

Statement by Kelly Fitzpatrick-Gonez

As the second largest school district in the country, LAUSD's food choices have an impact on more than 650,000 students. Those choices have a nationwide impact, and serve as a model for other districts. I commend the District for its leadership in committing to purchasing better-quality food and promoting nutrition in schools. I look forward to continuing that leadership as we identify new ways to promote healthy food and manage our food program sustainably and efficiently. As a teacher myself, I know that the food my students eat affects how they feel and how they learn. It is an important issue, and one that directly impacts our kids' outcomes in school and later in life.

I believe in making decisions with input from those who work every day in carrying out those policies. As a Board member, I would look to cafeteria workers, staff in charge of food purchasing, and schools with successful gardens for feedback on what works well; I would gather and respond substantively to feedback from students and families. At the same time, I would focus on potential improvements and how to expand existing best practices to other schools. LAUSD has the potential to lead the nation in setting policies that benefit both our students and lighten our carbon footprint on our environment.