



# ORANGE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Education Center

1401 North Handy Street • Orange, CA 92867-4334  
714.628.4000 • 714.628.4046 (Fax)  
[www.orangeusd.org](http://www.orangeusd.org)

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Dear Parents and Community Members:

The anticipation continues to build! For the past eight months, each of the District's four comprehensive high schools has been developing facility master plans with an architectural firm: Orange HS with Lionakis, Canyon HS with GKK Works, El Modena HS with Harley Ellis Devereaux, and Villa Park HS with LPA.

During the development process, numerous meetings were held with community members and District staff, who provided voluminous input towards the creation of newly modernized campuses that are unique to each school and community. In conjunction with each community's vision for their campus, the architectural firms developed global plans that create not only great 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environments, but facilities that will also serve our community. These plans were unveiled by each firm to the Board of Education, and the communities as a whole, at on-location Board of Education meetings.

In an effort to promote transparency and allow easier access for the community, staff and students to attend meetings and provide further input on their respective school's facilities master plan, the Board of Education decided to take their February and March meetings on the road to each high school. The overwhelming response and attendance at these Board meetings has far surpassed everyone's expectations. The visioning that has taken place developing the plans has been amazing.

In late January, a brochure and survey concerning high school facility priorities was mailed to households in the greater Orange community. In addition to completing and returning the survey by mail, there was an option to complete the survey on-line. The survey asked respondents to prioritize five areas for facilities modernization based on their importance: 1) Update classrooms to 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning standards; 2) Modernize aging science labs and equipment; 3) Upgrade aging facilities with green, energy efficient building components; 4) Upgrade/modernize aging athletic facilities; and 5) Modernize/build performing arts centers. While all the priorities received support, the greatest priorities are clearly for updated classrooms and modernized science labs. These results mirror what the architects learned through the master plan development process.

As a result of the master planning process, a grass-roots effort has been mounted by community members to advocate for the modernization of our high schools. They have selected the name CARE – Community Advancement through Renovation for Education – and have registered with the State FPPC to advance this cause through fund raising and community outreach. Anyone interested in learning more about CARE can find them on Facebook at CAREforOUSD or on the web at [www.CAREforOUSD.org](http://www.CAREforOUSD.org).

The next step in the process of implementing the high school master plans is to conduct a scientific poll of the community to determine the interest of the District's voters. The Board retained the services of True North Research to develop and conduct the polling, which will take place during April with the Board receiving the results at the May 8<sup>th</sup> meeting. Depending on the results of the poll, the Board may consider taking action as early as June to ask voters in the November general election if the District should sell bonds and use the proceeds to modernize our comprehensive high schools.

I encourage you to stay up to date on the events surrounding this issue and other important District communications by visiting the District's website ([www.orangeusd.org](http://www.orangeusd.org)) and following us on Facebook at OrangeUnifiedSchoolDistrictCA. Additionally, the designs for each high school can be found on the District's website at [www.orangeusd.org/facilities/plan/](http://www.orangeusd.org/facilities/plan/).

Sincerely,

Michael L. Christensen  
Superintendent of Schools