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More Pre-K Seats in L.A.'s Boyle Heights Planned

The International Institute of Los Angeles' mission encompasses a broad spectrum of family wellness. It helps families with everything from economic self-sufficiency to



Maria Uribe

legal services to transportation, and, as a licensed child-care provider, it operates low-cost, high-quality child-care centers throughout the region. It does not, however, specialize in real estate, which is why IILA's Coordinator of Childcare Services Maria Uribe accepted NSBN's help in establishing a much-needed pre-K center in Boyle Heights and is now considering other opportunities by which NSBN can help them branch out and extend needed services to even more children and families.

With the array of services for children and families provided by the International Institute, elaborate on what was to be gained by entering into a memorandum of understanding with NSBN to investigate joint- and shared-use neighborhood-centered facilities? How complementary are the two organizations' ambitions?

When NSBN first met with us, we were excited that somebody
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Yaroslavsky Champions Joint-Use Health Clinic in Sun Valley

Recognizing the natural connection between education and health care, L.A. County and LAUSD, in conjunction with supporting agencies, broke ground on a revolutionary community health clinic on the campus of Sun Valley Middle School.

Designed not only to bring health care to a badly under-served community but also to leverage scarce real estate, the clinic brings services close to those who need it most: the children and families of Sun Valley. NSBN was pleased to speak with L.A. County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky about the vision behind this crucial community resource.



Zev Yaroslavsky

The new Sun Valley Health center, located on the campus of the Sun Valley Middle School, recently broke ground. Elaborate on why you were so supportive of and involved in this joint-use school and health clinic.

Sun Valley is ground zero for the health care crisis in Los Angeles County. One-third of Sun Valley residents are uninsured. Over 80 percent of its children are living in families at or below 200 percent of poverty. The Sun Val-

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Schools Planned as 'Center of the Community' in Lennox

As an unincorporated community in L.A. County, Lennox does not provide the range of services that a city would. It does, however, have its own elementary school district, on which the families of Lennox, many of whom are low-income, depend. It is only natural, then, that Lennox would want to respond to the unique needs of Lennox families by forming a partnership with NSBN to plan its new pre-K center. Lennox School District Assistant Superintendent Ken Knott spoke with NSBN about the planning process for this new facility.



Ken Knott

Lennox School District, NSBN, along with an array of other partners has been working on a master plan for one of your new school campuses that envisions including early education, pre-K, and many other family-centered resources. What is the value for the school district of such collaborative, shared-use master-planning?

From the standpoint of an opportunity to think ahead, as opposed to react, and to be able to plan for future needs,
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NSBN PROJECT UPDATE

NSBN serves as a catalyst and third-party intermediary to front-fund, convene, and manage collaborative, stakeholder master planning of joint-use, community-centered pre-K facilities, schools, parks, and family resource centers in Los Angeles County and throughout California. With funding from First 5 LA and others, including the California Endowment and the Susan & Michael Dell Foundation, NSBN seeks to showcase for state and local decision-makers the civic and educational value of leveraging over \$18 billion of state and local school bond proceeds with park, library, UPK, philanthropic and housing funds to build not only better public facilities but healthier, family-centered neighborhoods.

Lennox Elementary School District

Construction of an exciting joint-use site has begun at Lennox's Whelan Elementary School. NSBN anticipates that all construction will be completed in time for the 2006-2007 school year. Once completed, this site will provide a host of services including Preschool, School Readiness, Healthy Start, and Adult Education. In addition to the Whelan Elementary project, Lennox Elementary School District and NSBN are currently collaborating on LAUP preschool projects in Lennox at Bufford, Felton, and Moffett elementary schools.

Los Angeles Unified/ACOF - Westlake

The Westlake community, just west of Downtown L.A., successfully completed a collaborative master planning effort spearheaded by NSBN. Instead of displacing A Community Friends' (ACOF) affordable family housing to make way for a new primary center, the community will have not only a new school, but family housing, additional open space, a Boys & Girls Club and, beyond all expectations, an early education center. Parents and community stakeholders participated in a six-month collaborative planning process, which culminated in a joint use development whose major components were adopted by LAUSD and ACOF. Both will begin construction on this model joint-use project in fall 2006 and construction is scheduled for completion in fall 2008.

City & School District of Paramount

NSBN initially worked with the Paramount Unified School District (PUSD) to collaboratively master plan an expansion of pre-K and Open Space at Los Cerritos Elementary School. An eight-acre park is now being designed and the

classrooms are in operation. NSBN is continuing its work with PUSD and its new Superintendent David J. Verdugo, EdD, by investing in the development of a preschool master-plan for the entire school district with a focus on new facilities at the Zamboni (formerly Orange Ave.) and Collins elementary schools located in Paramount and North Long Beach, respectively. Temporary facilities are being planned for installation later this year, as the first stage of a long-term planning, design, community outreach, and construction process. These preschools on existing school campuses will serve approximately 48 children in two areas that have been defined by LAUP as being in "greatest need" for new preschool seats.

Lawndale

The Lawndale Elementary School District (LESD) and Richstone Family Services signed a Memorandum of Understanding with NSBN to embark on the master planning of an expansion of space at Kit Carson Elementary School. The school is adjacent to a school owned park and another district elementary school. The collaborative team explored joint-use site planning ideas which included early childhood education space, a family resource center, and better linkages between the park and school. In addition, the team, with the support of NSBN and Trust for Public Lands, submitted an unsuccessful Prop 40 application to support improvements to community use of the park. The district is now considering a bond measure to build the adopted master plan. In the meantime, LESD is working with NSBN and the Los Angeles County Office of Education for the development of a LAUP-funded preschool site at Jonas Salk School in Hawthorne (see below for details).

Santa Monica Bl. Community Charter School

The Santa Monica Boulevard School (SMBCCS), now a charter school within the LAUSD, has been an integral part of its Hollywood neighborhood since 1910, evolving with the changing populations of its community. The school is beginning to plan and raise funds for a campus building project, and NSBN is working with administrators and community stakeholders to bring new services and

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Want everyone to know about your joint-use project? Send updates to Director, Attn: Joint-Use, New Schools • Better Neighborhoods, 811 W. Seventh Street, Suite 900, Los Angeles, CA 90017.

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ANTELOPE VALLEY

NSBN, Children's Center of Antelope Valley & Wilsona ESD Seek to Bring Pre-K Services to N. L.A. County

The northern portion of L.A. County is known mainly for middle-class bedroom communities and empty expanses of desert. But a fuller picture reveals that Antelope Valley is more diverse than that. The valley houses many low-income residents, and many of its low-income children and families do not benefit from the gleaming schools of Palmdale and Lancaster, nor do they have

sufficient pre-K childcare. But now, the **Wilsona Elementary School District (ESD)**, and the **Children's Center of Antelope Valley (CCAV)** are working to bring preschool to the area's underserved residents, and they have formed a partnership with NSBN to identify sites in the Lake Los Angeles Area. NSBN spoke with **Cathy Overdorf** of CCAV about this partnership.

What inspires CCAV's collaboration with Wilsona Elementary School District and New Schools Better Neighborhoods for the development of new preschool classrooms in the Antelope Valley?

We are really excited to be able to provide additional preschool services. Without the collaboration or the support of both the Wilsona Elementary School District—with which we've had a good partnership since we started an Evenstart program—and NSBN, we wouldn't be able to provide those additional services. We are limited right now by funding constraints especially with what has happened to Evenstart. We have a significant waiting list for our family literacy program, and a lot of our parents are interested in our preschool services as well. NSBN has helped us meet this need and form our vision.

How do the pre-K facility needs of the Antelope Valley differ from those of urban L.A.?

I think that the Antelope Valley, although a part of L.A. County, is unique in that it's kind of rural in some areas and struggling to become urban in other areas, such as Palmdale and Lancaster. But unlike urban L.A., we have a huge transportation problem because of geography and the lack of mass transportation.

I think one of the things that really pointed that out to me was when we were trying to figure out how we could get one

of our moms who wanted to go to the college to some classes at the college. In order for her to take one class at the college she would have to get on a bus early in the morning, get off at Lancaster Park to catch another bus, and then arrive at the college to take her class. Essentially it would take her eight hours to take a two-hour class at the college.

Politically, it is a much more conservative area than Los Angeles. But we

If I were designing programs, I think the first thing that I would say is that they need some flexibility. We have found through our programs that we have to be flexible enough to listen to the needs of the population that we are serving in order to meet their needs.

For example, initially we had thought we would do a typical preschool day, starting at 8 a.m. and run until 11:30 a.m. or 12:00 p.m. We found that that didn't work for the

participants that we were serving because they had other children in school. We had to alter our times to run from about 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., and we found that our attendance and participation has been much better.

The second key is transportation. If you don't find a way—particularly now with the price of gas—for people to gain access the services that they need, it is just not going to happen.

The third thing that I would say about LAUP in the Antelope Valley is that we see a lot of families in crisis; unfortunately, we have one

of the highest rates of child abuse in Los Angeles County. That's primarily because we are a commuter community. That may change somewhat over the years, but right now many of our parents leave early in the morning and come home late at night and there are a lot of stresses put on families. In order for a preschool program to work you need some kind of a case manager or a parent support or parent involvement person – somebody that isn't just tied to

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The Lancaster Church of Christ and the Children's Center of Antelope Valley are working with NSBN to build an LAUP pre-K facility on this vacant lot in Lancaster.

still have a large Hispanic population, especially at our program out in Lake Los Angeles, because agriculture attracts many workers out there.

You've been involved with early education in L.A. County for some time. What, from your experience, is the best pre-K program model to meet the needs of families and children in the Antelope Valley?

LAWNDALE

Lawndale And NSBN Continue to Collaborate On Joint Use Options for Families and Children

Perhaps the most efficient example of joint-use planning is the collaboration between education and recreation. Both require open spaces and equipment for children to play and get exercise, and both take up large, valuable swaths of scarce urban land. It is only natural, then,

that Lawndale ESD would want to locate an early education center in a renovated, updated Bodger Park. In the following interview, Superintendent Joe Condon discusses the myriad benefits from its collaborations with NSBN, including a new effort in Hawthorne.

What education and program objectives have you established for Lawndale Elementary School District's collaboration with NSBN?



Joe Condon

My vision, ultimately, is to establish a relationship with families the day the child is born. I'd love to have a staff that visits parents in the hospital and starts this relationship with them in terms of educating their children and meeting the needs of the family, that's my ultimate. I don't know if I will live long enough to achieve it, but that's where I'd like to go.

Elaborate this vision of lifelong education and its impact on the district's facility priorities. In doing so, share why the district partnered with NSBN.

I came across NSBN serendipitously. I didn't even know the organization existed until we began to look at using a piece of property a little differently, and I met David Abel at a meeting four years ago. NSBN expanded my thinking. It caused me to look at our assets differently and therefore meet the needs of a larger community, not just my student community or their parents, but the community at large. About 25 percent of the population has children in schools, so I am missing 75 percent of the population of this community on any given date. It enabled me to engage them about what their needs are and how we might better serve them.

NSBN caused me to think differently about how I might use a piece of property, so instead of just looking at a preschool, people began saying, "Well, have you

thought about this, or that?" and the truth was no, I hadn't. So it gave me an opportunity to see a different way of doing this.

Let's talk about the work and the school district's Bodger Park charettes with the community, civic and school officials in Lawndale. What was the land asset and what has come of the opportunity?

"NSBN expanded my thinking. It caused me to look at the property assets that we have differently and therefore meet the needs of a larger community."

