

# Claremont, California

## Participants

**The City of Claremont** has a population of 34,500 residents.

**Claremont Unified School District** serves 6,300 students in K-12. The district operates seven elementary schools, a school for the orthopedically handicapped, an intermediate school, a comprehensive high school, and a continuation school. The school District boundaries include the City of Claremont, and portions of the cities of LaVerne and Pomona.

*For more than a decade, the City of Claremont and the Claremont Unified School District have participated in a series of joint partnerships. The partnerships have included joint agreements related to cost efficiencies, student safety, and a variety of programs and services to benefit students.*

## Background

The relationship between the City of Claremont and the Claremont Unified School District has historically been positive. Over the past 14 years, there have been several formalized efforts to implement an ongoing partnership, which is often referred to as the “Joint Partnership.”

In the early 1990s, as the State and national economy went into recession, both the City and the School District began to cut programs and services. During this time, members of the City Council, the Board of Education, the City Manager, and the School Superintendent engaged in discussions about the impact of these reductions. The implementation of the educational revenue augmentation funds (ERAF) shift by the state in 1992, further aggravated the financial condition of the City and School District, and both agencies laid off staff and cut programs and services. After school programs were cut, parks closed, and school intramural and cultural arts programs were cut or reduced. Following a public process where residents expressed support for additional cooperative programs with the School District and expanded programs to benefit youth, the City Council approved \$250,000 in support to the School District for the 1993-94 and 1994-1995 fiscal years. The agreement with the District stipulated that the funds were to be utilized in a manner that benefited youth in the Claremont community. This agreement was completed in 1995 as the City began increasing funding for youth programs.

## Youth Master Plan

In September 1993, the City Council and Board of Education jointly appointed a 17-member community task force to research the needs of youth and the resources available to meet those needs, and to develop a strategic plan for improving programs and services for Claremont youth and their families. It was agreed that the City would provide \$25,000 in funding to develop the Youth Master Plan (YMP). The District did not have financial resources at the time to contribute funding, but did provide in-kind resources such as meeting space, copying, and staff support. The task force included City Council and School Board members, community leaders, parents, youth, key City and School District staff, youth leaders, health professionals, the faith community and college representatives. This effort, the Claremont Youth Master Plan, took seventeen months to complete.

The task force researched the School District demographics. For purposes of the Youth Master Plan, all children in the School District were considered to be “children of Claremont”. This information proved to be useful because there was a public perception that Claremont did not have “Those kinds of issues”. The data supported the impressions of the City and School District that the demographic changes in the community had resulted in a more ethnically diverse population, more working parents, and more latch-key kids consistent with the changes occurring in the larger Los Angeles metropolitan area. When this information was shared with the public during the community forums, the development of the Youth Master Plan gained greater importance. An inventory of the available services and providers identified duplicate programs and areas in which assistance was not available. This enabled the community to develop a priority listing of programs needed for youth over both the short and long term, which in turn, provided a guide for how financial resources should be allocated.

Community involvement was instrumental in the development of the Youth Master Plan. Over 150 community members served on subcommittees and over 3,000 people participated in community forums and surveys. Youth participation was solicited from all age groups, from creating posters and drawings at the elementary schools to participation in the youth attitudes and behavior survey at the high schools. The community was kept informed of the master planning process through existing City and School District publications. *This widespread involvement helped create a community-wide focus on the importance of youth and their families. It raised awareness of the issues, and developed community support by encouraging ownership early in the process. As a result of this early community participation, the Plan influenced the actions of many even before it was adopted.*

## Adoption of the Youth Master Plan

### Key Lessons

*Understand the perspective of the different organizations and how each thinks*

*Add meaning to commitments by making them in public forums*

*Establish relationships and systems to support on-going collaborations*

*Seek community input and involvement early in the process*

The Claremont Youth Master Plan was formally presented to the City Council, the Board of Education and the community on January 26, 1995 and the YMP was later adopted by the Board and Council as public policy. The Plan included a vision and guiding principles for the Claremont community and an action plan to:

- Mobilize the community. Get everyone involved; include and recognize youth; value diversity; and give everyone good information.
- Create a unified system of supports and activities. Be sure young people have something constructive to do when they are not in school; be sure everyone has physical and mental health care; help everyone feel safe and secure; support families; and educate parents.
- Coordinate, support and monitor these goals

Both the District and the City have continued to actively partner in implementing specific YMP recommendations since 1995. This has included jointly funding the Search Institute survey of student attitudes and behaviors in 1995, 1996, 1999, and 2001, and jointly providing financial support to community initiatives such as the Youth Wellness Center, Sunday hours at the Claremont Library, and counseling and other support services for students.

## Growth of the Joint Partnership

The YMP provided the impetus for further growth of the Joint Partnership between the City and the School District. The following is a summary of several elements of this Partnership:

- ***Campus Security & Student Safety Agreement:*** The City and District have developed policies and procedures for reporting crimes on campus and dealing with youth, who are truant, bring weapons to school, or who are under the influence and/or possessing alcohol/drugs on campus or at school sponsored activities. The protocol for arresting students on campus was also developed. The City adopted a Daytime Loitering Ordinance as a part of this effort. Additionally, emergency responses and training for potential incidents of school violence have been developed. A Joint Campus Security and Student Safety Operating Committee meets on an ongoing basis to coordinate this effort and to address specific issues that arise.
- ***Joint Use Agreement:*** The City and District have entered into an agreement whereby each agency may use the other's buildings and

facilities free of charge. The agreement includes priorities for scheduling the use of buildings and facilities. Currently, the District uses City facilities for a variety of student intramural activities, junior varsity and varsity sports, Adult School classes, meetings, and staff trainings. The City utilizes the Claremont High School and El Roble Intermediate School swimming pools for community aquatics programs and the Claremont High School gymnasium for adult recreational basketball. The City is currently working with the District to coordinate use of the new El Roble gymnasium for community recreational use.

