



# Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 20, 2021

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## Investigation of Lynwood High School Construction Reveals Extensive Structural Concerns, District Pursues Legal Options

**Lynwood** – Further investigation of Lynwood High School buildings revealed extensive construction issues that extend beyond those initially discovered, with egregious construction defects that threaten the basic structural integrity of the buildings, and the Board of Education is reviewing their options to litigate and recuperate construction costs associated with fixing Lynwood High School’s classroom building.

The review was launched out of an abundance of caution after the unexpected failure of exterior ceiling panels, called soffits, in one of the high school’s buildings in June 2020. LUSD’s Board of Education immediately initiated an independent engineering review of all campus structures in June to ensure the integrity of the buildings.

Since the initial failure of the soffits at LHS, the area under repair – as well as the majority of the campus – was closed to students, staff and faculty while the inspection proceeded. It was determined early on that certain buildings on campus were safe, such as the library and gymnasium.

According to newly released engineering reports, further inspections revealed extensive structural issues with some faults related to the collapse last summer, and additional issues related to the original contractors’ failure to construct the buildings in accordance with the approved plans and specifications. The inspection found that of the 49 locations on campus, only three areas were in compliance with approved documents. The internal structural issues include, but are not limited to:

- Screws were attached on one side of metal studs but not on both, as required.
- Metal studs were attached to a metal deck with shot-pins; shot-pins are not allowed by the Division of the State Architect (DSA), which regulates school construction.
- Electrical conduit pulling apart and exposed wires.
- Plywood decking was used at archways and overlapping, instead of the nonflammable metal decking required.
- Concrete was glued together and glued in place to the metal frame, instead of being attached with screws as required.
- Required seismic bracing was omitted.

### MORE

The mission of **Lynwood Unified School District**, the model urban school district, is to ensure each student fearlessly achieves their highest academic and personal aspirations while contributing to a diverse, global society through an evolving system. For more information, visit [www.lynwood.k12.ca.us](http://www.lynwood.k12.ca.us).

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California law typically prevents lawsuits for hidden construction defects more than 10 years after construction. However, there are exceptions, including where a party's misconduct is so serious and prevalent that it was either the result of either a deliberate decision to cut costs or of a virtually reckless failure to adequately supervise subcontractors.

"The Board of Education believes that the Lynwood High School construction issues fall within the narrow exception in California law and the District is continuing to investigate and evaluate the issue," Board of Education President Maria G. Lopez said. "Since the initial incident last summer, the Board and District have taken our time to identify the best path forward that focuses on our top priority of ensuring safety of LUSD students and staff."

In an effort to support student and staff safety, Lynwood Unified is in the process of realigning campus instruction in 2021-22 as the District works to resolve the structural issues. The realignment includes physically moving instruction off Lynwood High School's campus.

"Lynwood Unified is evaluating the potential liability of all parties involved in the design, construction and inspection of Lynwood High School, and considering all of its options in seeking to address the egregious defects that were discovered through the engineering review," Lynwood Unified Superintendent Gudiel R. Crosthwaite said. "The District is committed to maintaining its financial viability by seeking compensation from those parties responsible."

Lynwood Unified will continue to provide regular updates via the District website, social media and community eblast messages as new information becomes available.

Construction of Lynwood High School began in January 1995. The \$98.4 million school partially opened with substantial completion in 1998. Final construction work was completed in July 2000.

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The mission of **Lynwood Unified School District**, the cultivator of innovative thinkers, is to ensure each student fearlessly achieves his or her highest academic and personal aspirations while contributing to the greater society through a unique system distinguished by:

- ★ People of great character who inspire and lead by example
- ★ The instilling of courage to be creative
- ★ The transformative uses of technology
- ★ Safe and clean environments
- ★ The honoring of all voices of our community