We have a piece of property that is located between two schools. During the day and on the weekends it's a county park, and during the school day it's a school playground. The property is owned by the school district but it is used as a joint facility. We looked at building a preschool on a relatively unused two-acre portion of that area because we need room for preschool students, offices, staff, and things like that. Through a conversation with NSBN, the proposal was made to expand the use of that site. We had not previously thought about it, so we began a process to envision what that might look like.

Then, with the expertise of NSBN, we began to engage the community in a mean-

ingful conversation about what that facility would look like in order to better meet the needs of the community at large. So we had evening meetings at the local school adjacent to that property and gave notice to all the area residents to come in. With the NSBN staff as well as the architect for the project, we began to share with the community what we were thinking and ask them what they would like to see on that property in order to better meet their needs.

That process was exciting because it involved city representatives, police, fire, and then anyone that wanted to show up from the community. We had people that were opposed to our project; we had more people who were supportive of the project. More than any other project I've ever been involved in—we have built two schools and modernized seven—it engaged the community in a real, meaningful conversation. Looking back to what we had done in the last ten years, I would have done past projects differently had I been exposed to that kind of work.

A master plan that evolved from the charettes and community planning still awaits funding. Joint use school and park bond measures are on the November state ballot that could be tapped, and there is also the possibility of a local bond. How do these funding options affect the district's vision?

Locally we'd probably end up going out for another small bond. We estimate the cost of our plan at about \$8 or 9 million. The wording of the state bond and pending legislation, which expands access to joint use funds, will determine whether we can seek matching state funds. Access by Lawndale ESD to state bonds may be a challenge. For about 15 years, our school district grew rather steadily, about 1 to 1.5 percent a year. Last year and this year we

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WORKFORCE CHILDCARE

Century Housing Works with NSBN to Bring Childcare to Affordable Housing Developments

It is no secret that the Los Angeles area needs more affordable housing. But housing that is merely affordable and fails to provide the social services that low-income families desperately need does little to improve neighborhoods. Dedicated to building affordable and livable communities, **Century Housing** is working with NSBN to include childcare and pre-K facilities in housing

developments that serve working parents and their young children. As **Century Housing's Executive Vice President Robert Norris** explains in this interview, NSBN's ability to plan for multiple uses in one development is helping Century build and program exactly the kind of early childhood friendly neighborhoods needed to provide its residents with 'more than shelter.'

The slogan "More Than Shelter" suggests that the interests of Century Housing lie in more than just building housing units. What types of childcare and family services complement the housing in which Century invests?



Robert Norris

In the broad view, we know that transforming low-income communities into self-sufficiency involves more than just financial subsidies. For example, you have to allow the current residents access to better employment, which usually requires them to go through education or job training. That's why we have a program to help men and women enter into the construction trades.

And affordable childcare is beyond the realm of consideration for most residents of low-income housing. That is why Century has helped create child development centers that offer services to low-income families, near transportation corridors, or on-site in affordable housing developments in some cases. "More Than Shelter" is more than just a roof and four walls, as we like to say.

Century has entered into an memorandum of understanding with NSBN to both work on a pre-K facility on Imperial Highway, as well as other opportunities in South Los Angeles. What benefits does this collaborative partnership offer?

We have a certain expertise in developing the facilities, and in all the facilities that we've developed we've looked for qualified, experienced service providers. But we're smart enough to know our limits.

We would like to take advantage of the knowledge and qualifications of NSBN in developing a facility that would provide top-quality childcare services to the area.

How difficult is it to collaborate on bringing public agencies and communities together around mixed-use developments that have housing, pre-K, jobs, and open space?

"Century has helped create child development centers that offer services to low-income families, near transportation corridors, or on-site in affordable housing developments."

You have to try to hold some things constant while dealing with certain variables, such as community acceptance, the entitlement process, funding, timing, and qualifications of the service provider. Keeping all of those things together is crucial, especially in an effort to serve a low-income community. Usually that constituency doesn't have the political infrastructure or other community organizations that could underwrite the pre-development efforts or encourage a service provider to come in and support them while they're developing the project.

Why go through all of this? What's the payoff of building these neighborhood centers of mixed-use developments?

If I were to do what we call a "double bottom line" analysis there is a financial cost, but there is also a secondary impact on the individuals who will be using the service. For example, if single parents could put their children into affordable child care then they may be able to undergo training or take a job that would allow them to begin to support themselves. Meanwhile the young children in child care would get the early education and experience that would put them in a better position to succeed in school and perhaps enter and complete their secondary education. It starts to create multiplier effects.

Studies of Head Start and other programs have shown that early childhood activities have a significant impact on ultimate success in life. And, altruistically, society is a much better place if you don't create second and third generations of poverty.

Let's focus in on the Imperial and Central joint use project that NSBN and Century are working on. What does Century hope to accomplish there?

We have the opportunity to create over 100 childcare slots. We were looking initially at maybe 70 or 80, but as we've gone through the site consolidation process and especially with the involvement of NSBN and the support of Supervisor Yvonne Burke, we're now looking at a much more highly utilized site that will offer pre-K and/or a primary center.

That location allows us to establish a more comprehensive childcare center. It has required Century to play the role of organizing entity that would do the real

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NSBN PROJECT PROFILE

East Hollywood Charter School and LA Free Clinic Collaborate to Enhance Health Services

In the dense, diverse community east of Hollywood, NSBN has helped foster a collaboration between the **Santa Monica Boulevard Community Charter School** and one of L.A.'s most important public health institutions, the **LA Free Clinic**, which will open a satellite clinic on the school site to serve children and their families. In the following interview **SMBCCS Co-**

Director Vahe Markarian explains the benefits of co-locating educational and health resources and on the NSBN-led process that brought the school and the clinic together. **LA Free Clinic Director Abbe Land** and physician **Jehni Robinson** provide further insight into this collaboration between medicine and education.

What motivated Santa Monica Boulevard Community Charter School to engage in a master planning process with New Schools Better Neighborhoods and other collaborators?



Vahe Markarian

Our main goal is to become the center of the community and to provide as many services to our students and parents as possible. We added the word "community" to our name, now calling ourselves the Santa Monica Boulevard Community Charter School. Working with NSBN has opened the door to a lot of different services within the community that we probably couldn't otherwise have brought to our school.

What was the capital investment that you were trying to maximize? How much money do you hope to invest in renovating your school?

Because this is one of our long-term plans, over the years we have been putting funds away from our general funds just for this purpose. We were able to put away about \$3 million that we could invest towards projects that could help our community and our school. One of our original goals as we were trying to expand our campus and put up a new building on our site was to have an area that would serve as a community clinic, or services as such, for the students and the parents.

Unlike most LAUSD facility projects, you've truly engaged the entire community. Can you describe your school-family engagement process?

As we embarked on this big project we needed direct input in order to meet the needs of the community. With the help of NSBN, we held several open meetings and charrettes with school families and staff and had a dialogue about the specific needs of the community served. We tried to determine the services that the families felt are lacking or that they don't have access to, and figure out if we can bring those

"Working with NSBN has opened the door to a lot of different services within the community that we probably couldn't otherwise have brought to our school."

kinds of services into the school, or at least guide them to those services.

What came out of those meetings?

The main thing that came out was a need for different types of health-related services. From dental services, to counseling, to basic parenting skills. Organizations in the community provide these services, but to a great extent I think the parents aren't aware of them or they feel that they don't qualify for those programs. This is

a minority community and many of them are first generation immigrants. They need support and guidance.

Could you give us a status report on the school's plans and a timeline for implementation?

We already have started a priority partnership, which grew directly from our NSBN planning process, with the L.A. Free Clinic. Over six or seven months we have talked with them about the health concerns that our community had expressed to us. We then discussed a joint plan that could serve kids and parents both on our site and at the L.A. Free Clinic site, which is about three blocks from our school.

In the past three weeks we have started the dental screenings on our campus. We've been sending permission slips home notifying parents that this is the type of service we can provide and parents have been signing up for that. We've had two visits by dentists from the L.A. Free Clinic who have done screenings. Those kids that were found to need some dental work are referred to the free clinic site for those services.

Eligibility workers have also come and worked with our parents to help sign children up for insurance. Many children can qualify for insurance, but it's just one of those things that they just don't know about. Counselors have been coming to our school and working with students, also working with our school psychologist. We've had individuals from the health clinic come to our parents' center and teach health classes. We have been very successful so far.

The larger vision is that if we can help provide these services to our community, then we will have healthier kids and healthier community members, which

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STATE LEGISLATION

Sen. Torlakson Sponsors State Legislation to Encourage & Facilitate Joint-Use Schools

Despite all the arguments in favor of joint use, state law does not always facilitate, or even allow, multiple jurisdictions to collaborate and leverage their funds and assets in a way that would save money and benefit communities and families. But **State Senator Tom Torlakson** (D-Antioch) is trying to change that. Committed to delivering public services as efficiently as possible, he has

introduced **SB 1677**, which would encourage joint use in a variety of ways. **SB 1677** would re-define the sorts of facilities that can be used for education, and it would provide more flexible funding for joint use projects, especially those that use California's billions of dollars in education bond monies. **NSBN** was pleased to speak with Sen. Torlakson about this crucial legislation.

You have authored SB 1677, which would reform the allocation of joint use funds in the state's school facilities bonds. What's the problem? What is the bill's objective?



Tom Torlakson

The public wants public agencies to cooperate, and they don't care who runs it or how they put the facility or program together. The goal of the bill is to use the bond money more flexibly to get money out into the community faster.

I was disappointed in the middle of an education committee hearing when I learned about the difficulties local partners were having when they tried to work with the state program. The bill would make it easier to form joint-use partnerships. For instance, why does it have to be a facility located on a K-12 campus? If it serves the learning needs of our children and it meets state curriculum standards, then why not allow a science and technology center or a lab in the community or on a community college campus to be a joint-use project? The same with performing arts centers, parks and rec centers, technical education centers – these kinds of partnerships make a lot of sense, and they don't have to be located on the school campus.

The other key component of the bill is to define the local match more flexibly. Currently, each of the local partners has to come up with 25 percent, and we're saying that's an arbitrary number. If the local partners find a way to contribute more, then let them contribute 40 percent of the total and another partner can contribute 10, and then you get your 50 percent match anyway. So we're just saying that

local collaboration and cooperation should be given more freedom to define its own partnership balance.

Given the generosity of the voters of the state, who have approved more than \$35 billion of state money and a similar amount of local bonds, what motivated you to hone in on this particular school bond reform?

"The public wants public agencies to cooperate, and they don't care who runs it or how they put the facility or program together."

Local school administrators were frustrated by the rigid and illogical guidelines of the current program. I was frustrated to see that money was not being spent even though it was available in the last bond issue. Taxpayers don't like to see idle money when it could be doing good for the community.

The bill includes references to career technical centers and laboratories, childcare facilities, libraries, etc. Can you elaborate on the breadth of

opportunities that this reform might allow?

It provides for greater variety. I've seen joint use work so effectively in two libraries that are located on a middle school and a high school campus. I got them started when I was on the Board of Supervisors when I realized that we didn't have money to build a \$10 million brand-new community library, but we had a growing population and no real library. So rather than let the school library sit idle at 3:30 p.m. every day, we now have a county library providing library hours into the evening, literacy programs, weekend meetings, and access to books and computers that was blocked off when it was only a school resource under the jurisdiction of the school district.

