



# LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Board of Education Report

<b>Report Number:</b>	181 – 15/16
<b>Date:</b>	December 8, 2015
<b>Subject:</b>	Facilities Components of the Playa Vista Area Enrollment Growth Plan: Amendment to the Facilities Services Division Strategic Execution Plan to Approve Project Definitions at Two School Sites and Authorize Feasibility Studies at a Third Site
<b>Responsible Staff:</b>	
Name	Mark Hovatter, Chief Facilities Executive Cheryl Hildreth, Superintendent
Office/Division	Facilities Services Division Local District West
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### BOARD REPORT

**Action Proposed:** Staff proposes that the Board of Education take the following actions related to school facilities at Playa Vista Elementary School (“Playa Vista ES”) and Orville Wright Middle School (“Wright MS”) to support the Playa Vista area enrollment growth plan (“the Plan”). These actions are necessary to ensure the District will be able to continue to provide its students and families with the opportunity to attend their neighborhood schools, and for these schools to continue to operate on a traditional two-semester calendar:

1. Amend the Facilities Services Division Strategic Execution Plan (“FSD-SEP”) to approve the Project Definition for the Playa Vista ES Addition project, and incorporate the project into the FSD-SEP. The proposed project will include:
  - The addition of four classrooms (staff will evaluate the option of constructing four new stand-alone classrooms versus converting the existing library into two kindergarten classrooms and constructing two new stand-alone classrooms and a new library);
  - Furnishing and equipping new and converted facilities; and
  - Improvements as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”), Division of the State Architect (“DSA”), California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”), Department of Toxic Substances Control (“DTSC”), and any other required improvements or mitigations to ensure compliance with local, state, and/or federal facilities requirements.



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The proposed project is anticipated to begin construction activities in the second quarter of 2018, and to be completed in the second quarter of 2020. The project budget is currently estimated at \$7.68 Million. The school site/project is located in Board District 4 (Zimmer) and Local District West.

2. Amend the FSD-SEP to approve the Project Definition for the Wright Middle School Flexible Learning/Science Laboratory Facilities Upgrade project, and incorporate the project into the FSD-SEP. The proposed project will include:
  - Upgrading up-to five existing classrooms to create flexible learning/science laboratories in support of the three educational programs to be incorporated into the Wright MS campus as part of the growth plan (one 4<sup>th</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade program and two 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade programs);
  - Furnishing and equipping of the new flexible learning/science laboratories; and
  - Improvements as required by the ADA, DSA, CEQA, DTSC, and any other required improvements or mitigations to ensure compliance with local, state, and/or federal facilities requirements.

The proposed upgrade project is anticipated to begin construction activities in the fourth quarter of 2017, and to be completed by the fourth quarter of 2018. The project budget is currently estimated at \$2.57 Million. The school site/project is located in Board District 4 (Zimmer) and Local District West.

3. Authorize staff to undertake feasibility studies (primarily environmental investigations) at Westchester-Emerson Community Adult School (“Emerson”), a Venice Skills Center affiliated school, and other Westside schools as necessary, in order to determine the viability of identifying the site(s) as potential Proposition 39 (Education Code section 47614) facilities for Westside Innovative School House’s (“WISH”) elementary school program, including identification of any mitigation measures that may be necessary. Staff anticipates that these pre-planning activities will cost approximately \$200,000. The school site is located in Board District 4 (Zimmer) and Local District West.



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### **Background:**

Playa Vista ES opened in August 2012. The school was developed under the District's Two-Semester Neighborhood School Program to accommodate the projected demand for elementary classroom seats created by the Playa Vista development (Phase I and II) that could not be accommodated at District schools. As a condition of the approval of the Playa Vista development by the City of Los Angeles, the sub-divider of the development was required to dedicate four acres of land, at no cost to the District, for the construction of Playa Vista ES. Pursuant to the provisions of Education Code section 17620, the District also assessed developer fees on the Playa Vista development.

