



## **City of Alameda and Alameda Unified School District: Working Together for Alameda's Residents**

**March 15, 2007**

The City of Alameda and the Alameda Unified School District recognize the significant value of working together to serve their joint constituencies for the greater benefit of the Alameda community. By sharing information, coordinating programs, and promoting a collaborative working relationship, the Alameda City Council, the Alameda Board of Education, City staff, and School District staff are able to enhance the quality and effectiveness of their services, leverage the impact of limited resources, and strengthen the desirability of Alameda as a place to live and go to school.

The cooperative efforts of the City and the School District take the form of regular and systematic communication between City and School District leadership, joint planning for facility use and maintenance, joint efforts for improving school and public safety, sharing of educational and recreational resources, and the creation of unique and innovative programs that serve the public in new ways.

**Recreational Facilities and Programs:** The recreation arena provides one of the greatest opportunities for collaboration, with many City parks located next to schools to facilitate joint use and leverage resources. The new Ruby Bridges Elementary School, for example, occupies approximately 11 acres of land in the middle of the Bayport residential community. The site includes a seven-acre campus and a four-acre city park. A joint use agreement between the City and the District allows students to use the park during the school day for exercise programs, recesses, and special events. It also allows the City to build a community day-care building on the school site and the public to use the courts located on the school side of the property. In addition, both the City and the District use each other's community centers, schools, and athletic facilities at little or no cost in order to provide programming such as end-of-year school picnics and recreational swimming.

**Library Facilities and Programs:** The City leased space in the west wing of Alameda High School for use as an interim main library for about eight years while the new Main Library was being planned and built. During this time, the City and the School District collaborated to pilot K-12 programs for the Interim Library that would eventually become part of the programming for the new Main Library. The proximity of the Interim Library

to Alameda High School was also helpful for improving student use of the Library. In 2002, the City and the School District developed and signed a Joint Use Cooperative Agreement that helped secure a \$15.5 million state grant for library construction. As part of this process of applying for the state grant, the School District provided a staff representative to the Library Building Team over a four year period. Some of the joint programs include a core curriculum textbook collection, in which the Main and branch libraries have textbooks on hand for student use when they visit the libraries; a homework coaching program that provides homework help to K-6 students using the libraries; and SAT test prep sessions that include peer tutoring and test-taking tips.

**Energy and Conservation Programs:** More than 80% of Alameda's power is generated using renewable resources such as geothermal and hydroelectric facilities. Because "green power" is so important to the Alameda community, the City (through Alameda Power & Telecom) and the School District have partnered together to teach students about the important of conserving energy and using renewable resources. The City, for instance, provides classroom training on solar and geothermal energy, while the School District has retrofitted its buildings to be more energy efficient, thereby saving money and showing leadership on the issue of energy conservation. The Alameda Power Up for Learning program enables Alameda Power & Telecom customers to add money to their cable and electric bills that passes through the Alameda Education Foundation to fund technology for students.

**Infrastructure and Environmental Programs:** The City and the School District have worked together on a number of projects to improve pedestrian safety around schools. At Lincoln Middle School, for example, the City and the District collaborated to develop a revised student drop off/pick-up circulation pattern in the parking lot. The physical improvements were funded in part by the District's Measure C funds, while a State-issued Safe Routes to Schools (SR2S) grant partially funded other improvements to streets and crosswalks in the area. The School District assisted the City with the SR2S grant application. Other SR2S grant monies paid for in-pavement crosswalk lights near several schools as well as pole-mounted radar signs warning drivers to slow down. In addition to making physical improvements near schools, the City and the School District have worked to educate school children about the benefits of walking to and from school, including gathering data on safe routes and neighborhood traffic conditions. Finally, the City and the School District have partnered together to offer clean water puppet shows to younger students, and older students have participated in City and East Bay Regional Parks District-sponsored coastal clean-up days.

**Disaster Preparedness:** Disaster preparedness is a critical area for City/School District collaboration, and the two agencies are working together to coordinate disaster planning efforts and possible mitigation strategies. The City has provided School District staff with emergency operations training, demonstrated correct procedures for lock down drills at school sites, and helped the School District develop and practice annual disaster drills. On the education side, the City and the American Red Cross have teamed up through the Together We Prepare program to provide personal preparedness education for Alameda's elementary school children. Some middle

school children have also received the training. The City has also provides a shelter in place training for primary school children, and, in cooperation with the Bayview Women's Group, it runs Safety Town, a program for kindergarten children that teaches about fire safety, traffic safety, and stranger danger.

**Public Safety Education and Outreach:** In the public safety arena, the City has been providing DARE instruction in the elementary schools since 1986, teaching approximately 850 fifth grade students each year about the dangers of drug use. To help ensure the safety of children walking to school, the City funds the crossing guard program, with part-time crossing guards located in 27 locations throughout the city. The City also provides School Resource Officers in the middle schools and high schools. These officers provide information counseling and mentoring and classroom instruction, and they participate in administrative hearings and serve as liaisons between social service agencies and their students. Finally, the School Resource Officers are involved with the Alameda Safe Schools Enforcement Team (ASSET), which recently received a Distinguished Program Award from the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Division of Juvenile Justice, for their "exemplary service to youth and their contribution to delinquency prevention in the State of California." ASSET is a ground-breaking partnership launched by the City and the School District in which six city and county agencies meet once a month to share information about at-risk youth, review individual cases involving juvenile crime and truancy, and collaborate on specific strategies to provide support and intervention for Alameda students and their families.

**Community Representation Joint Efforts:** Members of the Council and the School Board, together with the City Manager and the District Superintendent, meet together regularly to discuss issues of mutual interest and ways to continue working together. These meetings facilitate the sharing of information and enable the two agencies to collaborate more effectively. In addition, the School District has provided representatives on the City's Transportation Commission, Library Development Team, and Alameda Point Advisory Committee.