

# ECO- SUSTAINABILITY OFFICE UPDATES

## Greening Schools & Climate Resilience Committee Meeting

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Chief Eco-Sustainability Officer

March 25, 2026



Annalee ES Seed to Table Program – Photo: Garden School Foundation



Dahlia Heights ES CHPS Project



CA Milkweed Plant Donation from SAMO Fund

# Agenda

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- LADWP MOU Updates
- Energy Savings & Management
- Recycled Water Irrigation
- Campus Ecology
- Transportation Electrification
- High Performance Schools
- Climate Literacy
- Wildfire Resilience
- Recent Presentations
- Notable Accomplishments



Annalee Ave. ES Seed to Table Program—  
Photo: Garden School Foundation



# LADWP MOU 2025

## Priority Programs in Development

### Resilience Pilot Programs

- Command Control Center – monitors and optimizes energy and water use district-wide
- Microgrid – on-site solar and battery backup

### Greening – \$2.25M Annually

- Tree planting opportunity assessment to increase shade, create micro-forests, and support related grants

### Water Conservation – \$1.0M Annually

Leak Detection – identifies losses to reduce waste and cost

- Smart Irrigation Controllers – automates watering to save water

### Education and Awareness – \$1.125M Annually

- Sustainability Professional Development for Climate Literacy RFP

### Direct Install LED Lighting Retrofits – \$100M total

- 41 school sites audited to date; 8 projects completed to date
- 4.94 million kWh potential savings in electricity use

**\$22.5M per Term Year for Various Sustainability Initiatives**



Alta California Elementary School – Aeroponic Tower Garden Program – funded by previous MOU



