

# INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

Los Angeles Unified School District

**TO:** Bond Oversight Committee

**DATE:** December 17, 2003

**FROM:** Joseph Mehula  
Deputy Chief Executive Officer, New Construction

**SUBJECT:** Responses to the July 29 (rev.) BOC Report  
Part 2, Section H. Outreach

The following is provided in response to questions posed by the Bond Oversight committee in their July 2003 report concerning Health Schools, Healthy Parks, Healthy Communities.

**How are we evolving community outreach into true community engagement for the next phase of planning, design and development?**

The Community Outreach Plan for Phase II of the new school construction program has leveraged the momentum from Phase I and evolved into true community engagement through the increased level and timing of community involvement.

As many are aware, Phase I was driven by the need to meet a June 2002 funding deadline to qualify for state matching funds; therefore, stakeholder involvement in the project definition phase was limited. Phase I projects were defined using criteria established by the June 2000 Priority Plan. The June 2000 Priority Plan identified schools that required the most significant relief based on the number of students that would not be able to attend their resident school on a multi-track calendar, and the number of years the school had been on a multi-track calendar.

Community outreach for Phase I began at site selection and through effective outreach, 76 sites were successfully identified with the support of committed community members.

Our experience tells us that the community wants to influence four areas of new school projects: project definition, site selection, school design and school operation. The Phase II Community Outreach Process was developed to facilitate this level of involvement. In Phase II, the community is engaged as a participant earlier in the new school planning process and will have the opportunity to help develop new school projects that will meet the needs of their community.

To keep the community informed and engaged during each phase of the school building process, a series of meetings will be held on project definition, site selection, relocation, design, environmental health and safety, and construction issues. At these meetings experts in demographics, real estate, environmental health and safety, design, construction management present information, answer questions and obtain feedback.

By providing open and accessible forums for information to be shared, Community Outreach strives to develop participation, trust and support and to ensure the community is an active partner in solving the severe overcrowding conditions in our schools.

**What is the relationship between the facilities community outreach department, the superintendent's office of communications and legislation, and the local district superintendent resources?**

The Director of Community Outreach is in daily communication and meets regularly with the Special Assistant to the Superintendent, the Director of Communications & Media Relations, and the Director of Legislative and Governmental Affairs. Additionally, Community Outreach works closely with local district superintendents. Senior Community Outreach Organizers have been assigned to local districts for the Phase II new school construction effort. In addition, they have been instructed to work with the local superintendents to determine a working arrangement that best suits the needs of each local superintendent, including working a specific number of hours out of the local district office. Currently, the average number of hours worked out of the local superintendent's office is 4-5 hours a week.

**What is planned to improve the level of information available to the community outreach department and their role in the development of new schools?**

Three area development teams are responsible for all Phase II preconstruction activities required to build a new school. Each team comprises representatives from the Local District, School Management Services, Community Outreach, Real Estate, Environmental Health Services, Design Management, Legal, Demographics, and Grants and Funding. These teams meet regularly to strategize on projects and develop community outreach plans for their region.

Our statistics with regard to Phase II outreach support are impressive. To date, we have held 56 formal community meetings at the District and Complex levels, held 480 presentations and briefings to key stakeholders, sent 1.9 million notices to student's families and distributed over 1.6 million meeting notices to homes, businesses and community locations.

**The Oversight Committee's recent hearing in Huntington Park drove home the lesson that LAUSD is not reaching the community with information about school construction, modernization, and repair. Parents do not know when their schools will be built, modernized, or repaired, and do not know who to ask. Principals do not have the information.**

For the past three and a half years, Community Outreach has been responsible for community engagement and communication of new school construction projects. We believe that we are making progress in gaining the trust of a disenfranchised public that has been neglected for 25 years in the form of inadequate facilities and a lack of a healthy two-way dialogue. Community Outreach is dedicated to bringing the public back into the school community through effective engagement and communication; however, there will be individuals in whose eyes the District can do no right. Still, despite the challenges, Community Outreach is the proud recipient of several commendations bestowed by organized parent groups.