- ***Vehicle & Equipment Maintenance Agreement:*** This agreement provides that the City provide fuel as well as maintain and repair the School District vehicle fleet. Additionally, the two entities have agreed to share all equipment and vehicles when necessary (i.e. – emergency response).
- ***School Site Purchase for Community Center:*** The City and the School District entered into an agreement for the City to purchase the former Danbury School site for development as a community center and park. This project resulted in a 32,000 square foot community center and 9.6 acres of open space being added to Lewis Park. The Alexander Hughes Community Center (AHCC) opened in July 2001.
- ***Joint Recreation/Adult School Brochure:*** For several years, the City’s quarterly Human Services Department activity/class brochure and the District’s quarterly Adult School publication were combined in an effort to reduce costs and to have a one-stop information piece for residents.
- ***Joint Council/Board Meetings:*** The Mayor, Mayor Pro Tem, Board President, Board Vice-President, City Manager, and School Superintendent meet two to four times yearly to discuss joint issues of concern and to monitor the status of joint projects. The City Manager and School Superintendent both meet and talk by phone regularly. The full City Council and Board of Education meet in joint session twice each year.
- ***Communication Between Senior Staff:*** The City Manager and School Superintendent meet monthly to discuss issues of mutual concern and frequently communicate by phone or email on a number of issues. The City’s Director of Human Services and the School District’s Director of Federal, State, & Community Education Programs meet monthly to address ongoing coordination and joint programming issues. Other City and School District staff meet regularly to ensure the implementation of joint programs and projects. On some levels (YAC, TRACKS, Kids Club, etc.) City and District staff interact daily.

- ***Joint Funding for Support Services:*** The City and District have jointly identified and funded specific services supporting youth. Over the years these have included anger management, suicide intervention, human relations training, alcohol/drug counseling, and parent-teen communication classes. The City has, for many years, provided funding to supplement on-site counseling for students at Claremont High School, San Antonio Continuation High School, and El Roble Intermediate School. Additionally, the City and District have contributed funds to purchase additional hours of service at the Claremont Library.
- ***Support for Youth Programs:*** The City and District have cooperatively worked to implement additional youth programs for the community. This has included opening the Youth Activity Center (YAC) for high school age students, implementing the TRACKS Program for intermediate school age students, providing additional after school program sites for elementary school age students and supporting (financially and otherwise) the development of community-based after school tutoring programs at three sites. The City has implemented a mobile recreation program to expand after school services to at-risk youth and has opened two community computer labs (AHCC and Wheeler Park) and two youth-focused computer labs (YAC & TRACKS Activity Center) so youth in the community have access to computers.
- ***School & Community Policing Grant:*** The School District and City jointly applied for and received a School & Community Policing Grant in 2001 that placed a School Resource Officer on the secondary school campuses. The officer offers educational support and campus safety.
- ***TRACKS Activity Center & El Roble Gym Complex:*** The School District and City partnered in the application for state matching funds to enhance the new gymnasium at El Roble Intermediate School. The funding allowed for the construction of a greatly enhanced facility that included a fitness center and a second teen center (the TRACKS Activity Center) as part of the building. This new facility opened in spring 2004.
- ***Live Scan Services:*** The City and District use a Live Scan computerized fingerprint check system that provides required background screenings for District and City employees and volunteers.
- ***DARE Program:*** the City and School District collaboratively offer this educational program to all fifth grade students to prevent or reduce drug abuse and violence among youth using trained Police officers and educators.

- ***La Puerta Sports Park:*** The City uses District owned land at La Puerta Sports Park for youth sports activities and general recreation.

## Challenges

Currently, the Joint Partnership faces several challenges. Both the City and the School District face economic challenges similar to what they faced in the early 1990's. The School District has dealt with significant budget cuts for the current and the 2004-05 fiscal years, and the Governor has proposed a funding shift that will reduce revenues to Claremont and other local governments. This fiscal year has seen funding cuts to some of the significant jointly funded programs offered through the Partnership (TRACKS, on-site school counseling, and Youth Wellness Center.) The City has backfilled funding in these areas, so that services could be maintained. The Youth Master Plan is approaching its tenth year and needs to be revisited. There is also a sense that with changing members among the Board, Council and staff at the City and District, the commitment to the Partnership needs to be revisited.

*The Partnership has included not only the **specific programs and services** mentioned above, but also the development of a **strong cooperative relationship** between policy makers and staff from the two entities, who have been committed to building and sustaining this collaboration. It has been a goal to **institutionalize the commitment** to collaboration in the organizational culture of the City and the District.*

## Contacts:

David Rose, Assistant Superintendent  
Claremont Unified School District, 909.398.0361

Mercy Santoro  
City of Claremont, 909.445.7852