I saw how those two examples benefited the community, and as we talked to high school and middle school administrators, we saw that cultural and historic education centers, recreation centers, and performing arts centers would have great value for field trips and classes' off-campus for our students. And there is growing recognition of the need for variety, particularly in the technical and science areas, that our schools can't build on each and every campus. They can't get these special labs or interpretive centers, but we could have more wonderful regional centers that are great assets for field trips and classes on the weekends.

Will your school facilities joint-use bill enable the early childhood education communities of California—especially L.A. County, with its commitment to universal access to pre-K for 4-year-olds—to use some of this joint-use money to link their pre-Ks to primary and elementary school facilities and playgrounds?

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NSBN Philosophy Inspires School-Clinic Partnership

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ley Middle School is federally designated as a health professional shortage area for primary care, and it's also designated as a medically under-served area.

For all of those reasons, when we looked at the possibility of leveraging county resources with school district property to bring ambulatory health care to a campus, this was the spot where we thought we could make the most impact. Fortunately, the school had several acres of under-utilized land, and we made a deal with the school district to build this clinic there.

You, along with other civic leaders, have been very supportive of joint-use schools being neighborhood centers. Is this Sun Valley project a prototype for what you hope will happen in other neighborhoods and on other school sites?

Yes. This whole idea really mirrors what NSBN has been talking about for a number of years. In fact, we took great strength from the NSBN philosophy and we implemented it at this location.

The Sun Valley Health Center is a partnership between L.A. County, the LAUSD, the Northeast Valley Health Corporation, and the UCLA Geffen School of Medicine. The school district is giving us the land gratis for 40 years or more. The county agreed to build a clinic at its own expense, for about \$7 million. Northeast Valley Health Corporation, which is a nonprofit health care provider based in the San Fernando Valley, will provide the health care services in the clinic; they are a "federally qualified provider," which is a term of art that means they can draw from federal funds that even the County cannot access. And the UCLA Geffen School of Medicine will provide expanded asthma screening for the kids and families in the Sun Valley area, where asthma is a particularly acute problem.

We've really leveraged everybody's resources here in an unprecedented

way. It is the first time that this kind of partnership has been done in the County of Los Angeles. At 11,000 square feet, we understand that it will be the largest school-based health clinic in the United States, and it certainly will be the most comprehensive.

The level of service provided to the community – and this will be a community clinic; it happens to be at a school, and it will target the school's 3,000 students – but we will also provide services to anybody else who walks in the door. For years the school has operated with only one full-time nurse, and now they and the rest of

bureaucracy of both the county and the school district.

Finally I called Superintendent Roy Romer, and I said, "Roy, I'm prepared to build you a clinic on your campus for \$7 million. Providers are ready to provide medical care – doctors, nurses, the whole nine yards – at the clinic, and UCLA is ready to expand their activity in the community. All I need is for you to give us the rights to build on this acreage, which you're not using. If you just give us the go ahead, we can move."

To his credit, Superintendent Romer did not call in a battery of attorneys and real estate experts. He just ruminated for about

30 seconds and then said, "Let's do it."

So principal to principal, more or less, and with the backing of his school board members, once he said yes, we moved. The district put out an RFP, Northeast Valley Health Corporation was selected, and we designed the clinic. What's really exciting about it – and I believe, as NSBN does, that as long as you're building something in a community, you might as well

make it an architectural amenity as well – is that we've created a beautiful mission-style design, which will be the nicest building anywhere within walking distance of the Sun Valley Middle School, and it will hopefully be a magnet for people to come in and get preventative health care.

As you have long noted, the health crises that threaten America are in L.A. County in epidemic form, in terms of diabetes and obesity among children. With \$19 billion in school bonds and billions in parks, libraries, police stations, and other facility bonds, what can we do between jurisdictions to leverage those capital investments in the most needy neighborhoods?

I think there needs to be, at the principals level – whether it's county super-



Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky (center) takes part in the Sun Valley Clinic ground-breaking.

the community will have a full-fledged clinic. It is a real prototype, not only for the County, but for beyond as well.

As NSBN has experienced throughout the county, joint-use collaborative planning between jurisdictions – school districts, cities, counties, nonprofits, housing developers – is not easy. What's the lesson from this success for others who want to engage in this kind of collaborative shared-use planning?

The lesson is that when there's a will, there's a way. When something makes sense, just do it. We had been cooking it up for five to seven years. We looked around, finally settled on the Sun Valley Middle School; UCLA and Patrick Dowling helped us identify the site and the most needy community, but it languished in the

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ARCHITECTURE

Former State Architect Castellanos Proposes Reforms to How Schools Are Designed & Built

Steven Castellanos formerly served as the California State Architect and currently serves as one of California's delegates to the board of directors of the American Institute of Architects. From his extensive experience designing and overseeing public projects and working with the Sacramento bureaucracy, Mr. Castellanos knows firsthand the challenge

of building neighborhood centered schools and especially of conforming schools to California's necessary, but strict, safety standards. But, as Mr. Castellanos explains in this NSBN interview, uniform standards need not constrain local initiatives to design innovate joint use schools that leverage funding and better serve children's learning and health needs.

This interview takes place at the 2006 AIA Convention in L.A., where the challenge of designing & building new schools in California is being discussed by architects. You've said in other interviews with NSBN that the centralization of approval power at the state level is an impediment to smart, flexible school design. Could you elaborate?

Everyone now accepts the notion that schools can and should be "centers of community." Schools and neighborhoods go hand-in-glove, and schools now serve much more than ever important needs of communities and neighborhoods. We now expect schools to do a great deal more to knit together communities, generations, and the incredible diversity that cities have, particularly in Los Angeles. And we have to make smart capital investments, consistent with the realities of the marketplace – the construction marketplace re the timing of the construction, and how we work together, if we are ever to optimize outcomes and use scarce resources effectively.

Being smart about our school building investments, I believe, now depends on reforming the underlying government infrastructure which controls the approval of bond expenditures. Question: Has the size of the school marketplace in California outstripped the state's capacity to serve that need? I think it has. The multi-billion dollar marketplace that schools represent in California cannot be served any longer using the same tools that were generated decades ago. It wasn't until the late 1990s when we saw the first billion-dollar bond program, and since then the voters have been incredibly generous and have understood the value of schools and education to the future of the state. We have to make sure we optimize bond resources, and the

state has to be willing to look at its own regulatory infrastructure – how the bond program is administered, how construction is administered – and support decision making at the local level better than it has in the past.

As a veteran of the state government at

"Everyone now accepts the notion that schools can and should be 'centers of community' . . . Being smart about our school building investments now depends on reforming the underlying government infrastructure which controls the approval of bond expenditures."

the State Architect's Office, critique the state's school building expertise.

Let's go back to the founding of the state architect's Schoolhouse Division. There has been no loss of life in a school since the development of the Field Act. The state has led the nation in the development of regulations that enhance the safety of construction, and we can't roll that back. We have to understand that schools themselves have to be safe, and any notion that this is about reducing standards should be set aside. The question is, can other players be introduced into this process? As construction has changed – the use of alternative delivery methods, the incred-

ible use of technology – we need to look at how state processes need to change to build on the incredible increases in effectiveness that the marketplace is producing. The design-construction marketplace is taking its next leap forward through things like building information models and refined, sophisticated project delivery systems that we're learning about all the time. It is inconsistent with that demand for increased efficiency and higher value if the state doesn't align its processes with this new marketplace.

A couple years ago, State Senator Jack Scott, chair of the Senate Education Committee, said that the value of joint use was not only that school districts would win, but also that cities and taxpayers would win as well. You have often said that there are very few examples of joint-use, neighborhood-centered schools in California because of the funding and approval process. Could you be more specific?

Joint use has occurred where folks have engaged with education and understand the idea that the whole can be greater than the sum of the parts. You can find school board members who have been members of library or city planning boards and are willing to go through the effort of putting very complex deals together. But reliance on individual experience creates a situation that is not easily replicated. Joint use should be one of the early decisions you make as you think about a project, and that's not happening for a number of different reasons. People now tend to be engaged in maintaining their own programs, no matter what agency they're in. They're only judged on the basis of their own efforts, and thus success is not a measure of how successful collaboration has been. We

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ILLA/Plaza Collaboration Will 'Enrich' Boyle Heights

Continued from page 1

took an interest in our important work. We have had problems over the years with the cost and availability of our existing facilities, which too often have imposed significant rent increases or are lost to us due to the sale of the buildings or the rental of our space to enterprises that are more profitable and thus are more willing to pay higher rents than childcare permits.

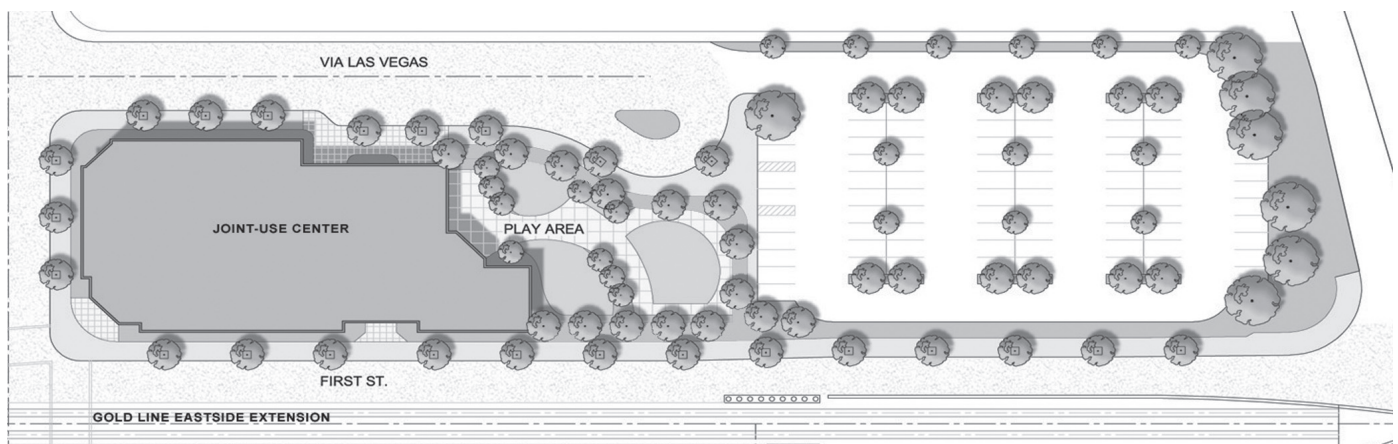
Our facility costs are important to us; the bottom line is that we need to carefully budget for space in order to maintain affordable services for our clients, who are mostly low-income. Similarly,

Describe the need for your services. Is demand growing?

There's a great need for childcare programs in Boyle Heights; in fact there are too few childcare and pre-K, spaces available presently. We've never collaborated with another nonprofit or shared a child care program facility. But we have a very good relationship with Plaza Community Center; and NSBN's suggestion that we collaborate with Plaza—share a building—on providing family services makes good sense. Just

How can the International Institute of LA, with NSBN's planning assistance, best serve Boyle Heights families?

Since the housing is either affordable or subsidized, most of those parents living in it will qualify for our program. We provide a comprehensive program and we can serve that community without the need to go outside of the neighborhood. Additionally, we can serve children from other parts of Boyle Heights and East Los Angeles since the Gold Line will bring us some clients from those com-



NSBN's project in Boyle Heights, developed in conjunction with the International Institute and Plaza Community Center, is envisioned to include a joint-use center and an state-of-the-art underground stormwater cistern funded in part by Prop O money.

we prefer sites specifically designed for child care rather than the more typical spaces which have been renovated for other and less child-friendly uses.

