



CENTINELA YOUTH SERVICES

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Board of Directors

Robert Pullen-Miles
President/Chair
District Director, Office of
Assemblywoman Autumn Burke

Olivia Valentine
Vice President
Mayor Pro Tem,
City of Hawthorne

Bernadette Suarez
Secretary/Treasurer
City Councilmember,
City of Lawndale

Winona Dorris
Chief Financial Officer,
Liberty Hill Foundation

Nital Patel
Senior District Representative,
Office of Senator Bradford

Mark Henderson, Ed.D
Councilmember,
City of Gardena

Michael C. Douglass
Partner, Lydecker Diaz

Danielle Sevilla
Vice President & Director
of Special Forces,
Murakawa Communications

Executive Director

Jessica J. Ellis

Centinela Youth Services, Inc.
(CYS) is a 501 (c) (3)
non-profit, tax-exempt,
community-based
organization.

www.cys-la.org

August 12, 2021

Dear LA County Board of Education:

Re: Future Is Now Preparatory public charter

At Centinela Youth Services, we have the County's longest running diversion program to keep young people out of the justice system with award winning restorative justice programming. For over 46 years, we have been serving our County's most vulnerable youth with excellent outcomes, proving that we do not need to incarcerate our teenagers in crisis in order to change behavior and help them thrive.

One of the biggest challenges for the youth and families we serve are schools that are unable to meet the needs of those who have experienced tremendous trauma and long-term toxic stress. Time and again, we see local schools respond to our kids' attempts to cope and survive, with harsh and punitive measures. Often our vulnerable young people are sidelined into continuation schools that give up on their intelligence and potential, with education reduced to worksheet packets and metal detectors. **We can and must do better!**

Future Is Now Preparatory dares to present an education model where children with the highest needs are valued as individuals worthy of a "do whatever it takes" approach to meet their unique needs to build their resiliency and reconnect them with their true potential.

Many of our youth served at Centinela Youth Services, desperately need this new vision for their education.

With the grave impacts on families with the pandemic, everything is behind schedule and slow, including responses to school registration by the most distressed families. We are actively working to sign up many of



CENTINELA YOUTH SERVICES

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

our families now. Give this new school a chance to open and build. We need them.

The experts behind Future Is Now Prep have a proven track record of educational innovation and success. This charter school vision is well designed, is in alignment with the need of the target population and fills a major gap in the educational landscape. This charter deserves your full support.

Please do not take any action to hinder FIN Prep's ability to open for the coming school year.

Sincerely,

Jessica J. Ellis
Executive Director