

## **California Safe Schools (Non-Profit) & 2nd Largest School District In USA Embrace Precautionary Principle**

For Immediate Release: 1999

---

*Created most stringent pesticide policy in nation for schools.  
Policy has become model for school districts and communities throughout the U.S.*

[WWW.CALISAFE.ORG](http://WWW.CALISAFE.ORG)

### ***Parents Gain Right to Know About Toxic Exposures***

Los Angeles, California - "Every parent in the Los Angeles Unified School District has gained the right to know if their children are being exposed to pesticides," said Robina Suwol, Executive Director of California Safe Schools Coalition. The right is part of a new policy adopted by the Los Angeles Unified School District (2nd largest school district in the nation with 800,000 students) introduced by California Safe Schools Coalition, an organization committed to ensuring that all students, teachers, staff and community members who attend, work, or live near school sites are in a safe, toxic-free environment. The policy, titled Integrated Pest Management (IPM), pledged to implement least-toxic measures to control all pest management issues at the district's hundreds of schools. The policy has become a model for school districts and communities nationwide.

"The policy mandates the use of preventative measures and least toxic methods first in schools. Only when preventative measures fail does the district turn to pesticides on the approved list. Pesticides on the approved list cannot contain products known to cause cancer, neurological disruption, birth defects, genetic alteration, reproductive harm, immune system dysfunction, endocrine disruption, or acute poisoning, which stops the routine use of the most hazardous pesticides in schools," added Suwol.

Because of the new policy, parents are given a list of pesticide products at the beginning of the school year that have been approved for use within the Los Angeles Unified School District sites. Parents who wish advance notification of each pesticide application at their child's school will receive notification by completing the "Right to Know" form and sending it to the school principal.

"As a parent, I am so grateful to California Safe Schools Coalition and (the Los Angeles Unified School District) for their hard work in finding the least toxic and yet effective methods for controlling pests and weeds in our schools; for including parents and staff in the decision making process; and for the right to know about potentially harmful applications of pesticides/herbicides near our kids," said Jenny Barsumian Brady, a parent representative for California Safe Schools.

Every parent knows that it is smart to keep children away from toxic chemicals." said Harvey Karp, MD, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, UCLA School of Medicine, American Academy of Pediatrics. "That's why I salute California Safe Schools Coalition. The coalition has helped the Los Angeles Unified School district to adopt the best solution in the country for getting rid of pests while protecting children."

Brandon Stirling Baker, Van Nuys High School Performing Arts Magnet student added, " Kids go to school to learn, not to get sick. I'm proud LA Unified was the first in the nation to include the "precautionary principle" in their low risk pest and weed policy. I look forward to hearing about other schools and communities using the "precautionary principle". It's always better to be safe than sorry".

For more information, and to view a copy of the groundbreaking Integrated Pest Management Policy visit: CALIFORNIA SAFE SCHOOLS at [www.calisafe.org](http://www.calisafe.org)

For more information:

Robina Suwol, Executive Director 818-785-5515 - Box 2123 Toluca Lake, California 91610