RESOLUTION NO. 2015-_____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ANAHEIM SUPPORTING ANAHEIM'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS, AND OFFERING TO WORK IN CONTINUED PARTNERSHIP WITH ALL CITY SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO ENSURE STUDENTS IN THE CITY HAVE EQUAL ACCESS TO A QUALITY EDUCATION, INCLUDING SUPPORT FOR PROGRAMS, POLICIES, AND EDUCATIONAL CHOICES PROVIDED IN STATE LAW TO EMPOWER PARENTS AND STUDENTS TO CLOSE THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP (AKA THE "ANAHEIM PARENT AND STUDENT EMPOWERMENT ACT")

WHEREAS, the City of Anaheim has a long-standing, supportive partnership with its school districts providing millions annually in supplemental educational resources; and

WHEREAS, the city's financial support includes funding public safety officers and crossing guards at public school campuses, after school enrichment programs, joint-use agreements for city parks and libraries, and community services that provide a direct enhancement to the education of the City's children; and

WHEREAS, the City of Anaheim's greater business community contributes millions annually to support the City's public schools, including a recently completed Youth Assessment Survey funded by the Disneyland Resort, and the new grant initiative Accelerate Change Together (ACT), managed by the Orange County Community Foundation with financial support provided by the Disneyland Resort, Angels Baseball, and Anaheim Ducks, to address gaps in service for underserved Anaheim youth; and

WHEREAS, the City of Anaheim agrees all residents, parents and children, deserve equal access to a quality education; and

WHEREAS, many school districts across the City are achieving and exceeding state standards, with many of their schools recognized as California Distinguished Schools, and

WHEREAS, several school districts in the City of Anaheim are unfortunately listed as having among the worst performing schools in the County of Orange, including the Anaheim Union High School District, which reports that half of their schools are failing to meet state standards despite having among the highest levels of per pupil funding per the state Department of Finance; and

WHEREAS, parents at chronically low performing schools in Anaheim have sought to exercise their legal rights under California's Parent Empowerment Law to improve access for

their children to a better education and have faced staunch political and legal opposition by elected and administration officials governing these schools at taxpayer expense; and

WHEREAS, charter schools provide a personalized approach to education including smaller classrooms, innovative teaching methods, and parent involvement, such as the acclaimed El Rancho Middle School with Orange Unified School District and the independent GOALS Academy, which opened its doors on August 17, 2015 with the full support of the Anaheim City School District administration and trustees; and

WHEREAS, Charter Schools have been used effectively in the Los Angeles Unified School District to provide an alternative for economically disadvantaged students who have been attending chronically underperforming public schools; and

WHEREAS, the AUHSD has unanimously adopted a resolution asking the City of Anaheim to establish an undefined, unrestricted line item in the City budget to supplement funding for all public schools within the City, above and beyond the millions in public and private financial support provided by the City today and without any advance communication or collaboration by the AUHSD trustees or administration with the City; and

WHEREAS, AUHSD covers five cities in its jurisdiction, Anaheim, Buena Park, Cypress, La Palma, Stanton and its resolution was directed only in Anaheim and provides no taxpayer safeguards that if adopted by the City, the additional funding would be used to support schools and students in Anaheim, rather than the other four cities of the AUHSD service area; and

WHEREAS, the line item in the City budget requested by AUHSD would have no restrictions, taxpayer oversight or accountability and has the potential to divert vital city funding for Anaheim police, fire, parks, libraries, roads and closing the gap on the City's escalating pension liabilities; and

WHEREAS, the City's schools have received record levels of increased state funding over the past two fiscal years and the state Legislative Analyst Office has stated that the next fiscal year will be at or above existing levels, in addition to a $249 million bond approved by voters for AUHSD in 2014 and a $169.3 million bond approved by voters for ACSD in 2010; and

WHEREAS, ACSD had just approved an expenditure of $670,000 in funding that will go to legal fees rather than its public schools to appeal the Superior Court ruling in favor of Palm Lane parents exercising their legal rights under the California Parent Empowerment Law; and

WHEREAS, a high percentage of Anaheim's economically disadvantaged students continue to attend chronically low performing schools and there is insufficient evidence that unrestricted funding by the City would be used to improve upon the status quo and bring about substantive reforms, as evidenced by the increased levels of local and state funding in recent years that has yet to substantively close the achievement gap at schools reported as underperforming in the City; and

WHEREAS, the City of Anaheim and its public school districts should work together to adopt programs, policies, and reforms that are directed at closing the achievement gap at existing schools currently underperforming by state standards to ensure all students in the City have equal access to a quality education; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Anaheim:

1. The City of Anaheim will continue to provide significant financial resources based on existing budgetary practices to continue the City's historic support of its public schools and will continue to partner with its school districts on joint-use facilities and programs to enhance educational opportunities for families, parents and children in the City; and

2. The City of Anaheim urges the seven school districts that serve Anaheim students to adopt policies and programs to provide greater levels of high quality educational choice, including charter schools, and to adopt strategic plans and reforms to close the achievement gap for chronically low performing schools in Anaheim before seeking additional city funding; and

3. The City of Anaheim urges all seven school districts to actively inform parents of their legal rights under the California Parent Empowerment law and its Parent Trigger provisions, and to support and not in any way legally hinder or cease existing legal efforts to challenge parents exercising their legal rights as authorized by state law.

THE FOREGOING RESOLUTION is approved and adopted by the City Council of the City of Anaheim this ____ day of _____, 2015, by the following roll call vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

CITY OF ANAHEIM

By: _____

MAYOR OF THE CITY OF ANAHEIM

ATTEST:____
CITY CLERK OF THE CITY OF ANAHEIM