

IS THERE A GREATER LIFE SAFETY RISK AT LUM IN LIGHT OF THE SOIL TEST RESULTS?

The question that must be answered by this Board is whether there is a greater life safety risk at Lum now, in light of the recent soil test results. The simple answer is, we do not yet know. Our experts will provide information on May 9th to help the Board assess this question, and to see that it would be irresponsible to vote on school closure without more information.

It is critical that the Board make its decision based on the fact that the buildings at Lum are Field Act and DSA complaint, meet all seismic standards established under the California Building Code, and pose no immediate risk to students or staff. There has been no data gathered or analysis conducted to support a conclusion that Lum no longer meets the SPC2 rating standard, which such buildings must meet in order to ensure that possible seismic events do not result in unreasonable life safety risks. No such risks have been documented at Lum. All that has been documented to date is a concerning soil test result. That test result requires that many more steps be taken in order to determine whether a greater life safety risk is posed, and whether it is an unreasonable risk relative to relocating students to other schools.

There is not sufficient evidence of any emergency or imminent risk posed in light of the soil test results alone that would warrant closure of Lum and relocation of students as of June 8, 2017.

THE BOARD SHOULD COMPEL AUSD COMPLIANCE WITH BEST PRACTICES

According to the California Department of Education best practices, any non-emergency school closure should follow a very specific process, which includes forming a District Advisory Committee that is tasked with gathering information and evidence, seeking community input, and making recommendations, which the Board and District would ultimately vote on, and implement. Those best practices have not been followed here, which has resulted in the fear and anxiety that our community is currently experiencing.

The Lum DAC proposes a “3rd option” which would follow those best practices, and would also address the concerns raised by the recent soil test results at Lum.

A YES vote on the Lum DAC’s “3rd option” agenda item, which the Lum DAC requests and recommends be added to the May 23, 2017 Board meeting, should include the following:

1. Delay any vote to relocate students and close Lum for a period of 12 months (to May 2018);
2. Officially establish a District Advisory Committee (DAC);
3. Have that DAC gather further information, data, and analysis, including an assessment of the buildings at Lum in light of California Building Codes , standard Structural Performance Category (SPC) ratings, and other relative risk

- assessment standards, coordinating and consulting with applicable government agencies, local experts, members of the community, and other relevant sources;
4. Have the DAC issue a report and recommendations to the Board by or before May 2018.

The Lum DAC also recommends that the Board add items to an upcoming Board meeting agenda, whereby the AUSD can be directed to do the following:

1. Establish new rule where non-emergency school closures require following Department of Education best practices, which includes forming a DAC;
2. Conducting an assessment of the buildings at all AUSD sites in light of California Building Codes and standard Structural Performance Category (SPC) ratings;
3. Conducting a relative risk assessment for all other schools in AUSD to determine the full scope of the risks posed at our schools from a large seismic event;
4. Establish a DAC to investigate, develop and present proposals to deal with those risks.

THERE IS NOT SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE OF IMMINENT OR IMMEDIATE RISK

The Lum DAC is making the above request and recommendation based on information that we've gathered, from experts over the last two weeks. Those experts include Calvin Wong, former Director of Building Services, City Engineer, and Chief Building Official for City of Oakland, with many years of professional experience. Tai Tang, a licensed architect with 17 years of experience and expertise in designing schools, commercial complexes, stadiums, industrial buildings and hospitals.

Some of these experts will be at the May 9th meeting to present their professional opinions. They are residents of Alameda who took notice of this situation and decided that they needed to speak up. Our experts believe that closure of a school is too important for them to allow it to occur based on what they consider to be insufficient data, and an errant recommendation.

These experts will pose specific questions and detail exactly what information is needed by this Board in order to actually assess whether students and staff would face an unreasonably greater risk if they were to remain at Lum. Some of those questions include:

1. What studies, measurements, simulations, or other assessments have been done to each of the 5 main "pods" at Lum, and any other smaller structures (portables), to determine that the 5" of predicted settlement during a 100 year seismic event would result in failure of each of those structures?
2. What data has been gathered to support a finding that there would be significant enough structural failures expected, building by building, to warrant concern?
3. Does that data specifically consider that the multiple Pods at Lum are single story, wide based, steel framed hexagons that are more resistant to structural issues from differential displacement than multi-story structures with a more narrow base?

