

California School District Selects Ralph Andersen & Associates

October 16, 2008

The Baldwin Park Unified School District (BPUSD), located in Southern California recently announced the selection of Ralph Andersen & Associates to work with a cooperative network of community stakeholders including first responders, public health, staff, teachers and parents as a unified crisis management team. This team will work together to develop an all-hazards emergency preparedness and response plan to enhance the integration of current assets, technological advancements, community resources and a more inclusive treatment of special needs and other hard to reach populations to protect its students and staff during emergencies.

The project is being funded by a \$298,082 Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Grant (REMS) received from the Department of Education in 2008. With 23 facilities spread over 6.7 square miles Baldwin Park Unified School District (BPUSD) serves approximately 17,000 students from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, economic levels, and age groups (including 5,000 adult education students).

Located within the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area, Baldwin Park is part of the designated Los Angeles/Long Beach Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) - an area ranked as one of the top cities at-risk for terrorist violence.

Ralph Andersen & Associates will be working with BPUSD teachers, students and first responders to provide planning, preparedness and response training as well as advanced technology. The primary objective is enable the school system to respond faster, in a more coordinated manner with other agencies to better protect both students and staff during natural and other types of emergencies situations such as earthquakes, campus shootings, bomb threats, and lockdowns.

Stephen Bayne, Director of Risk Management and Benefits is excited about this project and the opportunity to continue to add value to existing preparedness, response systems and collaborative relationships. "Our mission is to further improve the district's response to emergencies in an all threats environment by continuous planning and training in emergency response procedures and protocols, incident command systems, and exercises".