

# Los Angeles Unified School District

## Office of Environmental Health and Safety

**AUSTIN BEUTNER**  
*Superintendent of Schools*

**CARLOS A. TORRES**  
*Director, Environmental Health and Safety*

**JENNIFER FLORES**  
*Deputy Director, Environmental Health and Safety*

July 31, 2020

Dr. William A. Burke, Chairman  
SOUTH COAST AIR QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
21865 Copley Drive  
Diamond Bar, California 91765

Re: Dangerous Emissions Impacting  
David Starr Jordan High School, Watts, California

Dear Dr. Burke:

I am reaching out to the South Coast Air Quality Management District in my capacity as the Director of Environmental Health & Safety for the Los Angeles Unified School District. I am tasked with the mission of ensuring a safe environment for over 700,000 students to learn, 24,000 teachers to teach and 66,000 employees to work. As you know, Los Angeles Unified and AQMD have partnered many times on air quality issues affecting the school community and beyond.

Notwithstanding, I need to call to your attention a dangerous air quality situation. There is a school community in Watts that needs regulatory oversight of a facility threatening the health and safety of the school population and the surrounding new Jordan Downs affordable housing community that is currently being populated with an anticipated 1,500 families.

Los Angeles Unified has been working tirelessly to eliminate the environmental and health impacts caused by an ultra-hazardous metal recycling facility, Atlas Iron and Metal Company (10019 S Alameda St, Los Angeles, CA 90002). The facility shares fence lines with David Starr Jordan High School (2265 E 103rd St, Los Angeles, CA 90002) on one side and the housing community on the other. Of interest to SCAQMD are the emissions and the deposit of metal particulates from Atlas that have permeated the newly installed athletic facilities and internal buildings of our school, as well as other dangers.

We have engaged your enforcement team and I understand that there is an open investigation. However, given the extreme hazard this facility poses, I felt it imperative to notify you and the Board of the continuing endangerment in hopes for an immediate action by AQMD. This school community deserves strict regulatory review and oversight given the current environmental injustice that is occurring.

To be clear, our goal is to provide you with pertinent information that could result in enforcement action as appropriate. We are hopeful that this is yet another way that Los Angeles Unified and SCAQMD work together towards the common goal of protecting the health of students, staff and the community.

For more information, please see the following Los Angeles Times article, <https://lat.ms/2EqM4wP> , the attached photos and the site where we have housed pertinent documents, photos and videos. <https://achieve.lausd.net/Page/16939> We look forward to discussing this issue with you at your upcoming SCAQMD Board meeting on August 7, 2020.

Sincerely,

Carlos A. Torres, Director  
Office of Environmental Health and Safety  
Los Angeles Unified School District

Attachments:  
Photos



Your statement is important to the successful resolution of the Accident/Incident under investigation. It should be limited to the facts of the issue and should not set forth your opinions. Your opinions may be provided to the investigating official. Your statement will be used within LAUSD to support corrective actions, further safety and security investigations/reviews, sharing of lessons learned, and other administrative reasons. Your statement may be provided to LAUSD & the LAUSD OCIP Insurance Broker & Carrier in the furtherance of contractual obligations.

**STATEMENT by witness OR person involved in the accident/incident (gather several statements at accident/incident scene) –** what happened; where exactly did it happen – N,S,E,W of (draw a diagram on the back of what happened if it helps describe the incident); what did you see and hear; what did you do immediately after the accident; what did people say and who said it;

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