Attached is a list of community meetings held for the Huntington Park community at each stage of the school building process. These 30 meetings demonstrate the level of effort expended by Community Outreach in addition to hundreds of presentations and briefings to various groups and officials within the Huntington Park community, including:

- Middleton Neighborhood Watch and Corona Neighborhood Watch Groups
- Huntington Park School Principals
- Title One Meetings at various schools in Huntington Park
- Huntington Park City Council
- Huntington Park, Maywood, and Bell Parent Group, chaired by city of Bell Councilman George Cole
- District J Family Meetings

Meeting notices and informative fliers were also regularly distributed to:

- Areas where new schools are being built
- Huntington Park reliever schools
- Huntington Park County Library
- Old Timers Foundation
- Southeast YMCA
- Kiwanis Club of Huntington Park
- Tiny Tot Program at Corona Park
- Huntington Park BID (Business Improvement District)
- Huntington Park City Hall
- Huntington Park Chamber of Commerce
- St. Matthias Catholic Church
- Mexican American Opportunity Foundation Head Start Program

Attachments: List of Huntington Park Community Meetings

Bond Oversight Committee 12/17/03  
Attachment: List of Huntington Park Community Meetings

- 1) August 30, 2000 Community Meeting at Middleton ES for sites identified by Huntington Park residents for new schools
- 2) September 13, 2000 Middleton Bus Tour to Valerio Primary Center (Huntington Park parents participated)
- 3) September 29, 2000 Community Meeting at Middleton for review of sites suggested by community
- 4) November 16, 2000 at Miles Ave School for State Street New ES #1
- 5) November 28, 2000 at Bell Community Center for Huntington Park New ES #7
- 6) January 6, 2001 at Bell Community Center for Huntington Park New ES #7 (meeting with potentially impacted property owners and tenants)
- 7) January 8, 2001 Community Meeting at Miles Ave School for State Street #1
- 8) January 18, 2001 Community Meeting at Middleton for Middleton Primary Center and State Street #1
- 9) February 22, 2001 preferred site community meeting at Nimitz Junior High
- 10) March 12, 2001 Relocation Meeting at Miles Avenue School for State Street ES #1
- 11) April 3, 2001 Informational Meeting for Impacted folks for Huntington Park New ES #7 Corona Park
- 12) May 31, 2001 Community Meeting to go over the designs for all the proposed schools for the city of Huntington Park
- 13) July 11, 2001 Relocation Meeting for Middleton Primary Center at Middleton ES
- 14) July 30, 2001 Relocation Meeting for Huntington Park New ES #7 at Nimitz Junior High
- 15) August 3, 2001 Update Meeting at Pacific Blvd School for Huntington Park ES #3
- 16) October 24, 2001 Community Meeting at Miles Ave School to update community on all proposed projects for Huntington Park
- 17) January 9, 2002 PEA Public Hearing for Middleton Primary Center
- 18) January 19, 2002 Southeast Cities Relocation Mega Meeting at Embassy Suites in Downey (Note: We provided transportation to and from meeting)
- 19) February 20, 2002 PEA Public Hearing for State Street ES #1 at State Street ES School
- 20) March 18, 2002 Update Meeting for all Huntington Park School Parent Representatives at Old Timers Foundation
- 21) April 4, 2002 Meeting for Huntington Park impacted property owners and tenants at Gage Middle School
- 22) May 9, 2002 PEA Public Hearing for State Street Expansion Project at State Street School

Bond Oversight Committee 12/17/03  
Attachment: List of Huntington Park Community Meetings

- 23) July 23, 2002 Enhanced Relocation Meeting for Huntington Park New ES #7 at Nueva Vista ES
- 24) July 25, 2002 Enhanced Relocation Meeting for Middleton and State Street ES #1
- 25) October 24, 2002 Update Community Meeting for Huntington Park New ES #3 at Pacific Blvd School
- 26) October 29, 2002 PEA Public Hearing for State Street Expansion Project at State Street School
- 27) November 13, 2002 Demolition Community Meeting for State Street New ES #1 at State Street School
- 28) February 27, 2003 Huntington Park New ES #3 Ground Breaking Ceremony
- 29) March 8, 2003 Community Meeting at Pacific Blvd School for Huntington Park New ES #3 at Pacific Blvd. School
- 30) May 14, 2003 Relocation Meeting for State Street Expansion Project at State Street School