



**O'HARE NOISE  
COMPATIBILITY  
COMMISSION**

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## **Two Schools Qualify for Sound Insulation to Reduce Aircraft Noise**

### **O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission Thanks FAA, CDA for 'Second Look'**

Des Plaines, Ill., November 4, 2010—The O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission (ONCC) announced this week the Federal Aviation Administration has approved eligibility for Ridgewood High School in Norridge and Elk Grove High School in Elk Grove Village to receive sound insulation that will reduce aircraft noise disturbances within classrooms.

At the request of the ONCC School Sound Insulation Committee, FAA officials agreed to take a "second look" at aircraft noise levels at three Chicago area schools during last summer's recess.

"The FAA really stepped up to review these schools that were caught in the shift to build new runways at O'Hare International Airport," said ONCC Chairperson and Arlington Heights Mayor Arlene J. Mulder. "We appreciate the effort and willingness of Catherine Lang, FAA acting associate administrator for airports, to study the unique circumstances of these schools and to authorize noise re-evaluation in these buildings.

"Additional thanks go to Jan Schakowsky (D., Ill.), Peter Roskam (R., Ill.) and Sen. Richard Durbin (D., Ill.) for their efforts on behalf of these schools and to the Chicago Department of Aviation for coordinating the noise monitoring," Mulder continued.

At the request of the FAA, the Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) strategically placed noise monitors at three schools during July and August to determine whether aircraft noise inside the schools met an 8-hour Equivalent Sound Level (Leq) test result of 45 or higher. The 45 Leq is the minimum noise threshold the FAA established for schools to qualify for sound insulation funding.

Ridgewood High School, with 920 students, registered 46.4 Leq and Elk Grove High School, with approximately 2,000 students, registered 45.4 Leq. Carpenter Elementary School in Park Ridge registered 42.5 Leq and thus did not meet the 45.0 Leq noise level criterion for sound insulation.

"I am grateful that the FAA responded to my request to re-examine two schools in my district—Ridgewood and Carpenter—and very pleased that after the CDA's extensive monitoring, Ridgewood qualifies for the sound insulation it needs. I am disappointed that Carpenter did not qualify and we will examine the data that led to that decision," said Schakowsky.

(more)

## Two Schools Qualify for Sound Insulation/add 1

School sound insulation improvements, designed by specialized architects and acoustical engineers, may include insulated windows, additional roofing and ceiling insulation, improved doors, HVAC modifications and similar measures. The improvements are intended to reduce aircraft noise in schools and to facilitate a quieter learning environment.

Sound insulating the two schools is estimated to cost approximately \$20 to \$30 million. The FAA pays 80% of improvement costs with Airport Improvement Program funds and the city of Chicago pays 20% with approved passenger facility charge funds.

“While not the result Park Ridge-Niles School District 64 had hoped for, there is a positive. The number of daytime departures over Carpenter School is projected to decline to less than one percent as O’Hare moves toward its ultimate configuration of six parallel runways,” said Brendan McLaughlin, ONCC executive director.

In 2004 the FAA approved the schools as eligible for sound insulation, but in 2009 the FAA notified three schools that they no longer qualified based on the new noise contour projections associated with the O’Hare Modernization Program (OMP).

At the urging of ONCC, the FAA, Congressional, school, airport and ONCC officials took two tours of the schools earlier this year. Based on the age of the previous testing and OMP changes to the O’Hare airfield, the FAA requested re-testing of these three schools in 2010 to reflect existing conditions.

“After two years of work with regional and federal stakeholders, I am pleased that Elk Grove High School will be restored to eligibility for federal sound insulation funds. Thanks in part to FAA Administrator Lang, students at EGHS—especially those with special needs—will be able to enjoy a higher quality learning environment,” said Roskam.

Approximately \$280 million in federal and airport funds have already underwritten sound insulation for 116 Chicago and community schools near O’Hare, with another four schools in construction. As an inter-governmental agency dedicated to aircraft noise reduction at one of the world’s busiest airports, ONCC oversees the largest and one of the oldest school sound insulation programs in the world.

“We work cooperatively with all our stakeholders including the city of Chicago, Aviation Commissioner Rosemarie Andolino and her staff, and the FAA,” said Mulder.

ONCC is composed of 45 communities and school districts and is recognized nationally as a leading community-based organization that strives to reduce the impact of aircraft noise through residential and school sound insulation programs and to reduce aircraft noise, whenever possible, at its source.

For more information, call 773-686-3198 or visit [www.oharenoise.org](http://www.oharenoise.org) to read the CDA 2010 School Noise Monitoring Report.

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ONCC member communities: Arlington Heights, Bartlett, Bellwood, Bensenville, Chicago, Des Plaines, Elmwood Park, Franklin Park, Harwood Heights, Hoffman Estates, Itasca, Maywood, Melrose Park, Mount Prospect, Niles, Norridge, Northlake, Oak Park, Palatine, Park Ridge, River Forest, River Grove, Rolling Meadows, Rosemont, Schaumburg, Schiller Park, Stone Park, Wood Dale and Cook County. ONCC member school districts: 59; 63; 64; 80; 81; 84; 84.5; 85.5; 86; 87; 88; 89; 214; 234; 299; and 401.

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