Superior Street Elementary School – HEROES for Zero 2025-26 Eco-Warriors Team



# Energy Savings & Management

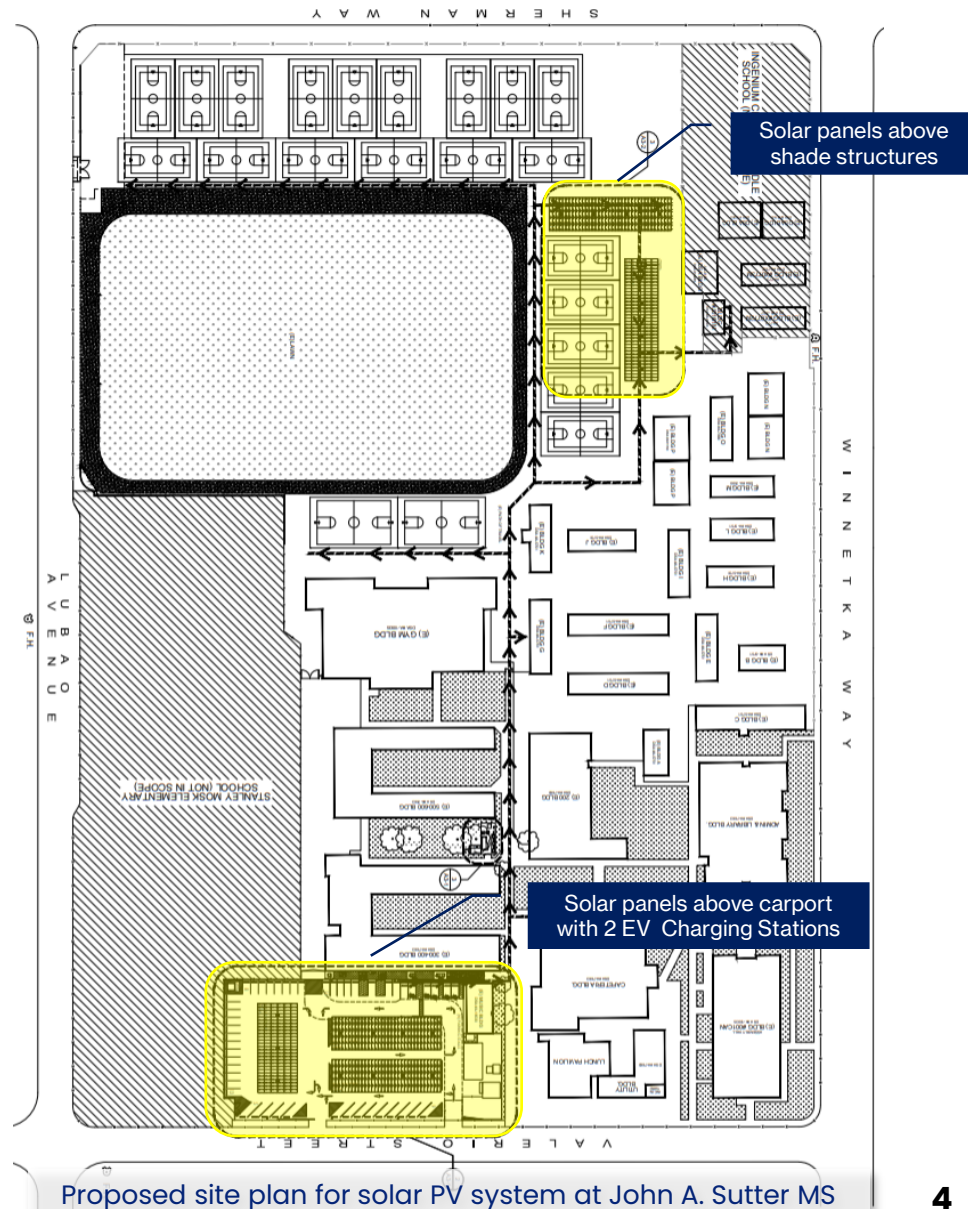
## Investment & Innovation

### Utility Cost Avoidance

- Constellation Energy Contract: 8¢/kWh vs. 12¢/kWh
  - \$3.6M annual cost avoidance
- SoCalGas: Replaced 63 aging natural gas water heaters
  - ~\$80,000 estimated annual utility cost avoidance

### Energy Credits

- Investment Tax Credit:
  - An estimated \$40M in **Investment Tax Credits** will be received from 21 solar projects to reinvest in additional renewable projects



# Energy Demand Management

## Innovation Pilot

### California Energy Commission Grant for Virtual Power Plant (VPP) Pilot:

- \$2.6M grant through partner Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) - \$1.9M directly benefits LAUSD
- Purpose: to test new technology to reduce electrical peak-loads in schools and provide demand load flexibility
- Pilots at two school sites:
  - Maywood Academy High School (MAHS)
  - Maywood Center for Enriched Studies (MACES)

