides an overview of the criminal justice system and the role attorneys play in criminal cases. First, students will review what they learned in the Introductory Lesson about various legal professionals and their job duties. Then, students will read a play about prosecutors, defense attorneys and judges in court. Next, students will discuss the basic steps in a criminal case and take the role of prosecutors to decide the charges in hypothetical cases.

Lesson 2: The Rule of Law

This lesson introduces students to the purpose of criminal statutes and the consequences of breaking them. First, students will brainstorm school rules. Then, they will discuss the purpose of each of the rules and the consequences for breaking them. Next, selected students will read a play to the class about students who decide to break the rules. Students will identify what laws were broken in the play, the purpose of each of these laws and the consequences.

Lesson 3: The Juvenile Justice System

This lesson provides students with an overview of the juvenile justice system. First, students will discuss whether juvenile and adult offenders should be treated the same in hypothetical situations. Next, students will read a play to the class that traces the steps in juvenile court proceedings. Finally, students will compare the adult and juvenile justice systems.

Lesson 4: Juvenile Corrections

In this lesson, students learn about sentencing options for juvenile offenders. First, a group of students will read a play to the class about the options juvenile court judges have in sentencing offenders. Next, students will participate in a PowerPoint-driven activity in which they determine appropriate sentences for hypothetical juvenile offenders. If using PowerPoint in the classroom is not an option for you, use Handouts 4B and 4C instead.

Lessons 5 & 6: The Payoff

This two-day lesson shows students the financial benefits of staying in school. First, students will discuss where they would like to be in 10 to 20 years in terms of jobs, housing, income and possessions. Next, students will examine and discuss a chart comparing the annual income of dropouts, high school graduates, college graduates and those with professional degrees. Then, students will create budgets based on the income of each of these education levels.

Lesson 7: Truant

This lesson focuses on the problem of truancy and its consequences. First, students will discuss why they should attend school. Next, a group of students will perform a play comparing two students – one who is truant and another who does well in school. For the activity, there are two options. One is to have students work in small groups to plan and perform skits about the consequences of truancy. The second option is to have students write letters advising a friend on the consequences of ditching school. Then, students will share and discuss the activity.

Lesson 8: School Bully

This lesson focuses on the problem of bullying and how it leads to other problems. First, students will share examples of bullying they have observed or experienced. Then, by taking a quiz, students will learn more about the problem of bullying and its effects. Finally, students will work to identify bullying situations and choose options for addressing them.

**Lesson 9: Down for the Neighborhood**

This lesson focuses on the issue of joining gangs. First, students will discuss what they know about gangs. Next, a group of students will read a play on the consequences of one boy's decision to join a gang. Then, students will role-play persuading hypothetical students not to join gangs.

Lesson 10: Staying Cool With FINAL

This lesson focuses on teaching students about refusal skills for at-risk behaviors such as truancy, delinquency, smoking, bullying and drug and alcohol use. First, students will share experiences of friends trying to get them to do something that they knew was a bad idea. Next, five students will read a play about refusal skills. Finally, students will act out scenarios demonstrating the use of refusal skills.

Lesson 11: Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover

This lesson focuses on issues of prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination. First, students will read and discuss scenarios that depict instances of prejudice and discrimination. Next, pairs of students will be given cards describing either a problem of discrimination or a law to address the problem. Students will find the matching law and problem and participate in a closing discussion.

Lesson 12: Conflict Resolution – One Story With Three Endings

In this lesson, students are introduced to conflict resolution. They will look at three typical ways people deal with conflict: denial, confrontation and problem-solving. Students will role-play endings to stories demonstrating denial or confrontation. Then, they will discover how the same scenarios play out using problem-solving skills.

Lesson 13: Pitfalls

This lesson focuses on two common youth crimes: theft and vandalism. First, students will learn about the elements of every crime. Next, selected students will present short plays to the class illustrating a specific situation in which one of these crimes has taken place. After each play, facilitators will lead a guided discussion to help students recognize and describe different consequences associated with each situation. In the next lesson, students will apply the FINAL steps to make anti-graffiti, theft or vandalism posters to be hung up at the school.

Lesson 14: FINAL Comic Strip Posters

This lesson provides students an opportunity to apply the FINAL steps from Lesson 10 as they create posters showing how to avoid getting involved in the crimes of shoplifting and vandalism. Students will use a comic strip format to illustrate a scenario and the FINAL steps.

Lesson 15: Alcohol, Drugs and Consequences

This lesson focuses on drug and alcohol use and reinforces the FINAL refusal skills as students think about different consequences of using drugs and alcohol. The lesson is driven by a PowerPoint presentation that embeds three plays that groups of students will perform, as well as an activity in which pairs of students will practice the FINAL skills. Also contained in the PowerPoint are examples of "Faces of Meth." An optional activity is included that asks students to list a variety of consequences related to drug and alcohol use.

Lessons 16 & 17: Preparing for the LEAD Mock Trial

This three-lesson sequence prepares students to present a scripted mock trial. Students will become jurors as they view and discuss a PowerPoint that familiarizes students with trial participants, trial procedures and the concept of reasonable doubt. After the PowerPoint, students will break into four groups: jurors, prosecutors, defense attorneys and court staff. Each group will receive a packet that provides instructions on how to prepare for the trial of *People v. Smith*, a hypothetical case involving a gun in the backpack of an 18-year-old. Students will present the case in Lesson 18.



Lesson 18: Trial Presentation

This is the final lesson of the culminating three-lesson sequence. In this lesson, students conduct a scripted mock trial. First, students will review the trial procedures and will make the final preparations. Then, students will present the trial. Students may present the trial in the classroom, the school auditorium or a courtroom during a visit.

Optional Lessons

Optional Lesson 1: When Hate Becomes a Crime

This lesson focuses on hate crimes. First, students will discuss whether there should be sentence enhancements for hate crimes. Next, students will read definitions and identify examples of hate crimes. Then, students will decide whether hypothetical situations constitute hate crimes and, if so, whether the perpetrators should have additional time added to their sentence because they committed hate crimes.

Optional Lesson 2: Animal Cruelty

This lesson focuses on the problem of animal cruelty. First, students will discuss why it's important to protect animals. Next, students will match human and animal emotions. Then, students will work in small groups to read a scenario on animal cruelty and discuss how to help. Finally, students will share and discuss their scenarios.