



Assembly Member **SANDRÉ SWANSON**
News Release

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Assemblymember Swanson Claims Victory In Return Of Full Local Control To Oakland Unified School District

(Sacramento) – Nearly six years after the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) went under State receivership, the elected Board of Trustees is resuming full governing authority.

“This is a complete victory for our children, for our parents, for our teachers, and for the entire community. The heart of our democracy is our schools, and with this move, parents will once again be able to participate in all decisions affecting their children’s education,” a triumphant Assemblymember Sandré R. Swanson (D – Alameda) stated.

Assemblymember Swanson has actively campaigned for full return of governing authority since he was elected to the State Assembly at the end of 2006. He introduced AB 45 on his first day in office, which mandated a transparent and accountable system for returning control. The measure spurred State Superintendent of Schools Jack O’Connell to return partial control to Oakland in 2007. A similar measure this year, AB 791, would have required the State Superintendent to return the final areas of control before July 1, 2010.

Oakland School Board President Noel Gallo praised Assemblymember Swanson’s work on returning local control. “Mr. Swanson has been a champion for local control since day one. I am extremely grateful for all of the work he has done in helping the community regain authority over their schools,” Gallo said.

Oakland Education Association President Betty Olsen-Jones also acknowledged Assemblymember Swanson’s efforts. “Assemblymember Sandré Swanson has been unwavering in his support of local control for Oakland Unified School District, sponsoring AB 45 on his first day in office and following with AB 791. We are certain that his consistent efforts helped to push [State Superintendent] Jack O’Connell to finally relinquish state control, and the Oakland Education Association is grateful that Mr. Swanson’s got our back! We expect to call on him for more assistance as our elected School Board assumes its duties with a legacy from the state takeover that includes an \$80 million debt,” Olsen-Jones stated.

OUSD entered receivership in 2003 when board members at the time discovered a massive cash shortfall that threatened to leave the district insolvent. The State stepped in with a \$100 million loan, stripping the elected board of all governing power and investing management of the district in the State Superintendent. Later investigations found that no criminal wrongdoing took place. Receivership in the six years since has been plagued with controversy, as State appointed administrators reportedly made sweeping decisions, including closing or consolidating schools, without community input.

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