NSBN presented the type of services that we could benefit from immediately, and we were enthusiastic about working together. We shared a lot of information about the programs we would like to provide in different areas of LA County. NSBN has helped us find two schools—one in Panorama City and the other in Boyle Heights with Plaza Community Center. We want to continue to work together to serve the community and the children of the community, and we will continue to explore with NSBN other potential sites in L.A. County.

You have been providing childcare services in Boyle Heights for sometime.

bringing the two programs together will enrich our planned two-block community complex in Boyle Heights. The plans afford the opportunity to expand our services and provide access for both our students and their families to the rich level of services proposed and possible at the site.

How much demand is there for IILA's services?

There's a large and growing demand. We have a waiting list of families—it takes more than a year to get into our program, which is difficult, especially for working parents who need reliable and high quality childcare.

The new Gold Line light rail and rail stations, new housing units, and a new high school are all being built in Boyle Heights.

The new train will facilitate transportation for some of our parents who commute to jobs or schools in other areas, making this location ideal for them.

NSBN currently focuses on assisting providers to site new and expanded pre-K school facilities as joint- and shared-use centers of their neighborhoods. Elaborate on the challenges of offering families an array of such neighborhood services safely and conveniently.

The institute hasn't collaborated in delivering these types of services before, but we have collaborated on other projects with the neighborhood. One of those projects focuses on training parents for new/better jobs. We now plan to be involved in parent education and hope to extend those services beyond our

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ILLA Hopes to Provide Pre-K Services in S.F. Valley

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work with parents who currently use our services at the site.

Working together with the schools is also a really important component, which fits with our school readiness initiatives with the First 5 LA Commission. Equally important is the health issue for the students and parents since academic achievement is related to the general health of the students and their families. If we are able to bring those services safely and conveniently to the neighborhood, I think it would enrich our programs and the health of the community.

By IILA focusing on expanding quality childcare service delivery and NSBN lending its expertise in securing more facilities, we see ourselves in a much stronger position. The synergy is very powerful.

Share with our readers IILA's present First 5 LA supported work, and what projects you hope to do with LAUP.

As I mentioned earlier, we have a school readiness initiative (SRI) contract with First 5 LA Commission to link our preschools with the academic requirements of the kindergartens that our students will be attending. Since we already have a well-established academically-focused program, we hope to get the funding for operations from LAUP by achieving a five-star quality rating. This funding would enhance our ability to work in the community and provide services for children that we have not yet been able to reach.

Further subsidizing our state preschool program is really going to help us in this regard. The programs, of course, are all high-quality because there's a mandate from the state Department of Education to provide such levels of service. We do lesson plans, children's assessments, developmental profiles, and curriculum design as a regular part of our services; everything is assessed and reviewed in our approach to quality. Currently, we're conducting a comprehensive evaluation of our centers to make sure we are following all the guidelines that refer to quality and accreditation.

What sort of opportunity might a Panorama City site provide for the International Institute's programs? How might NSBN assist you?

Our landlord has sold the facility in Van Nuys where we're currently located. It serves over 100 children, and we need placement for them when we are forced to close it. We have been given an eviction date of June 30, but we want to be able to continue our services to that community. We need LAUP or state preschool funding

"NSBN provides the expertise of finding that type of facility and real estate . . . that really helps us to focus on what we do best – providing quality early childhood development."

to maintain low-cost services, as long as we serve that particular area and that community which require subsidized rates. I know that there's a need in the Valley to provide services for children of working parents and a need to provide preschool children with an enriching program. We're intent on not losing slots, because that's a whole lot of slots. Of course, our goal is to expand opportunities, especially for economically disadvantaged families.

By working with NSBN, we are investigating whether we can get a new site in Panorama City. The site we have in mind had a Head Start program, and apparently, the agency scheduled to run the facility lost its funding. Our interest in working together with NSBN involves trying to get that facility licensed and have some slots open for

our children in Van Nuys. NSBN also is working to assist us with identifying other nearby sites within the LAUP-designated "area of greatest need" in Panorama City in order to obtain both operating and facilities funds, the latter might help cover the costs of any renovations or temporary facilities until permanent ones can be identified.

NSBN's pre-K planning model differs from other models, which start not by funding child care providers to find buildable sites, but by focusing on finding joint use neighborhood centered sites and then, through collaborative planning, offering service providers an opportunity to build their plans with the assistance of planning professionals and the leveraging power of compatible public funding. Does such an approach work well for you?

Yes, it does. NSBN provides essential expertise in finding that type of facility and real estate. It's not an area of my expertise and certainly not a core competency for my colleagues at IILA. That really helps us to focus on what we do best – providing quality early childhood development. We now look to NSBN to collaborate on this piece of the puzzle in order to help us locate our services and get the facility licensed and operating.

How important are the school, park and infrastructure bond measures on the November ballot for pre-K organizations like yours?

These bond funds are important because of all the demand for services that I've been talking about regarding the importance of providing family assistance for our communities. The additional funding will allow International Institute of LA and other childcare providers to develop and expand facilities while improving curriculum and maintaining affordability for all parents, regardless of income. The current geographic limits of LAUP's "areas of greatest need" are still too limiting and do not allow us to service all of our potential clients. The bonds will help make childcare truly "universal."

NSBN & Lawndale ESD Seek to Transform Park

Continued from page 4

declined for the first time in about 17 years. That usually puts us out of the running for state money—which I think is an error on the part of the state, but be that as it may, money is generally earmarked for districts that are growing as opposed to other needs. I'd have to wait and see the exact wording of that bond - I have not seen the details—and the devil is in the details.

We also submitted an application for park bond resources to build out our open space plan but did not get funding. That was an extremely competitive state grant process.

“In the charettes we talked to the community about what they would like to see, and they would like to see walking path, par courses with exercises stations, etc. We want to make the park friendly to the whole community.”

What does the Bodger Park joint-use plan include?

A physical building would house preschool students, some preschool staff, and a drop-off and pick-up library where parents could get online and order something. Our district truck goes right by the county library every day; we would be the delivery service for them. We've contacted the Little Company of Mary to see whether they would be interested in offering health services—not a medical clinic, but services such as health exams, and immunizations for the community. Initially they were not interested, but during that time Robert F. Kennedy Hospital in Hawthorne closed down. When that happened it burdened Little Company of

Mary's emergency room. They came back to us and said that their interest had changed because it would give them a service area and a physical presence that would ease the burden on their hospital. So for the first time, they were interested.

In addition to that, the park is at least 30 years old and needs renovation. So that grant application was to renovate the park and create a much more community-friendly park: kid-friendly for playground, community and adult-friendly for adult exercise as part of the whole project. So we'd use the property for a physical building and we'd renovate the park to meet the needs of the community.

How does the plan meet community and family, as well as educational, needs?

Currently, it's a playground for kids, used mainly during the day - seven days a week by hundreds of people. And over 1,000 children use it every day as a playground, which was designed 40 years ago strictly as a children's play area. A nonprofit organization sponsors soccer, baseball, and basketball at the park all year-round. It's an incredibly over-used park in that sense. Our intention is to modernize the park to meet the demonstrable needs of the community.

But more is possible. In the charettes we talked to the community about what they would like to see, and they would like to see walking paths, par courses with exercises stations, etc. An adult component is currently missing. The only thing that engages adults currently is a community garden, and we'd like to maintain that as best we can. There are a lot of apartments in the area, and the people that live there need a place to relax, to exercise, to picnic, and to grow their own vegetables. We want to make the park friendly to the whole community.

Let's turn to another pre-K planning project involving NSBN and the Lawndale Elementary School District: the Salk School, located in the city of Hawthorne. Why you are involved in that project?

By our demographic estimates that Salk site is located in an area of LA County that houses the largest density

of children 5 and under, and we are concerned about giving these children access to preschools. At the same time, we know that our own school district facilities are getting maxed out. The conversation with both LACOE, who owns the Salk site, and NSBN revolves around the possibility of us operating a pre-k program there. The Salk site allows us to expand our preschool offerings because it's in our catchment area. One of the needs in our community is full-day preschool, so we'd like to enroll children in an NSBN-

“We'd like to enroll children in an NSBN-developed preschool as well as our own state preschool so that children could go to one in the morning and the other in the afternoon.”

developed preschool as well as our own state preschool so that children could go to one in the morning and the other in the afternoon.

Also of importance, is that a pre-K on this site would draw from Hawthorne, which is a critical catchment area because they do not have preschools in Hawthorne. In fact, Bruce McDaniel of Lennox, another NSBN collaborator, and I have talked about finding locations in Hawthorne where we could run preschool programs. We have the staff and the experience, so does Lennox. The thought that we could operate the programs came out of our NSBN meetings about the Salk School. That's a whole different way of thinking about preschools, I think.

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Condon: NSBN & LACOE Collaboration Promising

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LACOE has signed on to this collaborative planning process with NSBN and Lawndale. What might be a reasonable timeline for establishing a new pre-K program at the Salk site?

I know NSBN is looking at September. That's really fast to get the community engaged and then to get the facility designed and built. Practically, I would think it could be done by the middle of the year.

You began this interview by saying that your vision starts with working with children from birth through all of their educational years. What role does pre-K and family resource centers play in the implementation of your life-long educational vision?

They are the key players. We have a home teaching program, and we call on parents, because they are children's first teachers. Our staff visits homes and works with parents. In addition to that, many parents, because of cultural issues, don't want to send their kids to preschool at age

3, so we recognize that and we go out to them. That's not just altruism. It's, first, to establish an education environment for every child, and, two, to establish a relationship with the school district.

A family resource center operated on the school camps says to the whole community, "We are here for all of you, not just for children ages 5 or 3 and above. We're here for you whether or not you have a child, whether or not you send your child to our school." I think it changes the whole dynamic of schools vis a vis the community. Right now I think the community sees school as simply serving children as a narrowly-defined client. I don't think that's where schools need to be, and I don't think that's where they ought to be. We have to get out of the mindset that we have

a command over 25 percent of the population. We don't. The population votes with their feet, and we need to do a better job of meeting all needs.

Share with our readers the advantages and disadvantages of being a small school district. Some LAUSD supporters, it must be noted, have suggested that large school districts are much more able to plan for and provide resources to their students and families.

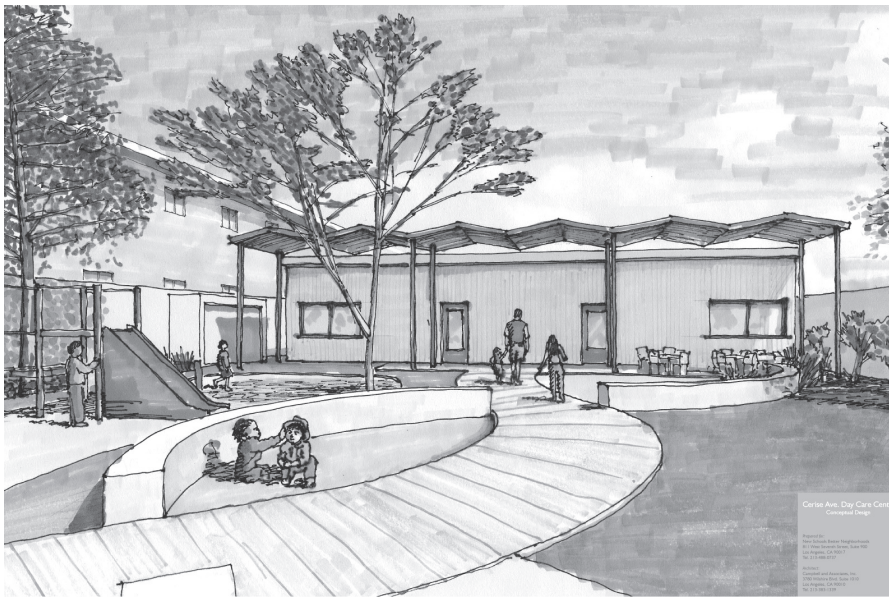
One disadvantage for us is that we don't have name-recognition. LAUSD does.

and one of the reasons I like working with them is that they are small, private universities, and they can move quickly on projects. I think we bring that same quickness and flexibility that an LAUSD does not enjoy.