4. Does that data specifically consider that Lum buildings have been timely upgraded to conform with DSA standards?
5. If there is any concern, which structures are concerning specifically, and what data supports that conclusion?
6. What data supports the conclusion that there is an unreasonably greater life safety risk at Lum, using the Structural Performance Category (SPC) rating standards, in the event of the 5" of predicted settlement that might occur during a 100 year seismic event?
7. What is the specific impact on the ability of staff and students to evacuate each of the structures, where each "pod" has multiple (up to 8 or more) exit doors located around the entire perimeter?
8. What evidence supports the contention that there is a significant risk posed, in each of the structures at Lum, and that each of the 8+ exits in each pod would be blocked during a 100 year seismic event?
9. What evidence supports the contention that each of the structures at Lum do not meet California SPC2 standards?
10. What data supports the conclusion that there are no options to mitigate any additional life safety risks at Lum?

Based upon our experts review of the reports and information that have been made available by the AUSD to date, none of the above questions have been answered, and none of the critical data and analysis has been compiled. The Board is being asked to vote on relocating 500+ students from a school where there has been no finding of immediate or unreasonable greater life safety risk, where the existing structures are still DSA and Field Act compliant, and where an actual assessment of possible future risk, based on data and evidence, has not yet been conducted.

Furthermore, there has been no assessment whatsoever of the AUSD recommendation, to relocate and close an entire school, upon the larger AUSD and Alameda community. There has been no assessment of the impact of relocation upon all of the schools, and the families at those schools, where Lum students would be moved. Closing an entire school will have a rippling effect on all of Alameda, for students, residents, and homeowners. This decision should not be made without input from the entire community of Alameda.

And if safety of ALL AUSD student is a priority, then an assessment of life safety risks during a 100 year seismic event should be conducted at all AUSD campuses, using the Structural Performance Category (SPC) rating standards. There is simply no data currently available to tell the Board what if any life safety risks exist at any other AUSD schools, and whether moving Lum students to those schools would simply change the type, rather than the relative extent, of any such risks during a major seismic event.

MITIGATION MAY BE FEASIBLE, OTHER OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE

On May 9th our experts will present information to the Board about the types of mitigation that may be available to address any life safety risk concerns at Lum. Some of

these options are quite simple, such as installing windows that allow for emergency exit, or doors that swing in both directions. The AUSD has not provided any such mitigation options to date. They cannot, because they have not yet conducted proper safety assessments to know what, if any, actual life safety risks might exist at Lum in light of these soil test results.

We have also gathered information, with the assistance of State Assembly member Rob Bonta's office, that DSA guidelines allow for emergency placement and approval of portable classrooms. So, if the Board votes to delay closure in order to gather additional information, and if that information gathering process later results in an evidence based determination that Lum cannot continue to be used due to immediate life safety risks, emergency portables can be placed at Lum. There is a DSA policy and procedure that allows for portables to be placed, and then approved after the fact in such circumstances. Such "temporary" approvals are good for up to 3 years, which would allow time for additional decisions to be made if such a situation were to occur.

The AUSD has recommended no options other than closure and relocation. In just two weeks our Lum DAC has gathered together viable, reasonable, and practical options for the Board to consider.

IT IS FEASIBLE, AND RESPONSIBLE, TO LEAVE LUM OPEN WHILE MORE INFORMATION IS GATHERED

What the AUSD is recommending, that Lum be closed and all 500+ students be relocated as of June 8th, is based on a one page opinion letter supported by no testing or analysis of the structural integrity of the buildings at Lum, and without having performed a life safety risk assessment using SPC standards. Any decision based on such a lack of evidence would be irresponsible. Such a decision, based on a lack of sufficient evidence, would cause irreparable harm to Lum students, families, the entire AUSD community, and to homeowners and residents of Alameda.

The buildings at Lum are Field Act and DSA complaint, meet all seismic standards established under the California Building Code, and pose no immediate risk to students or staff. There is not sufficient evidence of any emergency or imminent risk that would warrant closure of Lum and relocation of students as of June 8, 2017.

The responsible and feasible thing to do at this time, in light of the soil test results at Lum, is to place an item on the May 23rd agenda so the Board can vote to leave Lum open for the 2017-2018 school year while further information, analysis and planning is conducted.

-Lum District Advisory Committee