Playa Vista ES, in partnership with Loyola Marymount University ("LMU"), offers a highly regarded STEM Program. The school is currently configured as a kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade elementary school and consists of 26 total classrooms. Enrollment has steadily increased over the last several years, and the school is operating near or at capacity with an enrollment of approximately 540 students in the current 2015-2016 school year with no additional available rooms. This represents a significant increase in enrollment from the prior 2014-2015 school year, when 415 students were enrolled at Playa Vista ES.

Based on these enrollment trends, and taking into account the recent and anticipated completion of new housing units within the Playa Vista development area and the significant number of families continuing to buy and lease in the community, staff anticipates that elementary-age enrollment in the area will continue to increase significantly over the next five years before eventually stabilizing. By 2020, staff projects that 400 more elementary-age students (kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade) will reside in the area, requiring approximately 14 additional classrooms to be added to the existing facility capacity in the area. Approximately 50 percent of these new students are projected to be living in the area by the 2016-2017 school year. Therefore, at least seven more classrooms will be needed by the 2015-2016 school year to accommodate this influx.

The Plan, developed by Local District West and District leadership with support from the Facilities Services Division, is a multi-faceted plan that was borne out of the critical need to provide additional capacity to support the significant residential enrollment growth at the elementary school level in Playa Vista. The Plan also responds to the parallel demand for high quality middle school opportunities in the area. This long-term plan considers the needs of all families living in the Wright MS and Westchester Enriched Sciences Magnets High School ("WESM HS") attendance areas, including their feeder elementary schools (Playa Vista, Cowan, Loyola



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Village, Paseo Del Rey Magnet, Westport Heights, Kentwood, Baldwin Hills, and Windsor Hills elementary schools).

Under the plan, and in order to accommodate the impending enrollment growth and enhance the middle school opportunities in the area, the Playa Vista ES 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students will be relocated to Wright MS (a full-site magnet). Wright MS will continue to operate as one physical middle school, serving its feeder elementary schools: Playa Vista, Cowan, Loyola Village, Paseo Del Rey Magnet, Westport Heights, Kentwood, Baldwin Hills and Windsor Hills. Additionally, four classrooms will be constructed at the Playa Vista ES proper campus to accommodate students in kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. It is anticipated that the Playa Vista ES program at Wright MS will eventually require 10 classrooms for students in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade, while at least seven will be needed for the upcoming 2016-2017 school year. The District's partnership with LMU will continue as-is, thus allowing permits for LMU families in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding.

There are currently two separate instructional programs at Wright MS. The District operates a STEAM magnet for students in 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade within 35 classrooms, and WISH's elementary school program occupies 19 classrooms pursuant to a Proposition 39 alternative agreement. With the full implementation of the Plan it is projected there will no longer be space available for non-District programs at Wright MS.

**Expected Outcomes:** Staff anticipates that the Board of Education will approve the proposed Project Definitions for the Playa Vista ES Addition project and the Wright MS Flexible Learning/Science Laboratory Facilities Upgrade project, and authorize staff to undertake feasibility studies at Emerson and other Westside schools, as necessary.

The projects proposed in this Board Report are anticipated to provide sufficient capacity and support spaces so the students and families in the Playa Vista, Playa Del Rey and Westchester communities continue to be provided with an opportunity to attend schools on a traditional, two-semester calendar. Furthermore, the Playa Vista area enrollment growth plan provides the District with the opportunity to attract more area students who have historically made a choice outside of the District as they matriculate into middle school, and generate additional revenue.

**Board Options and Consequences:** Approval of this proposal will allow staff to proceed with design activities, environmental studies, and the required regulatory approvals for the classroom addition project at Playa Vista ES and the flexible



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learning/science laboratory project at Wright MS. It will allow staff to proceed with only feasibility studies at Emerson and other Westside schools, as necessary.

If the Board of Education does not approve the proposed actions, Playa Vista ES will have to implement other measures, such as the involuntarily busing of students, and/or establishing a multi-track academic calendar. Furthermore, as the elementary-age students steadily increase in the Playa Vista community, other area elementary schools may need to implement involuntarily busing or institute multi-track academic calendars to accommodate the growth. If the District is not able to retain these students at the elementary-level due to lack of capacity or rigorous middle school instructional opportunities, these students may not choose to attend a District school, resulting in a loss of revenue.