Regarding funding, if I was in LAUSD, I'd have more opportunities because people are more concerned about what's happening in L.A. and they come to L.A. For instance, we used to have a much closer relationship with UCLA for teacher training. At some point, they said that they had been directed to work with only LAUSD—and not because they didn't like working with us. At the same

time, because we're aggressive and flexible, we have been very successful in bringing in projects. We have built a positive track record, and when funders look at us, they know that we honor what we have said we're going to do.

Lastly, there is so much discussion in the press about school reform. What can we learn from your work in Lawndale that might inform a discussion about how to improve public education?



NSBN is helping to plan a LAUP preschool and modernization of the Salk School in Hawthorne.

People come to LAUSD and approach them because they're LAUSD, and because they are so large, they have a large, incredibly diverse staff. They have somebody for everything. In a district like Lawndale, everybody wears multiple hats.

At the same time, I think we can move much more quickly. Because I have a relatively small organization and an intimate relationship with both leadership personnel and the board, I'm comfortable supporting projects and taking positions I believe my board will support as well. Projects have come to me because LAUSD could not move quickly enough; organizations got frustrated and asked me if I was interested. So that's an advantage.

We affiliate with both Pepperdine and Loyola Marymount for student-teachers,

Everything is based on relationships, both internal and external. One of the advantages of a Lennox or a Lawndale is that we're small and intimate. People know one another, and we continue to look at our relationships with our parents, employees, and kids. I believe that teachers are happy and better teachers if they're stimulated and challenged. When we host student-teachers from a variety of universities, I don't recruit them for Lawndale. I talk to them about what feeds their spirit, and if teaching feeds their spirit, they should find the best place without compromising themselves by going someplace they don't want to go. Ultimately, if they find that teaching doesn't feed their spirit, they should do themselves and their kids a favor and get out.

Norris: Joint Use Housing & Pre-K Builds on City Heights

Continued from page 5

estate, due diligence, remediation and site preparation. We would be the ultimate destination and custodian of the land for the transaction, which allows the public agency to be the conduit for receiving the property from CalTrans and then putting it into ownership where it can be developed. The partnership with NSBN allows us to attract a service provider that will improve the operation of the site.

What is the promise of such working relationships for other sites with which Century Housing is involved?

People always ask, "What have you done and where have you done it?" They always want to see what you have done and when they see that you have overcome a challenge and you've put a quality operation into place, then their willingness to support your endeavors in other areas increases.

We're actively considering two or three other projects, and they're constrained only by the availability

of land and community acceptance for developing childcare at those particular locations, especially when you are talking about affordable childcare.

We also have to consider the challenges involved with those sites. Usually the sites that we are being offered are in tougher-to-develop areas because the high-value sites have already been developed, so we are going to have to look at sites that no one wanted on the first pass. And we are going to have to assemble parcels big enough to accommodate an adequate facility.

School districts are spending more than \$18 billion that has been approved by voters locally for school facilities and modernization, plus \$34 billion in state school bonds, and another \$10 billion that will be on the ballot in November.

How do your efforts to develop quality mixed-use neighborhoods that offer child care, affordable housing and access to health care and schools compete with or complement the school districts' agendas?

It is the challenge of all the new concepts, which people have to then integrate into their existing daily workload. What is often perceived as "slow" for a lot of people looking in from the outside is that process of integration where you have to get an organization like a school district

What would encourage metropolitan L.A. to follow the model of San Diego's City Heights? How do you replicate good development models?

We would need three projects of that type, only because L.A. is such a large area you have to bring one in the Valley, one in the city, and one in South Central as a minimum. It could even require as many as six sites to hit the compass points because neighborhoods tend to view themselves as separate and distinct, but once they see that it can work in each of those different

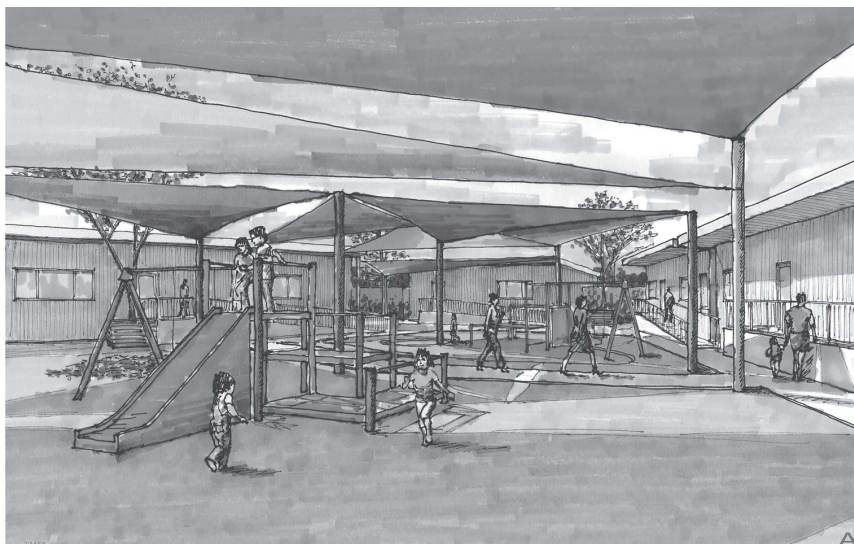
places, this model can gain traction and become part of our development process.

What is on Century's plate for the next year or two, and how does your agenda relate to children, families, and their neighborhoods?

We have been involved in this site for almost four years because it has taken that long to move through the process. But now, especially with NSBN coming on board, it looks like our time to action will

probably be about 12 to 14 months after we get the final transfer and approval from the county.

We're going to propose to put up an immediate facility for at least 100 kids within the next three months, and then we would like to engage the community to look at the final facility, try to integrate as many partners and address as many child development needs of the community as possible in that process and then bring forward a great facility. I say this because usually in low-income communities there is a 40- to 60-year cycle where you put something up and then the public is going to expect you not to need anything again for about 50 or 60 years. We're going to have to put something up that is good and can last. It will be worth it, it is just going to take time.



Century Housing will include an NSBN-facilitated child care center at Imperial and Central.

to look at a new way of consolidating its operations. In all fairness, the school districts have evolved into their current form through a process where its community and stakeholders have agreed on operating the way that it is now.

We're saying you can do something better if you want to do child development and you want to bring housing in because schools, as currently configured, are taking up a lot of valuable land that could have secondary uses. I'm looking particularly at my experience with the City Heights project down in San Diego, where the city and private enterprise and the bureaucracies of a school district and parks and recreation department collaborated on one area to make it a model for an integrated, living, business, school, recreation use.

Lennox ESD Serves Needs of the Entire Community

Continued from page 1

it's been invaluable. We've worked on coordinating the new elementary school that may break ground in September with the preschool component and the early education center component that is going to open in August. We were able to coordinate those two projects so that they complement one another.

There will be access by the community for ages 0 to 3, and 4- and 5-year-olds at the Early Education Center, and then kindergarten through fifth grade education services at the new elementary school. Emerging out of that prior planning came the ideas of adding outreach for the Healthy Start program, a collaborative effort with El Camino College, to provide some adult education classes, a collaborative effort to provide internet education access for the Whelan community, and possibly a sub-station either for the Sheriff's Department and/or the Parks Department so that we can share the athletic facilities for after school activities.

Where will the funds and programmatic resources come from to build out the school campus master plan? Does Lennox School District's capital program cover all the costs?

Funding for the new elementary school, the purchase of the land, and the money to build a new elementary school all come from the state. And as a hardship district, Lennox is 100 percent funded. Some of the preschool and early education expense is paid for out of state preschool funds and some of it is paid through early education funds, but the vast majority of it is an in-kind contribution by the district.

Since we have some surplus relocatable classrooms, we provided the classrooms for the preschool, and we'll do the restroom and access renovations. But we'll look to LAUP to help with some of that renovation cost. In terms of the early education expenses, we worked in collaboration with the W.M. Keck Foundation. The Keck Foundation provided the money for an administration building and a classroom building.

Between the state, grants, and district in-kind matches, we have planned and are building out what I think is going to be an

excellent educational facility for the east side of our community.

What are the actual planning and funding incentives and obstacles for the Lennox staff to engage in a master planning process that prioritizes multi-use and stakeholder collaboration?

We've done need surveys, and certainly we are an under-served area of L.A. County. We aren't a city of our own and, as such, the school district is the center

"What is exciting about the process that NSBN provided us with was the opportunity to include other folks that we generally cannot afford to come and join us in that conversation. Through that collaborative effort the picture expanded."

of the universe for a lot of our families. We have the regular K-8 education in place, but we've gone to both ends of the spectrum. That is to say, we started going below kindergarten into the preschool arena because we knew our kids could use the extra time in class in order to arrive to kindergarten with a better opportunity to succeed.

We looked at high school—and a number of our kids were not graduating from high school—we started looking at the charter high school as an opportunity to make sure that our kids graduated through the use of smaller, more personalized high schools. And then we went even below the preschool as a second step, because we found through our Healthy Start center that prenatal care, prenatal education, and then that very valuable age of 0 to 3, before they

even get into our preschool program, was something that our parents were clamoring for, especially in language development and motor development.

It's a community need that was assessed, and any way that we can meet those needs, we go about doing it, whether it be by our own means, through applications for grants, or applications to state programs. We are very aggressive in trying to obtain funds to meet those needs.

Given the scarcity of public funding for holistic planning of integrated program services, what reforms do school districts need to make the planning of joint- and shared-use facilities easier and more replicable statewide?

We can meet within our own sphere of influence and come up with a number of ideas and thoughts. What is exciting about the process that NSBN provided us with was the opportunity to include other folks that generally cannot afford to come and join us in our facility planning conversations. Through NSBN's collaborative master planning effort the opportunities for shared and joint use expanded.

After we build the facility, it also would be helpful to have some money to continue to have these conversations in order to maintain the shared vision. Sometimes it works for a year or two, but if you don't continue to meet and maintain relationships with entities with whom you are collaborating, these projects can fail. I think the seed money is great, and then finding the money to do the work is a second step, but the third step would be to have funding to maintain and assure program collaboration.

What State Allocation Board reforms regarding access to the state school bond joint-use facilities monies might help Lennox accomplish its education goals and mandates?

As educators, we know that community centered, joint- and shared-use school facilities that holistically incorporate early education, recreation, health, and adult education, would certainly help us real-
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Castellanos: State Must Rethink School Buildings' Purpose

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must make sure that when people engage in consideration of joint use that they see it as a positive endeavor.

What public funding and regulatory processes need to change? Are you suggesting control over the siting and design of schools needs to reside more locally?

Control fundamentally resides within the regulation that defines the practices of design and the methods of construction. But the old adage that all politics is local is true. Public agencies must deal

“The state has to work with local agencies, governments, and school districts to make sure that we deliver classrooms in a way that enables resources to go into the classroom by changing the process.”

with other public agencies – for example, when facilities might be shared between school districts and other organizations. How do we not only encourage that but assure that there is no barrier as far as process is concerned to the desire that different local agencies may have to join together to enhance a community-based school building project?