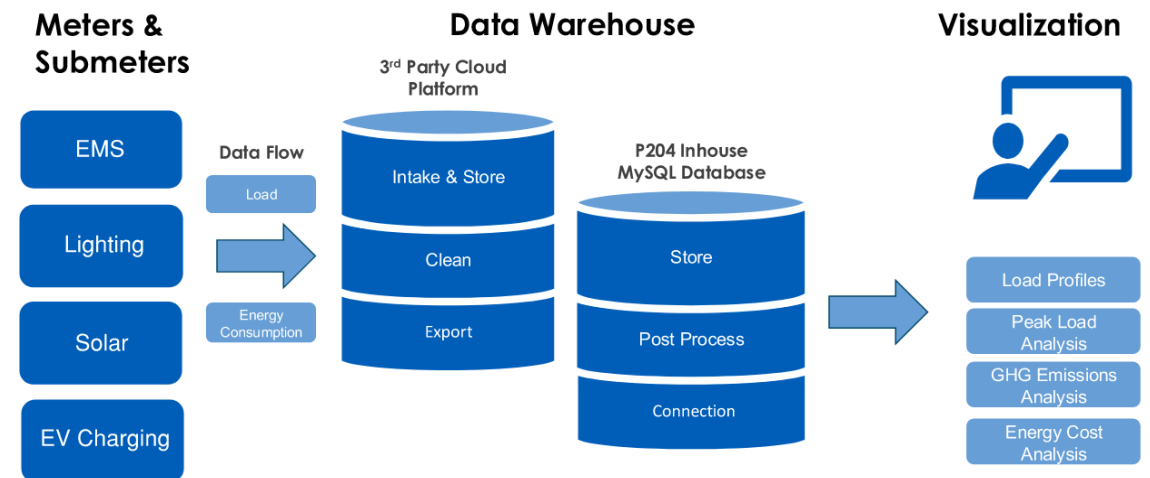


Maywood Center for Enriched Studies



Maywood Academy HS

### Project Data Flow & Data Pipeline Structure





# Recycled Water Irrigation



East Valley HS Purple Pipe Installation



East Valley HS Purple Pipe Signage

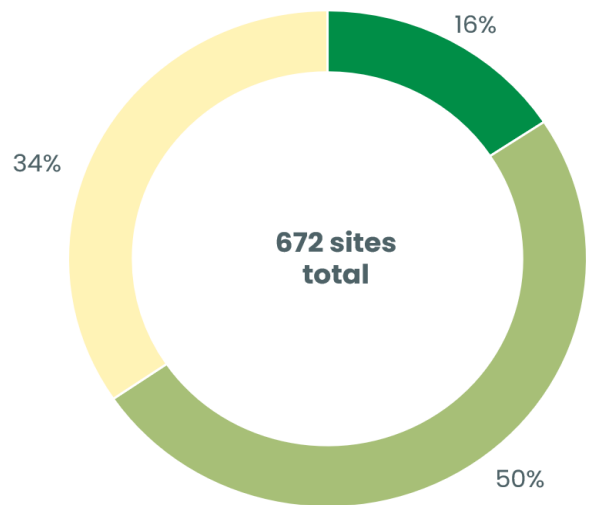
## Additional Sites

- East Valley HS Recycled Water Project completed in September 2025 in partnership with LADWP
- Conversion of irrigation system from potable (drinking) water to recycled water
- Four additional sites to be converted in 2026:
  - Gardena High School
  - Fulton College Prep
  - Westchester Enriched Sciences Magnet
  - North Hollywood High School
- 40 million gallons of potable water saved annually
- District saves approximately \$840,000 utility cost annually

**\$840,000 Annual Water Cost Savings Across 5 School Sites**

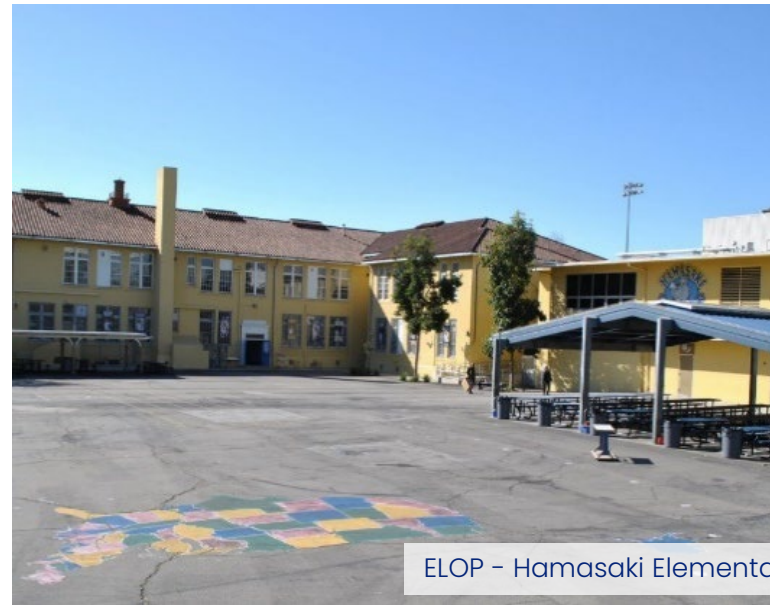
# Campus Ecology

- Convert 30% of every schoolyard in the District to permeable, green spaces by 2035
- Provide tree shade to 20% of all schoolyards



FY 23-24  
Baseline

- Schools w/ >30% coverage
- Schools w/ >10% coverage
- Schools w/ <10% coverage



ELOP - Hamasaki Elementary School - Before & After



ELOP - Wilson Elementary School - Before & After





# Campus Ecology

## Third-Party Greening Programs

**52 Third Party Greening Projects grant value of \$60M.**

**Streamlining the Third-Party Greening Implementation process:**

- \$3M district funds allocated to projects

**CAL FIRE Green Schoolyards Grant Projects:**

- 33 projects budgeted at \$45M
- 1 completed: O'Melveny ES (HBT)
- 4 in construction
- 19 in preconstruction/design
- 9 projects on hold

**Challenges:**

- Environmental site conditions, District fees, and escalation during construction
- Greening partners seeking funding support to maintain project scope



