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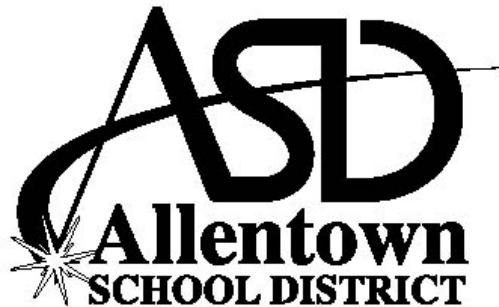
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**ALLENTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT ANNOUNCES CONSTRUCTION MANAGER AND ARCHITECT APPOINTMENTS FOR PHASE I OF FACILITIES IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

(Allentown, PA, November 17, 2006) – With the 2006-2007 school year well on its way, Allentown School District has finalized its review of proposals and announces the appointment of a construction manager and of two architects selected to implement Phase I of the District’s critically needed Facilities Improvement Plan. “As ASD grows, so does the physical space required to teach the student population,” stated Dr. Karen Angello, ASD Superintendent. “We have a great need to advance student achievement. To optimize academic progress, we must address our facilities so they not only provide the space for increased enrollment, but also support the programs required to deliver quality instruction. . The professionals selected to be our partners in expanding and improving our facilities are key to our success. The review of many fine submissions of proposals is over and we are ready to get started on implementation of Phase I for facility improvement.” The original request for proposals (“RFP”) was dated August 16, 2006 for architect/engineers and April 20, 2006 for construction manager.

Six schools within the District are being improved and/or expanded in the first phase of the plan: Jackson Elementary; Roosevelt Elementary; South Mountain Middle; Trexler Middle; Dieruff High; and William Allen High. The plans for these schools are to be phased in over five years. ASD's last new school was built in 1986, over 20 years ago: Sheridan Elementary School was actually a replacement of a former school located at near the current facility on North Second Street.

Since 2001, the District has added 2,037 students without increasing capacity.

### **Construction Manager Appointment**

At its September 28, 2006 board meeting, the ASD Board of Directors voted to approve Alvin H. Butz, Inc., Allentown, PA ([www.butz.com](http://www.butz.com)) construction manager for the implementation of Phase I. As construction manager, the Butz organization will review the program furnished by ASD to ascertain the requirements of the projects and provide a preliminary evaluation of the program, schedule and construction budget requirements. They will also prepare recommendations for construction methods, time requirements, availability of labor and materials as well as update the project schedule, among other management activity, on an ongoing basis.

### **Architect Appointments**

At its November 16, 2006 Board of Directors Meeting, the following actions were taken:

- ASD Board authorization was provided to engage The Ray Group, Lancaster, PA, ([www.raygroup.com](http://www.raygroup.com)) as the District's Architect/Engineer for the renovations and addition, and possible new construction, at Roosevelt Elementary, Jackson Elementary, Trexler Middle and South Mountain Middle Schools. Total construction cost is estimated at \$30,282,203.
  
- Board authorization was given to engage USA Architects Planners + Interior Designers of Somerville, NJ and Easton, PA ([www.usaarchitects.com](http://www.usaarchitects.com)) for the group to serve as the District's Architect/Engineer for the renovations and additions at William Allen High School and Dieruff High School with a total construction cost estimated at \$56,296,983. Tentative improvement plans for William Allen include a new St. Cloud Street building and significant renovations including American Disability Act (ADA) upgrades. A large focus of Dieruff's improvement plan is additional classrooms for increased instructional space and ADA upgrades.

“School buildings affect learning,” stated Dr. Angello. “We need to reduce class size and we need to improve security; these are just two of the major reasons why Allentown is moving forward as quickly as possible with this improvement plan. ASD continues to grow and we have a responsibility to provide improved learning environments for our students. The leadership of ASD Board of Directors Building Committee Co-Chairs guiding a facilities team in completing the comprehensive facilities plan has been commendable. I thank our ASD Board of Directors for their goal-directed vision for improved facilities and for their many hours in the selection of the construction manager and architects. They have exercised prudence in their planning, weighing student and taxpayer needs. Their leadership will contribute to the completion of quality learning environments, but there will also be a positive impact on the economic vitality in the City of Allentown with the opportunities for employment during the actual construction phases.”

Actual renovations and expansions will not begin right away. Now that a construction manager and architects have been hired, drawings must be completed for each school, and the Board must approve the final work to be completed. Communication and approvals must be received from municipal officials for some aspects of the projects. Approval from the Board of Directors and the Pennsylvania Department of Education must be gained through many steps in the PlanCon (state approval process) before the actual work can begin. It takes approximately three to four years to complete each school’s construction/rehabilitation plans.

“We would like to thank the region’s many fine architects and construction managers who submitted proposals for our review,” stated co-chairs of the Building Committee – Elsbeth Haymon and Andrew Weiss. “We appreciate the keen interest in improving Allentown’s public schools, and we want them to know that our review was thorough and considerate of the time and diligence they brought to the table.”

### **Background**

Over the past two decades, the District has attempted to meet the demands of the increased enrollment and the program requirements to ensure a quality education for all students within the present schools. Each school year, the District pours more and more funds into repairing the existing structures and converting spaces into classrooms. Every possible nook and cranny, including basement spaces, has been converted into classrooms. Each year, the District has had to expend more for its aging buildings, including roofs, boilers, and foundations. Often money that is set aside for well-planned maintenance must be directed to work that is directly related to immediate problems that arise.

As part of its strategic planning effort, the Allentown School District Board of Directors contracted with the Ray Group, Inc. in July 2004 to complete a Comprehensive Facilities Plan. This plan consisted of (1) Educational Specifications to determine needs for supporting instructional programs and capacity needs, (2) Enrollment Projections through 2015, and (3) a detailed Feasibility Study to assess the capacity capabilities and the status of the structural and code needs of each school.

In just five years, Allentown School District has grown 12.4 percent, from 16,467 students to 18,504 students in fall 2006. With 22 early childhood, elementary, middle and high schools located throughout the City of Allentown, PA, Allentown School District is the fourth largest school district out of 501 Commonwealth districts. The District continues to implement a standardized, district-wide instructional calendar with consistent teaching practices from school to school to assist students who move within and without the District on a frequent basis.

In 2006, Allentown School District was designated by the Pennsylvania Department of Education as a District “Making Progress,” an important moniker related to *No Child Left Behind* federal legislation.

Allentown School District employs approximately 1,218 teachers and 2,000 employees overall.

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