The size of the state's school building program has in many ways outstripped DSA's ability to serve the needs of the state. It's an incredibly dedicated organization, but much as the energy commission has relied on local government and local agencies for enforcement and have developed very high standards in regulation, I think it's time for the state architect's office to be considering much the same thing.

Can school districts, local building departments, architects and engineers be engaged in a yet to be defined alternative process that can return local decision-making to local levels? I think we've come to that point when we have to ask that question and we have to have a public discussion about how to best locally approach this notion of safety and oversight.

I think the same is true with the bond program. Bond optimization is what it's all about. San Diego schools once reported that for every month of delay, a K-8 was lost because of the degradation of the value of the money. For every six months, a high school was lost. So the state has to work with local agencies, governments, and school districts to make sure that we deliver classrooms in a way that enables resources to go into the classroom by changing the process. This is no longer about streamlining an existing process; this is about making a new process so that the whole thing can be much more flexible and more nimble.

Since leaving the DSA, you returned to the practice of architecture and to advising groups like NSBN on how best to align facility goals, funding, and process. Elaborate on how current funding and approval processes make it difficult to build joint use facilities that serve as neighborhood centers.

The financing, review, and oversight mechanisms of state government layered in with the additional requirements that local school districts, along with other agencies at the local level have re boards and different leadership and different budgeting systems, do make it difficult. Collaboration offers tremendous opportunity, but priorities often clash. The overall effort must be directed at joining together to use a school site for more than just classroom education. But without greater incentives to do that and some flexibility with regard to funding, regulation, and the approval processes, it's just difficult. So how do we create incentives for people to come together and do something that is eminently sensible—align public funds in a way that creates a whole greater than the sum of the parts?

The funding and regulatory schemes appear to compel building fewer schools on larger sites housing the most seats possible rather than building smaller, joint- and shared-use learning centers that bring the public physically back in public schools. Is that true?

It could be true, but let's return to a discussion I know more about, which is that have we spent enough time rethinking our notions of education and why we continue to build the kinds of schools we continue to build. But we're still living,

“We're talking about a generation of children who are engaged and who desire much more exposure to the rest of the world. We need to rethink education and decide whether we're being responsive to new models.”

unfortunately, with schools that reflect an industrial-age model of dedicated, isolated sites for education. The whole notion of a classroom is not how we recall it from our own childhood, with desks lined up in rows. We're talking about a generation of children who are engaged and who desire much more exposure to the rest of the world. We need to rethink education and decide whether we're being responsive to new models.

Many of the Corps of Engineers types now working for school districts on siting and building new facilities complain that the educators are too unsure about what they want new schools to designed for, and their indecision is costly, because

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SMBCCS, LA Free Clinic Form 'Exciting' Partnership

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in the larger sense helps the community and also it helps keep the kids in school. We're going to have fewer absences, which is going to have a direct impact on student achievement. That being our ultimate goal, I think that we are well on our way.

Abbe, would you also elaborate on the new arrangement between the L.A. Free Clinic and the SMBCCS? How are you going to work together to program expand the services you provide to the school community?

Abbe Land: The school will have on-site services, but the clinic itself won't be

"What's really exciting is this partnership that has happened between the Santa Monica Charter School and the Los Angeles Free Clinic, a partnership that is happening because of New School Better Neighborhoods."

on-site. It will be just a couple of blocks away, and they won't have to deal with the everyday operational issues that you have to deal with in a clinic.

What's really exciting is this partnership that has happened between the Santa Monica Charter School and the Los Angeles Free Clinic, a partnership that is happening because of New School Better Neighborhoods. They have helped bring us together to solve a problem, and that problem is making sure that kids have access to health care services they need so they can be good students. A study was done recently that says if a kid misses ten days of school in a semester, it really affects their ability to learn. And in L.A. kids miss about 27 days per semester because of illness.

Dr. Robinson, what array of health services does the L.A. Free Clinic now provide families and children?

Jehni Robinson: At the LA Free Clinic, we are family practice physicians. We take care of children, adults, and families. We offer preventative care, well-child care, immunizations, physical exams as well as being able to take care of people's acute needs when they get sick, have coughs, colds, or other illnesses.

The other benefit that we offer is that private physicians can take care of entire families and continue to see them over time, so they can get to know that provider and have a relationship with them, and they can care for families and their children. All of our physicians speak Spanish, and we also have a physician who speaks Korean, so we're able to meet those community needs as well.

Vahe, in addition to access to health care services, the school's master plan includes other physical improvements. Please describe them.

We are a large elementary school and we're really, really overcrowded. Over the years as the school population has increased we've brought in bungalows and bungalows and bungalows and put them on the yard. Our master plan's objective is to replace those old bungalows with two state-of-the-art buildings.

We're hoping that our project will be completed in two stages. The first building will go into place and then hopefully within the year we can put in the second building. We're looking to replace the old dilapidated bungalows and increase our school capacity by three more classes.

We have about 120 preschool students right now, three programs going on in our school. But we have a long waiting list for preschool, so we're hoping that with the addition of the new building we can accommodate more preschool students. The master plan also envisions including a clinic component, where we would have a section that serves as a screening-clinic that our students and the community could access.

Share the value you derive from being a conversion community charter school. More specifically, what are the virtues of being a charter as you plan your new campus facilities?

From the time we converted to charter school status about four years ago, there have been big changes. As a charter school we have greater freedom. We are able to make decisions on our own, rather than involve all different departments from the district, which just extends the time that it takes to get any project off the ground. We are able to make decisions that we feel meet the best needs of our

"Over the years as the school population has increased we've brought in bungalows . . . our master plan's objective is to replace those old bungalows with two state-of-the-art buildings."

community and our school.

Being a charter school also allows us to make our own decisions with curriculum because we all know, and the research shows, that one size does not fit all. In a large district like L.A. Unified, decisions are made district-wide that don't necessarily meet the needs of every child. So here at the charter school we can make decisions based on our community and what our kids' needs are.

Being a conversion charter school gives us a lot of financial flexibility. We are directly funded by the state and the federal government, which means funds flow directly to the school. Again, because of the charter status we have a lot more flexibility with our funds. The way I look at it is, this charter allows us to use our resources

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Castellanos: Successful New Schools Have More than 'Seats'

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delay causes cost overruns. So, the facilities professionals step into the breach and build the cookie-cutter classrooms of the past. Are the construction folks right?

I don't know. I think there are different ways of looking at this, but it's always a challenge to try to engage educational programs with operations. There has been a push to separate those in school design and construction for some time, and I don't know why that is.

But if you look at office buildings nowadays for example, there's a great deal of good work going on about how to optimize workspace for increased productivity. There's a great deal of research about how to do much of the same thing in schools. But we're not seeing enough of that new knowledge penetrating deeply enough to influence significant change in the classroom models and how schools are built. We need more dialog among people who operate schools and folks who understand children and community for us to begin to learn and understand more about what we need to build.

Given that the state is spending about \$60 billion on school facilities, can you explain why the State Allocation Board and/or the DSA have failed to track, examine and share the best practices of school district building programs so that districts can learn from one another?

I think there are legitimate reasons. There is such a pressing need for classrooms, so the notion has been that we have to put every available dollar into the development of a safe and healthy

classroom. However, I think we all know that complex and large efforts require not just a guy pulling a trigger on the starting line and hope that we all run the race as quickly as we can. We're not learning from our own experience, which is endemic to the design and construction industry, and we're also not testing these assumptions that have been around schools and education the way we should be.

A small increment out of every bond program should go toward the development of a body of knowledge that informs future decisions better. Without that, we're doomed to repeat the mistakes of the past. This is for children, for taxpayers, and to try to make our state a better place. We want to make sure that every decision is going to help make our communities successful.

Would it be fair to say that in jurisdictions like Chicago—where the mayor has oversight of the school and the city—there has been considerable emphasis on joint use and that where one jurisdiction has oversight of both entities, it's far easier to reconcile the differences and controversies?

Whatever the mechanism is, there have to be ways of getting school districts and others to partner. You can put them in the same room together, make them one in the same, or find other mechanisms. But the focus should be on partnership. Much the same thing is being discussed in design and construction – how do we remove the notion of being adversarial and towards collaboration to optimize outcomes?

SMBCCS *cntd.*

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when we want it and how we see fit to use those resources.

In our last NSBN newsletter, Maria Casillas of Families in Schools said, "school districts (e.g. L.A. Unified) need help reaching out to parents and community leaders in order to gain authentic and sustainable support for public schools in general and they need, often, intermediaries that can facilitate dialogue and collaborative civic engagement in public education." Is it easier for a charter to reach out to its parents than it is for L.A. Unified?

It's easier for us to do it, because, again, a charter school is a grassroots movement. We are better equipped to reach out to the community. People in charter schools are committed to their neighborhoods and the kids and parents that they serve. That in itself allows us to have better communication and dialogue with parents.

Because we are a charter school, we've been able to purchase a property next to our school and convert it into a parent center where we have a full-time parent educator for assistance that gives classes—whether it's ESL, to computer classes, citizenship classes, or health classes—for parents to help them become better equipped to better help their kids and be better citizens in the community. I think these are some of the advantages that come with being a charter school.

Lastly, can what you've accomplished at the SMBCCS be replicated in other schools in metropolitan Los Angeles?

I believe it can be, absolutely. It requires a commitment by the leadership of the school, and it also requires the commitment of the larger district, whatever district it may be—it doesn't have to be just L.A. Unified—into making sure that they commit to, not just serving the kids, but the community at large. If those commitments are in place, certainly that can be done. I think there also needs to be some financial flexibility so they can actually incorporate into facilities parent centers and things like that.

"We need more dialog among people who operate schools and folks who understand children and community for us to begin to learn and understand more about what we need to build."

Knott: Lennox Campus Reaps Rewards from Collaboration

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ize our educational mission better. As far as K-8 education goes, our facilities, for years, have been negatively impacted because we went from about 3,500 students in 1980 to a peak of about 7,400 students. We have more than doubled in size. But the size of the land didn't double; the size of the libraries didn't double; and, the size of the parking lots didn't double. The district and the community have a real problem with green space for recreation, and a real problem with off-street parking. Our schools in Lennox are used by the community year round, seven days a week, for soccer leagues and baseball leagues.

It would be great if the state, through the allocation of joint use bond funds, could provide capitol dollars to schools, especially ones that are in fact the centers of community in an unincorporated area, to build underground or two-story parking in order to save some land for green space. The same would be true with re-locatables, if not all of the re-locatables, that we just kept adding to our campuses.

If we could have money to build two-story stick frame buildings, we could grab back some of that green space. And then of course the libraries and auditoriums are undersized for the population of the schools. Last but not least, restrooms are a big issue. The restrooms are for the initial size of the school, not for facilities with double the capacity. Those are some of the facilities issues that are both directly and peripherally related to joint use.

You referred to the fact that the Lennox School District exists in an unincorporated area of Los Angeles, and that your

school campuses act as the center of community life. Larger school districts in metro Los Angeles, like LAUSD, do not typically assume that it is their duty to build anything but "seats"? How does Lennox's approach differ from that of the larger school districts that surround Lennox?

It would be hard for me to comment on a larger school district, but I can comment on what I think makes Lennox unique, and to the degree that it can be replicated it might be of use to other people.