Belvedere ES Before ELOP Project



Belvedere ES After ELOP Project



# 122<sup>nd</sup> St Elementary School Micro-forest Pilot

## Innovation & Impact

### Project Scope:

- Creation of a micro-forest with 44 trees, 124 understory plants, decomposed granite, mulch, log seating and two years of maintenance

### Testing alternative cost savings landscape details:

- No header between the DG and planting areas
- Logs and stumps with bark
- Log/branch borders

### Development of new details for future projects:

- Redwood header detail
- Curved composite header detail
- Concrete mow-strip along grass/forest border still required
- Detail for no header between DG and mulch planting areas

### Educational opportunities:

- Educational materials/curriculum resources developed by Green Schools America (GSA) for the school
- Forest ranger program that Principal Smith is implementing

**LAUSD will continue to monitor the project and learn/benefit from the resources and ideas that emerge**

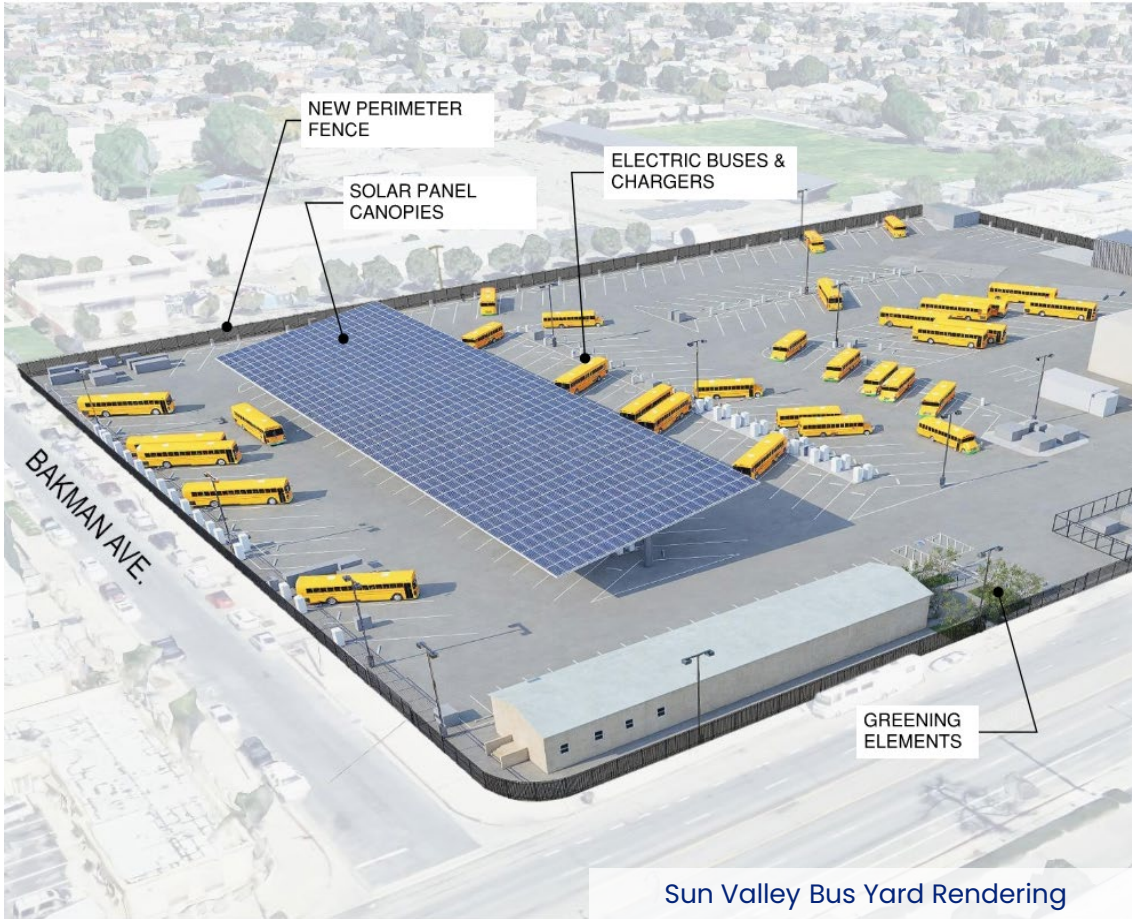


GSA held tour at 122<sup>nd</sup> St ES Schoolyard Forest



122<sup>nd</sup> St ES Schoolyard Forest

# Transportation Electrification



Sun Valley Bus Yard Rendering

**Industry Forum for Upcoming Bus Electrification Projects:** Solicitation for 242 zero-emission buses with charging infrastructure

