As someone who spent 18 years as a LAUSD teacher, and whose entire education (from kindergarten through graduate school) was in public schools, I have a passionate and lifelong commitment to a world-class public education system.

Beverly Hills City Council and public schools must work together to preserve and enhance the progress we have made under the Joint Powers Agreement, but we must move beyond the JPA to expand educational opportunities and resources for the entire community from toddlers to seniors.

To maintain and surpass our current high standards, the City Council must work tirelessly to garner all available funding from State and Federal sources. We must ensure balance in the distribution of our building fees to schools and parks and recreation uses, and we must dramatically lessen our reliance on one time fees paid by large outside developers in favor of more stable, predictable funding sources.

The City must work in partnership with the schools, the PTAs and all stakeholders to make Beverly Hills a leader in science education, in early foreign language training, and in teacher to student ratios, with more and better classroom aides a priority. The decline in our schools Academic Achievement scores over the past few years is not acceptable. It is urgent and imperative that we work with Lisa Korbatov, the new President of our School Board, and her colleagues on the Board to mount an aggressive plan to return our district to academic excellence and make Beverly Hills a "Lighthouse District" once again.

We cannot and will not overlook security for our children. I will work closely with teachers, administrators, parents and our public safety officials to maintain the highest standards for campus security and playground safety.

Beverly Hills is blessed with a wonderful population of concerned and engaged parents, heroic and talented teachers and administrators and a diverse student body with high academic achievement levels. This means that our City Council has both an opportunity and an obligation to work in close partnership with our dedicated community of education stakeholders. Our children's future depends upon our cooperation and our vision.