Without approval to undertake feasibility studies at Emerson, the District will be unable to determine whether this site could be utilized and occupied by in-District charter school students. Also, other Westside area schools could not be studied for the potential Proposition 39 co-location of a charter school. Given the size of WISH's elementary school program, coupled with the other Proposition 39 facilities requests by other charter schools on the Westside, and the amount of actual capacity, it is important that these feasibility studies be undertaken to ensure the District can meet the legal deadlines under Proposition 39.

**Policy Implications:** The proposed action is consistent with the District's long-term goal to provide its students with the opportunity to attend their neighborhood schools operating on traditional, two-semester calendars. The proposed projects also address unmet school facilities needs and significantly improve the conditions of aging and deteriorating school facilities as described in the District's local bond measures K, R, Y and Q.

**Budget Impact:** The combined budget for the projects at Playa Vista ES and Wright MS is \$10.25 Million. These projects will be funded by Developer Fee receipts and Bond Program funds in the School Upgrade Program targeted for major renovations, modernizations, reconfigurations to school buildings.

The feasibility studies to be undertaken at Emerson and other Westside schools, as necessary, will be funded by funds in the School Upgrade Program set-aside for indirect/program-level costs. Should a facilities solution be identified that requires physical improvements and/or modernizations to a school site, a separate Project Definition will be presented to the Bond Citizens' Oversight Committee ("BOC") and Board



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of Education, and the funding for the feasibility studies will be redirected to the project itself.

**Issues and Analysis:** The District's Bond Program is making up for decades of overcrowding. At the inception of the Program, nearly 230 schools were operating on a multi-track calendar and approximately 110 schools were involuntarily busing students. In order to address this overcrowding, the Board of Education has approved 131 new K-12 school projects and 65 new K-12 addition projects. Prior to this year, demographic projections indicated that these projects were sufficient to ensure all District students were provided with the opportunity to attend their neighborhood school and that it operated on a traditional, two-semester calendar. However, based on updated demographic projections, it is necessary to undertake the proposed projects to ensure all District students continue to be provided with the opportunity to attend their neighborhood school, which operates on a two-semester calendar.

WISH submitted a Proposition 39 facilities request for its elementary school program for the 2016-2017 school year to the District. As a result of the impending changes at Wright MS, it will be necessary to identify alternative facilities options for WISH. As such, staff is requesting authorization to undertake feasibility studies at Emerson and other Westside schools, as necessary, in order to determine the viability of identifying the site(s) as a potential facilities solution for WISH. If Emerson is identified as the acceptable facilities solution for the District and WISH, the adult programs offered at Emerson will be relocated to nearby District locations.

Local District West, with support from FSD staff, has been meeting and discussing the plan with the administrators of Playa Vista ES and Wright MS schools and key stakeholders. Staff from FSD and the Charter School Division have also been in preliminary discussions with WISH leadership and parent representatives regarding potential alternative facilities solutions for WISH. In addition, Local District West leadership has met with and briefed the administrators at all elementary schools feeding into Wright MS. A community meeting for families and community members living in the Wright MS and WESM HS attendance boundaries was held on November 16, 2015. Information was shared regarding the need for additional classroom capacity and the proposed plan and projects for the area. Time was also provided for questions and feedback, which were recorded.

**Bond Oversight Committee Recommendations:** This item was considered by the School Construction Bond Citizens' Oversight Committee (BOC) at its meeting on November 19, 2015. As a quorum was not present, an official recommendation could not be



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made; however, a vote was taken resulting in 7 ayes, 0 nays and 0 abstentions.

Having fulfilled the obligation under the MOU to present for the BOC's consideration all projects that require the use of bond funds, staff's proposal will be brought before the Board of Education for action.


**Attachments:** None.

- Informative**
- Desegregation  
Impact Statement**



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Respectfully submitted,

  
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Superintendent


APPROVED BY:

  
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 (AM)

APPROVED &  
PRESENTED BY:

  
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Approved as to form.

  
KRISZTINA TOKES  
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CHERYL SIMPSON  
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Approved as to budget impact statement.

  
CHERYL HILDRETH  
Superintendent  
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