## Electric School Buses

### Sun Valley Bus Yard Electrification:

- 186 electric buses and 186 EV charging stations, solar generation & battery storage - microgrid
- Completion: Q1-2027

### Grant Funding Opportunities - \$121M:

#### Zero Emissions School Bus Incentive (ZESBI)

- ZESBI 1: \$7.2M for 20 electric buses and EV charging stations at San Julian Bus Yard. Pending approval
- ZESBI 2 and 3: \$70.8M for 192 buses and EV charging stations at San Julian and Gardena Bus Yards

#### EPA Clean Heavy Duty Vehicle Grant:

- \$20.4M for 50 electric buses and EV charging stations and workforce development at San Julian Bus Yard

#### 2025 Carl Moyer 2:

- \$6.1M for buses and \$11M for infrastructure; award announcement in April 2026

#### CEC Blueprints 2.0

- \$4.2M for 32 EV bus chargers at Newman Nutrition Center. LACI: grantee; LAUSD: grant beneficiary



# High Performance Schools

## Building Certifications

**LAUSD certified four projects in FY24/25 through the Collaborative for High Performance Schools (CHPS) green building program:**

- 7<sup>th</sup> Street Elementary – New Food Service Building
- Wonderland Elementary – New Kindergarten Building
- Grover Cleveland HS – Comprehensive Modernization
- Dahlia Heights Elementary – New Classroom Building

**\$202,000 in avoided energy costs during FY 24/25 through CHPS**

**\$258,000 in total collected incentives through LADWP’s Zero by Design Program during FY 24/25**

**Managing 49 active CHPS projects**

**Evaluating impacts and benefits for transitioning from CHPS to LEED, taking place in 2028**

**Completed 147 High Performance Projects to Date**



Dahlia ES CHPS Verified Project



Wonderland ES CHPS Verified Project



# Climate Literacy

## Building Climate Knowledge

### Curriculum

- Over 300 Climate Literacy Champions this year!
- The HEROES for Zero Contest has 55 schools registered, 900+ students participating in the 2025-26 contest

### ESO and LADWP programs in development

- Sustainability for Climate Literacy Professional Development
- Energy Education, Edible and Native Plants, and Environmental Justice Curriculum
- Student Sustainability Project Grants
- LAUSD educator and staff trainings
- Earth Month Student Showcase Videos

### Workforce Development

- ESO partnered with industry professionals to involve 21 LAUSD schools in solar project work-based learning
- CTE and Climate Literacy Champions to be involved in work-based learning programs
- LADWP-ESO partnership supporting student pathways to green industries

**900+ Students Participating in HEROES for Zero Contest**

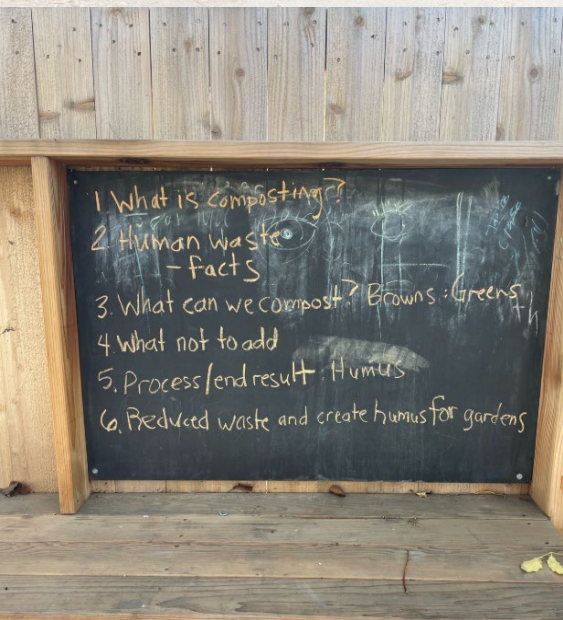


Narbonne HS students on a field trip to a sustainable farm

# Climate Leadership in Action



Ms. Brighton and students tending to campus gardens



Outdoor composting lesson



Students planting trees

## School Spotlight

**Efforts are led by Mallory Brighton, a 3rd Grade Teacher and Climate Literacy Champion at Sherman Oaks Elementary Charter**

