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# News Release

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Southern California Sports Community Joins Together to Save LAUSD School Athletics**

*LA84 Foundation, Dodgers, Nike, Chivas USA and other Foundations Donate \$1.3 Million*

LOS ANGELES — With the clock winding down on high school sports in Los Angeles, some of the most prominent names in local sports and philanthropy have teamed up for a game-saving play: providing \$1.3 million in emergency funding to ensure that sports in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) can continue to thrive despite crippling budget cuts that have reached across the District and threatened athletic activities.

The aptly titled “Save our Sports” (SOS) initiative will pay coaches stipends to ensure all 14 competitive sports offered in the District can continue in the upcoming 2010-2011 school year. Among the leaders joining the effort are the LA84 Foundation, the Dodgers Dream Foundation, Nike, Chivas USA, Lincy Foundation, the Weingart Foundation, Easton Sports Development Foundation, the Pete and Ginny Ueberroth Charitable Trust, and private individuals who have made sizeable anonymous donations.

LAUSD Superintendent Ramon C. Cortines praised the LA84 Foundation for “stepping up to the plate” and leading the initiative. “This is a tremendous day. Without the leadership of Anita DeFrantz, the Board and staff of the LA84 Foundation, we would not be here today celebrating success in saving sports for our students,” the superintendent and former high school track runner said. “We are also enormously grateful to our partners in the sports and foundation communities who have made such a strong commitment to the young people of Los Angeles.”

LA84 Foundation President Anita L. DeFrantz, whose foundation is committed to the development of youth sport, pointed out the crucial role of sports for young people. “We developed the “Save Our Sports” program because we could not let the District’s budget crisis negatively affect the opportunity for more than 35,000 students across 72 high schools to participate in sports,” said DeFrantz, a 1976 Olympic bronze medalist. “Sports create an understanding of leadership, team work and commitment, which are all values that create better citizens.”

(more)

Los Angeles Dodgers owner Frank McCourt, who responded immediately to LA84's request, said he believed it was crucial to provide opportunities in sports for the next generation. "Youth sports are essential for Los Angeles," said McCourt, whose team nurtured such hometown greats as Don Drysdale, Willie Davis, Willie Crawford and many others. "The Dodgers Dream Foundation is proud to give young Angelenos a chance to play ball – and learn the value of teamwork, dedication and many important life skills."

"Nike is committed to our youth and understands the value of sport", said Fabiola Torres, Marketing Director; Nike Los Angeles. "Our commitment to save high school basketball is a continuation of our long-standing dedication to providing all Los Angeles youth access to sports."

"Chivas USA is committed to Los Angeles in a way that goes far beyond simply making this donation," said Chivas USA President and CEO Shawn Hunter. "This will be the beginning of a great partnership with LAUSD, and we are excited for the opportunity to help build and maintain strong high school soccer programs that coaches, students, and families can be proud of."

"We are extremely grateful to all those who generously gave to SOS," said LAUSD Board President Mónica García. "We know that sports provide motivation for many students to stay in school and will assist us in our goal of a 100 percent graduation rate."

Barbara Fiege, LAUSD Director of Interscholastic Sports, added, "It is a fact that participation in high school sports, and the coaches who dedicate themselves daily, change the lives of students and build future community leaders. I know I speak for all of our coaches and student athletes in extending a heartfelt 'thank you' to all of the incredible contributors for giving us the opportunity to continue to provide 100 percent of this important educational program!"

Those wishing to be involved in the "SOS" program may contact Melissa Infusino, Director of Partnerships LAUSD, at 213-241-7000 or go to [www.cif-la.org](http://www.cif-la.org).

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