We have a benefit and a downside to our district's size. In a little over a mile and three quarters square, we have a 7,000 pre-school through eighth grade population. Because of the size of the district, and because of the lack of bureaucracy, decisions can be made

quickly. We can get everybody we need to make a decision in the room at the same time and the same place. We can get in our cars and within five minutes arrive at a site in order to look at the site and determine from a practical standpoint what needs to take place.

If I had to identify the one thing that has made so much of our progress possible, it's that Lennox staff and parents don't put limits on their vision. And once that vision is out there, staff has permission to go out and try to find the means to make that vision a reality.

Once we get the wherewithal, we get together and make sure that all the roadblocks have been taken care of. Within the district it's a very collaborative effort, and I believe that it's the relationships and the small size of the district that makes all that possible.

"If we're looking at a holistic approach and we're looking at recreation, health and adult education, joint facilities could certainly help us realize some of those goals."

Zev/Sun Valley ctd.

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visors, school board members, superintendents, mayors, whoever they are—a cross-jurisdictional conversation about the needs of the community. Whether it's a health center or a library, whatever the need is—with the kind of building program the school district is engaged in you can sometimes do both—there is no limit to what can be done.

The limiting factor for us was the real estate; it wasn't the money. The money to build is a one-time cost for the county. It's substantial, but it's worth it. The operational money is largely going to come from drawing on federal money through the Northeast Valley Health Corporation. UCLA is going to contribute a portion, and LACare donated the first year's operational cost.

So it's a real partnership, and the opportunities are manifold throughout the County of Los Angeles. It works economically, it works physically, it meets a need in the East San Fernando Valley, and there are other areas of the county where this can be replicated. But it requires a vision and a goal, which is to leverage dollars and assets, assets such as real estate and community-based assets, such as federally qualified health centers, which can bring quite a bit to the table.

In the case of libraries or other facilities for which there is bond money, the assets are there. So as long as you're in the business of acquiring land and building schools, it doesn't take that much more effort—and not even that much more money—to make the school site a broader community-based site with all kinds of community-based assets. And in this community, no asset is more valuable than this health clinic.

We have all the health problems that the rest of the county has—in terms of diabetes and obesity and the growing epidemic of adult-onset diabetes in teens, and on top of that we have air quality issues that are unique to certain parts of Los Angeles County, including Sun Valley.

So we have an opportunity here that is second to none, and there's no community in the LAUSD's jurisdiction where this can't be done, but it requires decision-makers who can say what Roy Romer said—"Let's do it."

Sen. Torlakson Champions Joint Use in Sacramento

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My understanding is that this joint use would allow those kinds of collaborations. Community colleges that do early childhood development can partner with elementary schools to both provide those services and also give students the opportunity to learn and move towards degrees in early childhood education. I think this absolutely provides that opportunity. Right now if the childcare center is located at the community college, it couldn't be considered for joint-use funding because it is on the community college campus. With these more flexible rules, those kinds of partnerships can develop.

“The bill will provide more opportunities to design a built environment that is healthier, that is going to allow for walkable connections and recreation.”

NSBN, USC, UCLA, the California Endowment and others recently held a conference in Los Angeles entitled “Unhealthy by Design?” on the relationship between the built environment and community health. How will your bill promote public health through joint use?

The bill will provide more opportunities to design a built environment that is healthier, that is going to allow for walkable connections and recreation. There are great examples throughout the state of school districts and local park and rec districts coming together to provide joint use in after-school hours. But I believe this reform will broaden those opportunities.

The idea fundamentally is that schools can and should be community centers and that as we invest in the school we can invest in other facilities close by or on campus that will offer a benefit and be seen as community assets, not separate real estate owned by a school district or controlled by a city.

In late June the Center for Civic Partnerships and Joan Twiss are hosting a small group of local officials, housing developers, and transportation experts from Northern and Southern California on how to connect housing, transportation, and community health. What tools or revenue streams do local governments have to connect those dots and create healthy, livable communities?

The bond package presents a historic opportunity to do things better. The Transportation and Housing Committee was Senator Perata's innovation to get out of the old boxes and connect two key challenges in California: the transportation crisis and the housing crisis. I chaired that committee for a year and conducted 23 hearings around the state listening to businesspeople, parents, labor, and we were impressed with the uniform desire to do things differently and better to work towards healthier communities. The sprawl that has resulted in longer commutes, more parents trapped in traffic, more air pollution, more childcare costs, more afterschool program need, air pollution, lung disease. We can turn that around.

For instance, in the housing bond we have \$850 million of urban infill incentives. A city that does its fair share of regional housing and meets targets we will establish in trailer legislation can receive those funds as rewards for putting more housing close to transit and job centers. And then there will be some discretionary money that could be spent on joint use facilities, which would benefit both schools and the community. Also, \$200 million of that \$850 million will be dedicated to parks, open space, and recreation, which, again, has great opportunity to be programmed in a vestment approach that will yield healthier communities and schools

as partners with the city. The education bond has \$29 million more in it for joint use. So in addition to changing the rules in the bill we discussed earlier, we also want to supply some real money to help that happen.

The other thing out of a \$20 billion transportation bond, about \$4.5 billion will go to transit. That's a huge commitment to new opportunities in urban infill and to connect housing and jobs, which will result in healthier communities. The longer commutes are unhealthy not just because you're sitting and you're not exercising, but because it's stressful, and

“Sprawl that has resulted in longer commutes, more parents trapped in traffic, more air pollution, more childcare costs, more afterschool program need, air pollution, lung disease. We can turn that around.”

the chances of an accident or an injury every time you drive a 70-mile round-trip commute are real. They cost us a lot of lost lives and injuries. So the bond package offers tremendous opportunity to go in a more positive direction as California moves forward.

With the failure of Prop 82, what strategy, if any, will proponents of universal pre-K now pursue?

In my discussions with Sen. Perata and my own assessment of 82, it was just too big of an investment and not targeted well enough to the higher-need communities. I believe we will come forward with a plan that will be better targeted and hopefully

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LAUP: Pre-K Facilities Funding Available Now!

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Potentially, yes. We hope to continue our partnership with NSBN as we need to be much more careful about leveraging our own resources. NSBN is definitely one of the models that could provide a more interesting use of resources in the years to come. Not only is it a different kind of funding structure, but it also presents the opportunity to erect a structure that may have multiple uses for the community.

What funding for new spaces does LAUP offer your partners—existing preschool providers, cities, school districts, other nonprofits, etc.—for expanding spaces for 4-year-olds?

We are offering facilities funding. We got 377 applications recently, more than 200 of them are facilities projects of some sort. In all cases we are offering funding to remodel, bring a modular on site, as well as funding for a provisional contract to prepare for moving into operational funding.

So applicants who are thinking about partnering with LAUP can have a sense of your facility priorities, what are the areas/neighborhoods of greatest need?

From the policy direction we got from our board last year, we looked at the data across the county by zip codes and we looked across the county for zip codes where the service rates were below the county average, which is 48 percent. Then we added to that the raw need; that is, how many children needed spaces that were not available. And if the zip code needed more than 1,000 spaces, then that became the first priority – Tier I. I think that includes 14 or 15 zip codes. Then immediately after we created a Tier II with a raw need of 500 or more, and that includes 20 zip codes on which we are now concentrating. It so happens that

when you correlate this data of service rate with API scores, the correlation is very high, which tells us that our criteria work.

How long does the LAUP approval/funding process take regarding these facility applications? What might applicants expect when they apply for funding for new preschool seats?

I wish I had an average to give you. We just haven't done enough to have a valid number. But I can tell you that we are prioritizing according to projects that are less time-consuming. Some of the projects will take just a few months, so we expect to have operational spaces as early as four or five months from now. Some of the projects are quite involved, and they will require more time to make sure that all the specifications are in place, so it could be a year or more.

While LAUP is focused on universal preschool for 4-year-olds, First 5/LA has becoming increasingly interested in 0 to 3 services for children and families. What then is the value of siting new preschool facilities in neighborhood centers that provide multiple services, such as preschools, primary centers, health clinics, parks, and libraries?

The value is mostly for the families and the children. If the families have children of different ages, then they have one place where the services are centered, and the sooner we can impact these families in areas of health and a variety of other ways, the sooner we start making progress towards helping that child succeed academically and in life. The most important element is the continuity of services that can happen for a family. If they get used to going to one place when the child is a baby

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NSBN is currently working, with support from First 5 LA, with LAUP to site and develop “new pre-k seats” in several L.A. County communities that have been identified as being in “greatest need”:

Lennox Elementary School District (LESD) and NSBN are collaborating on LAUP preschool projects at Bufford Elementary, Felton Elementary and Moffett Elementary. These preschool projects will be co-located on the existing school campuses and will be a sizable expansion of preschool programming currently operated by LESD.

NSBN is continuing its collaborative work with **Paramount Unified School District** in the development of a preschool master-plan for the entire district with a focus on new pre-k facilities at the Zamboni (formerly Orange Ave.) and Collins elementary schools located in Paramount and North Long Beach, respectively.

NSBN, in collaboration with the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) and the **Lawndale Elementary School District (LESD)**, is developing a family and children services master plan for an existing LACOE school site in Hawthorne. Among other joint-use opportunities, LACOE is working with NSBN and LESD to facilitate the operation of a LAUP-funded preschool and open space on the Hawthorne five-acre site.

In collaboration with Century Housing and the Drew Child Development Corporation (DCDC), NSBN is developing plans for a 100-seat preschool and space for DCDC offices at a site in the **Watts/Willowbrook** area of Los Angeles.

NSBN, in collaboration with the Lancaster Church of Christ, the Children's Center of Antelope Valley, and the Wilsona School District, is developing plans for new preschool seats in the Lancaster and Lake Los Angeles areas of the **Antelope Valley**.

Sen. Torlakson

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find the administration and Legislature working together so that preschool will be part of a broader package of additional funding for schools.

I personally think that we need to do something in terms of new revenues for education in general, and we need to take care of that before we start a whole new program. Certainly, targeting to lower decile schools and populations that cannot afford preschool on their own makes a lot of sense. We will see a higher return on our investment by targeting the neediest of California's children than taking the universal approach that was outlined in Prop 82.

How could the state and the Legislature encourage more holistic infrastructure planning in our communities? How do you make it easier for neighborhoods desperate for safe access to good school facilities, recreation, pre- and after-school programs, adult education and health care overcome the silo planning of most capital and facility expenditures by schools and other public entities?

That isn't easy, because we have these separate boxes of policy work. But we can build bridges and we can get out of the boxes. I just think it takes creative efforts and good examples. One thing I heard recently in the Education Committee was that school districts were having great difficulty working with cities to plan their sites and the accompanying traffic, sidewalks, and infrastructure. I went forward with another bill that will allow for master EIRs and more collaboration between the cities and the school districts for them to get their sites approved at the local level.

Beyond doing bills, I'm working on facilitating a committee of the League of Cities to sit down with a committee from the administrators and school boards associations to look at other dimensions of where they can cooperate in the planning process to make it less confrontational. That kind of collaboration is healthy, and we just need support from community groups who see the rationale behind it. The taxpayers certainly don't want to see us getting bogged down over jurisdictional lines.

NSBN

LAUP Funding

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and then the services are there when the child reaches preschool age, the familiarity for the family and the ability to navigate all of the services has an impact on whether the family will really be able to gain access to those services or not.

The proposed state budget for next year contains increased funding for pre-K and there also is an ongoing conversation about going back to the voters with a modified version of Prop 82. Does LAUP expect sufficient funding to become available in coming years?