### Leadership and Community Engagement:

- Established a Greenification Team (with teachers, parents, administrators) and host monthly volunteer days
- Active Environmental Ambassadors Afterschool Club (30+ student participants)

### Waste Reduction and Composting:

- Installed and manage a compost system for food scraps + campus greens/browns
- Re-launched schoolwide recycling program

### Campus Greening:

- Planted 11 new trees on campus
- Installed a water-wise California native garden at the school entrance

### Recognition:

- Awarded Gold Level California Green Ribbon



# Wildfire Resilience



Christos Chrysiliou discussing resilience at Marquez Charter ES on 1/23/26



LAUSD & LACI during a tour at Marquez Charter ES on 1/23/26

## Resilient Recovery

**Rebuild of school facilities at three sites due to the Palisades fire: proven strategies that can be incorporated within tight timelines**

**Evaluation of strategies such as microgrids and operable window /HVAC interconnects**

**Collaboration with partners to encourage resilience innovation and evaluate standards:**

- Los Angeles Cleantech Incubator's Innovation Initiative
- US Green Building Council and Center for Green Schools
- CAL FIRE
- American Institute of Architects
- Theodore Payne Foundation
- Arup and other architecture and engineering consultant firms

**CAL FIRE Standards for Defensible Space: minimize fire risk while promoting green and cool urban environments**

**EPA Wildfire Smoke Preparedness in Community Buildings Grant Opportunity**



# Recent Presentations

## Sharing Knowledge

### World Resources Institute presentation (Jan 27, 2026):

- LAUSD plans to fully electrify its bus fleet by 2040—moving toward emissions-free transportation
- 252 fossil-fueled buses replaced with electric leading to cleaner air for students and communities

### LAUSD Executive Cabinet Workshop (Feb 9, 2026):

- The Eco-Sustainability Plan was introduced, its planning process, sectors and initiatives, priorities and next steps
- ESO opened a discussion and brainstorming session with other divisions

### Center for Green Schools Conference (Feb 17, 18, 2026): 7

- Climate-Ready Schools: Planning for Resilience & Equity
- Transforming Schoolyards for Student Health and Learning and Climate Resilience
- Measurable Impact - High Performance Schools at LAUSD

### Community of Practice for Schoolyard Forests (Mar 19, 2026):

- 122nd Street Elementary School Micro-forest Pilot



Sylvia Wallis presenting at the Green Schools Conference



Christos Chrysiliou presented at World Resources Institute Board Retreat



# Notable Accomplishments

## LADWP / LAUSD New MOU – \$120M Impact

- Energy, Water, Waste, Education, Greening, & New Technologies

## Energy Efficiency & Utilities

- \$9M+ in utility cost avoidance (Direct Install + Constellation electricity contract + equipment upgrades)

## Transportation Electrification

- Funding for 245 zero-emission buses with charging infrastructure (ZESBI, EPA)

## Greening Projects

- Streamlined Greening Implementation process
- 2 CAL FIRE and 17 ELOP projects completed

## Investment Tax Credit

- 21 solar projects → ~\$40M to reinvest in additional solar

## Recycled Water

- ~\$1M in annual savings across 5 sites (current + planned)

## Climate Literacy

- Issued the Task Force recommendations report
- Workforce development in planning for Solar Panel Program

## New Technologies & Research

- Virtual Power Plant w/ EPRI: \$2.6M for peak-load reduction

## Sustainability research partnerships:

- LBNL-Solar Reflective Coating Study; UCLA/UCD/USDA - Schoolyard Forest Research; ASU/UCLA - NSF Heat Ready Schools; Poppy/Attune - ARPA-H Breathe Scale Air Quality Program; LA County/TEC - Extreme Heat Mitigation

## High-Performance Schools

- \$202K+ cost avoidance + \$258K incentives (FY 24/25)

## LAUSD Eco-Sustainability Plan underway



USC Student collecting data for Solar Reflective Coating Study



CA Milkweed Plant Donation from SAMO Fund



Dahlia ES CHPS Verified Project



# Thank You



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