How do we provide equal access to family resources in a community



I think the governor's \$100 million proposal is a very good first step, but we know that it's going to cost many more hundreds of millions to really provide quality preschool for children across the state. As far as alternative public funding to create sustainability in L.A. County, we are looking at partnerships to begin developing a plan. I think it's a little premature to talk about the specifics of such a plan, but the feeling among LAUP's board and staff is that Prop 82 is a temporary loss, not a defeat.

Society has recognized that quality preschool for 4-year-olds is good for the future. Social movements happen in progressive stages. All of us have learned from this initiative process, and it's now time to gather those lessons and find alternative ways to bring this forward. Our community has shown that it has the will, and now we have to find the way.

NSBN

Antelope Valley

Continued from page 3

the classroom and that can hook up families with other services and give them the support they need and participate in a good preschool program.

A year from now, assuming the current NSBN/LAUP planning process results in more pre-K classrooms, what services will you be offering and what will be happening in Lake Los Angeles?

I think we will be able to add an additional preschool for 4-year-olds, which will allow us, depending on how it is structured, to serve possibly 30 to 40 more families that have preschool children but are unable to get services. Because of the partnership with the Wilsona School District, these children and families should have a much better chance at success in kindergarten, first, and second grade, for a variety of reasons. One, they will have had the preschool experience, and, two, they will also have established a connection with the school district. When parents first put their children in kindergarten it takes a while sometimes for them to feel really comfortable about going to school and talking to teachers. This partnership should speed up that process. The ultimate goal is to ensure success for these children as they go on to school.

If you wanted more resources in north L.A. County, whether financial or professional, to further expand pre-K opportunities, what would you need and to whom would you go for support?

I would come to NSBN to get assistance in directing me towards that kind of support. That's the truth – I am not just saying that. It has been through your efforts – getting the letter of interest – that this may even be a possibility. I would come first to NSBN and say, "look, this is what is going to help us, do you have any ideas on where we could go and what we could do?"

When NSBN approached us, they presented some ideas and suggestions that I hadn't even thought of for putting together some collaborations or maybe looking at some places for additional funding. So I would just throw it back to you and ask, "Can you help with this?"

NSBN

NSBN PROJECT UPDATE

Continued from page 2

facilities for the community into the project. NSBN was successful in finalizing a design plan for SMBCCS that allows a new partnership with the Los Angeles Free Clinic to offer students and their families access to free health care on-site at SMBCCS with referrals to an expanding LAFC facility located within walking distance of the campus. As the clients become more acquainted and comfortable with the clinic, a referral and appointment desk and an insurance assistance program will replace on-site medical care. Simultaneously, NSBN received a grant from the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation that will fund a health care assessment program and study of the impact of healthy school design on academic achievement.

Boyle Heights- East LA High School

In the East Los Angeles neighborhood of Boyle Heights, the need for land for a new school and MTA station appeared to endanger an existing community pre-school, until the parties, with the support of then-Councilman (and now Mayor) Villaraigosa’s office and the assistance of NSBN, worked out a collaborative, joint-use alternative. A visionary community master plan by Barrio Planners followed the signing of an MOU by LAUSD’s Board President (and now Councilman) Jose Huizar, Rev. Jim Conn, an urban strategist with United Methodist Ministries, Eduardo Garcia of Plaza Community Center, and Elizabeth Zamora of the Boyle Heights Learning Collaborative.

With additional support from the International Institute of Los Angeles, another childcare operator located within Boyle Heights and the Boyle Heights Learning Collaborative (a spin-off educational action group within the Roosevelt HS and new East LA HS feeder areas), the NSBN/Boyle Heights’ stakeholders are now working with the Mayor’s Office, LA City Council District 14, the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles, the LA City Community Development and Engineering departments, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, and the California Department of Transportation District 7 to co-develop a 2.5-block multipurpose community center with preschool facilities operated by both Plaza Community Center and International Institute, as well as other community-based programs.

NSBN is pleased to announce that, on May 17, the L.A. Proposition Citizens Oversight Advisory Committee (COAC) approved a recommendation to include the NSBN planned Boyle Heights Joint-Use Community Center in the list of projects to be funded under Proposition O. The COAC, established by the voters, recommends projects to the City Council to be funded by proceeds from the Prop O bond. This project and its funding under Prop O is historic. The combination of a childcare center and social services in one location is not unique, but the inclusion of the Prop O component to clean up stormwater pollution in the adjacent neighborhood is truly unique. On May 25, 2006, the COAC’s recommendation was approved by the Administrative Oversight Committee.

Hawthorne

NSBN, in collaboration with the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) and the Lawndale Elementary School District (LES), is developing a master plan for an existing seven-acre school site in Hawthorne. Once a “starter” school (a small, three-classroom facility with only an office, bathroom facilities, and limited recreational space) within LES, the site was transferred to LACOE and currently operates as an alternative day school for junior and senior high school students reassigned from other schools within the South Bay region of L.A. County. LACOE now has plans to expand its current classrooms with a small addition while developing appropriate playing fields for its current student population.

Separately, LACOE is working with NSBN and LES to facilitate the operation of a LAUP-funded preschool on a portion of LACOE’s Hawthorne site. This preschool will serve approximately 48 children in an area that has been defined by LAUP as being in “greatest need” for new preschool seats. Further, NSBN is working with LACOE to identify other potential project participants, such as Trust for Public Land, to develop an accessible, open space master-plan for improvement of this large school site.

Willowbrook, South L.A.

NSBN, in collaboration with Century Housing and the Drew Child Development Corporation (DCDC), has developed plans for a 200-seat preschool and space for DCDC offices, which are being

relocated from DCDC’s current location at the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science campus. As with several of NSBN’s current projects, this facility will serve preschool children in an area that has been defined by LAUP as being in “greatest need” for new preschool seats. This project was stalled for 10+ years due to land acquisition issues, but the intervention by LA County 2nd District Supervisor Yvonne Braithwaite Burke’s office recently facilitated this joint-use development. Both Century Housing and DCDC have signed Letters of Intent with NSBN for this pre-K project.

Lancaster

NSBN, in collaboration with the Lancaster Church of Christ (LCC) and the Children’s Center of Antelope Valley (CCAV), is developing plans for much needed preschool seats in the Lancaster area of Antelope Valley. NSBN is pleased to report that both LCC and CCAV have signed Letters of Intent with NSBN for this pre-K project.

Lake Los Angeles, North County

NSBN, in collaboration with the Wilsona School District (WSD) and the Children’s Center of Antelope Valley (CCAV), is developing plans for much needed preschool seats in the Lake Los Angeles area of Antelope Valley. This new facility will be located on the campus of Wilsona Elementary School. NSBN is pleased to report that both WSD and CCAV have signed Letters of Intent with NSBN for this project.

NSBN Executive Staff

David Abel, Founder and Chairman

John Hurtado, L.A. Executive Director

Cathy Kersh, Sr. Project Manager

New Staff

Diane Sasaki has joined NSBN on a part-time basis as a project manager in North County.

R. Wayne Woods has joined NSBN on a part-time basis as a project manager in Lawndale and Lennox.

Veronica Zimmerman recently joined NSBN, after graduation from a Coro Fellows Program, as a project manager in East L.A.

**New Schools
Better Neighborhoods**

UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL

LAUP Seeks to Bring Preschool to High-Need Areas as Soon as Possible

NSBN was formed both to advocate for a vision of public facilities, most especially schools, as vital community centers, and to assist families and neighborhoods in creating built models of community centered learning centers. • NSBN has emerged as California's independent, neighborhood-led master planner, committed to reforming existing approaches to siting and designing family resource centers, public schools, parks, libraries & housing. NSBN has established key relationships with state and local policymakers, educators, regulatory agencies, business leaders, architects, planners, and community-based organizations to define and promote a 21st century vision for California's urban neighborhoods and school districts: **New schools should be centers of neighborhood vitality; likewise, neighborhoods and communities should serve as healthy centers of learning for families and children.** NSBN is a project of **Community Partners**, a 501 (c) 3 Calif. Public Benefit Corporation.

The Goals of NSBN

- Create a strategy for including community dialogue in determining the siting and design of public facilities - schools, parks, pre-K, etc.
- Move from the outmoded "factory model" that has defined public school buildings to a model of community-focused schools that anchor increasingly diverse, family-centered neighborhoods.
- Understand how joint ventures between schools, family resource centers, & other services (health, recreational, libraries) can leverage scarce assets and help make schools the centers of community.
- Promote changes in statutes, regulations, and/or decision-making processes necessary to implement this vision.

New Schools • Better Neighborhoods

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Dedicated to making preschool available to all of L.A. County's 4-year-olds, LA Universal Preschool distributes funds for siting and building-out new pre-K seats in the county's most under-served communities. Despite the defeat of Prop 82, LAUP

continues to pursue this mission by leveraging scarce resources and collaborating with model partners such as NSBN. Under the direction of CEO Graciela Italiano-Thomas, LAUP is collaborating with NSBN on projects described on page 21.

Los Angeles Universal Preschool's goal is to make high-quality voluntary preschool accessible to all 4-year-olds in L.A. County by the end of the decade, and that requires providing facilities and more seats to meet demand. With the failure of State Prop 82 this June, what is LAUP's plan to assist providers in adding new facilities and seats?



Graciela Italiano-Thomas

At the moment we have an approved budget and plan for 2006-07, which starts July 1, to continue building infrastructure in the areas of greatest need in the county. We will proceed with the approved plan. What has changed for us is our strategic thinking about what will happen in the years to follow. At the moment we have approximately four more years of funding from First 5 LA, including this coming year. We have to engage our board and our key partners in the community to make sure that we use these seed funds in the most judicious manner. We must regroup, therefore, and figure out a strategy to bring sustainable funding to this great effort — to both facilities infrastructure and programmatic sustainability. Our goal remains to bring high-quality preschool to all 4-year-olds. For us, the defeat of Prop 82 is only one more new challenge for us to meet.

What's the preschool demand in Los Angeles County? How many seats are needed if LAUP's goal is to be by the decade's end?

We know there are approximately 155,000 4-year-olds in the county. We estimate that about 70 percent would participate if it were offered to them. So with the system fully functioning, we would probably be reaching 115,000. To calculate the supply side is more challenging which points to the complexity of accomplishing our mission.

Can we not assume if universality is the goal, that tens of thousands of new pre-K seats will be still needed, even after building on existing infrastructure of licensed care facilities? LAUP, and you specifically, have been quite articulate about LAUP's need to partner with all kinds of resources in the county to meet demand. Elaborate on some of the partnerships that you've been developing and the promise of those partnerships to close the pre-K seat gap.

How we've been approaching our build-out of new facilities is to first see what resources are available. We have great partnerships with the school districts. We've also partnered with non-profit organizations that are either expanding their facilities or in some cases building new facilities, and our funding will be just a portion of the new facility. And we've been creating spaces by funding empty classrooms that were physically there before but didn't have operational funding.

Partnerships span the continuum from just providing operational funding and remodeling, and in many cases we are funding modular units that can be placed in close proximity to a community-based organization or a school. Our key partners are some of the nonprofits, some are school districts, but we also have partnerships with cities and elected officials that have access to knowledge or resources that can tell us where there are usable empty facilities in the community, and then we have to go through the process of urban planning and geomapping to place them where they are most needed.

Regarding partnership, LAUP has been working with NSBN, with common funding from First 5/LA, on a portfolio of preschool facility projects in neighborhoods in Lennox, Paramount, North County, South L.A. and East Hollywood. NSBN's model focuses on finding available land and then partnering with a provider to build new seats, rather than depending on a provider to find and develop new pre-K facilities. Is the NSBN model proving valuable for LAUP?

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